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Expenditures for Religious Services
By the Soviet Population

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EXPENDITURES FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES
BY THE SOVIET POPULATION

Erik Weisman

Paper No. 28, June 1991
A Note from the Editors

Clifford Gaddy, the technical editor of the Berkeley—Duke Occasional Papers series since 1987, received his Ph.D. degree from Duke University in May of this year and has accepted a position with the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Gaddy has performed the tedious and unrewarding editorial chores very well. The editors want to express their gratitude for his untiring efforts and wish him good luck in his professional career.

As of this issue, Ms Kimberly Neuhauser of the Economics Department, Duke University, takes on the responsibility of technical editor of the series.

Gregory Grossman and Vladimir G. Treml

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# Table of Contents

Summary ................................................. 1

Introduction ........................................... 2

Religions in the USSR ................................. 4

The Russian Orthodox Church ....................... 7

Church Income .......................................... 13

Definitions ........................................... 13

Number of Worshippers and Believers ............. 15

Candles and Donations ............................... 19

Occasional Religions Rites ......................... 21

Baptisms .............................................. 21

Funerals .............................................. 29

Marriages ............................................. 35

Ritual Objects and Other Occasional Rites ....... 39

Monasteries and Convents ......................... 41

Sale of Religious Literature ....................... 42

Total Income Estimates ............................. 45

Income of All Religions ............................. 47

Sources Cited ......................................... 71
List of Tables and Appendices

Table 1: Membership of Religious Followings in the USSR in the Early 1980's

Table 2: Percent of Women Who Considered Religion Most Important

Table 3: Estimated Number of Baptisms

Table 4: Estimated Income from Baptisms

Table 5: Estimated Number of Religious Funerals

Table 6: Estimated Income from Funerals

Table 7: Estimated Number of Religious Marriages

Table 8: Estimated Income from Marriages

Table 9: Total Estimated Income of the Russian Orthodox Church

Table 10: Availability of Houses of Worship

Table 11: Comparison of Religious Structures

Table 12: Estimated Income Generated by Religious Followings

Appendix A: Russian Orthodox Church Expenditures

Table A1: Estimated Expenditures on Priests' Salaries and Pensions

Table A2: Total Estimated Expenditures of the Russian Orthodox Church

Appendix B: Membership of the Russian Orthodox Church Prior to the Communist Revolution

Appendix C: Historic Perspective of the Russian Orthodox Monastic Order

Appendix D: Income of the Russian Orthodox Church Prior to the Communist Revolution

Appendix E: Historic Perspective on the Number of Russian Orthodox Priests and Churches
SUMMARY

Soviet national income accounts do not include income generated by religious organizations. Considering the estimated 90-115 million believers in the USSR, the omission of religious income is significant. This study estimates that the annual income generated by religious organizations in the Soviet Union in the mid 1980's was approximately 3-8 billion rubles.

Although the income of religious organizations is not a component of the Soviet second economy, the fact that this source of income is not included in Soviet national income accounts merits its inclusion as a part of the overall Berkeley-Duke Project on the Second Economy in the USSR.

I would like to thank Vladimir Treml for comments on earlier drafts. Michael Alexeev, Clifford Gaddy, Christopher Giosa, Gregory Grossman, Bridget Hiedemann, Kimberly Neuhauser, Dixie Reaves, and Alan Resley also provided valuable suggestions and critical comments. Responsibility for errors and omissions is my own.
Introduction

A hoary anecdote dealing with the early period of post-revolutionary education in the USSR has an examiner and his student engaged in the following exchange:

Q. What is God?

A. God is a superstition by which the exploiters delude the laboring classes by leading them to place their hopes for rescue from their misery in a nonexistent after-life rather than in the life they are actually living.

Q. Well, you have passed.

A. Thank God!

[TREADGOLD, 1977, p. 8]

O, Russia isn't Russia anymore; the only place you can feel at home is in the Church.

[FLETCHER, 1977, p. 231]

Despite decades of state persecution, religious sentiment remains relatively high in the Soviet Union. Given that revenue generated by religious associations is not included in Soviet national income accounts, this source of income would seem to be important to analyze. To estimate the income generated by religious organizations within the USSR, ideally, one would seek to investigate all of the major religions. Unfortunately, information regarding religious activity within the Soviet Union is very scarce. Data concerning the financial aspects of religious organizations are even
Erik Weisman

more limited. The little information that is available is predominantly related to the Russian Orthodox Church. As a result, this study estimates the income of the Russian Orthodox Church and, by way of extrapolation and comparison with other religious traditions, estimates a global figure for income generated by all religious organizations in the USSR.

The problems with this procedure are numerous. One might be tempted to assume that the pattern of religious activities and religious expenditures of Russian Orthodox believers are roughly similar to those of other believers. This assumption may not be hard to apply with regard to other Christian denominations, but it is more difficult to justify in reference to Islam, the second largest religious following in the Soviet Union.

One difficulty in using this assumption concerns income levels across religions. While Lutherans and Catholics in the Baltic states earn relatively high salaries, Muslims in the Asian republics earn considerably less. One must also account for the nationalistic sentiment within different religious groups. To retain a sense of national identity, followers of Islam, Judaism, Georgian Orthodoxy and Armenian Apostolicism may practice more fervently and, therefore, spend a larger portion of their income on religion than Russian Orthodox believers. Persecution by the State may also vary across religions. The fear of Islamic fundamentalism may have facilitated greater persecution of Muslims by Soviet authorities than of other religious followers. In addition, Judaism was far more heavily denounced in relation to the size of its following than were other religious traditions as
Expenditures for Religious Services


The availability of houses of worship varies with regard to religious traditions as a result of the concentration of different religious populations. While Russian Orthodox churches are scattered throughout the country (though mostly in the Western regions), Catholic and Lutheran churches are concentrated in the Baltics. Moreover, while the center of Christian worship is the church, this is not true of Islam, which has traditionally had relatively few registered religious communities within the Soviet Union. There are certainly many other problems inherent within this framework.

The validity of the basic assumption that religious traditions within the USSR display similar patterns of religious activity and religious spending is examined in more detail in Section 4. The outcome of this analysis will determine how the income of the Russian Orthodox Church is used to estimate the revenue generated by other religious organizations in the Soviet Union.

1: Religions in the USSR

Although the largest, Russian Orthodoxy is but one of many religions within the Soviet Union. ELLIS [1986, pp. 176, 484] reports that in the early 1980's there were at least 50 million Russian Orthodox believers, 45-50 million Muslims, 5.5 million Roman Catholics, 1.5 million Eastern-rite Catholics, 4-5 million Protestants of various denominations, 2.5-3.0 million Jews (this number has fallen significantly in recent years due to
emigration), and 500,000 Buddhists.\(^2\) In addition, due to strong nationalistic sentiment, many of the 5 million Georgians and 3 million Armenians are members of the Georgian Orthodox Church and Armenian Apostolic Church, respectively. Religious memberships are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Membership of Religious Followings in the USSR in the Early 1980's (Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Following</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian Orthodoxy</td>
<td>50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>45-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholicism</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern-Rite Catholicism (Outlawed)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestantism</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>2.5-3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgian Orthodoxy</td>
<td>5 (entire population of Georgia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian Apostolicism</td>
<td>3 (entire population of Armenia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>117.0-123.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\)I would like to acknowledge ELLIS [1986] as a very valuable source. Her work facilitated the investigation of further references. I would also like to note that ELLIS [1986], and especially FLETCHER [1981] and LANE [1978], cite primary Soviet sources in support of their works. I have not checked these Russian language sources.
Expenditures for Religious Services

With regard to Muslims, FLETCHER [1981, p. 73] notes that "it remains problematical whether religion is separable from culture in Islam...." In a like manner, ELLIS [1986, p. 177] states that some of these numbers should be scaled down because "not all of the ethnic Muslims and Jews are religious believers, and many if not all of the 0.5 million Buddhists would call themselves atheists." Moreover, the populations of Armenia and Georgia are fairly diverse with respect to religious followings. Many people in these republics are not members of their respective national churches and thus these numbers must be reduced as well. ELLIS [1986, p. 177], therefore, estimates that there were 55-60 million non-Russian Orthodox believers in the mid 1980's.

Using a conservative estimate of 50 million Russian Orthodox believers, ELLIS allows for at least 105 million religious believers in the Soviet Union. Although numerous other religious groups are not included in this figure, their aggregate membership is not significant. After investigating many Soviet sociological studies, FLETCHER [1977, p. 228; 1981, pp. 209-12] concludes that 45 percent of the Soviet population in the mid 1970's, or 115 million people, were believers. This figure included 30 percent of the Russian half of the population and 60 percent of the non-Russian half of the population. Of these 115 million, FLETCHER estimates that approximately 50 million were Russian Orthodox. He further notes that Soviet studies usually refer to 10-35 percent of the Soviet population as believers [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 69]. Citing a 1990 Soviet study, ANTIC [January 11, 1991, p. 9] reports that there were up to 90 million believers of various denominations in the USSR with upward revisions likely. This figure seems unreasonably low. A more
acceptable lower bound is the figure provided by ELLIS, or 105 million believers.

Estimating the amount of money spent on religious activities by the Soviet population depends upon a number of factors: the portion of the 105-115 million believers who actually worship, the frequency with which they attend services, their expenditures during worship, the portion who engage in religious rites of passage, the customary donations or offerings for the administration of religious rites of passage and other elements. These issues will be explored with reference to the Russian Orthodox Church. The resultant income estimate will then be used to calculate the total annual income of all religious traditions in the Soviet Union in Section 4.

2: The Russian Orthodox Church

The Orthodox Church has been an integral part of Russian society for over a millennium. When Prince Vladimir of Kiev converted to Christianity in 988, he ushered in the beginning of a rich religious tradition. It should come as no surprise, then, that despite persistent and often vicious persecution by the State over the past seven decades, Russian Orthodoxy has remained a formidable, albeit diminished, force under Soviet rule.3 Until quite recently, the official attitude towards the Church has been one of great disdain:

3Despite harsh conditions, the Russian Orthodox Church has "received distinctly more favorable treatment than other religious organizations" during communist rule [LANE, 1978, p. 33].
Expenditures for Religious Services

The evolution of Russian Orthodoxy can never make it acceptable as a world view to the builders of communism. Despite modernization, the church is still a propagandist of antiscientific religious ideology and a champion of Christian moral ideals, which contradict the norms of communist morality. Not even the most radical modifications of religious faith can eliminate the profound contradiction between science and religion [GORDIENKO and KUROCHKIN, 1979, p. 185].

Given the Marxist State's historic position regarding religion, the Russian Orthodox Church has, by necessity, operated entirely from private funds [ELLIS, 1986, p. 46]. Moreover, because the State has not, until recently, acknowledged the legitimacy of religious activity, income generated by religious organizations is not included in Soviet national income accounts.

Before proceeding further, a number of issues must be addressed concerning the estimates that follow. First, as a result of the changes brought about by Gorbachev, the Church has attained a higher degree of acceptance in recent years. Given the fairly stable conditions regarding religious tolerance between 1965 (after Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign) and 1986, it is likely that Gorbachev's stance on religion has increased the scope of religious activity. To analyze

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4 All religious organizations in the USSR operate from private funds and receive no funding from the State.

5 Although Church income is supposedly deposited into the State Bank and subsequently managed by state appointed authorities, it is unknown to what extent the Soviet bureaucracy controls this money in practice [ELLIS, 1986, p. 45].

8
the religious environment as it existed prior to Glasnost, all calculations relating to religious income are presented for 1986, the last "normal" year of Soviet religious persecution.⁶

Second, because of the uneven distribution of Russian Orthodoxy throughout the Soviet Union, the western Slavic republics (the RSFSR, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Moldavia) are the regions considered when calculating birth, death and marriage rates for the entire Russian Orthodox population.⁷ These rates will then be used to determine the total number of Orthodox baptisms, funerals, and marriages for the USSR.

The third condition involves the trend of religious activities during the last 25 years. The majority of

⁶Many of the previous Berkeley-Duke Occasional Papers on the Second Economy in the USSR are based on data from the Berkeley-Duke survey of Soviet emigres to the U.S. This survey relates information regarding individual and household income and expenditures in the USSR during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Unfortunately, the survey does not contain questions concerning religious expenditures. Given that information regarding religious expenditures in the Soviet Union is more abundant for the mid 1980's, the year 1986 was chosen for the present study.

⁷One should be careful not to group the Russian Orthodox Church and the Georgian Orthodox Church together. For the remainder of this paper, Orthodox or Orthodoxy refers to the Russian Orthodox Church only.

Russian Orthodoxy is strongest in those regions which were not incorporated into the Soviet Union until after World War II (especially Moldavia and the western Ukraine) and in those areas where churches were reopened under German occupation during the war (Byelorussia, southern Ukraine, southwest RSFSR and the northern Caucasus). It is estimated that half of the functioning Orthodox churches during the last two decades were in the Ukraine [ELLIS, 1986, p. 18].
Expenditures for Religious Services

Studies investigated in research for this paper were undertaken (by Soviet sociologists) in the 1960's and early 1970's. There is reason to believe that, during the 15 to 25 years between the time of these surveys and the year 1986, conditions concerning religion had changed. LANE [1978, p. 30] notes that there were "significant changes" in many aspects of Russian Orthodoxy between 1959 and 1974. Over the period 1960-1986, the Orthodox population had become that much further removed from the unhindered tradition that flourished prior to the revolution. Whereas in 1960, there were still many people who had experienced life before the establishment of the Soviet State and its policy of atheism, by 1986 only the oldest segment of society could possibly recall a time when religion was acceptable. In addition, those studies undertaken during and shortly after Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign (1959-1964) must certainly have been affected by the relative rise and subsequent decline of religious persecution.

Despite these caveats, the estimates of income generated from the administration of occasional religious rites (baptisms, marriages, funerals) are made under the assumption that conditions have remained unchanged since the time of these studies. FLETCHER [1981, p. 185] notes the persistence of religious (not necessarily Russian Orthodox) rites of passage in several regions of the Soviet Union during the 1960's and early 1970's. This information lends some credibility to the notion that, while Russian Orthodoxy may have undergone some changes, conditions surrounding religious rites of passage might have been relatively stable.
Finally, one must consider the possible differences between urban and rural believers and the income elasticity of demand for religious expenditures. According to LANE [1978, p. 46], "the ROC [Russian Orthodox Church] has its support overwhelmingly in the countryside." Analyzing several Soviet studies, she concludes that during the 1960's, 5-16 percent of the Soviet urban population were Orthodox believers as opposed to 20-40 percent of the rural population. Furthermore, in a survey on the attitudes of Soviet women towards religion, a report from the USSR STATE COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS [Press release No. 8, January 14, 1991] indicates that, when choosing between several items, far more rural women considered religion to be the most important part of their lives than did urban women. Table 2 shows the results for the entire sample (93,000 women) and for the traditionally Russian Orthodox republics.

Table 2: Percent of Women Who Considered Religion Most Important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>ALL WOMEN</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSFSR</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKRAINE</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYELORUSSIA</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLDAVIA</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It might be argued that the effective wage (after accounting for stolen hours, pilferage, and second economy activities) is higher for urban worshippers than
Expenditures for Religious Services

for those in rural locations and, therefore, religious expenditures per capita fall as one moves from the city to the country. But given religion's traditional and rural nature, religious spending in the Soviet Union is probably fairly inelastic with respect to income. Although there is little evidence to support this notion for the USSR, there has been research on the subject in western countries. Based on U.S. Internal Revenue Service data, primarily for 1962, FELDSTEIN [1975, p. 217] estimates that religious contributions have an income elasticity of 0.63. It does not seem unreasonable to extend this result to communist nations. Furthermore, the variance of wealth between different social groups of worshippers is small since most Orthodox followers, both urban and rural, are female, elderly or retired, and poorly educated. Moreover, most information regarding religious expenditures by worshippers in the Soviet Union does not differentiate between city and country. Therefore, for the remainder of this paper, the membership of the Russian Orthodox Church will be treated

8 The price of religious contributions in the U.S. varies by income group depending upon the appropriate tax deduction. Whereas in the USSR, a one ruble donation to the Church costs one ruble, in the U.S., a one dollar donation costs less than a dollar. To account for the variable price of charitable contributions, FELDSTEIN leaves the price elasticity unconstrained. But the unconstrained model may lead to collinearity between price elasticity and income elasticity. As an alternative specification, FELDSTEIN constrains the price elasticity of all charitable contributions (based on a prior study) to -1.24, arriving at an income elasticity for religious contributions of 0.38. This second specification is probably less meaningful than the original model where the unconstrained price elasticity of religious giving is estimated at -0.49.
as a homogeneous population with respect to religious expenditures.

3: Church Income

The income received by the Russian Orthodox Church is primarily derived from the sale of candles and from weekly private donations or offerings. In addition, revenue is earned from offerings received upon the administration of occasional religious rites (baptisms, funerals, marriages) as well as donations made for lesser religious activities, such as blessings for those embarking on a journey. Income is also generated by convents and monasteries, from the sale of ritual objects and through the illegal sale of religious literature. Although the Church also performs many other functions that might bring about further revenue, the vast majority of income is generated by the items listed above. Therefore, each of these sources of income is analyzed below.

A: Definitions

The most important issue involving the estimation of Church income is determining the number of Orthodox believers and Orthodox worshippers. As a matter of definition, it should be made clear that a believer and a worshipper of the Russian Orthodox faith are not identical. While a believer might be defined as one who

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9See APPENDIX A for information concerning Russian Orthodox Church expenditures.
accepts at least some aspects of Russian Orthodoxy, only those who attend church services are denoted as worshippers. Many believers do not practice openly for fear of state-sponsored persecution and harassment. Others do not attend services because of the distances involved and the prohibitive nature of travel. Still other believers attend church only for the most sacred of holy days.

Donations and the purchase of candles by regular worshippers constitute the bulk of church revenues, but a significant portion of Church income is generated by offerings made upon the service of rites of passage. When considering the number of people who participate in religious rites of passage (baptisms, funerals, and marriages), the scope of individuals involved must be widened beyond regular churchgoers. Because each of these rites occurs only once in a lifetime (perhaps more frequently for marriages), often those who believe but do not regularly worship partake of these religious traditions. "It is... participation in rites of passage and church holidays, which have been most vigorously preserved by [the] Orthodox.... [It is these] religious practices through which a very large proportion of

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10 It is standard for Soviet researchers to label people as believers, waverers, or nonbelievers. A waverer is one who is no longer certain of his faith but maintains some connections to the Church. These categories are often divided into a variety of classifications. Given that there is no standard method for these classifications and that definitions vary, FLETCHER [1981, pp. 63-64] notes that it is difficult to compare the many different studies. LANE [1978, p. 45] notes that, perhaps inappropriately, the Soviet sources she analyzed do not include waverers as believers.
contemporary Russians are still connected with Orthodoxy" [LANE, 1978, p. 60]. There are even reports of non-believers taking part in certain religious rites of passage [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 185-98]. For example, a Soviet study reports that a third of all non-believers in one village believed that it was necessary to baptize their children [LANE, 1978, p. 63]. As difficult as it is to accurately determine the number of Orthodox worshippers, it is even more difficult to establish the number of people who might engage in these occasional rites (i.e., believers and many atheists).

For the purposes of calculation, then, it is necessary to establish the number of regular worshippers to estimate income generated from weekly donations and candle sales. It is also essential to determine the number of believers (and those atheists) who would consider themselves (or their children, in the case of baptisms) eligible for an Orthodox baptism, funeral or marriage. This determination will facilitate the calculation of revenue derived from offerings made upon the administration of religious rites of passage.

B: Number of Worshippers and Believers

Excluding the brief courtship between Stalin and the Church during The Great Patriotic War, those following the Orthodox faith have been harshly persecuted throughout communist rule. As a result, overt membership has fallen dramatically.\(^\text{11}\) It has been difficult to

\(^{11}\text{See APPENDIX B: Membership of the Russian Orthodox Church Prior to the Communist Revolution.}\)
Expenditures for Religious Services

estimate the number of believers because, theoretically, state officials do not have the right to question citizens regarding their religious preferences. In addition, identity cards and official documents do not identify religious affiliations [ELLIS, 1986, p. 173].

Another difficulty encountered when estimating the number of worshippers is the significant number of unregistered congregations or "domestic churches" [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 179-80; LANE, 1978, p. 42]. In some rural regions, where churches are separated by great distances, villagers have been known to build their own houses of worship. In 1971 the traditionally Orthodox region of Voronezh (in the southwest RSFSR, about 500 kilometers south of Moscow) had 48 registered and 484 unregistered Orthodox congregations. A further source of confusion surrounds the frequent crossing of denominational boundaries. Again as a result of the paucity of churches, many worshippers are forced to attend services of a faith other than their own. Orthodox Christians, Baptists and Old Believers have reportedly participated in this practice. Christians and Muslims have even been known to worship together [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 180].

Having concentrated heavily on state sponsored atheism, it was more than a little surprising when the Soviet census for 1950 indicated that 70 percent of the population, or 115 million people, considered themselves to be believers. The figure advanced by the State was 20 percent [KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5]. In fact, it was the State's contention that "with the elimination of illiteracy and the growth of cultural and material prosperity, the overwhelming majority of Russians [had] become atheists" [GREAT SOVIET ENCYCLOPEDIA, 1979, p.
389]. Of these 115 million believers, 30 million were identified as members of the Russian Orthodox Church [KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5]. In 1961, during Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign, the Russian Orthodox Church announced its regular worshipping membership at 30 million [ELLIS, 1986, p. 173]. This number would seem to understate the true figure given the heightened persecution of the time. ELLIS [1986, p. 174], citing several Soviet sources, believes the number to be close to 40 million, or about 15 percent of the 1983 Soviet population and 20 percent of the traditionally Orthodox regions. The figure of 40 million regular weekly worshippers was also reported by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1975 [ANTIC, October 5, 1989]. Given this information, for the purpose of calculations, the number of regular weekly Russian Orthodox worshippers is estimated at 40 million.  

12FLETCHER [1981, pp. 175-77] cites Soviet studies from the 1960's and early 1970's which indicate that only about 10-40 percent of Orthodox believers attend regularly. In conjunction with an estimated 60 million Orthodox believers, there would be, at most, 24 million regular worshippers. This seems to contradict most other findings. Interestingly, FLETCHER [1981, p. 177] notes that some Party members have been known to attend church.

13The various studies refer to worshippers as "regular," "weekly," "active" and "infrequent" without defining the exact meaning. The term "regular" would seem to imply one who practices "weekly." "Active" worshippers probably include those who practice less than "weekly," while the term "infrequent" probably refers to those who attend services only on the holiest of days. There are many infrequent worshippers as a result of the paucity of churches and the distances between houses of worship. Although some of those included among the estimated 40 million weekly
Expenditures for Religious Services

It is clear that there are a great many more Orthodox believers than worshippers, and still more non-believers who might partake in the administration of certain Orthodox religious rites of passage. "This fact is well illustrated by the higher number who participate in certain rites of passage than of those who profess a belief in God" [LANE, 1978, p. 56]. Analyzing many Soviet studies, ELLIS [1986, p. 177] concludes "that as many as 15-20 million Soviet citizens who cannot or do not attend Orthodox worship regularly, none the less retain a sense of themselves as being in some way Orthodox." LANE [1978, p. 46] estimates that 20-25 percent of the Soviet population in the 1960's were Orthodox believers, or 52-65 million people. FLETCHER [1977, p. 228] allows for only about 50 million believers. Given that the number of regular worshippers is estimated at 40 million, it will be assumed that there are an additional 20 million believers who consider themselves (or their children in the case of baptism) eligible for Orthodox rites of passage. Therefore, the number of believers who might engage in the occasional Orthodox rites is 60 million. The number of atheists who might consider taking part in these rites of passage differ with respect to baptisms, funerals and marriages. This issue will be considered below.

worshippers may not attend services each week, the large number of infrequent worshippers may compensate for this shortcoming.
Most of the income generated by the Russian Orthodox Church is derived from the sale of candles. In fact, 70 percent of Church revenue reportedly emanates from candle sales [ANTIC, October 5, 1989; KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5]. Upon entering the church, it is customary for most worshippers to buy at least one candle to represent each member of their household, including those family members who are atheists or for other reasons do not attend the service.\textsuperscript{14} LANE [1978, p. 42] states that worshippers often "run 'spiritual errands' for [family members]... [and] buy and burn candles or have special blessings said for members of the family...." It is not known to what extent candles are bought for deceased family members.

The problems of estimating the amount of money spent on candles and donations per week are many. It is unclear as to the size of the congregations during daily and evening services as opposed to those on Sunday, and it is not known how often during a week regular worshippers attend. Many of those faithful who do not work observe services during the day [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 180]. Others who work and wish to attend more frequently than once a week observe evening services. "To cope with the increased demand on church facilities... two or three daily celebrations of the Eucharist are widely held instead of one, and vigils are sometimes duplicated... to fit the requirements of Soviet working life" [LANE, 1978, p. 182].

\textsuperscript{14}Candles are bought during weekly (and daily) services as well as for special occasions.
Expenditures for Religious Services

p. 41]. To further complicate matters, while some of the urban churches may have more than one daily service, a significant portion of rural churches operate only on the 70 religious holidays during the year [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 180-81; LANE, 1978, P. 65]. Another difficulty involves the possible disparity between the price of candles in urban and rural areas. Although ELLIS [1986, p. 46] indicates that the candles are produced under the direction of the Moscow Patriarchate, there is no information available regarding price differentials across regions.

According to ANTIC [October 5, 1989], candles are bought and sold at a price of 30 kopeks, 50 kopeks or 1 ruble, depending upon the size. It is assumed that these prices hold for both urban and rural churches. In addition, worshippers regularly make small donations or offerings of 20 kopeks to 3 rubles that reportedly constitute 30 percent of church income [ANTIC, October 5, 1989; KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5]. For the purpose of calculation, assume that the average regular worshipper spends between 80 kopeks and 2 rubles a week on candles and donations. This might correspond to 2 small candles and a 20 kopek donation as a lower bound and several small candles and a one ruble donation as an upper bound. Allowing for the 40 million weekly worshippers established above, the estimated income in 1986 from candles and donations was 1.6-4.0 billion rubles.15 This calculation assumes that the vast

15This estimate is based on the assumption that regular weekly worshippers attended church 50 times in 1986. Those who attended services somewhat less frequently are offset by the infrequent worshippers who are not explicitly included in the estimate.
majority of worshippers attend church only once a week and those who observe services more frequently spend less money per visit.

D: Occasional Religious Rites

The Church also generates income through offerings received upon the administration of baptisms, funerals, and marriages. The revenue derived from each of these rites of passage will be examined separately.

a. Baptisms

The proportion of people baptized in the Soviet Union is quite high. A study by STRUVE from 1967 estimated that 100 million individuals who were currently living in the USSR had been given the Orthodox baptism rites [ELLIS, 1986, p. 177]. Citing many Soviet sources from the 1960's, LANE [1978, p. 60] indicates that approximately 50 percent of those "eligible" for Orthodox baptisms were administered the rite. Unfortunately, LANE does not specifically define the meaning of the word "eligible." The 50 percent figure probably applies to all Orthodox believers, not only worshippers, and would not include secret baptisms which are often performed to

Therefore:
(50 weeks) x (80 kopeks) x (40 million worshippers) = 1.6 billion rubles and
(50 weeks) x (2 rubles) x (40 million worshippers) = 4.0 billion rubles.
Expenditures for Religious Services

avoid persecution. Furthermore, LANE [1978, p. 60] notes that "participation in baptismal... rites has remained stable or declined only slowly."

In a survey of Soviet sources from the 1960's and 1970's, FLETCHER [1981, pp. 186-87] finds that the incidence of baptism differed, depending upon the study and the region in question. The traditionally Orthodox region of Voronezh displayed a rate of 89 percent, while some other areas exhibited extremely low levels. Moreover, "not even the atheists are entirely free from the influence of baptism" [FLETCHER, 1981, P. 191]. The atheist participation rate in Orthodox baptisms was reported at no more than 2 percent by one Soviet sociologist, but was referred to as not infrequent by another [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 185-86]. A Soviet source states that "a significant number of members and candidates of the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] do not act against the religious rite of baptism of their children and grandchildren, and some even personally took part" [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 191]. There are similar reports involving members of the Komsomol [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 186, 191].

FLETCHER [1981, pp. 191-93] also notes that the numbers regarding newborn baptisms do not account for the relatively high rate of non-infant baptisms which, according to one Soviet study, constitute about a fourth of all Orthodox baptisms. In fact, the rate of older

16Official baptisms are registered with the State. This facilitates State sponsored persecution and discrimination. Secret baptisms are a means to circumvent the bureaucracy while maintaining the solemnity of the rite. This issue is elaborated upon below.
children and adult baptisms increased after 1965. This trend is probably a result of the diminished persecution of religious activity after Khrushchev's ouster.

Yet another study by BINNS quotes a Soviet sociologist as stating that between 1961 and 1972 the baptism of all Soviet newborns, across the religions that practice the rite, decreased from 40 to 20 percent. BINNS does not display much confidence in these figures [ELLIS, 1986, p. 178]. Further evidence regarding baptism is provided by Archbishop Makari of Uman. When interviewed in 1982 for an American television film he "said that he believed that 50-60 per cent of all newborn Ukrainians were baptized" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 178].

ANTIC [January 11, 1988] relates that, in 1986, there were 774,747 official baptisms as reported by religious organizations which practice the rite. This figure was down from 830,586 in 1981. The numbers do not include secret baptisms but do include official baptisms of older children and adults (85,431 in 1981 and 92,153 in 1986). The total number of non-Russian Orthodox Christian believers in the USSR in 1986 was probably about 15 million, or 20 percent of all Soviet Christians [ELLIS, 1986, p. 176; LANE, 1978]. Given that there

17The approximately 15 million non-Russian Orthodox Christian believers include 5.5 million Roman Catholics; 1.5 million outlawed, nonregistered Eastern-rite Catholics; 4 to 5 million Protestants; 2.5 million followers of Georgian Orthodoxy; and 1.5 million Armenian Apostolics [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 176, 484]. About one half of the respective populations of Georgia and Armenia probably belong to their national church. Including the estimated 60,000,000 Russian Orthodox believers, there are about 75,000,000 Christian believers.
is little evidence that other Christians are more or less apt to have their children baptized than Russian Orthodox families, one may conclude that the majority of those cited by ANTIC were Russian Orthodox followers.\textsuperscript{18}

Reasons for baptism vary, but the rite appears to be strong in traditionally Orthodox areas. According to Soviet sociologists, most often religious conviction is not the prime motive behind baptisms. Many rural people have their children baptized so as to avoid possible ostracism by fellow villagers [ELLIS, 1986, p. 178]. In other instances, baptism is a way to perpetuate tradition and appease older relatives [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 188]. In fact, it is reported that Orthodox believing relatives often exert great influence on non-believing parents to have children baptized. On other occasions, grandparents have their grandchildren baptized without the consent of the non-believing parents [ELLIS, 1986, p. 178]. Some Soviet sociologists believe that a large portion of baptisms are performed by parents out of a sense of indifference to the religious significance; it is seen as

\textsuperscript{18}It is not known to what extent "atheist baptisms" are included in the figures provided by ANTIC. But given the persecution surrounding those who engage in religious activity, an atheist probably would not risk being labeled a believer and thus would be more likely to opt for a secret baptism.

With regard to the baptism rate among other religious denominations, FLETCHER [1981, p. 186] cites Soviet sources from the 1960's and early 1970's which indicate that the rates of baptism were 26 and 12 percent for the heavily Lutheran republics of Latvia and Estonia, respectively, and about 50 percent among Lithuanian Catholics. FLETCHER feels that these figures are too low. VARDYS [1977, p. 358], citing a Soviet source, reports that the rate of baptisms among Catholics in Lithuania dropped from 81 to 58 percent between 1958 and 1964.
Erik Weisman

a basic custom in which most families partake [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 188-89]. "Parents, on the whole, do not feel that baptism of their children obliges them to bring them up in a religious way" [LANE, 1978, p. 45]. These motivations tend to confirm the belief that those "eligible" for Orthodox baptisms include (the children of) a large number of atheists. Therefore, it will be assumed that, in addition to the estimated 60 million believers, 10 million atheists also might consider baptisms for themselves or their children. This brings the number eligible for the rite to 70 million.

According to ANTIC [October 5, 1989], the customary offering to the church for an official Orthodox baptism is usually between 5 and 6 rubles. Until recently, however, official baptisms were registered with the State.

Before a child can be baptized in a church, both parents have to be present and produce their passports - i.e. internal passports, or identity cards, which are carried by all adult Soviet citizens - details from which are entered in a register kept by the church's executive committee. These records are available to CRA [Council of Religious Affairs] commissioners, and enable them to identify local residents as believers [ELLIS, p. 196].

Discrimination against parents who openly baptized their children prior to Glasnost was widely cited in the literature. Therefore, many baptisms were conducted in secrecy. In contrast to official baptisms, offerings for secret baptisms are reportedly 50-100 rubles [ANTIC, October 5, 1989; KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5].
Some have charged that secret baptisms are a means for the priest to pocket the monetary offering. The motivation behind this action on the part of the parishioners has already been noted. Although some priests use the high demand for secret baptisms to their advantage, most perform the service purely due to the desire of the believer to avoid persecution [ELLIS, 1986, p. 90].

There is no information available regarding the ratio of secret to official baptisms. Official figures and cited percentages would certainly not include those services which were performed in a clandestine manner. It seems clear that the incidence of secret baptisms is significant but not necessarily overwhelming. For the purpose of calculation, it is assumed that one fourth of all Russian Orthodox baptisms are secretly administered.

The birth rate in the traditionally Russian Orthodox part of the Soviet Union (RSFSR, Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Moldavia) was 16-17 per 1000 in 1986 [NARKHOZ 1986, p. 406]. The number of persons "eligible" to have had Orthodox baptisms for their children or themselves in that year is estimated at 70 million. Under the conjecture that the baptism rate for the Orthodox population was 45-60 percent, then there were an estimated 504,000-714,000 Orthodox baptisms (official and secret) in 1986. This result is shown in Table 3.

19The birth rates (per 1000) in 1986 in each of these republics were as follows: RSFSR, 17.2; Ukraine, 15.5; Byelorussia, 17.1; Moldavia, 22.7.
Table 3: Estimated Number of Baptisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIRTH RATE (PER 1000)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER ELIGIBLE</td>
<td>70,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAPTISM RATE (PERCENT)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF BAPTISMS</td>
<td>504,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These estimates would seem to imply that the rite of baptism is performed in the year of birth. This is not always the case. Besides those who are born late in the calendar year and thus are not baptized until the following year, a significant number of baptisms are administered to older children and adults. But if it is assumed that the rate of baptisms of two year olds and three year olds and n year olds has remained fairly constant, then there is very little loss of generality regarding the above estimates. Specifically, the number of children born in 1986 who are not baptized until some later year are offset by those born in 1985 and 1984 and earlier years who are baptized in 1986. The estimated rate of Orthodox baptisms (45-60 percent) accounts for this situation.

Compared to the 774,747 registered baptisms reported by ANTIC, official Orthodox baptisms (75 percent of the estimate above, or 378,000-535,500) account for 49-69
Expenditures for Religious Services

percent of all registered baptisms. If Russian Orthodoxy makes up about 80 percent of the Christian population in the Soviet Union, this number does not seem unreasonable.

Given that the customary offering is 5-6 rubles for an official baptism and 50-100 rubles for a secret baptism, the generated income from the administration of this rite was roughly 8.2-21.0 million rubles in 1986. This result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Estimated Income from Baptisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF OFFICIAL BAPTISMS (75 PERCENT OF TOTAL)</td>
<td>378,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF OFFICIAL BAPTISM (RUBLES)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF SECRET BAPTISMS (25 PERCENT OF TOTAL)</td>
<td>126,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF SECRET BAPTISM (RUBLES)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME FROM BAPTISMS (RUBLES)</td>
<td>8,190,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20The birth rate for the entire USSR in 1986 was 20 per 1000 [NARKHOZ 1986, p. 406]. Therefore, 774,747 registered baptisms implies that approximately 14 percent of all people born in that year received (or will receive) an official baptism. This figure assumes that all official baptisms were reported, a supposition which cannot be verified.
b. Funerals

Not unlike baptisms, the rate of religious funerals is also high in the Soviet Union. "Clearly there is no danger of reprisals, in this case, to the person undergoing the ceremony, and the relatives who arrange it can appeal to the wishes of the departed one" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 179]. But whereas non-religious motivations account for a significant portion of baptisms, this is not true of religious funerals.

BINNS quotes a Soviet sociologist who states that religious funerals fell from 60 percent of all funerals in 1961 to 33 percent in 1972 [ELLIS, 1986, p. 179]. Again citing Soviet studies, LANE [1978, p. 60] indicates that, of those "eligible" for Orthodox funerals in the 1960's, 50 percent were buried under religious observance. She also mentions that, to overcome the paucity of priests in many regions, there has emerged the phenomena of funeral rites "by correspondence" (zaochno). "The relatives of the deceased send by post to the priest some earth from the grave, and the priest blesses it in absentia and returns it the same way" [LANE, 1978, p. 41]. Quoting Soviet sociologists, LANE [1978, p. 41] states that, in some regions where Orthodox communities exist and villages are separated by great distances, funerals by correspondence as a percentage of all funeral rites ranged from 46.8 to 89 percent in the 1960's and were on the rise. Funerals are also often performed by Orthodox laymen when a priest's services cannot by obtained [LANE, 1978, p. 60]. It is unknown whether a donation or offering is made upon the administration of the rite by a layman rather than a priest. LANE [1978,
p. 60] notes that the figure of 50 percent cited by many Soviets probably does not include the high rate of funerals by correspondence and those performed by laymen. FLETCHER [1981, p. 197] reports a Soviet study from 1966 which claims that in two districts, funerals by correspondence made up 63 percent and 89 percent of all funeral rites. In reference to religious funerals in general, he notes that in the Orthodox region of Voronezh, 100 percent of those surveyed were in favor of religious funerals [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 197]. Moreover:

The motivations of people who participate in religious funerals revealed a very high level of direct religious sentiment.... [E]ven Communist Party members on occasion arrange for and take part in religious funerals...[and] one highly respected scholar, Pivovarov, has asserted that all people are believers at funerals... [FLETCHER, 1981, pp. 197-98].

Another indication of the number of Orthodox funerals performed is given by a report from the Council of Religious Affairs for 1974: "[T]he Moscow Patriarchate produced 1 million headbands and prayers for the dead every year. These were essentially for Orthodox funerals" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 180].

ANTIC [January 11, 1988] indicates that, in 1986, the various religious organizations registered 1,179,051 funerals.21 This number was up from 1,125,058 in 1981.

21The death rate for the entire USSR in 1986 was 9.8 per 1000 [NARKHOZ 1986, p. 407]. This means that approximately 43 percent of all those who died received a religious funeral. This figure probably does not include funerals by correspondence. The figure also excludes religious funerals that, for whatever reason, were not reported. Moreover, ANTIC [January 11, 1988]
These figures are not restricted to Christians; they include all registered faiths in the Soviet Union. Presumably, the numbers do not include funerals by correspondence. Given that the total number of religious believers in the USSR has been estimated between 105 million and 115 million, the Russian Orthodox believers constitute somewhat more than half. Again, assuming that Russian Orthodox believers are as likely to have religious funerals as other believers, then over 50 percent of those buried in a religious fashion as reported by ANTIC were Russian Orthodox. 22

The problems of estimating the income from donations for funeral rites are similar in nature to those encountered when computing the income raised from baptisms. The ratio of Orthodox funerals to all religious funerals is not known. The customary fee for a funeral by correspondence is also unknown. And the

reports that there were only 751 religious communities accounted for by Muslims in 1986. ARGUMENTY I FAKTY [August 11-17, 1990, p. 8] indicates that there were 392 Muslim religious associations as of July 1, 1985. It is hard to believe that 392-751 religious communities could possibly serve 45-50 million Muslims. BENNIGSEN [1977, p. 251] notes that the "immense majority" of Muslims observe religious funeral rites. Therefore, it is unlikely that all of these religious funerals were registered by the few existing religious communities. Thus, the religious funeral figures provided by ANTIC are probably low.

22Although FLETCHER [1981, p. 196] notes some low funeral rates reported by Soviet sources from the 1960's and early 1970's, most of the references he studied regarding the Baltic states estimate rates of religious funerals for Catholics, Protestants and Jews at greater than 60 percent. Muslims also display a high rate of religious funerals [BENNIGSEN, 1977, p. 251].
Expenditures for Religious Services

portion of funerals administered by correspondence is
difficult to ascertain.

Referring to ANTIC [October 5, 1989], a complete
Orthodox funeral service generates offerings of 100-200
rubles. This might include the following: 25 rubles in
the presence of a coffin, 5 rubles for services in a
church, 10 to 25 rubles for a cover (10 for a simple
cover, 13 for a cover with religious text, 25 for silk),
25 rubles for a headband, 3 rubles for an ordered mass
and 3 rubles for a requiem. Also, a monetary offering is
typically made to the deacon and the choir. There is no
information available regarding the percent of Orthodox
funerals that receive a "complete" service, nor is it
known how much a scaled down funeral might cost in the
way of a donation.

With regard to atheists who might request an
Orthodox funeral, it seems clear that they are much fewer
in number than those who might partake in Orthodox
baptisms. Therefore, it will be assumed that only 3
million atheists are amongst those eligible for Orthodox
funeral, thus bringing the total eligible to 63 million.

For the purpose of calculations, it is assumed that
60-90 percent of those eligible receive an Orthodox
funeral, of which one third receive a "complete" service,
one third receive a more limited service and one third
attain the rite by correspondence. These assumptions are
difficult to qualify, but do not seem unreasonable based
on the available information. Given that the offering
for a complete funeral service is 100-200 rubles, it
appears reasonable to assume that a limited funeral might
cost 50-75 rubles and a funeral by correspondence may
bring about a 15-30 ruble donation.
The death rate in the traditionally Orthodox regions was approximately 10.5 per 1000 in 1986 [NARKHOZ 1986, p. 407]. Combined with the estimated 63 million people who were eligible for the Orthodox funeral rite and, under the supposition that 60-90 percent of the Orthodox population engage in a religious funeral of some sort, the number of Orthodox funerals administered in 1986 was 396,900-595,350. Table 5 illustrates this result.

Table 5: Estimated Number of Religious Funerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEATH RATE</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PER 1000)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER ELIGIBLE</td>
<td>63,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNERAL RATE (PERCENT)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS FUNERALS</td>
<td>396,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring to the 1,179,051 registered religious funerals reported by ANTIC, the number of registered Orthodox funerals (66.7 percent of the estimated 396,900-595,350) accounts for 22-34 percent of all registered religious funerals in the Soviet Union. Although these figures would seem to be slightly low, it is possible that some

[23] The death rates (per 1000) in each of these republics in 1986 were as follows: RSFSR, 10.4; Ukraine, 11.1; Byelorussia, 9.7; Moldavia, 9.7.
funerals by correspondence are, in fact, officially registered.

As shown in Table 6, the income generated by Orthodox funerals in 1986 amounted to approximately 21.8-60.5 million rubles.

Table 6: Estimated Income from Funerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF COMPLETE FUNERALS</td>
<td>132,300</td>
<td>198,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF COMPLETE FUNERAL (RUBLES)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF LIMITED FUNERALS</td>
<td>132,300</td>
<td>198,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF LIMITED FUNERAL (RUBLES)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF FUNERALS BY CORRESPONDENCE</td>
<td>132,300</td>
<td>198,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF FUNERAL BY CORRESPONDENCE (RUBLES)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME FROM RELIGIOUS FUNERALS (RUBLES)</td>
<td>21,829,500</td>
<td>60,527,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to income brought about by the administration of the funeral rite, there is also a religious ceremony involving prayer for the soul of the deceased on the fortieth day after the death, on the one year anniversary, and perhaps several more times. These blessing services also generate income in the form of offerings. For an estimated 396,900-595,350 Orthodox funerals, this would amount to at least 793,800-1,190,700
additional funeral related ceremonies (some probably performed by correspondence), and perhaps several million rubles in donations.

c. Marriages

The rate of Orthodox marriages is very low when compared to that of Orthodox baptisms and funerals. This is almost certainly due to the fact that anti-religious pressures are a more formidable deterrent to a religious marriage than to a traditional baptism or religious funeral. Whereas a baptism may be administered secretly or with little pomp, marriages are a matter of public record, always under the scrutiny of the State. Similarly, the repercussions from a religious funeral are limited by the obvious lack of concern on the part of the deceased and due to the fact that the rite is sometimes performed by correspondence and thus not open to public criticism. While the central person involved in a baptism or religious funeral is not a participant in the decision-making process, this is not true of a religious marriage where both partners are likely to be pressured against the religious rite. Relatives "are more inclined to opt 'just in case' for religious ceremonies for their dependents than they would for themselves" [LANE, 1978, p. 60].

The study by BINNS cites Soviet estimates which indicate "that Orthodox [religious] marriages constitute less than 3 percent of all marriages..." [ELLIS, 1986, p. 179]. A Soviet source from 1972 indicates that religious marriages in the Orthodox region of Voronezh were not significantly above 3 percent between 1959 and 1970.
Expenditures for Religious Services

[FLETCHER, 1981, p. 194]. Other studies displayed low rates as well. But the religious marriage rate may in fact be higher than reported:

It is doubtful... that Soviet researchers have been successful in discovering all instances of church weddings, particularly when such weddings are conducted along with civil ceremonies. Means have been developed to solemnize weddings by correspondence or in a quasi-religious manner by having the couple kiss an icon even when a priest is not available [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 195].

Offerings to the church for such ceremonies are probably limited. LANE [1978, p. 42] notes that couples have been known to seek the blessing of a priest prior to a secular marriage ceremony and to receive icons after the wedding. Alternatively, the couple may send the wedding rings to a priest for blessings, not unlike funerals by correspondence. A small offering is probably made in such cases. LANE [1978, p. 60] reports a potentially higher figure than BINNS and FLETCHER for religious marriages, citing Soviet sources which indicate that the proportion of Orthodox marriages during the 1960's was 1-15 percent and declining. The falling rate is attributed to the fact that "Soviet substitute secular rituals have been more successful in the case of marriages than in the case of funerals or baptisms" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 179].

Considering the pressures against religious marriages, it may seem reasonable to define only the 40 million regular worshippers as "eligible" for Orthodox marriages. But FLETCHER [1981, p. 195] notes that religious marriages tend to be influenced by non-religious motives more often than other rites. These motives imply that the 20 million non-regular worshipping
believers might also consider an Orthodox marriage. Alternatively, there is no evidence to support the idea that significant numbers of atheists seek religious weddings. Therefore, those "eligible" for Orthodox marriages will only encompass the estimated 60 million Orthodox believers.

ANTIC [January 11, 1988] reports 79,840 religious marriages in 1986, down from 106,259 in 1981. This figure includes not only Christian marriages but those of other religious traditions as well. There is some evidence indicating that Orthodox believers are less likely to opt for a religious marriage than other believers. Given that about half of the believers in the USSR are Orthodox, this would imply that less than half of those marriages reported by ANTIC were administered to Orthodox believers.

The marriage rate for the entire USSR in 1986 was 9.8 per 1000 [NASELENIYE SSSR 1987, pp. 190-97]. Therefore, if all religious marriages were reported, then approximately 3 percent of all weddings in the USSR were administered in a religious fashion. Once again, due to the very few registered Muslim communities, there were probably many Muslim religious marriages that were not reported.

FLETCHER [1981, p. 194] cites Soviet sources from the 1960's and early 1970's which estimate that, in the heavily Catholic republic of Lithuania, 30-38 percent of marriages received a religious service, while in the Lutheran republics of Latvia and Estonia the figures were about 10 percent and 2.5 percent, respectively. VARDYS [1977, p. 358], citing a Soviet source, indicates that the rate of religious marriages among Catholics in Lithuania dropped from 79 to 38 percent between 1958 and 1964. BENIGSEN [1977, p. 260] indicates that, in the USSR, Muslims are more likely to observe religious rites than Christians.
Expenditures for Religious Services

The usual offering for an Orthodox marriage is 25-30 rubles [ANTIC, October 5, 1989]. The marriage rate in the traditionally Orthodox republics for 1986 was 9.8 per 1000 [NASELENIYE SSSR, 1987, pp. 190-97].

Given that those eligible for an Orthodox marriage numbered 60,000,000, and assuming that an estimated 3-6 percent of the Orthodox population observe religious marriages, then there were 17,640-35,280 people who received an Orthodox marriage in 1986. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Estimated Number of Religious Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARRIAGE RATE (PER 1000)</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER ELIGIBLE</td>
<td>60,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORTHODOX MARRIAGE RATE (PERCENT)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS MARRIAGES</td>
<td>17,640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These estimates account for 22-44 percent of all registered religious marriages (79,840) as reported by ANTIC.

If the customary offering is 25-30 rubles for the administration of the Orthodox marriage rite, then the above estimate corresponds to 441,000-1,058,400 rubles of generated income. Table 8 shows this result.

26 The marriage rates (per 1000) in 1986 in each of these republics were as follows: RSFSR, 9.8; Ukraine, 9.5; Byelorussia, 9.9; Moldavia, 9.8.
Table 8: Estimated Income from Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF MARRIAGES</td>
<td>17,640</td>
<td>35,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF MARRIAGE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RUBLES)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME FROM</td>
<td>441,000</td>
<td>1,058,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS MARRIAGES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RUBLES)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E: Ritual Objects and Other Occasional Rites

The Church also performs other rites and sells ritual objects that generate income. A water blessing service generally "costs" 3 rubles in the way of an offering [ANTIC, October 5, 1989]. The Church also provides blessings for special occasions. For example, one may seek a blessing before embarking on a trip or upon receiving a promotion at work. There are even reports of believers ordering prayers or blessings by correspondence in a similar fashion to funeral rites [LANE, 1978, p. 42]. But given that priests may only rarely perform blessings outside the church, it is no longer general practice for them to bless new structures, wells or farm animals [ELLIS, 1986, p. 78; LANE, 1978, p. 39].

27In the region of Ryazan (about 200 kilometers southeast of Moscow) in 1960, one church reportedly derived 30 percent of its revenue from "correspondence" income [LANE, 1978, p. 42].
Expenditures for Religious Services

With regard to the sale of ritual objects, FLETCHER [1981, p. 173] notes that icons are extremely prevalent in the traditionally Orthodox regions of the USSR.28 Even in villages where no church exists, icons are reportedly found in most households. In the 1960's certain rural areas reported that about 90 percent of households contained icons, while the rate was 14-63 percent for urban homes [LANE, 1978, p. 68; FLETCHER, 1981, p. 174]. Atheists, Communist Party members and Komsomol members were also known to own icons. But LANE [1978, p. 68] states that few of these religious objects were new, most of them having been handed down from previous generations. Moreover, she notes that the once large production of "miracle-working icons and holy relics" had stopped [LANE, 1978, p. 39]. Alternatively, ANTIC [October 6, 1989, p. 23] refers to the Sofinsky factory in Moscow which mass-produces religious ritual objects. It is not known whether this factory was in operation in 1986.

Orthodox members also buy icons in the form of printed religious passages. These printed icons, produced by the Church, are postcard-sized and cost a few

28 ELLIS [1986, p. 146] relates an interesting story regarding the production of religious objects. In 1979, the Orthodox nun Valeriya Makeyeva was charged with "engaging in illegal commercial activities.... Sister Valeriya had formed a group which produced small religious artifacts in great demand by believers, notably monastic belts embroidered with the words of the 91st Psalm." Charging prices of 50 kopeks and one ruble, she reportedly sold enough to provide for the accommodations of many homeless nuns. Although this type of activity is not included in Russian Orthodox Church income, it provides evidence of a religious component of the second economy.
kopeks each. Orthodox believers buy several of these icons each year.

There is very little information available regarding these lesser religious rites and ritual objects. As a very conservative estimate, assume that each of the 40 million regular worshippers spends, on average, 2-4 rubles per year on lesser religious rites and on ritual objects. This would produce 80-160 million rubles per year. In addition, several million believers attend services only a few times a year. Given their infrequent visits, it is probable that a large percentage of these irregular churchgoers request some type of blessing or buy an icon. This is not accounted for in the estimate above.

F: Monasteries and Convents

In addition to churches, monasteries and convents also produce revenue. As of 1977, there were 6 monasteries and 10 convents functioning in the Soviet Union [ELLIS, 1986, p. 125]. The number of monastics in 1970 was reported at 1,275 and appears to have declined over subsequent years through 1986 [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 130-31].

See APPENDIX C: HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX MONASTIC ORDER.

As of late 1990, "21 complexes [had] been turned over to be restored as monasteries" [ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, August 11-17, 1990, p. 8]. By October 27, 1990, 25 monasteries and 31 convents were functioning compared to 26 monastic orders in 1989 [ANTIC, January 4, 1991, p. 15].
Expenditures for Religious Services

The monastic order in the Soviet Union generates income "from the sale of candles (about half of total income), and, in roughly equal amounts, fees for performing rituals, revenue from the sale of other ritual objects, offerings, and donations received through the post" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 134]. They receive no financial support from the Moscow Patriarchate or from the churches in their region. The CRA (Council of Religious Affairs) report for 1970 stated that the total income of the 16 monasteries and convents was 2,499,913 rubles in 1970 [ELLIS, 1986, p. 134]. The religious climate surrounding the monastic order seems to have changed relatively little between 1970 and 1986. Given that this figure was released by an organization whose sole purpose has been to limit the role of the Church, one might argue that this income level is far too low. Unfortunately, there is little data to verify this notion. Therefore, for the purpose of estimating the income of the Russian Orthodox Church, the official figure will be used.

G: Sale of Religious Literature

An interesting practice that might be construed as a source of Church income is related to the extreme paucity of religious literature available in the Soviet Union. Under the Soviet system until 1986, state publishers were forbidden to publish religious literature, and the Moscow Patriarchate had been allowed to publish only five editions of the Bible and three editions of the New Testament. None of these printings exceeded 400,000 copies [ANTIC, March 10, 1989, pp. 16-17].
As a result of this shortage, religious books have been readily available on the black market [ANTIC, March 10, 1989, pp. 15-16; ELLIS, 1986, p. 165]:

New Testaments were at one point said to fetch 30 roubles and Bibles 60 roubles, or roughly half a month's salary.... Copies of the DOBROTOLYUBIYE PHILOKALIA, (which consist of five large volumes) were said in 1982 to cost 500 roubles each, or four to five months salary [ELLIS, 1986, p. 165].

The fact that these books were subject to confiscation by the militia or KGB and could still be sold at such prices indicates the great demand for religious material and the risk involved in black market activities.

Further information regarding the black market value of religious literature may be derived by analyzing the impact of the large inflow of Bibles into the Soviet Union beginning in 1988 as donated by western religious organizations. During the early phases of shipment, 75,000 copies of reprints of the three volume Annotated Bible (also known as the LOPUKHIN Bible, published prior to the revolution) were sent to the Soviet Union. The Moscow Patriarchate, which received the Bibles free of charge, sold copies at a price of 150-180 rubles. Those Bibles that found their way to the black market sold for 400-500 rubles [ANTIC, March 10, 1989, pp. 15-16]. Although this situation occurred after 1986, it is

This type of black market activity is a source of revenue for the Russian Orthodox Church only to the extent that the Church sells the merchandise. When non-clergy individuals operate on the black market, the Church derives no income.
Expenditures for Religious Services

further evidence to support the notion that the black market for religious literature was probably significant in the mid 1980's. In addition, these events imply that, when possible, the Russian Orthodox Church generates income through the sale of religious literature.

Religious literature has also been used in a similar manner to vodka, as a medium of exchange. "[I]t has been reported that some bishops stockpile religious literature received from the West and use it as an 'alternative currency'" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 165]. Upon restoring a church, an artist was offered 200 rubles or a copy of the PHILOKALIA. Being a believer, he chose the latter and considered it a bargain [ELLIS, 1986, p. 165].

Religious literature has also been produced illegally. During a house search in 1982, several Orthodox believers were arrested after a large quantity of religious literature was found at a number of addresses. Six thousand prayer books were found at one residence alone. "It transpired that these believers had somehow been able to photocopy prayer books and other religious literature, have them bound, and sell them" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 166]. Whether they sold the books through the Orthodox Church is unknown. Another such activity was reported in the newspaper SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA on July 8 and 9, 1982, where the perpetrators were denounced as speculators. The possibility that these people could have been motivated by religious conviction was nowhere considered. They allegedly stole state equipment and produced 61,500 pieces of religious literature in two years [ELLIS, 1986, p. 166]. ELLIS argues that, although the revenue from this operation must have been significant, the high costs involved
suggest that little profit was made. It is not known whether any of this revenue was acquired by the Church.

The total amount of income generated by the Russian Orthodox Church through the illegal production and subsequent sale of religious literature and through the black market and "alternative currency" use of such books cannot be estimated given the paucity of information available. But the preceding evidence would seem to indicate that it may be significant.

H: Total Income Estimates\textsuperscript{32}

Adding the sources of income as estimated from the previous sections, Table 9 shows that the Russian Orthodox Church generated revenue between 1.7 and 4.2 billion rubles in 1986.

\textsuperscript{32}For a look at the income of the Russian Orthodox Church prior to the communist revolution, refer to APPENDIX D.
Table 9: Total Estimated Income of the Russian Orthodox Church (Millions of Rubles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CANDLE SALES AND WEEKLY DONATIONS</td>
<td>1,600.0</td>
<td>4,000.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAPTISMS</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNERALS</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRIAGES</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER RELIGIOUS RITES AND THE SALE OF RITUAL OBJECTS</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>160.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONASTIC ORDER</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS LITERATURE</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL INCOME</td>
<td>1,712.5</td>
<td>4,245.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These total income figures contrast sharply with the official numbers. According to ANTIC [October 5, 1989], "The income of the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) amounted in 1987 [to] 312 million rubles. In years before the income can be assumed to have amounted to some 300 million rubles." This figure is confirmed by KHARCHEV [September 18, 1989, p. 5] as the official income of the Church. ELLIS [1986, pp. 49-51] also calculates the income of the Russian Orthodox Church, arriving at 314 million rubles per year. She utilizes a small sample of reported incomes from churches of various sizes and extrapolates to arrive at her figure. After noting the arbitrary nature of her methodology, ELLIS cautions that the number is probably
too low. In fact, if 300 million rubles were generated from a very conservatively estimated 30 million regular weekly worshippers, then each churchgoer would spend 20 kopeks per week on candles and weekly donations, not even enough to buy a single candle. As a true representation of the income of the Russian Orthodox Church, the figure of roughly 300 million rubles can be ignored.

The estimated 1.7-4.2 billion rubles generated by the Russian Orthodox Church indicates that the average Orthodox believer spent 28-70 rubles on religious activity in 1986. But this figure is misleading because many of the 20 million Orthodox believers who did not attend services may have spent virtually nothing on religion. Realizing that close to 100 percent of church income is generated by regular weekly worshippers, the average Orthodox worshipper spent 43-105 rubles on religious activity in 1986. Given that the average annual income of a Soviet worker was approximately 2,200 rubles in 1986 [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 85-86], an Orthodox worshipper spent 2.0-4.7 percent of his income on religious activity. In fact, since most Orthodox believers are relatively poorly educated, rural and female, their incomes are probably substantially lower than 2,200 rubles per year. Thus, the portion of income spent on religion is somewhat higher.  

4: Income of All Religions

Using the Russian Orthodox Church income as estimated in this paper to calculate the total income of

[33]These results do not account for illegal income.
Expenditures for Religious Services

all religious organizations in the USSR is very problematic. As outlined in the introduction to this paper, one might be tempted to assume similar patterns of religiousness and religious expenditures among Orthodox and non-Orthodox believers. To examine the viability of this assumption, non-Orthodox believers are separated into two groups: (1) Muslims and (2) "Other Christians," including followers of Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Georgian Orthodoxy and Armenian Apostolicism. Eastern-rite Catholicism was outlawed in the USSR and, therefore, is not included among religious organizations generating income. The relatively small number of practicing Buddhists and Jews are also excluded for simplicity. Religious believers from group (2) make up about 15 million of the 105-115 million believers in the Soviet Union and display somewhat similar religious patterns to that of Russian Orthodoxy. Alternatively, the 45-50 million Soviet Muslims, most of whom are identified as believers, exhibit a very different religious system than that of Russian Orthodox believers. The religious structures of each of these two groups are compared to that of Russian Orthodoxy below.

Approximately 95 percent of Russian Orthodox income is derived from the candle sales and donations or offerings made by active or regular worshippers. It will be assumed that most income generated by other religious organizations is brought about by weekly (and/or daily) services as well. Under this supposition one must compare the religious structure of Muslims and that of Other Christians to Russian Orthodoxy with reference to the amount of money a worshipper might spend in the process of active observance and with reference to the
likelihood that a believer actually attends organized services.

The majority of the Other Christians (Roman Catholics, Georgians and Armenians) are concentrated in the Baltic and Transcaucasus republics. Disposable income in these regions is probably higher than disposable income in the traditionally Russian Orthodox republics (RSFSR, Ukraine, Moldavia, Byelorussia). With the exception of the small number of Lutherans in Latvia and Estonia, the remainder of the Protestants (over 3 million Baptists, 0.5 million Pentecostals and some smaller groups) are concentrated in the traditionally Orthodox republics. Therefore, the average income of Other Christians is higher than that of Russian Orthodox believers. Conversely, disposable income in the predominantly Muslim Asian republics is thought to be lower than in the Russian Orthodox region. Even if demand for religious expenditures is fairly inelastic with respect to income, the average Other Christian worshipper probably spends more in the process of worship than does a Russian Orthodox worshipper, while a Muslim worshipper probably spends less.

Disposable income includes both legal and illegal earnings. In general, the Baltic republics display the highest level of legal per capita income, the Slavic republics are second, followed by the Transcaucasus republics and finally the Muslim republics. Opportunities for illegal income are thought to be more abundant in the Southern republics, especially in the Transcaucasus regions [ALEXEEV and GADDY, 1991, pp. 18-19]. After accounting for illegal sources of earnings, disposable income is probably higher in the Baltic and Transcaucasus republics than in the Slavic regions.
Expenditures for Religious Services

The degree of nationalist sentiment among group (1) and group (2) believers is relatively high and greater than that of Russian Orthodoxy. FLETCHER [1981, pp. 210-11] indicates that "religion and national culture are... intimately intertwined" among Georgians and Armenians and that Catholicism is "virtually synonymous with nationality" in Lithuania. Nationalistic feelings are probably strong among Lutherans in Latvia and Estonia, but Baptists and Pentecostals are not likely to display a high degree of nationalism.

In reference to Muslims, FLETCHER [1981, p. 210] states that "religion and culture are so intimately identified that it may be quite unrealistic to suggest that more than a fraction are nonreligious in any meaningful way.... Not only does religiousness tend to accompany nationalism in Muslim areas; the lack of the Russian language virtually excludes these people from atheism." Moreover, "[i]n Islam... the intimate identification of religion with the national culture of the peoples contributes to a far stronger religious influence within the family" than for Christians [FLETCHER, 1981, p. 149]. Also commenting on the nationalist aspect of Islam in the USSR, BENNIGSEN [1977, pp. 258, 260] notes that "it is not only a faith, it is a culture, a way of life, a system of human behavior." As a result, "more Muslims observe their customs than Christians.... [These] customs are intimately intermingled with their national mode of life, integrated into their very essence."

Prior to Glasnost, persecution of religious traditions was universal. But LANE [1978, p. 33] notes that the Russian Orthodox Church "has received distinctly more favorable treatment than other religious
organizations." This statement implies that Other Christians were at least somewhat less acceptable to the State than were the Russian Orthodox. BENNIGSEN [1977, p. 246] notes that "the effort of anti-Muslim propaganda is immense, greater in bulk than the anti-Christian effort." He notes further that the effects of the persecution have been minimal. Whether greater persecution leads to less religiousness is unknown. Persecution may make worship more difficult, but it may also instill greater feelings of religious sentiment and cause more religious spending.

Information regarding the availability of houses of worship is provided by ANTIC [January 11, 1988] and ARGUMENTY I FAKTY [August 11-17, 1990, p. 8]. These sources report, respectively, the number of religious communities and religious associations for the various faiths. If a religious community or association is defined by the existence of a functioning church or mosque, then the number of believers per house of worship can be calculated as shown in Table 10. These figures would seem to be a good proxy for the availability of houses of worship for the different religious affiliations.
Table 10: Availability of Houses of Worship for Different Religious Followings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Communities (1985)</th>
<th>Number of Religious Believers (millions)</th>
<th>Number of Believers Associations (7/1/85)</th>
<th>Per House of Worship (thousand)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RUSSIAN ORTHODOX</td>
<td>6,794</td>
<td>6,806</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSLIM</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>40¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATHOLIC</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>1,068</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTESTANT</td>
<td>&lt;4,264</td>
<td>3,560</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGIAN ORTHODOX</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.5²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.5²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The vast majority of the 45-50 million Muslims are thought to be believers.
²About half of the Georgian and Armenian populations are probably believers of their respective national religion.

The figures regarding Armenians and Georgians probably underestimate the availability of houses of worship for these faiths. The remainder of the Other Christian traditions display a relatively high availability of churches in comparison to Russian Orthodoxy. This result may be somewhat misleading given that Baptists and Pentecostals are much less concentrated than are Lutherans and Roman Catholics. Muslims have the least accessibility to houses of worship. Therefore, Other Christian believers have more opportunity to worship in a church and to spend money on religious activities than do Russian Orthodox believers. Conversely, Muslim believers have less chance to attend
a house of worship and, thus, to spend money in the process of worship than do Russian Orthodox believers.

The center of Christian religions is the church and the clergy. In reference to Russian Orthodoxy, ELLIS [1986, pp. 13-14] indicates that:

the church is... the meeting-point of heaven and earth, and the icons, the priests' sanctuary behind the iconostasis and the sheer beauty and splendor of the worship are all windows through which they hope to catch a glimpse of heaven.... It is clear from this that a prime necessity for the Orthodox community in the Soviet Union is to have an open church in which to worship. Without this, it is difficult to hold the liturgy and other services, and therefore virtually impossible to maintain any kind of corporate life.

Other Christian denominations display a similar need for church and clergy.

In contrast:

[Islam] is a religion without "clergy," based upon the belief that there is no need for intermediaries between believer and Creator.... A mosque is not a consecrated temple, but simply a place for the performance of collective prayer, which could well be performed outside of it. The ritualistic, ceremonial aspect of the "cult" in Islam is less important than in any other religion [BENNIGSEN, 1977, pp. 249-50].

Other than the traditional Friday religious ceremony, it is difficult to imagine opportunities for the Islamic "Church" to generate large sums of money in the way of offerings. The lack of funds is heightened by the fact that the zakat (legal alms) is no longer collected.
Expenditures for Religious Services

because of the illegal nature of religious social life in the USSR [BENNIGSEN, 1977, p. 250]. (This was the situation prior to Glasnost.) There is evidence to support the notion that Soviet Muslims are much more likely to observe religious rites of passage (circumcision, marriage, funeral) than Christians [BENNIGSEN, 1977, pp. 251, 260]. But if Russian Orthodoxy can be used as an example, income generated by religious rites of passage is insignificant compared to revenue derived from worshippers who observe services regularly.

Table 11 compares the religious structures of Muslim believers and Other Christian believers with that of Russian Orthodox believers.

The following conclusions can be drawn: (1) Other Christians are more likely to be active worshippers who attend services than are Russian Orthodox believers; (2) Other Christians are likely to spend more money in the process of worship than Russian Orthodox believers; (3) Muslim believers are less likely to attend religious services than Russian Orthodox believers; and (4) Muslim believers who do worship at mosques are likely to spend less money on religious activities than Russian Orthodox believers.
### Table 11: Comparison of Religious Structures of Other Christian and Muslim Believers to Russian Orthodox Believers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Other Christians</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Sentiment due to Nationalism</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Religion by the State</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Houses of Worship</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Organized Religious Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A +/- indicates a greater/lesser degree of the characteristic relative to Russian Orthodoxy; the number of '+s or '-'s indicates magnitude; 0 indicates a similar situation with respect to Russian Orthodoxy.

The average Russian Orthodox believer spent 28-70 rubles on religious activities in 1986 as estimated in this paper. This figure includes both those who worship regularly (40 million) and those who do not (20 million). Based on conclusions (1) and (2), the average Other Christian believer spends more on religious activities than the typical Russian Orthodox believer. Conclusions (3) and (4) indicate that the average Muslim believer spends less on religious activity than a Russian Orthodox believer. For the purpose of calculation, assume that the approximately 15 million Other Christian believers spent 50-100 rubles on religious activities in 1986, while the 40 million Muslim believers spent 10-50 rubles.
Expenditures for Religious Services

Given these estimates, Table 12 presents total religious expenditures by religious groups in the USSR.

Table 12: Estimated Income Generated by Religious Followings (Millions of Rubles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RUSSIAN ORTHODOX</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER CHRISTIAN</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSLIM</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>7,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures probably underestimate the true value of income generated by religious organizations in the Soviet Union. The 10-50 rubles spent by the average Muslim believer may be too conservative. In addition, if all 45-50 million Muslims are actually believers, then total income could rise by 250-500 million rubles. Moreover, despite the fact that the number of believers represented in the above estimate is 115 million, there are probably as many as 2-4 million additional believers of smaller religious followings. This shortcoming could add as much as another 400 million rubles if 4 million believers each spent 100 rubles in 1986.
Appendix A

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH EXPENDITURES

Information concerning expenditures by the Russian Orthodox Church is exceedingly scarce. ELLIS [1986, p. 47] notes that "the income of a religious association may be spent only on the maintenance of the church building and on objects necessary for worship, on salaries for priests and for workers... and on donations to the diocesan and patriarchal administrations." Under the conditions of the 1929 Law on Religious Associations, Articles 17 and 54, religious organizations are forbidden from engaging in any charitable activity [ANTIC, September 22, 1989, p. 7; ELLIS, 1986, p. 47; PYLE, July 21, 1989, p. 13].

Among the components that appear to be important for determining Church expenditures are the number of priests and their salaries, the number and wages of other "servants of the cult" and non-clergy church employees, the number of churches and monuments in need of maintenance and/or repair, donations to charitable organizations, and the cost of producing or buying candles and ritual objects sold to parishioners.

By 1974, according to Soviet sources, there were about 7,500 functioning Russian Orthodox churches and approximately 6,000 practicing priests [GORDIENKO and KUROCHKIN, 1979, p. 186; ELLIS, 1986, p. 82; FLETCHER,
Expenditures for Religious Services

1981, p. 178].35 ARGUMENTY I FAKTY [August 11-17, 1990, p. 8] reported 6,806 Russian Orthodox Church associations as of January 1, 1985, while ANTIC [January 11, 1988] states that the figure was 6,794 in 1986.36 Rural priests are known to service more than one parish [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 82-83, 86]. To carry out the service, a priest is accompanied by at least one deacon and one non-ordained person such as a cantor. The total number of Russian Orthodox deacons and other clergy is unknown, as is the number of non-clergy employees (i.e., maintenance and custodial staff).

The 1989 Soviet census states that there were 50,000 "servants of the cult" in the USSR. Whether this figure includes non-ordained church servants is not known. According to ANTIC [January 11, 1988], these "servants of the cult" operated 15,036 religious communities in 1986, of which 6,794 were Russian Orthodox. ARGUMENTY I FAKTY

35For an historical perspective on the number of Russian Orthodox priests and churches, refer to APPENDIX E.

As a matter of interest, each of these 6,000 active priests would have performed an estimated 153-224 occasional religious rites in 1986 as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RITE</th>
<th>NUMBER PERFORMED IN 1986</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAPTISMS</td>
<td>504,000 - 714,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNERALS</td>
<td>396,900 - 595,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRIAGES</td>
<td>17,640 - 35,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>918,540 - 1,344,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures do not include lesser rites and blessings or weekly services.

36ARGUMENTY I FAKTY [August 11-17, 1990, p. 8] also reports that the number of Russian Orthodox churches rose to 11,118 by the middle of 1990. ANTIC [January 4, 1991, p. 15] indicates that there were 11,940 Orthodox parishes as of October 27, 1990, of which 1,830 had been opened in the first nine months of the year.
Erik Weisman

[August 11-17, 1990, p. 8] reports 12,438 religious associations as of July 1, 1985, including 6,806 which were Russian Orthodox. 37 If different denominations have, on average, about the same number of "servants of the cult" per religious community, then the Russian Orthodox Church accounts for one third to one half of the stated figure of 50,000.

There is no aggregate information available regarding the sum spent on maintenance and repair to the functioning churches. While some of the vacant churches have been converted to other uses as depicted in the satirical journal KROKODIL (where a cartoon illustrates a church having been transformed into a sobering-up station), it is not known how many other churches have been left to decay [POWELL, 1977, p. 195]. The Church has been known to maintain and restore churches that are not currently registered [ELLIS, 1986, p. 47]. On some occasions, though, local authorities have hampered repair efforts [ELLIS, 1986, p. 47; PYLE, July 21, 1989, p. 14].

The cost of providing candles and ritual objects for sale has not been explored. It is evidently common practice for workers of the church to extinguish candles long before they burn out and to melt down the wax for

37 The Islamic religion does not have clergy in the Christian sense. Therefore, the figure of 50,000 may or may not include the Muslim mullahs or imams and other clerics. Of the 15,036 registered religious communities, only 751 were Muslim [ANTIC, January 11, 1988]. ARGUMENTY I FAKTY [August 11-17, 1990, p. 8] reports 392 Muslim associations as of July 1, 1985.

There were 18,666 registered religious associations as of late 1990, including 11,118 Russian Orthodox and 1,103 Muslim [ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, August 11-17, 1990, p. 8].
Expenditures for Religious Services

subsequent use. This process would tend to limit the cost of candles, the extent of which is unknown. ELLIS [1986, p. 46] indicates that candles are produced in workshops of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The little that is known concerning Russian Orthodox expenditures relates to priests' salaries, donations to charities and monastic spending. The average wage for non-clergy employees and for "servants of the cult" other than priests is not available. Information regarding priests' wages, while sketchy, is sufficient to make some rough estimates concerning Church expenditures. ELLIS [1986, p. 85] notes that there exists no standard salary for priests because finances are determined at the parish level. The after-tax salaries for priests in the late 1970's was reportedly 200-280 rubles per month (or about 450-600 rubles per month before taxes). This income level was higher than that of the average Soviet worker (141 rubles per month in 1974, rising to 180 rubles in 1985). A select few of the leading clergymen in the late 1970's received 600 rubles per month (or about 2,000 rubles per month before taxes) [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 85-86; MATTHEWS, 1978, pp. 33, 92]. Prior to 1981, the tax rate on "servants of the cult" was 24-81 percent depending upon the income level. The tax rate subsequently fell, but remained substantially higher than the tax rate levied on citizens in the socialist sector [ELLIS, 1986, pp. 86-87].

38The income tax rates levied on workers in the socialist sector have a ceiling of 13 percent [ANTIC, October 6, 1989, p. 23; ELLIS, 1986, p. 87]. Estonia became the first republic to abolish the higher taxation of "servants of the cult" in 1989 [ANTIC, October 6, 1989, p. 22].
More recent information regarding priests' salaries (and taxes) is provided by ANTIC [October 6, 1989, pp. 22-23]. In the late 1980's, a priest in Narva, Estonia (presumably Lutheran), reportedly "earn[ed] 3,000 rubles a year and [paid] 941 rubles in tax - 2.8 times the amount paid by blue- and white-collar workers" [ANTIC, October 6, 1989, p. 22]. In 1988, a Russian Orthodox priest stated that priests who earned 100-200 rubles per month were taxed 18.5 percent on 100 rubles and 27.6 percent on 200 rubles. In the same year, the dean of Dushanbe Cathedral paid taxes in excess of 2,500 rubles, implying a gross salary of 500 rubles per month. These figures coincide with a 1989 article from the weekly ARGUMENTY I FAKTY. The periodical indicated that a priest earning an annual salary of 6,000 rubles must pay 43 percent in taxes, or 2,581 rubles.

As a result of smaller congregations, the large number of rural priests usually earn considerably less than the urban clergy and are often forced to service more than one parish [ELLIS, 1986, p. 86]. Priests have also been known to receive gifts from their parishioners which are not necessarily included in donations.39

The relatively high salaries of priests are allowed by the State in the hopes that the public will become resentful and further fragment the religious community [ELLIS, 1986, p. 88]. LANE [1978, p. 53] mentions that, before the revolution, people disapproved of priests' begging and that now they disapprove of priests' high standard of living.

39There are also indications that a very small minority of priests embezzle funds. Once again, as a component of the second economy, this type of activity is not included in the estimates of the income of the Russian Orthodox Church. One priest organized drinking
Expenditures for Religious Services

Priests are eligible for retirement at age 60 whereupon they "receive a church pension of 50 roubles a month plus one rouble for each year of service" [ELLIS, 1986, p. 85]. A conflicting pension scheme, provided by a 1988 issue of ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, reports that priests (and archimandrites, abbots, archpriests and priest-monks) receive a pension of 60 rubles for twenty-five years of service, an additional one ruble and 60 kopeks for each year of service between twenty-five and forty-nine years, and 100 rubles for fifty years of service [ANTIC, October 6, 1989, p. 23].

If in 1986 the average priest earned a pre-tax income of 300-600 rubles per month and a retired priest received an average pension of 60-80 rubles per month, then, assuming 6,000 active priests and 500 retired, the expenditures on Orthodox priests' salaries and pensions in 1986 were 21.9-43.7 million rubles. These results are shown in Table 13.

Given the large number of other "servants of the cult" and non-clergy employees, the Russian Orthodox Church must pay a substantial sum on wages alone.

sessions using Church monies and evidently stole the collection box one evening [ELLIS, 1986, p. 89]. Another was known to have charged 100-200 rubles to recite prayers for the sick or dead without actually performing the service [ELLIS, 1986, p. 95]. Other clergy have been accused of living well beyond their means by way of theft of Church income. Although many of the charges against corrupt priests cannot be verified, it has been the practice of the Council of Religious Affairs to allow some of the most blatant offenders to continue their activities in the hope that it will disrupt the religious community and give the Church a bad reputation. In fact, it is believed that "the state infiltrates men into the priesthood" with this goal in mind [ELLIS, 1986, p. 96].
Table A1: Estimated Expenditures on Priests' Salaries and Pensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF ACTIVE PRIESTS</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNUAL SALARY (RUBLES)</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF PENSIONED PRIESTS</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNUAL PENSION (RUBLES)</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (RUBLES)</td>
<td>21,960,000</td>
<td>43,680,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although technically illegal, it has been common practice for the Church to donate a sizable amount of money to charitable organizations. In the late 1980's, it was reported that each year 35 million rubles were allocated to the State-run Peace Fund [KHARCHEV, September 18, 1989, p. 5]. The Russian Orthodox Church also reportedly gives "large sums" to the Children's Fund and the Cultural Foundation [ANTIC, September 22, 1989, p. 8]. As a rough approximation, ELLIS [1986, pp. 50-51] estimates that churches donate 20-25 percent of their income to the Peace Fund. Using her estimated 314 million ruble church income, this implies that 62.8-78.5 million rubles were donated to this cause. (She does not explicitly mention the Children's Fund or the Cultural Foundation.) Using the income of the Russian Orthodox Church as estimated in this paper, 20-25 percent would amount to 340-1,050
Expenditures for Religious Services

million rubles. It would seem that donations of this magnitude would elicit some type of response from the State. As there are no reports of such State responses, these figures are probably too high.

Expenditures by monasteries and convents in 1970, according to the CRA (Council of Religious Affairs) report for 1970, totalled 2,324,648 rubles, roughly equal to their reported income [ELLIS, 1986, p. 135]. The expenses included the needs of the monks and the nuns, along with the priests who serve them; repairs and maintenance of buildings and monuments; and donations to the Peace Fund. Over half of the expenditures were listed under "other." The monastic tradition had reportedly changed little between 1970 and 1979, indicating that conditions were probably stable up through 1986 [ELLIS, 1986, p. 135].

As presented in Table 14, priests' salaries, donations to the Peace Fund, and the costs incurred by the monastic order account for 59.4-124.7 million roubles of Russian Orthodox Church expenditures.

Table A2: Total Estimated Expenditures of the Russian Orthodox Church (millions of rubles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>LOWER BOUND</th>
<th>UPPER BOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SALARIES AND PENSIONS OF PRIESTS</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONATIONS TO THE PEACE FUND</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONASTIC ORDER</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>124.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These estimates fail to account for the bulk of Russian Orthodox income. Further research is needed to allow for more precise estimates of expenditures by the Russian Orthodox Church.
MEMBERSHIP OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
PRIOR TO THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

The membership of the Russian Orthodox Church has fallen substantially since the revolution. This decline contrasts greatly with the trend during the two decades prior to communist takeover. The Holy Synod reported 79,115,820 members in 1898, growing to 86,259,732 followers by 1902. The population of Russia in 1897, as reported by the census of that year, was 125,640,021 [BONWETSCH, 1911, pp. 118-19]. Until 1905, membership to the Church was automatically attained by those born on Russian soil [LANE, 1978, p. 30]. In 1913, the Orthodox Church reported 98,534,800 members [TROITSKY, 1918, p. 875].
Appendix C

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX MONASTIC ORDER

Not unlike other aspects of Orthodoxy, the monastic order has greatly diminished since the revolution. In 1902 there were 862 monasteries and convents housing a total of 8,455 monks (and 8,090 aspirants) and 10,082 nuns (accompanied by 31,533 aspirants) [BONWETSCH, 1911, p. 119]. By 1914, these figures rose to 1,025 monastic communities (550 men's and 475 women's) housing 11,845 monks (and 9,485 servitors) and 17,289 nuns (and 56,016 serving sisters) [TROITSKY, 1918, p. 875]. In 1917, prior to the revolution, there were 1,105 monasteries and convents, but a mere three years later only 352 remained open [ELLIS, 1986, p. 125]. By the end of 1929, all monastic communities had been closed [ELLIS, 1986, p. 125]. As part of Stalin's patriotic war effort, 89 monasteries were allowed to reopen in 1943, but Khrushchev ordered over half of them shut down during his anti-religion campaign [BLASCHKEWITZ, 1967, p. 409].
As a result of the many currency reforms since 1917, it is difficult to compare contemporary ruble figures with ruble amounts prior to communist takeover. According to BONWETSCH [1911, p. 119], "[i]n 1898 the official income of the Orthodox Church was 60,000,000 rubles... 40,000,000 from the state and 10,000,000 direct gifts, while the budget of the holy synod in 1900 was 24,000,000 rubles, and the imperial budget for 1906 was 29,126,000 rubles for the Orthodox Church...." TROITSKY [1918, p. 875] reports that, in 1914, "the [Orthodox] churches possessed 110,307,793 rubles of capital; the expenditure on various needs of the Church was 40,438,134 rubles...."
Appendix E

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE NUMBER OF RUSSIAN ORTHODOX PRIESTS AND CHURCHES

Like other aspects of Russian Orthodoxy, the numbers of religious buildings and clergy were growing rapidly prior to the communist revolution. In 1902, there were 49,703 Russian Orthodox churches including 723 cathedrals serviced by 46,827 priests and 58,529 cantors [BONWETSCH, 1911, p. 119]. By 1914 the numbers grew to 54,174 churches (not including 25,593 chapels and oratories) serviced by 3,246 arch-priests, 47,859 priests, 15,035 deacons and 46,489 psalm-singers [TROIITSKY, 1918, p. 875]. One Soviet source states that, prior to the Revolution, there were 360,000 Russian Orthodox priests, but by the end of 1919, 320,000 had reportedly been killed [ANTIC, September 8, 1989, pp. 20-21]. In Moscow, 500 Russian Orthodox churches operated in 1917, but by 1939 only 17 were functioning [BLASCHKEWITZ, 1967, p. 408]. This trend was followed throughout the country where the total number of active Russian Orthodox churches had fallen to between 100 and 4,225 by 1939 [FLETCHER, 1977, p. 217].

During the Second World War, Stalin appealed to religious and traditional sentiment and opened between 13,000 and 25,000 Russian Orthodox churches. After the war the number gradually fell [BLASCHKEWITZ, 1967, p. 408]. During Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign (1959-1964), about 10,000 were closed, half of the total [FLETCHER, 1977, p. 218; LANE, 1978, p. 33]. By 1963,
there were an estimated 11,500 functioning Russian Orthodox churches and approximately 14,000 Russian Orthodox clergy [MALONEY and WUYTS, 1967, p. 751]. These numbers fell steadily until the 1980's.

By way of comparison, there existed 26,000 Muslim mosques in the USSR in 1912. In 1942 the number had fallen to 1,300, and by the mid 1980's there were between 392 and 751 functioning mosques [BENNIGSEN, 1977, p. 245; ANTIC, January 11, 1988; ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, August 11-17, 1990, p. 8].
Sources Cited


Expenditures for Religious Services


TROITSKY, S.V. "Russian Church." Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. 1918, X, 867-77.
