

(Un)religiousness in Slovenia

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POVZETEK

RAZISKOVANJE (NE)RELIGIOZNOSTI V SLOVENIJI, 1968-1992

V prispevku avtor analizira pojav (ne-)religioznosti v Sloveniji na osnovi raziskav "Slovensko javno mnenje" v obdobju 1968-1992, posebej pa se opre na raziskave "World Value Survey" (februar 1992) in "Religion", International Social Survey Program (november 1992). Pri tem ugotavlja, da je bil vpliv sistema na vernost v Sloveniji izrazit v obdobju neposredno po II. svetovni vojni, kasneje pa je moč ideološke indoktrinacije upadla. Za 60-ta in 70-ta leta je za Slovenijo značilen sekularizacijski trend, ki pa se v 80-ih letih obrne. To se pokaže predvsem v naraščanju neortodoksnih oblik religioznosti. Torej tudi v Sloveniji poteka dinamična pluralizacija vrednot in proces individualizacije, kot v Zahodni Evropi.

Na vprašanje, ali je družbeni preobrat (1990) neposredno posegel v človekov religiozni svet, avtor - z zadržkom odgovori nikalno. Vse, kar ponazarjajo rezultati raziskav religioznosti v Sloveniji po preobratu, je kot zametek oziroma trend prisotno že v 80-ih letih. Le ta z "legaliziranjem" cerkve in povečanjem njene družbene moči ne narašča tudi njen družbeni ugled. Vračanje v prostor družbene moči v Sloveniji cerkvi ne ponuja posebnih prednosti pri uveljavljanju njene duhovne vloge.

INTRODUCTION

Systematic empirical sociological research into religiousness and attitudes towards the church has been conducted in Slovenia since the mid-Sixties. However it was only after the establishment of Slovenian state independence (June 1991) that researchers were able to join two major international projects investigating the phenomenon of religion in the contemporary world, namely the World Values Survey

(WVS)¹ and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)². The present text first briefly describes circumstances in Slovenia, from the end of the Second World War to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which determined the status of believers and the relationship between church and state, then reviews the findings of sociological research into religiousness carried out over the period 1968-1990, and presents the religion section of the WVS compared with the findings of ISSP, Religion 1991.

1. Slovenia prior to the WVS enquiry (1991)

Slovenia in Yugoslavia and independence. The WVS 1991 and ISSP, Religion 1991 inquiries took place at a crucial point in Slovenian history, directly after the first democratic elections (April 1990) and following the country's achievement of independence. Previously Slovenia had been a part of the federal Yugoslav state. Its 45-year postwar development had been characterized by a dominant ideology which underpinned all societal, economic and social relations, and a single political party which autonomously ruled on all ideological issues and at the same time held total control of the army, police, economy, mass media, as well as educational institutions and the church. The everyday state of affairs in postwar Yugoslavia - notwithstanding the original concepts of self-management socialism and federalism - in essence comprised all the components of Friedrich's definition of totalitarianism (Friedrich, Brzezinski, 1956). This is not to overlook of course all the distinctive features and divergencies in Slovenia's development inside this - nevertheless essentially - totalitarian skeleton. In the wake of state independence in 1991 Slovenia is attempting to establish itself as a democratic society through a plurality of political parties, the reinstatement of private property and a market economy, the welfare state. It is shaping itself anew, a new democratic institutional political system is arising with the germ of new social structures and new political practice. The situation is marked further by an economic and social crisis which is expressed partly as a crisis of values.

Although observing the situation in Slovenia over the past decades has constantly encouraged consideration and characterization of the differences and peculiarities in its development compared with the rest of Yugoslavia and other East bloc countries, there is no doubt that the revolution was made possible by the collapse of the so-called socialist systems and the profound political, economic and cultural crisis of Yugoslav federalism. Slovenia, along with the other Central and East European, former-communist countries, was caught up in the third wave of democratization following the Second World War. The first wave encompassed the pacified states - the Axis Powers; the second mainly encompassed the Romance and Latin American countries, and in Europe, Spain, Portugal as well as Greece; while the present, third wave encompasses the entire European part of the former East bloc. The course of transformation of these countries and their capacity to establish democratic

1 World Values Survey (WVS), Professor Ronald Inglehart, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. A national survey of a representative sample (N=1028) was conducted in February 1992 by the Research Institute of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (RI FSS), under the author's leadership.

2 ISSP, Programme 1991, Religion. A national survey of a representative sample (N=2080) was conducted in November 1991 by the RI SSF in the framework of the project Slovenian Public Opinion which has been underway in Slovenia in similar way to the GSS (USA) or ALLBUS (Germany) since 1968 under the author's leadership.

institutions and political relations is determined by the intersection and sources of certain tensions or conflict relations - namely: (a) regarding the redefinition of the nation or the nation state, with all the ramifications that this process of redefinition generates and that influence the consolidation of democratic institutions. An important part is played in these processes by the so-called national churches as they break out of their marginalization during communist rule. The churches are in renewal, gaining importance as a factor in awakening national consciousness, and hence as a political factor as well. This is demonstrated by the situation in Russia, Croatia, in Serbia - and in Poland throughout; (b) the question of the relationship between democratic institutions and the economic restructuring of society (Bruszt, Janos, 1992); and (c) the eradication of the communist parties' ideological monopoly while at the same time preventing the emergence of others.

The collapse of the east European communist systems then has quite obviously been marked by a redefinition of the nation and the nation state. In Yugoslavia this striving to redefine the position of one nation at the expense of others, and in particular a more powerful one inside a federal system, displays all its destructive might. But the redefinition of a nation state may - in contrast to the foregoing - also prove a significant impulse for the development of democratic institutions. Considering the current situation in Slovenia and the changes already forged, it may be stated that issues related to national constituting have not been at the forefront since international recognition was achieved (Toš, 1992). In the initial period following the revolution the process of constituting a national state creates an appropriate environment and stimulus for the establishment (nominally) of a democratic institutional system. In Slovenia the church did not have a dominant role in these processes, but it did finally escape the marginal position it was assigned after the Second World War.³

The position of the church in Slovenia in this period is determined by certain essential circumstances and factors (Roter, 1993):

(a) From the time of Christianization and the Slovenes' settlement to the present-day, the leading ecclesiastical institution has been the Roman Catholic Church which has decisively influenced the development of the national culture and policies of the Slovenes down the centuries.

(b) During the Reformation, Protestantism gained sway in Slovenia particularly in the towns, and was forcibly eradicated by the Catholic Church during the Counter Reformation. Today the proportion of Protestants in Slovenia is negligibly low, and restricted primarily to the border area near Hungary.

(c) During the Second World War, when Slovenia was occupied and annexed partly by the German Reich and partly by Fascist Italy and Hungary, the Roman Catholic Church did not join the mass Partisan resistance movement, the National Liberation Front, which was led by the Communist Party; instead it aligned with the anti-communist movement which arose during the war under the patronage of the occupation forces. In contrast to the Polish Catholic Church, which was a pillar of the resistance, the Slovenian Church is characterized more by collaborationism.

(d) In the postwar years the Catholic Church was persecuted in Slovenia, its property was expropriated on the charge of collaboration; priests were also persecuted. The Church took a negative stand towards the postwar regime which carried out a forcible agrarian reform, nationalization, established one-party (communist) rule and the constitutional separation of church and state. Subsequently (from the end of the

3 For more, v: Nationalities Papers, Voice from the Slovene Nation, N.Y. 1993, Vol XXI/1.

1960s) relations between church and the state were gradually normalized (re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See; renovation of churches with state assistance, the religious press and religious celebrations were permitted, etc.) and finally formally regulated in the new Slovenian Constitution which posits the freedom of confession, the social and spiritual role of the church, and maintains the principle of separation of church and state.

(e) Empirical sociological research since 1968 has shown that relative freedom of confession nevertheless obtained in Slovenia in the four postwar decades: A large part of the population preserved and renewed their religious orientation as well as their ties to the Catholic Church (more on this below). Conditions for preserving and renewing religiousness were substantially more favourable in Slovenia than in most East European communist states, particularly the extreme cases of East Germany and Albania.

2. Surveys of religiousness in Slovenia, 1968-1990

In presenting the state of religiousness or unreligiousness in Slovenia in the period 1968-1990 we may draw on a series of investigations in the context of the Slovene Public Opinion (SPO)⁴ project which has been under way since 1968. It is based on a representative sample of the adult population of Slovenia and has regularly included religiological aspects. At the very beginning of the survey (1968) the typology of dimensions of religiousness developed included the variable (non-) religiousness and at the same time recorded frequency of attendance at religious ceremonies. Thus operationalization includes the dichotomized dimension: religious-unreligious and the dimension of devoutness, expressed through frequency of religious attendance. The typology includes 9 categories, namely: (1) religious -consistently devout (believers who attend services every Sunday or more often); (2) religious -inconsistently devout (religious, who frequently attend services); (3) religious -indifferently devout (religious, who only occasionally attend and then major religious services); (4) religious - undevout (religious, do not attend religious services); (5) undecided - devout (do not know whether they are religious or not, nevertheless attend religious services); (6) undecided - devout (do not know whether they are religious or not, nevertheless do not attend religious services); (7) unreligious - inconsistent (not religious, but occasionally attend religious services); (8) unreligious - consistent (are not religious and do not attend religious services); (9) all others.

The usefulness of this operationalization stems from the fact that Slovenia is in effect a mono-religious region where the Roman Catholic Church dominates absolutely, such as in Austria, Italy, Spain, etc.

4 This survey has been under way since 1968 in the framework of the Center for Public Opinion and Mass Communications Surveys and the Research Institute of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.

TABLE 1: (Non-)Religiousness and attendance at religious services by the Slovenian population, 1968-1992*

	1968	1973	1978	1983	1988	1990
1- I am religious and regularly attend religious services every Sunday	21.7	17.7	11.8	11.0	12.4	13.0
2- I am religious and often, at least once a month, attend religious services	10.3	10.4	8.7	9.0	9.3	10.2
3- I am religious and only sometimes, on major holy days and special occasions attend religious services	23.2	23.2	20.1	21.9	28.3	31.2
4- I am religious and do not attend religious services	2.6	8.1	4.7	5.8	6.3	7.4
5- I cannot say whether I am religious or not, although I attend religious services	-	3.3	2.4	4.5	3.9	3.5
6- I cannot say whether I am religious or not, and I do not attend religious services	-	5.1	7.8	6.9	7.3	6.3
7- I am not religious, although I attend religious services	3.7	1.6	2.7	3.0	2.8	2.7
8- I am not religious and do not attend religious services	25.9	28.2	40.1	35.6	27.9	23.6
9- I cannot answer	2.6	2.4	1.7	2.3	1.8	2.1
	100% (2475)	100% (2098)	100% (2064)	100% (2067)	100% (2075)	100% (2074)

Source: SPO, RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

* Besides those shown, data is also available for the years 1969, 1971, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1989.

The situation at the first measurement on the religiousness dimension (Table 1, 1968) shows that a good two-thirds of the population expresses belief yet only a poor half of these show adequate ties to the church in terms of regular or frequent attendance at religious ceremonies; the remaining one-third of the population is unreligious and only insignificantly tied to the church. The data obtained on (un)religiousness and (un)devoutness may be interpreted as 'normal' for Slovenia's European (predominantly Catholic) environs at that time. The decades-long ideological indoctrination which denied and attacked the human, social and cultural essence of religion and the church as a reactionary social force did not substantially affect the extent and intensity of religious commitment. As a consequence of the insularity of the state (Yugoslavia) and lags in the process of its industrialization and urbanization, which were proceeding intensively in West Europe at the time, there had been a hold-up in the process of secularization. But it intensified with the liberalization of political relations in the Sixties and the opening of the borders to migratory flows. This is illustrated well by the data for 1968-1978 in Table 1. The proportion of the religious 'devoted' to the church (regular attendance at church services) declined by almost a half, there was a slight rise in the proportion of the religiously undecided, and a substantial increase (from 26% to 40%) in the proportion of unreligious. In the Slovenian literature precisely this period is labelled a period of intensive secularization. It was not just a matter of a decline in religiousness in general, but also of weakening ties to the church. Thus, a Slovene Catholic theologian (Rajhman, 1979) observes that for the Slovenes the epithet 'a Catholic people' is more a reminder of the former glory of the Church and its organizational apparatus, that the Catholic Church has to say goodbye to this epithet because the process of

secularization is so strong, and the sociological situation in Slovenia does not differ from that in modern industrial countries. A similar fall in attendance at religious services has been found in surveys in Austria (Zulehner, 1991, p.126). Thus the proportion of regular and frequent attendance in 1968 reached about 34% in Austria compared with 32% in Slovenia where, however, the downtrend was more intensive and by 1978 it had reached just 20.5% and remained at a level of 20% in 1983. Nevertheless the secularization process or trend was a phenomenon limited to the Seventies. When the cross-section 1978-1988 and later measurements are compared it may be observed (Roter, 1989, p.93) that in Slovene society "certain noteworthy changes have taken place: the halting of the secularization trend which is evident in a perceptible rise in the proportion of believers and a marked drop in the proportion of non-believers". The proportion of those regularly attending services remained at a low level (11% - 13%), although the proportion of those occasionally attending rose substantially in that period: from 34% in 1978 to 44% in 1988 and 48% in 1990 (see Table 2). Yet the secularization trend from the previous period had not waned entirely. The province of church and religion somehow functioned more freely, less bindingly and more openly.

TABLE 2: Attendance at church services by the population of Slovenia, 1968-1992

	1968	1973	1978	1983	1988	1990	1992 WVS
- regularly (1x weekly or more)	21.7	17.7	11.8	11.0	12.4	13.0	22.7
- occasionally (less than 1x weekly)	37.2	38.5	33.8	38.4	44.3	47.6	41.0
- does not attend	41.1	43.8	54.4	50.6	43.3	39.4	36.3
- others	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(2475)	(2098)	(2064)	(2067)	(2075)	(2074)	(1035)

Source: SPO, RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

The findings of the surveys in the first decade (1968-1978) clearly show a deterioration in the position of religion - and hence a clear secularization trend, which was then followed in the next period (1978-1988) by a trend to religious revival. This trend is also confirmed in the 1988-1992 period (see Table 3). A comparison of the data for 1968/1973 and 1988/1992 shows that Slovene religiousness 'revived' and that the differences were only in nuances: there were fewer unreligious, fewer religious - there were substantially more undecided. The question arises, what caused the 'glacial period' in religious confession from the end of the Seventies to the mid-Eighties? In that period totalitarian ideological control in former Yugoslavia - and Slovenia - eased, matters concerning relations between the Catholic Church and the state were gradually set in order, a critical cultural and political public was taking shape which gave rise in the latter half of the Eighties to a multitude of social movements, with democratization of the system and the first pluralistic elections. At the same time in both Yugoslavia and Slovenia there was then a growing ideological, systemic and especially economic crisis, nationalism and ideas of independence were on the rise. This 'freezing' of religiousness most probably had some inner cause - and was not some delayed expression of European secularization trends.

TABLE 3: Declarations of religiousness by the population of Slovenia, 1968-1991

	1968	1973	1978	1983	1988	1990	1992 WVS
- religious	67.8	66.4	45.3	47.7	56.3	60.7	60.2
- unreligious	29.6	29.8	42.8	38.6	30.7	26.3	23.2
- undecided	2.6	10.8	11.9	13.7	13.0	13.0	17.7
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(2475)	(2098)	(2064)	(2067)	(2075)	(2074)	(1035)

Source: SPO, RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

Naturally research in the past period has not been limited to merely determining religiousness and devoutness, but also dealt with the question of the conformity of individual religious convictions and values to church teachings, the question of the position of faith and believers in the church and society, and especially the question of the church as an institution and its position in society and the state order and in connection with the desired relationship between church and politics.

The findings show that both the general European and the Slovene secularization trend is evident above all in the relationship between individual belief and values and church teachings, the way the role of the church as an institution is understood, and how the relationship between church and politics is viewed. We present the degree of (non-) conformity between individual religious convictions, beliefs and values and church teachings, on the basis of the values survey (WVS, 1991). The secularization trend, evinced as a high degree of disparity between individual beliefs and values and church teachings, is present throughout. Thus for example Roter (1989, p.93) concludes from the survey that "in terms of the so-called dissolution of dogmatic belief the secularization effects of the preceding period are still operative and evident in the ever-perceptible gap between the attitudes of believers and doctrinal church dogma, although within the group of devoutly religious there is an increasing degree of conformity between religious convictions and church teachings". This conformity, then, is more and more a 'privilege' of the relatively narrow category of believers classified as devoutly religious in our system or 'kirchlich' by Zulehner (1991, p.126). In the other groups it is low or entirely absent.

A kind of secularization trend, which is not waning, is therefore expressed in a new freedom, openness and optional relationship between the person and the church and religious teachings. This flexibility is evident not only in the attitude of the religious towards religion and the church but also in that of the non-religious. Sectarian rejection of religion and the church (1969: 22.8%) has almost completely faded today (1990: 4.4%). Characteristic of Slovenia in the 'Eighties then is a highly predominant acceptance of the legitimacy of faith and the church and the rules of conduct and values that it lays down. At the same time there is increasing acceptance of the role of the church not just as a religious teacher or guardian of religious rites and the follower's morals, but in the humanitarian and charitable domain, as well as the educational (religious).

The impact of secularization is seen from attitudes towards the relationship between church and politics and the position of the church in the state: in the 'Eighties, religious and unreligious Slovenes strongly rejected the possibility of the church adopting political standpoints and encouraging the political activity of its followers (1962: 66%; 1990: 79%). This predominant predilection is finally also shown in attitudes towards the new Constitution (1991) for 71% of the population

supported the constitutional rule of separation of church and state and only 18% of respondents rejected it.

These are only some of the aspects of empirical study of religion in Slovenia⁵.

3. Slovenia's inclusion in the first international survey - ISSP, Religion 1991

ISSP, Religion 1991 is the widest empirical survey so far in the field of the sociology of religion which was conducted in Slovenia as well as 13 other European countries, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Israel and the Philippines. The results of the Slovenian part has been described in part by Roter (1992, pps 39-46), while the first comparative analyses have been made by Greeley of NORC, University of Chicago. From his preliminary analysis of the data from the Slovenian part of the survey Roter confirms his thesis about 'the crisis in secularization processes' in Slovenia and the religious revival, and at the same the limited impact of church teachings on secular attitudes and values. Greeley observes on the basis of the overall comparative picture and preliminary analyses that although the data does not indicate ideal conformity with religious orthodoxy or religious practices it does not indicate that faith has ceased to be important for the majority in the countries studied. In his view the 'persistence of faith' is shown by the fact that the majority in these countries believe in God. And this holds for Slovenia as well.

With regard to the three former socialist countries included in the survey Greeley concludes that religion is reviving in them. Faith is increasing in Slovenia and East Germany, and in Hungary church attendance is growing. East Germany is the only unreligious country amongst those studied. He groups Slovenia with New Zealand, Norway, Britain and West Germany in terms of religiousness, while the United States of America, Italy and Ireland deviate strongly upwards.

In the countries with the highest level of faith there is also a high level of personal happiness. Of the fifteen countries surveyed (WVS) Slovenia and Hungary rank at the bottom with the lowest measured personal happiness. At the same time Slovenia shows an above-average level of superstition, and rates high (60% above the factor average) on Greeley's 'magic factor' composed of four 'animistic' variables. Subsequent analysis may explain how low subjective happiness and high superstition (expressed by the religious and unreligious) go together with a relatively high level of unreligious in the same population. Are the relatively low faith and high superstitiousness related to the constant repetition of threats and risks that have confronted the Slovenes down the centuries (and especially the last few decades) at the crossroads of different systems, cultures and traditions, and particularly as the nation sets out on the road of national independence and has no control over external factors? I end this thought with Greeley's reference to recent studies of magic practices in African and Asian societies which suggest that their fundamental purpose is to reduce anxiety: one does not need magic when fishing in the lagoon; one needs it when venturing into the open seas. Belief in magic rises with fatalism and nihilism and is highest amongst those who are both nihilists and fatalists. Our research to date has not shown the average Slovene to be fatalistic or nihilistic. Is the high level of

5 Most of the surveys in this period were conducted in the framework of the Centre for the Study of Religion and the Church, or the Center for Public Opinion and Mass Communications Research of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana; recently surveys in the field of pastoral sociology have begun to be conducted in the framework of the Theology Faculty, University of Ljubljana.

superstition found an artefact? should different explanations be sought? or do we still not know enough, on the basis of the surveys made, about the beliefs and values of the Slovenes? It must also be noted that Greeley ranks West Germany and Great Britain close to Slovenia on the magic factor. He goes on to consider atheism and concludes that in the contemporary world this is more a question of 'believing atheism', which is also true for Slovenia where atheists subscribe to various forms of belief or superstitions. Thus for example 38% of Slovenian atheists believe in astrology, as in West Germany (32%).

This comparative analysis of ISSP, Religion 1991 deals in particular with the position of religion in the former socialist countries. Greeley speaks of a resurgence of hope related to the fall of socialism when he analyses the circumstances determining faith in Slovenia, Poland, Hungary and East Germany. He wonders why faith declined so steeply in East Germany and not in Slovenia or Hungary. In Slovenia 11% of the population has no religious affiliation, in Hungary 5% and in East Germany 65%. He attributes the differences to East Germany's traditional Protestantism and the fact that it did not have a powerful Catholic Church, to its especially severe ideological indoctrination and regime, and to the fact that the fall of religion was taken more literally than in other socialist countries.

My own impression from a review of the code book of the international survey is that in respect of religiousness, intensity and extent of belief, evaluation of the position of the church and the influence of church teachings on attitudes and values, Slovenia tends to form a group with West Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary and Austria. In devoutness and values Slovenia differs strongly from the United States of America, Ireland and Italy. In view of this it may be said that although it is located in Central Europe, Slovenia belongs more to the West European cultural-civilizational fold.

4. World Value Survey - Slovenia Survey 1992

Participation in the World Value Survey through the survey conducted in Slovenia in February 1992, brought the sociology of religion in this country new possibilities for describing and explaining the phenomenon of religiousness-unreligiousness, attitudes towards the church, and the influence of church teachings and rules on actual conduct and attitudes. Identification with religion and the church may be expressed by statements of religiousness, affiliation to a church or religious group, or by attending religious or church services. Table 3 shows that the WVS found 60.2% of Slovenes are religious, 17.7% are undecided, and 23.2% are unreligious. Only a small part of the unreligious respondents (6.9% or a poor third) describe themselves as atheists. Another central dimension of religiousness in WVS analyses to date has been the concept of god. In the population surveyed 19.8% subscribed to a theistic concept of a 'personal god', 38.6% to a deistic concept of 'some sort of spirit or life force'; 17.2% were undecided on the question, 13.1% explicitly denied the existence of god or some kind of spirit or life force, and 11.3% did not respond to the question. Every concept of god is found amongst the subjectively religious, as well as the unreligious and the undecided; belief in a personal god however is restricted to the group of subjectively religious.

An important variable included in the analysis was 'frequency of attendance at religious services' and identification with a religious group or church. Trends in attendance at services in the period 1968-1992 have been presented in Table 2. In 1992 the proportion of regular attendees (22.7%) lagged behind the proportion of

'abstainers' (non-attenders - 36.3%) and occasional attendees (41.0%). Nevertheless 63.7% or two-thirds of the population of adult Slovenes observed attended religious services at least occasionally. It must be added here that the Slovene population is predominantly affiliated to the Catholic Church. Table 4 shows that in the two consecutive surveys in 1992 approximately 70% declared an affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church, the proportions affiliated to the Protestant and the Orthodox Church, and to Islam were insignificant, while 22% and 26% respectively declared no religious affiliation. In view of the data on faith, church attendance, and belief in a personal god, it is quite plain that identification with a religious group is part of cultural-civilizational tradition in Slovenia and as such does not directly indicate religiousness, although it does help in understanding it.

TABLE 4: Identification with a religious group, church, in Slovenia

	WVS 1992 (February)	SPO 1992 (November)
Roman Catholic Church	69.0	71.3
Evangelical (Lutheran) Church	0.8	1.5
Orthodox Church	1.1	2.4
Other Christian Church	0.9	0.8
Islam	1.5	2.1
None	26.7	21.9
	100% (1035)	100% (2024)

Source: RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

Typology of religiousness. Upon joining the two international projects (ISSP, Religion 1991 and WVS 1991) we abandoned our own operationalization of the dimension of religiousness which had been grounded in the variables of belief (statement of religiousness or unreligiousness) and attendance at religious services (frequency). Amongst the various options open we elected the typology used in the European value survey and described by Zulehner (1991, pps 125-126). It employs a combination of the 'concept of god' and 'frequency of attendance at religious services' variables (WVS V 175 and V 147). By recoding and combining the two variables we obtained 5 types of religiousness/unreligiousness, namely:

TYPE	Share in %
A - orthodox type (theistic, regular church attendance)	13.4
B - traditional-church type (deistic, regular church attendance)	14.5
C - religious type (theistic, occasional church attendance or abstinence)	8.6
D - traditional-religious type (deistic, occasional or no church attendance)	18.2
E - unreligious type (denial of the existence of god/spirit or undecided on the question, occasional or no church attendance)	
	35.3
	100.0% (N=935)*

* Total number surveyed is N=1035, 100 units were excluded from the classification.

In assessing the usefulness of this social-religious typology (Zulehner, 1991) we drew on a comparison of the results of its application in the Austrian survey which yielded the following distribution: 15% orthodox, 9% traditional-church, 14% religious, 40% traditional-religious, and 22% unreligious. The deviations in the Slovenian survey are small and expected because it had earlier been established that there are more unreligious and more abstainers from church services in Slovenia than in Austria. The findings from the first section, that the Slovene population splits three ways in relation to religion and the church: a third are religious and devout, a third are religious and not devout, and a third are unreligious. This is confirmed in the main with the present typology: a good third (35.3%) are shown to be unreligious, all the remainder (64.7%) are more (27.9%) or less (36.8%) tied to the church or religion.

Adoption of this social-religious typology in the analysis of the remaining indicators in the WVS questionnaire showed the following:

(a) *Indicators of religiousness.*

- Concept of god (V 135, V 138, V 140): 70% of the 'orthodox' agree with the statement -Life is meaningful only because God exists; with the 'traditional-church' and 'religious' agreement falls to 35% and 32%; with 'traditional religious' to 9%, and with 'unreligious' to 5%. The picture is similar with the remaining statements.

- Church affiliation (V 244 - V 145). About 96% of 'orthodox' (type A) declare affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church (type B: 89%, type C: 74%, type D: 56%, type E: 55%). Thus as many as 55% of the unreligious declare their affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church! This confirms the above-mentioned conclusion that a statement of affiliation to a church or religious group is predominantly a matter of cultural-civilizational identification. Only 3% of the unreligious respondents identified themselves with another church, and the most outstanding option was no affiliation to any church (42%). There is a relatively high share of those declaring no church affiliation in the 'traditional-religious' group - type D (37%), and the religious - type C (19%). Amongst the 'orthodox' the share is quite negligible (2 respondents).

- Subjective belief (statement of religiousness - V 151). Of course all 'orthodox' type respondents are religious (type A: 98%, type B: 89%, type C: 84%, type D: 51%), a third of the 'unreligious' are subjectively religious, and two-fifths (40.6%) are unreligious or atheists, and a good quarter (26.4%) are undecided. There is a more substantial share of unreligious or atheists amongst the 'traditional-religious', type D (26.1%) and the 'religious', type C (11.3%), while there are none amongst the 'orthodox'.

TABLE 5: Socio-religious typology and acceptance of religious teachings (in %)

Believe in	Total share N=1035	TYPE A Orthodox	TYPE B Traditional Church	TYPE C Religious	TYPE D Traditional Religious	Type E Unreligi- ous
- God	54.9	98.4	85.3	87.5	43.2	23.9
- life after death	23.0	64.8	44.1	35.0	15.9	2.4
- soul	37.4	81.6	61.8	52.5	38.6	9.1
- devil	13.9	44.0	20.6	20.0	10.6	1.8
- hell	14.4	47.2	23.5	21.3	9.5	2.1
- heaven	25.0	72.0	38.2	43.8	13.6	6.8
- sin	40.5	85.6	63.2	62.5	34.5	14.2
- resurrection	18.1	64.8	36.6	26.3	6.4	3.3
- reincarnation	12.4	27.2	14.0	16.3	17.0	3.6
	(1035)	(125)	(136)	(80)	(264)	(330)

Source: WVS, RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

- Various components of faith (V 116-174). Table 5 shows how the respondents on average, and the various types, accept various components of the faith. Thus, belief in God (54.9%) is the most outstanding in the population as a whole, followed by belief in sin (40.5%), and belief in the soul (37.4%). The other components of faith are accepted by relatively small groups. Belief in God then is the central ingredient of religion or faith, which is confirmed by the 'orthodox' type which accepts this tenet completely (98.4%). Types B and C are only slightly behind, but belief in God drops strongly in type D (traditional-religious - 43.2%) and to a poor quarter amongst the unreligious (Type E - 23.9%). Other components of belief common to types A, B and C are belief in the soul and belief in sin, whereas all the other components (eg. life after death, heaven, resurrection from the dead) point to a type A - type B relationship. In the framework of the survey the 'orthodox' type A emerges as a completely independent category of orthodox religiousness. With respect to profundity and scope of belief it is a 'privileged' category. Next come types B and C which display great similarities although type B is based on a deistic belief and regular church attendance and type C on theistic belief and occasional or non-attendance. Characteristic of both is that in effect they accept belief in god, in sin, and in the soul but strongly reject belief in reincarnation, the devil and hell. The 'religious' type D (traditional-religious) constitutes an independent category which is characterized by unintensive, occasional and arbitrary belief, with belief in god as the most outstanding (43.2%) followed by belief in the soul (38.6%) and belief in sin (34.5%). All the other components of belief are marginally represented in this type, particularly belief in resurrection from the dead (6.4%), in the devil and hell (about 10%), in heaven (13.6%) etc. The 'unreligious', type E of course represents an independent category which partly expresses atheism. In this group a partial belief in god is expressed by a weak quarter (23.9%) and belief in sin by one-seventh (14.2%). All the other components of faith gain insignificant shares (from 9.1 down to 1.8%). Although this type encompasses the biggest group of respondents, it nevertheless still holds that in the population observed as a whole there is only a small share of 'pure' atheists who do not subscribe to one or another of the component beliefs.

We have illustrated then how religiousness, expressed through the concept of god and church attendance affects the scope and depth of faith. It is more than clear that orthodox believers are at the same time dogmatic believers and that deviation from its basic religious teachings and premises is evident with increasing distance from the church.

(b) Influence of socio-religious type on individual attitudes and values. A group of variables (V 152- V 165) signifying the province of the church's work and influence in the contemporary world was included in the analysis. Factor analysis grouped these variables into three factors: the first included the most prevalent problems or areas of decision which do not have a marked religious or ecclesiastic connotation but are nevertheless ruled upon by most contemporary churches. This is also the case with the Catholic Church. These areas are: disarmament, the problems of the third world, unemployment, race discrimination, and ecology and environmental issues. The second factor groups together aspects and problems that intersect with the precepts of the church, particularly the Catholic, and contemporary Western (west European) societies. It is significant for this group of issues that they directly concern the individual and his intimate life. The factor includes: attitudes towards abortion, extra-marital relations, euthanasia, homosexuality, and also government policies. Outside this a third independent factor was made up of responses to the question whether the Church (in Slovenia) responds adequately to: moral problems and the needs of the

individual, family problems, the individual's spiritual needs and social problems affecting the home country.

TABLE 6: Socio-religious typology and issues on which the Church should take positions (in %)

The Church should rule on:	Total share N=1035	TYPE A Orthodox	TYPE B Traditi- onal Church	TYPE C Religious	TYPE D Traditi- onal Religious	TYPE E Unreligi- ous
- disarmament	39.8	44.0	43.4	43.8	43.2	33.3
- abortion	20.6	47.2	23.5	22.5	16.7	12.4
- third world	32.5	45.6	35.3	28.8	39.8	24.5
- extra-marital relations	18.3	45.6	19.1	26.3	12.9	10.3
- unemployment	37.0	41.6	41.9	33.8	44.7	29.4
- race discrimination	35.2	43.2	42.6	37.5	41.3	25.8
- euthanasia	21.9	32.0	23.5	25.0	23.9	16.4
- homosexuality	17.0	25.6	18.4	15.0	17.8	13.6
- ecology	47.1	39.2	54.4	47.5	56.8	40.9
- government policy	15.2	23.2	14.7	17.5	12.5	10.9
	(1035)	(125)	(136)	(80)	(264)	(330)

Source: WVS, RI FSS, University of Ljubljana

The results of the factor analysis are illustrated by the data in Table 6. The degree of concurrence regarding which personal or societal problems the church should take positions on was substantially lower, and the influence of the Church and its teachings on attitudes was not as marked, as in the case of the various components of belief. There were no substantial differences between the different socio-religious types with regard to attitudes towards the general problems of contemporary society and countries, such as disarmament, the third world, unemployment, race discrimination and also ecology. A line of division was only found between the first four types (A,B,C,D) and type E. Respondents that are more or less intensively tied to religion and the Church consider the Church should take positions on these general social issues. The 'unreligious' do so with much less intensity. These are somehow not matters on which the Church should take positions. Nevertheless it may be stated that the proximity to faith and church does not have a marked sway on these attitudes.

The second group includes those matters and issues that concern the individual's intimate life, his private world. These are: abortion, extra-marital relations, euthanasia, homosexuality. The data in Table 6 shows that attitudes on these issues are substantially determined by proximity to faith and the Church. Attitudes more congruent with Catholic doctrines are expressed by respondents that come within the 'orthodox' (type A) group, while the 'traditional-church' and 'religious' types (B, C) deviate markedly from type A; an even more marked deviation is evident with the 'traditional-religious' type (D); the 'unreligious' take a negative stand in the great majority of cases.

The Church's efforts to increase attendance at its services are quite understandable. This is seen from the correlation between orthodoxy and the acceptance of the basic tenets of the faith, and also the attitude towards the social and moral role of religion and the church in the contemporary world. Of course this is far from asserting that there is a causal relationship in this. The fact is, however, that those who identify with religious teachings and church precepts and who adopt the Church's moral rules to a greater extent, also go to church and attend services.

(c) Socio-demographic characteristics of the socio-religious types. Having found significant differences in the extent and intensity of faith, and in the extent of the influence of Church teachings on the formation of attitudes towards a series of general human and intimate matters, it is of course interesting to see if this typology also functions in the socio-demographic context. For this purpose tests were made with respect to gender, age and subjective ranking on a socio-economic status scale.

Gender. Analysis showed that females are represented more strongly than males in types A, B and D, while representation in type C was more even. Males were represented much more strongly in type E (unreligious)- 40.4% compared with 30.9% of females.

Age. The oldest age group was most strongly represented in type A, in which the incidence of the youngest group was low (18-25 years of age, 8.8%; 65 years and over, 24.8%). The young compensated for their low incidence in the foregoing group in type B ('traditional-church': 18-25 years of age - 17%; 55-65 years - 18%; the other groups range around 12%). In type C, 'religious', there is a clearly higher incidence of the oldest group, while the incidence of the first four age groups in type D, 'traditional-religious', is more marked (18-55 years: on average around 33%, and that of the two oldest groups much lower (20.7%; 16.3%). The 'unreligious' type E is almost evenly distributed over all age groups, with the 25-35 and 35-45 year groups showing slightly higher incidence.

Older people, then are more 'orthodoxly religious' than younger. A lower degree of religiousness in general is shown by the 25-45 year groups, that is those in the midst of personal and professional ascent. The youngest (18-25 years) cluster most heavily in types B and D. This group accounts for 51.7% of the youngest and only 28.6% of the oldest (65 and over). However, although there is a clear relationship between age and religiousness it is not possible to posit a directly correlated change in religiousness with age. The relationship is much more complex and certainly requires more detailed analysis, as far as Slovenia is concerned. It is true that the young and the youngest are less devout than the older groups and that the oldest are the most devout. But it is also true that the youngest and the young groups are on average equally present in the religious and church space and that they perceive it more individually, more flexibly and more freely than as some 'belief and behavior pre-pack'. They are not disciplined worshippers, nor prepared to orthodoxly conform to church dogma. Finally, their incidence in the 'unreligious' type (E) is only slightly below average. If non-participation in religious services means 'less' faith, perhaps this is because young people are the pillars of social development, social change and revolt. Perhaps as they grow older they retreat in part to the space of unreligiousness, and in part become more 'disciplined' in the church and religion space and thus become more 'religious'. Since conclusions are often drawn about the secularization process on the basis of the growth of 'religiousness' with increasing age, Hout may be cited (1993) to illustrate this idea: church attendance, occasional or regular, increases with age in every group of people born in this century. This data strongly supports the hypothesis of a life cycle, but not the hypothesis of secularization. The life cycle is so powerful, secularization so weak, that comparisons of different cohorts of the same age do not yield significant differences. This probably cannot be confirmed by empirical data from Slovenia which is characterized by a dynamic (up and down) de-secularization process due to various internal and external factors.

Socio-economic status. We drew on the indicator of 'socio-economic status' which allocates respondents into four categories: (1): the upper, upper middle class; (2) middle class, non-manual workers; (3): manual workers - skilled and semi-skilled;

(4): manual workers -unskilled, farm workers, unemployed, etc. It was found that degree of religiousness is directly proportionate to socio-economic status. This holds to a lesser degree for types B and C, but is reversed for type D in which the higher and middle classes are more strongly represented and the skilled/semi-skilled and unskilled less so. Type D shows strong under-representation of only the lowest class. It may be observed then that socio-economic status determines the relationship to church and religion and is reflected in the intensity of religiousness and church attendance. The unreligious are (almost equally) distributed in the top three status categories which share the common characteristic that personal socio-economic status is based on completion of at least secondary schooling.

5. CONCLUSION.

International comparisons have not been included in this short review and preliminary analysis of WVS Slovenia 1992. The summary results available for the Federal Republic of Germany (the former West Germany), Italy, the Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria - and the impressions gained from them - suggest that Slovenia ranks as rather 'normal' in its European space. This also emerged from comparison with ISSP, Religion 1991. 'Normal' here means that in terms of the distribution of responses in the religion section and in terms of its values, Slovenia ranks near or together with the Netherlands, Hungary, Federal Republic of Germany, etc. on the European values continuum. It is quite removed from the value samples and belief findings for Italy, Poland, i.e. countries with a marked Catholic cultural tradition. Unquestionably the system (communist) and the prevailing ideology had a marked influence on faith and attitudes towards the church in Slovenia. This holds especially for the initial post-Second World War years, and the next 20 years. At that time the state, political power and ideology went (repressively) hand-in-hand. The ideological monopoly even prevented empirical sociological research so that no sociological record is available for that time. Subsequently, and this is illustrated by the data, personal value systems broke free of the system and the power of ideological indoctrination declined strongly.

In connection with the secularization thesis it may be observed that the secularization trend reversed in Slovenia in the 'Eighties. This is evident above all in the growth of unorthodox forms of religiousness. People feel freer in the religion and church space. Amongst the young in particular there is negatively. Everything indicated by the results of research into religiousness in Slovenia following the revolution (ISSP, Religion 1991, WVS 1992) was present or evident as a trend in the 'Eighties. Of course the position of the church, church schools, the presence of the church in the mass media and of church dignitaries in public life, have all changed, and been formally regulated in the Constitution. The process of restitution of church property that had been expropriated after the war (forests, land, buildings, etc.) has been initiated. However the Church's social standing is not rising with its 'legalization' and the increase in its social power. The position of the Church and priests on the confidence scale is low, along with political parties, trade unions, government institutions, etc. Its return to the arena of social power in Slovenia does not give the Church any special advantages in exercising its spiritual role.

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