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Protestants in the Former Soviet Union: What Survey Findings Reveal

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Recently completed field research, primarily among Evangelical Christians-Baptists (ECB) in the former Soviet Union, provides fascinating and sometimes surprising new insights into Protestant church life and beliefs today. Dr. David Barnes, professor of biology at Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester, NY, and a missions partner with the Evangelical Christian Temple of Christ Church, Novgorod, Russia, secured funding from Roberts Wesleyan College to underwrite a survey administered by Dr. Irina Kargina, director of research for the Association of Spiritual Renewal, Moscow, the Russian affiliate of U.S.-based Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries.

Population and Questionnaire

During December 2000 and January 2001 survey workers administered a two-part, 96-item questionnaire to 732 subjects. Objective and short essay questions in Part I explored autobiographical and church-related themes. Part II, which was completely anonymous, included questions relating to Christian faith and practice, using multiple choice and Likert (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) formats. On average, completion of the questionnaire took 75 minutes. Respondents included 604 Russians (from 118 cities and 171 churches), 65 Ukrainians (from 18 cities and 27 churches), and 63 Byelorussians (from 10 cities and 11 churches). The denominational breakdown was 503 Evangelical Christians-Baptists, 90 Seventh-day Adventists, 30 Pentecostals, and 109 other Protestant Christians, including Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and members of independent churches. All Ukrainian and Byelorussian respondents were Evangelical Christian-Baptist. Evangelical Christians-Baptists constituted 69 percent of respondents and are the focus of this report.

It should be noted that Russian Evangelical Christian-Baptist answers closely matched those of their Ukrainian and Byelorussian counterparts. Likewise, differences among Protestant pastors, assistant pastors, university students, seminary students, lay leaders, and ordinary church members were seldom significant. University students were somewhat less conservative than others, but the differences were typically small.

Part I: Pastoral and Church Profile

The 82 senior pastors (86 percent Evangelical Christian-Baptist) surveyed were typically married (91 percent), had Christian parents (81 percent), were military veterans (74 percent), had been in their present position for at least three years (54 percent), and became believers prior to 1991 (52 percent). Fifty percent owned approximately 100 Christian books; 46 percent had two or more children; and 31 percent had Internet access.

Church Allegiance and Worship

Forty-eight percent of respondents' churches were founded since 1996. For the 43 ECB churches founded earlier, median membership in 1996 was 48 and median attendance was 30, whereas in 2001, median membership and attendance was 60. Thus, over the five years, median membership in these churches increased 33 percent and median attendance doubled. Fifty-eight percent worshiped in churches or remodeled houses owned by the congregations and 42 percent in rented buildings.

Church Impoverishment and Church Life

Those few pastors willing to divulge their salaries (21 of 82 respondents) received an average of \$832 per year from their congregations. While 78 percent of congregations owned hymnals, less than half owned a VCR/TV (42 percent), a tape recorder (40 percent), pictorial flannel graphs (35 percent), a computer (23 percent), a vehicle (22 percent), an overhead projector (21 percent), or a photocopier (18 percent). Despite this material impoverishment, the vast majority of churches conducted Sunday worship (94 percent), held Sunday schools for children (88 percent), possessed a church library (72 percent), and held weekly prayer meetings (63 percent). Lesser percentages of churches sponsored teen summer camps (46 percent), church choirs (43 percent), Sunday evening worship (35 percent), clothing distribution (33 percent), counseling (33 percent), youth choirs (31 percent), programs for teens (27 percent) or single adults (20 percent), adult Sunday schools (18 percent), or food distribution (9 percent). Many churches engaged in outreach to old-age homes at least once a month (59 percent), while fewer than

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Respondents, by a surprising majority, believed that Protestants "should try to live peacefully with the Russian Orthodox Church" (87 percent).

Survey Findings (cont. from page 1)

half had monthly ministries to hospitals (40 percent), orphanages (28 percent), or prisons (12 percent).

Part II: Issues of Faith and Practice

Findings in this report for Part II in this report are derived from 375 Russian Evangelical Christians-Baptists widely dispersed across western and central European Russia. (Only four percent of Russians surveyed were from Moscow and nine percent from St. Petersburg.) Between 94 and 100 percent of respondents were familiar with biblical accounts of creation, the flood and Noah's Ark, David and Goliath, the birth of Jesus, the conversion of Saul, and the stoning of Stephen. Ninety-four percent believed the Bible was inspired by God and that every sentence "is completely true as written." Ninety-two percent believed God created the world and all forms of life in six days. Only 14 percent believed that "people from many religious perspectives can have a personal relationship with God."

Respondents, by a surprising majority (answering "strongly agree" or "agree"), believed that Protestants "should try to live peacefully with the Russian Orthodox Church" (87 percent) and that "devout Russian Orthodox believers will go to heaven" (80 percent). Eighty-nine percent believed that those baptized in childhood should be baptized again as adults. Forty-two percent favored a more traditional, rather than contemporary, style of worship. And 23 percent noted that their churches had experienced difficulties with cults.

The Woman's Place

Fifty percent of respondents, answering "strongly agree" or "agree," believed married women should wear head coverings in church. A majority approved of women working in the church as teachers of children (95 percent), teachers of women (90 percent), choir directors (84 percent), missionaries (75 percent), administrators (60 percent), and as members of church councils (55 percent). On the other hand, a majority of respondents opposed women serving in churches as pastors (92 percent), elders (90 percent), teachers of men (86 percent), preachers (80 percent), or deacons (66 percent).

The Church and Society

Regarding Christian interaction with society, a majority of respondents answered "strongly agree" or "agree" when asked if devout believers should feel free to attend university (100 percent), participate in civic organizations (94 percent) or city government (89 percent), serve in the military (66 percent), or become business leaders (69 percent), but fewer believed devout Christians should run for political office (48 percent). A majority approved of expressing opinions in newspapers (91 percent), watching movie videos at home (85 percent), watching TV at home (79 percent), and attending movies in theaters (61 percent).

Politics and Personal Morality

Perhaps reflecting traditional Anabaptist influences upon Russian evangelicals, a majority opposed capital punishment (57 percent) and only 23 percent approved of the war in Chechnya. Regarding the Soviet period, only 16 percent believed "it was not so bad," while 33 percent were neutral on this point, and 50 percent "disagree" or "strongly disagree." No doubt reflecting their pietist roots, a majority of post-Soviet evangelical respondents did not believe devout Christians should engage in homosexual (99 percent) or extramarital sex (98 percent). Nor should they smoke (95 percent), drink alcohol in moderation (83 percent), or participate in modern dance (67 percent). However, over half had no objection to cultural/folk dancing (56 percent). Reflecting noncompliance with traditional pastoral teaching, only 22 percent of respondents considered artificial birth control morally wrong. Only small minorities believed abortion to be acceptable in the first trimester where the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother (19 percent) or in cases of rape or incest (nine percent). Eighty-two percent "strongly oppose" or "oppose" euthanasia of the sick, elderly, and severely mentally handicapped. Seventy-eight percent favored church sponsorship of sex education for young people.

Conclusions

The status of Evangelicals in the former Soviet Union today may seem positive compared to the travails they endured in the Soviet and tsarist eras. Or their status may seem troubled compared to the much greater comfort and security of their counterparts in the West. The basis of comparison makes all the difference. In terms of civil liberties, post-Soviet Evangelicals in 1992 were dramatically better off than were their Soviet- or tsarist-era counterparts. And still in 2002 they are appreciably better off than they were under commissars or tsars. But compared to Evangelical material advantages in the West and the legal protections Evangelicals enjoy in North America and Great Britain, post-Soviet Evangelicals appear startlingly impoverished and politically embattled.

The study confirms any number of long-held assumptions, but also reveals sometimes unexpected perspectives and practices of post-Soviet Evangelicals. In perhaps the most encouraging revelation of the study, survey results indicate a 33 percent increase in membership and a doubling in median attendance in ECB churches in existence for the past five years.

Western observers have known that many post-Soviet Evangelical congregations rent church buildings, but it still proves sobering to have documentation indicating that the figure is 42 percent. The survey confirms stark impoverishment in most congregations, with believers possessing few material resources with which to conduct ministry. Furthermore, pastoral salaries are so meager that bivocational ministry is frequently a necessity. Western ministries might be well served to focus on microenterprise development projects and teachings on biblical stewardship in their partnerships with

struggling post-Soviet congregations.

Congregational outreach may be hampered by the small average church size, the psychological hangover and lack of experience due to Soviet proscriptions against charity, and renewed obstacles by local officials against Evangelical work, especially in orphanages and prisons. Nevertheless, it is remarkable what typically poor and small church fellowships manage to support in addition to Sunday worship. Readers, likewise, will be impressed with Evangelicals' high level of biblical literacy and their generous and charitable stance towards Russian Orthodox believers, something rarely documented previously.

Survey results indicating a limited role for women in Evangelical churches document what has been widely recognized, though one could argue that approval of women as church administrators (60 percent), and especially as members of church councils (55 percent), indicates some movement towards greater acceptance of women in roles of responsibility.

Given the absolute exclusion of Evangelicals from Soviet society and higher education described by Walter Sawatsky (*Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II*) and Michael Rowe (*Russian Resurrection*), the openness of today's Evangelicals to certain forms of

interaction with society indicates a dramatic shift in attitude and practice. High positive responses from Evangelicals favoring civic involvement, media acceptance, and participation in business, differ sharply from the Soviet era. Finally, that Evangelicals still adhere to a strict code of personal morality comes as no surprise, though some Western readers may not have realized the degree to which post-Soviet Evangelicals oppose alcohol consumption, the war in Chechnya, capital punishment, and abortion, even when the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother.

In summary, the present study reveals aspects of the beliefs and practices of post-Soviet Evangelicals that are especially valuable since these believers rarely appear on the radar screen of surveys conducted of the general post-Soviet population. A future study comparing Evangelical Christians-Baptists with the burgeoning number of post-Soviet Pentecostals and charismatics and a study comparing Russian Protestants with the proportionately much larger Ukrainian Protestant community would be invaluable in deepening our understanding of Evangelicals in the post-Soviet era. ♦

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Church Strength in Ukraine

Orthodox and Catholic Church Strength in Ukraine

	churches	monasteries	monks	seminaries	seminary students	priests
Orthodox						
Ukrainian Orthodox Church						
Moscow Patriarchy	8,490	113	3,396	15	3,657	7,122
Ukrainian Orthodox Church						
Kyiv Patriarchy	2,491	17	87*	15	1,649	1,978*
Ukrainian Autocephalous Church	989	2	2	7	279	602*
Old Believers	66	2	4			40
Russian True Orthodox Church	30					28
Other Orthodox Churches	24					23
Orthodox Total	12,090	134	3,489*	37	5,585	9,793*
Catholic						
Ukrainian Eastern Rite Catholic						
Church	3,236*	78	1,188	12	1,588	1,976
Roman Catholic Church	772	38	252*	6	444	428*
Catholic Total	4,008*	116	1,440*	18	2,032	2,404*

Source: Viktor Yelens'kii, Oleksandr Stegnii, Andrii Yurash, and Il'ko Kucheriv, "Kruglii stіл' Religijnii vibir naselennia Ukraini: za danimi opituvannia gromads'koi dumki" [Round Table Discussion 'Religious Choices of Ukraine's Population: According to the Data from Public Opinions Polls']. Kyiv: Fond "Demokratichni initsiatiivi," Mott Foundation, 2000.

*Numbers in italics reflect more recent updating in Andrew Yurash, "Inter-Confessional Relations in Ukraine—Permanent or Usual Interaction? Laconic Portraits of the Main Participants of Inter-Religious Opposition," unpublished paper, September 2001.

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Protestant Church Strength in Ukraine

	churches	clergy
Baptist		
All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (ECB)	1,944	2,463
Independent Churches of ECB	80	111
Evangelical Christians	73	100
Council of Churches of ECB	33	46
Other Baptist Churches	22	61
Subtotal	2,152	2,781
Pentecostal		
All-Ukrainian Union of Churches of Evangelical Faith Christians	1,087	1,501
Independent Pentecostal Churches	230	288
Union of Free Churches of Evangelical Faith	76	104
Union of the Church of God in Ukraine	20	26
Church of God in Prophecies in Ukraine	17	24
Subtotal	1,430	1,943
Charismatic		
Church of the Full Gospel	329	450
Religious Congregations of Charismatic Movement	139	161
Church of the Living God	30	25
Subtotal	498	636
Other Protestants		
Seventh-day Adventist	729*	950*
Reformed	107	55
Church of Christ	70	101
Other Smaller Protestant Churches	60	60
Evangelical Lutheran	57	42
New Apostolic	52	73
Presbyterian	28	31
Jewish Christian	17	17
Methodist	10	7
Nazarene	9	11
Other Protestants Subtotal	1,139*	1,347*
Protestant Total	5,219*	6,707*

Sources: Viktor Yelens'kii, Oleksandr Stegnii, Andrii Yurash, and Il'ko Kucheriv, "Kruglii stіл' Religijnii vibir naselennia Ukraini: za danimi opituvannia gromads'koi dumki" [Round Table Discussion 'Religious Choices of Ukraine's Population: According to the Data from Public Opinions Polls']. Kyiv: Fond "Demokratichni initsiativi," Mott Foundation, 2000.

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Commentary

Research on the denominational configuration of Ukraine today varies so much that it raises questions about validity. However, the problem is not researchers' lack of professionalism, but the lack of firm denominational identity among respondents. Actually, this is not a problem for the Eastern Rite Catholic Church because it consistently accounts for six to eight percent of the adult population of Ukraine in surveys. It is more complicated with

Protestants because some surveys do not "catch" them at all. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses,** some Pentecostals, and even some Baptists do not respond to the name Protestant. Yet, Protestant denominations that have a fixed membership are easy to count. The All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptist Church has 130,000 members, the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christians (Pentecostal) has about 90,000 members, the Ukrainian Union of Seventh-day Adventists has

Editor's Note:

Keston Institute's journal, *Religion, State and Society* 29 (September 2001), devotes all but one article to the theme of Christianity in Ukraine today. For order information, consult Keston's Web site: www.keston.org.

about 40,000 members, and Jehovah's Witnesses** have about 107,000 members. The above Protestants, plus members of charismatic and independent churches (excluding Reformed and Lutherans), cannot be more than 600,000 to 700,000. Without question, their influence on religious life is much

higher than their numbers would suggest. But the figures shown also undermine the idea of "Protestant expansion" in Ukraine. ♦

****Editor's Note:** The East-West Church & Ministry Report does not consider Jehovah's Witnesses, who are non-trinitarian, to be members of a Christian denomination.

How Religious Is Ukraine? Results of Survey Research

1. Your attitude to religion. You are ...

A believer	66
A nonbeliever	23
An atheist	5
Difficult to answer	7

Sixty-six percent of the people questioned consider themselves to be believers, almost a fourth are nonbelievers, and five percent say that they are atheists. This rather high level of declared believers does not correspond with actual participation in religious life.

2. How often are you coming to church services?

Once a week	7
Twice or more often a month	5
Once a month	5
2—11 times a year	23
Once a year	15
Never	10
No answer	35

Calculating the results, we can assume that the number of believers who actually hold to church canons and live correspondingly is not higher than 15–20 percent of Ukraine's adult population today.

3. What is your denomination?

Ukrainian Orthodox Church	
Kyiv Patriarchate	22
Ukrainian Orthodox Church	
Moscow Patriarchate	12
Orthodox, but do not belong	
to any denomination	26
Eastern Rite Catholic Church	8
Ukrainian Autocephalous	
Orthodox Church	1
Roman Catholic Church	1
Other	5
Do not belong to any	
denomination/ecumenist	25

There is a paradoxical situation in that the number of registered churches of the Moscow Patriarchate is much larger than the number of churches of the Kyiv Patriarchate, yet only 12 percent of the people identify themselves with the Moscow Patriarchate, whereas 22 percent identify with the Kyiv Patriarchate.

Source: Ibid.

Churches in Ukraine Today: At Odds with Each Other; At Odds with the State

Anatoly Kolodny

Problems Resolved

In the new, independent Ukrainian state, a number of previous problems in religious life have been resolved.

- The activities of some major confessions prohibited in the past have been permitted to resume, most notably the Ukrainian Autonomous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.
- All confessions have obtained the freedom to conduct their canonical, catechization, and preaching work freely without obstruction.
- An indigenous Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchy has been established.
- Religious buildings and possessions, which were taken away by the Communist regime, are now being given back to confessional organizations.
- Religious organizations are able to establish or renew fraternal connections abroad.

Problems Persisting

At the same time it seems that no country in the world has a religious life characterized by such complexity and conflict or such uncertainty as exists today in Ukraine. The following problems are evident.

- In an unprecedented crisis, Orthodoxy has disintegrated into three independent churches hostile to one another. This crisis has a distinctly geopolitical character, reflecting state relations between Ukraine and Russia and in Ecumenical Orthodoxy.
- Liberation has led to the clash of interests of differing religious unions, resulting in many-sided and many-leveled conflicts. The acute interconfessional conflicts in Ukraine, especially among different Orthodox churches, as well as between Orthodox and Greek-Catholic believers, have not only a religious

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Local representatives of the State Committee for Religious Affairs lack an attitude of equality towards various confessions.

The rehabilitation of religion in public opinion during the years of independence of Ukraine and changes in the public estimation of the role of religion are a kind of illusion rather than a true reflection of religious life.

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ground, but also important political and regional aspects, dividing Ukraine into various regions according to the religious factor. In the L'viv Region alone these conflicts embrace more than 600 communities.

- At the time of the totalitarian regime the traditional churches were so constricted that they now need help from society in order to reestablish their status as dynamic spiritual and social institutions. Otherwise they shall suffer defeat in competition with foreign missionaries.

- Interference of foreign spiritual centers, in particular the Moscow Patriarchy and the Vatican, into the religious life of the subordinate confessions makes urgent the problem of the legal solution of the connections between Ukrainian religious unions and corresponding foreign centers.

- The opposition of traditional confessions in Ukraine to new nontraditional religious formations is becoming more serious. Traditional religious bodies are eager to establish their own representative bodies at some state institutions with the aim of using their influence to place limitations on the activities of nontraditional religious bodies.

- Ukrainian press and other state mass media present religious problems in an excessively unskilled, unprofessional, tendentious way and often even in a confessionally partisan manner that creates the impression of the presence of "state churches," or a "single national religion."

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchy claims the role of state religion in Ukraine, while in the western part of the country Greek Catholicism takes a similar position, thanks to the support of local political forces. In both cases, however, one cannot agree with such an assertion. Both are simply claiming as reality that which they desire.

At the present time, state authority in Ukraine is

in search of social, political, and spiritual unity for the country. Under such conditions all eyes are fixed on the church and religion that, until recently, was viewed as a single and legitimate institution that had been in opposition to the former ruling Communist Party and Communist ideology. The post-totalitarian elite sees religion as an instrument of political and ethnic mobilization, a means for carrying these tasks that, properly speaking, are beyond the religious sphere.

Federal and Local Religion Policy at Odds

Existing legislation concerning freedom of conscience is often subjected to criticism by various political forces, and laws that violate the freedom of beliefs are sometimes accepted at the regional level. Local representatives of the State Committee for Religious Affairs lack an attitude of equality towards various confessions. Often they place limitations on the activities of new religious bodies, despite the fact that these newer bodies find their followers among the most active layers of society—the young people and the intelligentsia. The law does not prevent local legislation that may favor one confession. This is already taking place in Galicia where Greek-Catholicism enjoys privileges given by local authorities. ♦

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Understanding Nontraditional Religiosity in Ukraine

Lyudmyla O. Filipovych

Ukraine is now experiencing its third national renaissance. Religious organizations are coming to the fore as an active factor of spiritual renaissance. The network of religious organizations is growing very rapidly. The number of religious communities functioning in Ukraine in 1990 was approximately 4,500 but in a decade it has reached almost 24,500. In the recent past only 10 percent of respondents regarded themselves as believers, but this figure has now reached 70 percent. The number of believers among young people, the intelligentsia, men, and the socially active population has increased markedly.

Religion in Deep Crisis

Taking all this into account, many speak lately about religious renaissance in Ukraine. It is difficult to agree fully with this assertion. The rehabilitation of religion in public opinion during the years of independence of Ukraine and changes in the public estimation of the role of religion in spiritual and national renaissance are rather a reaction to the propaganda of religious spirituality by the mass-media, a kind of illusion rather than a true reflection of religious life. Church life in Ukraine is characterized by a deep crisis (save perhaps Roman Catholic and some Protestant trends).

This crisis is manifested in the following ways:

1. the intensification of interchurch and interconfessional conflicts;
2. a decrease in the influence of traditional religious bodies and an aggravation of their financial position;
3. various foreign missions taking over the religious field in Ukraine;
4. an increase of surface manifestations of religiosity in the absence of a deep and strong faith, with the presence of exotic and pragmatic orientations of young people towards religious phenomena;
5. the removal of religion from the processes of national renaissance; and
6. the decline of relevance of religion as a moral imperative in the sphere of everyday life.

The Spread of Nontraditional Religions

The merging and spreading of neoreligious movements cause alarm in the traditional religious environment and among the leaders of state power structures who feel a strong threat to centuries-old cultural and spiritual traditions and who yearn for [restrictions on] neoreligions in the form of state legislation. What are the distinguishing features of the development of nontraditional religiosity in Ukraine? First, nontraditional religiosity is polyconfessional. There are a great number of neo-Christian movements, both homebred and of foreign origin, in particular pro-Russian, neo-Christian movements. Trends toward oriental sects, mysticism, and scientology are widespread. Neopaganism is gradually strengthening its position. Second, nontraditional religiosity is urban, mainly among youth and intellectuals. Third, individuals not burdened by past

religious traditions and characterized primarily by an indifferent worldview become followers of neo-religions in Ukraine. Fourth, the spread of nonconfessional religiosity in Ukraine is often expressed in various forms of mysticism as well as in the creation of different theosophical unions and clubs.

What are the determinants that cause the merging and spreading of nontraditional religiosity in Ukraine?

1. the presence of a spiritual vacuum in the Ukrainian people created on the one hand by the failure of communist ideology, and on the other hand by the estrangement of a considerable part of the population from their own indigenous spiritual tradition;
2. the traditional churches' loss of prestige in the eyes of the people due to their part in the official political establishment and dogmatic and ritual forms that intellectual believers no longer accept, considering such to be an anachronism in religious life;
3. the destruction of personal family relations in urbanized society and the rupture of close connections between generations that existed in the past; and
4. the spiritual denationalization of a considerable part of Ukraine's population under Communism. ♦

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Interconfessional Intolerance in Ukraine

Howard L. Biddulph

Recently, the bitter opposition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate to the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ukraine has revealed the continuance of serious alienation and intolerance of the largest Orthodox confession toward Catholicism. This Orthodox church vigorously petitioned the government to cancel or postpone the papal visit, but the government ignored these demands to welcome the Pontiff both to western Ukraine and also to Kyiv. The Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church joined other confessions in warmly welcoming John Paul II.

National Versus Local Treatment of New Religious Movements

All four large traditional churches have continued to vigorously oppose state acceptance of new religious movements (NRMs) in Ukraine, seeking to block their official registration, foreign missionary programs, and local evangelical activities. Since 1995

the state at the national level has generally protected NRMs against the suppression desired by the dominant churches. At regional and local levels, however, the picture has sometimes been different. Some regional and local state authorities have been more responsive to the intolerance of the most powerful religious bodies and have illegally restricted or suppressed activities of registered NRMs.

Intolerance at a Tolerance Conference

The following recent experience highly suggests the conclusion that intolerance remains high. At the May 2001 Conference on Religious Freedom and Tolerance in Kyiv, sponsored by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the Center for Religious Information and Freedom, I was asked to chair a final session on the question: "How Religious Bodies Can Promote Greater Religious Tolerance." Instead of providing constructive suggestions on this topic,

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Interconfessional Alliance (cont. from page 7)

the session was dominated from beginning to end by the enumeration of grievances and attacks among religious groups. The representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Kyiv Patriarchate, attacked the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and was responded to in kind. Catholic and Protestant representatives presented mutual grievances. Spokesmen of the White Brotherhood, Hare Krishna, Muslims in Crimea, and Neo-Buddhists bitterly aired their grievances against actions by traditional churches or local state representatives. One lone Reformed Jew called for mutual understanding and tolerance between his faith and the Christian majority in Ukraine, but his witness was drowned in the mutual recriminations of others. I concluded the session with a strong appeal for mutual respect and cooperative action, but the dominant mood of participants in the session was clearly oblivious to that perspective.

Religious Policy in Conflict: More Evidence

The Kuchma presidency has followed a fairly consistent policy of egalitarian treatment of the four traditional churches since 1995, seeking to reduce or resolve conflicts and to promote mutual tolerance. It has also taken a full toleration position toward the overwhelming majority of nontraditional faiths, including NRMs. Officials of the State Committee for Religious Affairs, who administer religious policy and most of the judiciary, are the most visible supporters of that relatively full-toleration perspective. However, parliamentary parties of the left and far right seem to be defenders of one or more of the traditional churches and exhibit a nontoleration or, in some cases, limited toleration perspective toward all or most NRMs. Deputies from the parties of the center and center-right or center-left are the main defenders of full toleration. The chairman and the deputy chairman of the parliamentary commission that considers legislation on religion are supporters of full toleration of nontraditional religions.

Ukrainian security agencies are the other locus in the national government of officials with a limited toleration or nontoleration toward nontraditional religions. The old Soviet KGB perspective that foreign missionaries are agents of foreign security agencies, and that membership in nontraditional and especially new religious movements is sufficient grounds to initiate security surveillance, has been carried over into the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU). In a democracy, equal protection under the law is contravened when religious affiliation alone is considered a sufficient basis for questioning the political or cultural loyalty of citizens. Reportedly, the Ukrainian Security Service closely monitors membership lists and group activities of nontraditional religions, especially NRMs.

In my experience there is a wide spectrum of views about religious minorities among regional and local officials, from full toleration, limited toleration, to nontoleration. Regional and local officials are more easily pressured by the traditional churches to suppress NRMs than national officials. There have

been quite a few instances of local violation of national policy and laws in the religion field.

In conclusion, post-Soviet Ukraine is a state whose national policies since 1995 have favored equal treatment of traditional churches and generally broad toleration of nontraditional confessions, including most NRMs. Yet a broad culture of toleration does not seem yet to have developed among all actors in the Ukrainian state. A wide segment of state actors seems to favor limited toleration or nontoleration of NRMs. They may conceivably be able to influence national legislation and some administrative activities. A troubling example of this is Decree No. 0109 of the Cabinet of Ministers, dated 26 March 2001, addressed to the State Committee for Religious Affairs. The State Committee is ordered to "improve the mechanism for countering the penetration and growth in Ukraine of destructive religions that cause damage to the State and its citizenry." These "destructive religions" are not identified in the decree, leaving the directive open to various interpretations, especially since it was also sent to regional state administrations. Democracy in Ukraine is negatively affected by any degree of selective toleration.

Arbitrariness and Whim

In 1997 Kyiv's city government, which formerly had registered 300 new Protestant churches, forbade the renting of meeting halls to Protestants, who understandably suffer from the absence of church buildings. Directors of local movie theaters and clubs were forced to break contracts. Another example of such opposition is the emergence of a new association of representatives in the Ukrainian Parliament entitled: "For the Advocacy of Canonical and Traditional Faiths in Ukraine." Its objective is to advance the interests of traditional churches.

At the local level, oblast committees of religious affairs have refused entry to representatives of many religious organizations and to foreign missionaries. There are cases in Rivno Oblast where Americans were barred from missionary activity. It is evident that relations between new religious congregations and the state are not unfolding smoothly. Moreover, these restrictive tendencies will likely persist. The personal, emotional, and politically opportunistic attitude of the local government clerk will determine the fate of this or that congregation, rather than the law. Decisions are based on whether the official "likes" or "dislikes" a church and whether it is expedient to assist or suppress the congregation. The absence of a clear state policy regarding religions and churches and the arbitrariness of local power structures that flout existing legislation, together provoke individual congregations into noncompliance and precipitate conflict with the local government. These governments still frequently balk at granting registration rights or construction permits for church buildings.

Nevertheless, we are optimistic about the future. Ukraine has always been open to diverse influences because of its location at the crossroads of East and

A broad culture of toleration does not seem yet to have developed among all actors in the Ukrainian state.

West and North and South, where various cultural and religious worlds intersect. This has served to enhance pluralism in the Ukrainian worldview and a tolerant attitude toward different ways of thinking, including the religious. These are vital preconditions for interdenominational and interreligious understanding and cooperation. ♦

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Anatoly M. Kolodny, Lyudmyla O. Filipovych, and Howard L. Biddulph, Religion and the Churches in Modern Ukraine. A Collection of Scientific Reports (Kyiv: Svit znan', 2001).

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Catholicism in Postcommunist Europe Today

Timothy A. Byrnes

Catholicism—Holding Its Own

In East Central Europe the Catholic Church was an active agent of resistance to Communism. But the question is the role the church plays now, after Communism has passed from the scene. In short, and in the simplest terms possible, the Catholic Church plays a very important role in shaping the postcommunist politics and societies of East Central Europe. At least in its first decade, postcommunist democracy (if we can even use such a phrase with full confidence) has not brought with it a marginalization of the Catholic Church, in either social or political terms. Far from it, in fact. On the contrary, a decade or so after the fall of Communism, the Catholic Church remains deeply involved in the central political debates in the region over both political structure and public policy. It remains deeply implicated (for better or worse) in the ethnic divisions that characterize the postcommunist era. And it remains profoundly part of the social fabric of just about every postcommunist state in the broad south-easterly arc stretching from Poland to Croatia.

It was by no means obvious or predetermined that the Catholic Church would emerge from the cataclysm of Communism as a viable institution in the region. Stalinism, with its self-conscious effort to destroy the church, could have been successful. Instead, the church in Poland, the church in Slovakia, the church in Croatia, and even the catacomb Greek Catholic Church in Romania survived Communism. All of these local manifestations of Catholicism were still there in 1989 to celebrate the collapse of the regimes that had tormented the church for four long decades.

The Catholic Church has, so far at least, been able to navigate the treacherous shoals of the anticommunist revolutions with some degree of success. The story is far, far from over, of course. Secularism appears to have challenged, though not swamped, the church in East Central Europe. Throughout the region the Catholic Church is still a substantial counterweight to the consumerism and, for lack of a better term, Westernization that arrived in East Central Europe in 1989. In Poland, the

church is the counterweight to secularization and to a kind of postcommunist social democracy; in Slovakia, the church is working to reestablish itself as a viable basis for a kind of postcommunist Christian Democracy; and in Croatia, the church is struggling within itself over its relationship with postcommunist nationalism. But the main point is that in all three settings the Catholic Church is still actively involved in the political life of these diverse postcommunist states.

The Polish Case

The breadth and depth of the Catholic Church's role in postcommunist politics are due to the church's ability to participate simultaneously at all levels of politics: systemic, national, and individual. How should one conceptualize the church's role in postcommunist Poland, for example? Is it a system-level phenomenon growing out of the Holy See's status as a nonterritorial player in international affairs and the Holy See's obvious commitment to shoring up the status of the church in the Pope's homeland? Is it a nation-level phenomenon growing out of the very specific history of Poland and the role that Catholicism has played in preserving the Polish nation, not to mention reconstituting an authentically autonomous Polish state? Or finally, is it an individual-level phenomenon, a function of the will and energy of one remarkable man, the Polish Pope, Karol Wojtyla? The church's role in postcommunist Poland, as well as in postcommunist East Central Europe more generally, is at one and the same time a function of all of these systemic, national, and individual factors combined.

Politically Connected

First, the church, through the Holy See, is formally a part of the various international institutions that comprise a kind of supranational level of political interaction in the post-Cold War period. The Holy See is a Permanent Observer at the United Nations, a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and a full, duly

(continued on page 10)

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Catholicism in Europe (cont. from page 9)

invited and seated participant in international conferences on global issues such as population, the role of women in society, or the dangers posed to the world community by environmental degradation. The Catholic Church, through its Secretariat of State and its delegation at the OSCE, had a "seat at the table" during international discussion of the breakup of the Yugoslavian state. Moreover, it was able to use that access to press, in all ways possible, for the early recognition by the European community of the individual sovereignty of the Catholic republics of Croatia and Slovenia. Why should the Catholic Church, of all institutions, be granted formal status, and even at times full membership, in political institutions that are otherwise comprised of territorial states? Controversial though it may be, the special status granted to the Holy See in international politics nevertheless affords the Catholic Church a level of political participation in postcommunist politics that it would not otherwise have.

There is no avoiding the important part that Cardinal Józef Glemp has played, and is playing, in shaping the role of the Catholic Church in postcommunist Poland. The story is a complex and ambiguous one. But on the whole, I would credit (or, rather, blame) Glemp's triumphal response to the end of Communism, and his general lack of political imagination in the years since, with helping to delay the reconceptualization of the church's role in Poland that must come soon. Cardinal Glemp, in many ways, is a man of the past. He was trained in an opposition church and prepared for types of political resistance that are no longer appropriate within democratic Poland. This particular bishop may have to pass from the scene before the Polish church can truly come to terms with the radically new circumstances within which it finds itself in the postcommunist age.

The Slovak Case

In the Slovak Republic individual bishops and the particular approaches they take to political circumstances have also profoundly influenced the position of the church. Some bishops collaborated with the Communist regime in Slovakia (really Czechoslovakia, of course); some did not. And now these two groups of bishops are vying with each other for control of a bishops' conference that is facing very difficult circumstances indeed. Bishop Rudolf Baláž, the president of the Slovak Bishops Conference, has spearheaded the movement of the Catholic hierarchy away from [former Prime Minister] Mečiar's brand of nationalism and demagoguery, but he is also leading the effort to "reevaluate" Father Tiso and his wartime fascist government. And he represents, both as the leader of the bishops' conference and himself personally, the shrug-of-the-shoulders response of the Slovak bishops to the plight of Hungarian Catholics within their flock. In Croatia, Archbishop Josip Bozanić acted quickly to distance himself and his church

from [President] Tudjman and his brand of violent nationalism and to identify himself and his church more explicitly with John Paul II and the Pope's calls for ethnic reconciliation in the Balkans.

A Political Savvy Pope

Individuals are not all that make history, but individuals do matter. Nothing makes this point more clearly than the case of Karol Wojtyła himself. Would the role of the Catholic Church in East Central Europe have been different over the last two decades if the first Italian Pope John Paul had not died in 1978 after only one single month on the throne of St. Peter? Of course it would have. It is no insult to the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and elsewhere to point out the central importance of having in the Vatican a Polish pope with a remarkable flair for public relations, insisting day after day after day on the fundamental inhumanity of Communism and embodying in his very person the profound failure of Marxism-Leninism to defeat or tame Catholicism and Catholic humanism in East Central Europe. Alberto Luciani of Italy (Wojtyła's predecessor as Pope John Paul I) simply would not have, could not have, played the same role.

Catholic Hierarchs as Nationalists

I traveled to places like Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania expecting to hear [in] my conversations with church officials carefully worded expressions of Catholic solidarity and pointed endorsements of papal calls for reconciliation. Over the years I have grown used to the characteristic loyalty and calibrated blandness of most Episcopal discourse. In actual fact, however, I was quite surprised to hear how willing bishops and their aides were to express their unhappiness with each other across national barriers. In Budapest, László Lukács, director of the Hungarian Bishops Conference's Office of Communication, explicitly characterized Slovak bishops as nationalists. In Trvana, Slovakia, Bishop Dominik Tóth dismissively discounted the validity of Hungarian ethnic resentment. And in Oradea, Romania, Bishop József Tempfli exhibited a palpable fatigue when discussing his difficult relations with some elements of the church in Hungary and especially with the Greek Catholic Church in his own country. These experiences helped lead me to the conclusion that the Catholic Church in East Central Europe is still very much aware of its multiethnic structure.

There is a delicate balancing act or even an internal contradiction inherent in the outlook and worldview articulated and embodied by many of these bishops. On the one hand, they are committed to the Pope personally and to his vision of a renewed role for Christianity and for the Catholic Church in the new, post-Cold War international order. But on the other hand, they are apparently unwilling or unable to apply that commitment wholeheartedly to their transnational relations with each other when it comes to ethnic tensions within the church. Over

and over again I have heard bishops and priests echo the Pope's call for the aggressive defense of the church's institutional interests, for the uncompromising application of the church's moral teachings, and for the reevangelization of the post-Cold War European union. But I have also heard these same bishops and priests change their tone ever so slightly when discussing their role in the ethnic tensions that bedevil Europe and potentially limit the church. I have heard bishop after bishop wearily blame his counterparts across one national divide or another for the lack of unity and coordination that characterize interethnic Episcopal relations in the postcommunist region.

Papal authority and papal vision meet their limits in the face of the historic, deeply imbedded relationships that pertain between the Catholic Church and national identity in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Croatia. The Roman Catholic Church is, in an unavoidable way, fully

Polish, fully Slovak, and fully Croatian. This fact deepens the difficulty that popes and Vatican officials have in overcoming national identity and in using their church as a vehicle for deepening and redefining European union. The Vatican's hope that a revitalized Catholic Church will sit at the heart of a common European home is being frustrated at the moment by the powerful force of secularism in the West and by the postcommunist uncertainties of life in the East. Yet at the same time and at an even more fundamental level, the Vatican's hopes are also being frustrated by the national institutions and national identities that are built right into the very structure of the church itself. ♦

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission of the publisher from Timothy A. Byrnes, Transnational Catholicism in Postcommunist Europe (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

Is There a Correlation between Religious Confession and Economic Vitality?

Daniel Chirot

The most cursory glance at economic growth statistics in post-Communist Europe suggests that the past counts a lot. Yet it isn't quite as simple as a Boeing analyst summarized in a 1991 conversation when talking about economic growth potential in post-Communist Eastern Europe: "Protestant and Catholic, good; Orthodox, bad; Muslim, forget it." It is more complicated, of course, but this sort of gross and unfair generalization does succinctly capture what has happened as well as or better than some of the more sophisticated comparative theory models.

An alternate description would state in more politically correct terms that Central Europe is doing pretty well, especially Poland. By contrast, the Balkans, including Romania, are doing quite poorly, except for Catholic Slovenia. Croatia, now that it is at peace and President Franjo Tudjman has been replaced by more pro-Western leaders, shows prospects for recovery, but Serbia is hopeless. Albania is a disaster. In the former Soviet Union, the Baltic countries (Catholic for the most part) [sic] are doing

best, the Orthodox countries are doing badly or worse, and much of Central Asia is a catastrophe.

Economic statistics vary from year to year and there are seeming anomalies. The Czech Republic, for example, once a leader in reforms, is now performing relatively poorly. But to go from Prague and Brno to Bucharest is to go from one world to another. All statistics about direct foreign investment, about consumption patterns, or about quality of life show that, indeed, Catholic and Protestant Central Europe is far better off than the Orthodox and Muslim East and South. ♦

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from "How Important Is the Past? Interpreting Eastern Europe's Transitional Failures and Successes," East European Studies News, (November-December 2000), 3, based on an East European Studies Meeting Report.

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Rating Religious Liberty in Post-Soviet States

Editor's Note: The Freedom House Center for Religious Freedom, Washington, DC, and editor Paul Marshall deserve commendation for their balanced and comprehensive survey of Religious Freedom in the World, A Global Report on Freedom and Persecution (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2000). The Report's rankings for the nations of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the study's carefully nuanced criteria for evaluating levels of freedom of conscience, provide an informed and succinct summary of the status of religious liberty in the region.

Religious Freedom Rating

(1-3 Free; 4-5 Partly Free; 6-7 Not Free)

Country
1 Estonia
2 Lithuania, Poland
3 Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Ukraine
4 Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyztan, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia
5 Azerbaijan, Belarus
6 Uzbekistan
7 Turkmenistan

Religious Freedom in the World based its ratings on the following checklist:

(1-3 Free; 4-5 Partly Free; 6-7 Not Free)

Country
1. Individuals' right to freedom of conscience
2. Freedom of worship
3. Freedom of clergy
4. Right to social participation
5. Freedom of religious education and instruction
6. Right to self-government by religious bodies
7. Equality/nondiscrimination of individuals
8. Equality/nondiscrimination of communities and institutions.

Editor Paul Marshall carefully crafted criteria for each of eight categories. For example, a sampling of the 15 questions concerning "Individuals' Right to Freedom of Conscience" asks if "citizens have the right 1) to have or not have a religion or belief of their choice; 2) to adopt or to abandon a religion or belief; 3) to change religion or belief; 4) to be members of religious or nonreligious communities of their choice; and 5) to manifest, to defend, to promote, and to disseminate their religious or

nonreligious beliefs in private, in public, and in the media." The editor derived checklist criteria from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, the European Convention on Human Rights, and from Willy Fautre, Human Rights Without Frontiers, Brussels, Belgium. ♦

Orthodoxy as a Component of Russian Identity

Kimmo Kääriäinen and Dmitrii Furman

Table 1. Russian Attitudes Toward Different Religions

Toward:	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad
Orthodoxy	44	50	1	0
Islam	8	51	16	5
Catholicism	5	53	9	3
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad	4	39	13	6
Buddhism	3	35	15	7
Old Believers	4	33	21	7
Judaism	2	28	19	8
Lutherans	2	27	12	6
Baptists	2	23	33	12
Krishnaism	1	20	20	13
Methodists	1	16	15	7
Pentecostals	1	15	24	12
Adventists	1	14	17	10
Jehovah's Witnesses	1	13	26	21
Munism [Moonies]	1	10	18	15

There is an understanding of Orthodoxy as the common Russian religion. [At the same time,] people, though they may be far from Orthodoxy, tend to pay higher respect to religions that are traditional for other nationalities and that do not direct any propaganda towards Russians. The "worst" religions are new ones and those that are active.

Table 2. People's Trust in Different Institutions

	Trust completely	Trust	Do not trust	Do not trust at all
Russian Orthodox Church	23	46	11	7
"The Green"	14	50	11	6
Army	9	43	26	12
UN	5	32	15	13
Television	5	45	32	12
European Union	3	23	19	13
Mass Media	3	37	35	18
Trade Unions	6	27	29	24
Courts	3	31	32	24
CIS Countries	1	20	32	16
Police	3	25	37	30
Government	2	23	36	32
Large Companies	1	14	28	30
Duma (Parliament)	2	13	40	38
Political Parties	1	7	39	34

Russian Orthodoxy not only is the leading religion, but also is the most trusted organization compared to other community and government institutions. Unlike trust in other institutions (or better said, distrust, because the degree of trust of the Russian people in different social institutions is strikingly small), trust in Orthodoxy is "ideological" because in reality only a small number of Russians have any real contacts with the Russian Orthodox Church as an institution. This is the direct expression of the "pro-Orthodox" consensus that has arisen in Russian society.

Orthodoxy and Russian Identity

According to the data, a close connection exists in the modern Russian mind between Orthodoxy and national identity. Orthodoxy took first place in national identity with the fall of the USSR and Soviet identity. In Soviet times "Soviet" conveyed pride in being the first Socialist country, free education and medical service, a great military force, and success in space. Now all that has collapsed and Russians have found themselves in the situation of not being certain what value there is in being Russian. Here Orthodoxy comes to the rescue, not so much as a religion, but as the symbol of Russian originality and spiritual worth, something that can be proudly opposed to others. As a result, the concept of "Orthodox" in modern Russia is not the concept of "believer," which totally contradicts any "normal" logic.

An Overlap of Orthodox and Nonbelievers

In 1991, 1993, and 1996 we asked the question: "Without any connection with your church attendance, do you consider yourself to be an adherent of any particular denomination?" People who answered "yes" in 1991 were 34 percent; in 1993, 43 percent; and in 1996, 36 percent; which is more than those who called themselves believers (correspondingly 23 percent, 32 percent, and 34 percent). This means that for many Russians today it is possible to be an adherent of a certain faith without being a believer. When those who identified themselves as adherents of a denomination were asked what denomination, the majority (1991, 80 percent; 1993 and 1996, 91 percent) replied: Orthodox. Non-Orthodox were, first of all,

representatives of different ethnic minorities, mostly Muslims. The total average of Baptists and Adventists was not more than one percent in all these years among those who identified themselves with any religious faith, let alone all the respondents. In fact, many nonbelievers are "Orthodox," and even atheists can claim the same, like Belorussian president A. Lukashenko: "I am an Orthodox atheist."

In 1999 we asked respondents a similar but slightly different question. We did not ask before if respondents identify themselves as adherents of any confession but we asked directly: "Do you consider yourself an adherent of Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism, or other confessions, or an unbeliever?" With this formulation 82 percent of all Russian respondents called themselves Orthodox (three percent called themselves nonbelievers and 13 percent "do not know"). This shows that the number of Orthodox is much greater than the number of believers (42 percent). Fifty percent of nonbelievers called themselves Orthodox and 42 percent of atheists did the same. That 82 percent of Russians consider themselves Orthodox certainly is a great achievement, but it is clear that such "ideological" Orthodoxy has only very indirect relation to religious faith. ♦

Translated by Vitaliy Bak.

Excerpt printed with permission from Kimmo Kääriäinen and Dmitrii Furman, Starye tserkvi, novye veruushchie; religiia v massovom soznanii postsovetskoi Rossii [Old Churches, New Believers; Religion in the Mass Consciousness of Post-Soviet Russia] (Moscow: Letnii Sad, 2000).

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A Post-Soviet Evangelical Theology

Darrell Cosden

The Search for an Evangelical Identity

Since its beginnings, Russian and Ukrainian evangelicalism has suffered an identity crisis similar to that of all Eurasian institutions: is it Eastern or is it Western? The answer is it is genuinely both. Nevertheless, whether accidental or not, Western (often North American conservative) evangelical theology, both in its structure and content, has dominated this church. This is partly due to an often necessary dependence upon its Western counterparts for theological resources—concepts, materials, and teachers. It is also partly due to a many-times prevalent Western evangelical insistence that only its questions, forms, and content taken together form a truly Christian and evangelical theology.

Post-Soviet evangelical theology will have to come to grips with its own unique identity. This will mean critically evaluating its relationship to conservative Western evangelical theology, striving to understand the context within which its own theology developed. Such a coming to grips with its identity will likewise inevitably mean entering into a close dialogue with Eastern Orthodox theology, which too has shaped it and formed it culturally, intellectually, and in terms of its spirituality.

It will also be important for post-Soviet evangelical theology to seek other dialogue partners, especially those with which it already has some affinity, if not relationship. Contextual theologies like Latin American liberation theology or Asian theology might offer insights in settings similar to those of today's post-Soviet Christian.

A Postliberal Option

Postliberalism might be a particularly appropriate dialogue partner for post-Soviet evangelical theology. Essentially postliberalism is a theological methodology that is committed to removing modernity or liberalism (explicit and implicit) from Christian life and thinking. This is its negative function as a movement. Its positive function is to call Christians to return to the Bible so that Scripture rather than, say, philosophy, can form Christian thinking, actions, and community life. Specifically postliberalism means returning to the Bible but not as if it were a collection of propositions to be dissected, broken down, objectively mastered by the reader, and then extracted from their literary

forms for logical organization into a system that we can call theology (the liberal approach). Rather, a postliberal return to the Bible involves reading scripture more as narrative, as literature, and thus as a whole that we can enter into and be formed by.

Postliberalism wants to emphasize 1) the Bible as scripture and central for forming Christian life and community, 2) the accessibility of scripture to all Christians, 3) the literary nature and wholeness of the Bible and thus the need for a theology that embraces rather than destroys this nature, 4) the dangers of liberalism and liberal approaches to Christianity, and, related to this, 5) the need for a contemporary theology that genuinely moves us beyond modernity.

Living in Russia and Ukraine and teaching and working with Soviet and post-Soviet evangelicals, I have found that many of post-Soviet evangelicalism's concerns are quite similar in both ethos and content to those in postliberalism. First, Soviet and post-Soviet evangelicals are, as Walter Sawatsky has described them, "a Bible movement" whose approach has always been "to read the Bible and put into practice its plain and simple message." Second, post-Soviet evangelicals lean culturally and intellectually toward more literary or narrative approaches in their thinking and knowing. They tend to write poetry rather than systematic theology. And third, post-Soviet evangelicals (as their Eastern Orthodox neighbors) are very weary of Western enlightenment liberalism and its influence upon theology, even upon Western evangelical theology. I am calling for this specific dialogue because I believe it will help clarify many issues for post-Soviet evangelicalism.

In conclusion, I believe it is time for post-Soviet evangelicals to come of age theologically, to hammer out a more contextualized post-Soviet evangelical theology, and to do this consciously in context. Whether this theology ends up taking a more systematic form, a more poetic or literary/narrative form, or indeed some other yet undiscovered form remains to be seen. ♦

Darrell Cosden is a lecturer in Christian doctrine and ethics at the International Christian College, Glasgow, Scotland, and teaches contextual theology at Donetsk Christian University, Donetsk, Ukraine.

Post-Soviet evangelicals (as their Eastern Orthodox neighbors) are very weary of Western enlightenment liberalism and its influence upon theology, even upon Western evangelical theology.

Non-Indigenous Protestant Missionaries in Post-Soviet States, 1994–2001

Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk

Former Soviet Union	1994	2001	Percentage Increase/Decrease
Armenia	10	N/A*	—
Azerbaijan	N/A*	N/A*	—
Belarus	6	82	+1,367
Estonia	45	95	+211
Georgia	8	24	+300
Kazakhstan	N/A*	N/A*	—
Kyrgyzstan	N/A*	138	—
Latvia	29	72	+248
Lithuania	4	62	+1,550
Moldova	0	50	+5,000
Russia	505	2,200+	+436
Tajikistan	N/A*	N/A*	—
Turkmenistan	N/A*	N/A*	—
Ukraine	48	463	+965
Uzbekistan	N/A*	N/A*	—
Missionaries "working in Eurasia or in sensitive countries"	458	N/A	
Subtotal	1,113	3,186	+286
East Central Europe			
Albania	1,113	460	-241
Bulgaria	77	132	+171
Czech Republic	87	232	+267
Hungary	213	489	+230
Poland	77	151	+196
Romania	165	453	+275
Slovakia	10	131	+1,310
Former Yugoslavia**	53	399	+752
Subtotal	864	2,447	+283
Total	1,977	5,633	+285

*Information not available

** 2001: Bosnia, 137; Croatia, 117; Macedonia, 47; Slovenia, 46; Yugoslavia [Serbia-Montenegro], 52.

Source: Johnstone, Patrick and Jason Mandryk. *Operation World*. 5th ed. (Bromley, England: OM Publishing, 1995); 6th ed. (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Publishing, 2001).

Editor's Notes:

1. In countries where figures for both 1994 and 2001 are available, increases in the number of Protestant missionaries occurred in eight former Soviet republics and in seven Central and East European nations. The exception was Albania which experienced a sharp decline of 241 percent.
2. Anecdotal evidence might have suggested missionary retrenchment in post-Soviet territories in recent years, given growing government restrictions and rising anti-Western sentiment. The increases noted above come as such a surprise that the East-West Church & Ministry Report hopes in the near future to undertake a survey of the largest sending agencies to compare figures published previously with current figures.
3. The data in many cases raise as many questions as answers. What is the status of the missionary community in Central Asia? How did mission sending agencies manage such large increases in the face of growing domestic opposition? Could it be, even assuming accuracy in reporting, that the figures reflect more of a short-term than career missionary surge? Could it be that many local authorities and residents quietly favor Protestant compassionate ministries, public protests notwithstanding? Does the Albanian civil strife of 1999-2000 fully account for the dramatic decline in the number of missionaries in Albania? Reader comments on any of these questions would be welcome.

Post-Soviet and Third World Contextualization

Trevor R. H. Warner

Third World Lessons—Lacking

There has often been a lack of good missiology and a failure of those working in Russia to draw on the experiences of the contextualization debate that arose in the Third World. Mission administrator Samuel Metcalf notes, "Unfortunately, missiological thinking and practice have been largely ignored in much of the former Soviet Union. Under the false labels of 'new paradigms' and 'new strategies' old mistakes simply are being repeated."¹ However, he does not go far enough, as old mistakes were often repeated, not because new paradigms and new strategies were claimed, but simply because good missiological practice and thinking were completely ignored.

Part of the problem has been the isolation of Protestant churches and missions in the former Soviet Union from developments in the rest of the world. While 70 participants from the USSR attended the 1989 Lausanne II meeting in Manila and a followup evangelization conference in Moscow in 1990,² in general, Protestant churches in Russia have had little contact with the church worldwide. Most of the missionaries working in Russia come from the First World, have never worked as missionaries in other parts of the world, and have had limited contact with the Two-Thirds World. The result has been the separation of missionary work in former Communist countries from the church worldwide.

Missionary-Indigenous Church Tensions

The very conservative nature of traditional Baptist and Pentecostal churches has made it difficult for new believers not brought up in their traditions to adapt to their church culture. As a result recent converts often find it easier to fit into churches planted by foreigners. Such criticism should not be taken to mean that more conservative groups lack good traditions. And some attributes, such as an open time of sharing for all believers during the service, have been adopted by new groups.

The effect of this split in the church is that older, more mature believers are often not able to pass on their knowledge and wisdom to the new generation. One such example in Siberia involved Lloyd Porter, an Operation Mobilization colleague of this author. While leading a Bible study on suffering for one's faith, he pointed out that many believers had been

imprisoned and martyred in the Soviet Union. Young believers argued that there had been no such persecution. Tragically, new Christians do not always realize how Christians of all confessions were persecuted by the Communists. Older churches suffer as more young people go to the newer churches and nonbelievers view them as less relevant. Discipleship, which many foreign missions stress, would be greatly helped if mature Christians from Baptist and Pentecostal churches could have input into the lives of these new converts. Foreign missions should help facilitate this. They need to value traditional churches and, while serving alongside them, work within their rules. Foreign missionaries can encourage traditional churches as they seek to recontextualize the gospel, but such encouragement is unlikely to be given a hearing if missionaries immediately offend the church by criticizing its traditions or by refusing to submit to them.

One of the best examples of a missionary submitting to living within this church culture involves Cindi Runyon, an American colleague of this author. Working in a Baptist church in Novosibirsk, she agreed to conform to the church's practice of women wearing skirts all the time, not just in services. She discussed the matter with the head pastor and told him that, although she did not believe it was sinful for women to wear pants, she would respect his leadership and the church's rules. "I'd rather Christ change their heart through revealing the freedom they can have through him," she concluded, "rather than have a church split because 'A missionary wears pants so why can't we?'" Insisting on wearing pants would have tainted all the ministries she undertook and could possibly have caused a church split. Instead, because of her respect for local custom, she was able to minister effectively. ♦

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Trevor R. H. Warner, "An Assessment of the Impact of Foreign Missions on the Russian Federation and the Existing Russian Church Since the Fall of Communism," M.Th., Queen's University of Belfast, 2001. The thesis on disc may be obtained from the author for \$13 plus mailing costs. Contact: warnerthesis@yahoo.co.uk.

¹"Topsy-Turvy Missiology," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 2 (Fall 1994), 6-8.

²*Keston News Service*, no. 363, 8 November 1990, p. 15; *Keston News Service*, no. 365, 9 August 1990, p. 5.

Most of the missionaries working in Russia come from the First World, have never worked as missionaries in other parts of the world, and have had limited contact with the Two-Thirds World. The result has been the separation of missionary work in former Communist countries from the church worldwide.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Sharyl Corrado and Jason Ferenczi, compilers

AAASS Slavic Resources on the Web

<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~aaass/resource.htm> (in English)

The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies provides a helpful list of links to academic sites containing resources on Russia, Central Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe.



Central Asian Studies World Wide

<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~casww/> (in English)

Sponsored by the Harvard Forum for Central Asian Studies, the site provides resources for scholars on the history, religion, sociology, and anthropology of the region. Includes directories of experts, relevant dissertations, important libraries, language study programs, periodicals, research institutions, and links to important Web sites in the field.



Eurasianet

www.eurasianet.org (in English, with some Russian)

A wide-ranging site covering Central Asia, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Iran, with significant coverage of religion. Sponsored by the Central Eurasia Project of the Open Society Institute, the site gives much attention to human rights and media freedom. The country resource pages are especially helpful. The news wire provides up-to-date reporting from the region. The site is easy to use, frequently updated, and fully searchable. A weekly E-mail subscription is available.



InVictory.org

www.invictory.org (in Russian)

A self-styled "metacatalogue of Christian Resources," this site is geared toward Russian-speaking Christians with many useful links to Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox resources. Links include Christian charities, art, literature, history, theology, the relationship of faith and science, Christian education, evangelism, Christian publications and publishers, and a variety of churches and religious groups. The site, which has no identifiable denominational affiliation, is easy to use and is frequently updated. A search engine is under construction. Subscription by E-mail is possible.



National Security & Defense, No. 10 (2000)

http://www.uceps.com.ua/eng/all/journal/2000_10/html/content.shtml (in English & Ukrainian)

This issue of the journal *National Security & Defense* of the Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies (104 pages) is completely dedicated to religion in Ukraine. The first 65 pages give an exhaustive survey of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant denominations, with statistics on membership, churches, clergy, monasteries, and institutions of higher education. The data are based on Ukrainian government statistics and give a wide overview of the subject. The online version is slightly cumbersome and difficult to print. Print copies may be ordered.



Religion in Russia (Religiia v Rossii)

<http://religion.russ.ru> (in Russian)

The site was launched in October 2001 by Orthodox priest Father Philip Taratorkin. It is a project of the magazine, *Russkii dzhurnal*. Provides information on developments in religious communities in Russia as well as analytical discussions of questions of religion in Russian society. Subjects addressed include religion and the state, religion and society, and religion and history. Includes book reviews and discussions of current issues. This easy-to-navigate site includes a searchable archive.



Sobornost

<http://www.sobor.ru> (in Russian)

This Russian Orthodox "Internet Journal" was created in November 1998 to reflect "the past, present, and future from a Christian point of view." Includes announcements, sermons, and a detailed catalog of Orthodox online resources. Of special interest are the papers from an October 2000 Internet Conference on Theology and Economics (<http://www.sobor.ru/doctrina/>) and discussion forums on topics of interest.



Transitions Online

<http://www.tol.cz/> (in English)

This excellent Prague-based Internet magazine covering Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the former Soviet Union is the online successor to *Transitions* magazine. It seeks to cover both local and cross-border perspectives on often-overlooked topics. Recent issues covered such subjects as Romany (Gypsy) refugees, human rights in Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyz attitudes toward their government. Includes book reviews, opinions, links to European and Eurasian newspapers, a searchable archive, and detailed country files for all 28 former Communist countries in Europe and Eurasia. The site is very user friendly and is updated weekly.

(continued on page 18)

Internet Resources (cont. from page 17)

An E-mail subscription is possible. While weekly news is available free, the rest of the site is by subscription only (\$25/year for regular subscribers, \$12/year for students, and free for citizens of the 28 countries covered). A free two-week trial subscription is available.



Virtual Library of "OK's Nest"

<http://www.magister.msk.ru/library/> (in Russian) Maintained by an unidentified Web master, this site includes complete texts of a variety of literary, historical, and reference works, many of which contain religious content. As well as containing

works of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Pushkin, and other Russian authors, the site includes material on theosophy, Mormonism, and Bibles in a variety of languages. Of special interest are Metropolitan Macarius's *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi* [*History of the Russian Church*], St. Augustine's *Confessions*, Sergei Bulgakov's *Pravoslavie* [*The Orthodox Church*], and Bible commentaries by John Calvin. ◆

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RESOURCES

Freedom of Religion, A Report with Special Emphasis on the Right to Choose Religion and Registration Systems, compiled in part by Keston Institute, includes Turkmenistan among eight countries highlighted in this 2001 study. Though Turkmenistan adopted a new constitution in May 1992 that provides for freedom of religion and does not establish a state religion, laws are often ignored, especially human rights and religious liberty laws. Turkmenistan's membership in the United Nations should bind it to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, its constitution has been amended three times, narrowing the freedom to practice one's religion. For example, the report documents that only Sunni Islam and Russian Orthodoxy are allowed to function in Turkmenistan, while members of other religious groups are pressured to convert to Islam.

In 1997 about half the mosques were not reregistered and non-Muslim and non-Orthodox groups were deregistered. The 1996 amendment requires an adult member community of 500 as a prerequisite to register, which of course makes it impossible for all but the largest religious communities to comply. But when the Hare Krishna community gathered its 500 adult members required to register, it was told that because the people did not all live in the city in which the church was located, they could not be reregistered.

The report also documents the destruction and confiscation of places of worship, arrests, fines, loss of jobs, and beatings of those not professing either Islam or Russian Orthodoxy, deportation of foreign religious activists, and slander in the press toward religious groups and private citizens in those groups. It also notes the confiscation and destruction of religious literature. This 156-page report, published by Norway's Forum 18 and the Norwegian Mission to the East (NMO), can be downloaded in Adobe Acrobat from the NMO Web site: <http://www.normis.no>.

Increasing Religious Intolerance against Minority Religions in Europe and Eurasia

On 19 June 2001 the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) published a 35-page report on religious intolerance in selected participating states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including 11 nations of the former Soviet Union and five in Central and Eastern Europe. Covering mainly the year 2000, the study concluded that the trend in the field of religious freedom is toward adopting legislation that increasingly restricts the activities of minority religions to the advantage of so-called traditional religions. Some Western European countries do not provide good models for new democracies, as they develop discriminatory legislation or practices governing religious associations. Anti-sect hysteria has been a source of violations of Helsinki commitments.

The IHF report documents the persecution of Islamic believers in Central Asia, in particular in Uzbekistan, where hundreds and perhaps thousands are imprisoned unjustly. Another group suffering frequent persecution in numerous OSCE states is Jehovah's Witnesses. Most OSCE countries have failed to adopt adequate legislation on the right to conscientious objection on religious grounds. In most cases the victims have been Jehovah's Witnesses who refuse to carry out military service on grounds of their belief.

Source: International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), Wickenburggasse 14/7, 1080 Vienna, Austria; tel.: 43-1-4088822-11; fax: 43-1-4088822-50. Copies of the report are available online on the IHF Web site, www.ihf-hr.org. ◆

Reviewed by **Jena Abbott**, assistant editor of the East-West Church and Ministry Report.

East European Missions (cont. from page 20)

through Soviet customs with quantities of Christian literature, no questions asked. For me the October 1991 issue of the Soviet humor magazine *Krokodil*, which I bought on a Moscow street, highlighted most dramatically how times had changed. On the cover a cartoon depicted a young couple gazing across the ocean at a sun, half hidden on the horizon. The portion that was visible was emblazoned with the initials of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the caption read, "Oh, what a beautiful sunset!" Mere possession of such anti-Soviet propaganda could have led to imprisonment a few short years prior. Yet by 1991 such sentiments could find their way onto the cover of a magazine produced and underwritten by the Soviet state. It was in this period that Czech dissident playwright Vaclav Havel exchanged a prison cell for a presidential palace in a matter of 15 months. No wonder he wrote, "We have no time to be astonished."

Wholesale Mission Transformation— For Better and for Worse

The spontaneous, popular revolutions that took the world by such surprise in 1989-91 spelled an end to Communist rule in East Central Europe and the dismantling of the Soviet Union. They also profoundly transformed prospects for the region's churches and East European ministry. West European and North American Christian ministries serving post-Soviet states, typically known as "East European missions," seized on the possibilities presented by radically altered circumstances. Elsewhere I have tried to describe, and make sense of, the burgeoning mission efforts of the 1990s. Ministries in this decade underwent wholesale organizational restructuring and dramatic expansion. They engaged in unprecedented cooperative undertakings, yet failed to reign in unseemly competition among mission mavericks. On the one hand, they promoted specialization that provided invaluable expertise to indigenous believers. On the other hand, they too often failed to respect or relate positively to indigenous Christians, whether Orthodox or Protestant. (Mark Elliott and Sharyl Corrado, "The Protestant Missionary Presence in the Former Soviet Union," *Religion, State and Society* 25 [no. 4, 1997], 333-51.)

Lessons Ignored

Despite the commendable accomplishments of East European missions in the 1990s, it is disheartening to note the frequency with which they ignored hard-earned lessons missionaries had learned in other lands and in previous centuries. In the waning years of the twentieth century

1. too often missionaries intertwined the sharing of the gospel with advocacy for Western culture and Western political and economic systems;
2. too often a sense of urgency obscured the necessity "for painstaking, disciplined study of languages, history, and culture;"
3. too often missionary lone rangers made forays into Eastern Europe lacking proper accountability

and proper respect for indigenous Christians; and

4. too often East European missions focused so intensely on translating Western literature that they failed to sufficiently encourage indigenous Christian writers. (Mark Elliott, "New Opportunities, New Demands in the Old Red Empire," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 28 [January 1992], 36-37.)

... And Lessons Learned

Too often—but not always. To be sure, East European mission miscues in the 1990s frequently repeated mistakes made by missionaries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in times past. At the same time, at least as often, missionaries serving in territories newly freed from Marxist overlords got things right. They preached the right gospel message of hope and redemption. They offered the right assistance to the needy. And they provided the right training and expertise that will provide church leadership for decades to come. I am reminded of the sage observation of my respected mentor, Peter Deyneka, Jr., who concluded that opposition to East European ministry stemmed not only from what Western missionaries were doing wrong, but from what they were doing right. In 1997 I elaborated on this theme as follows:

The fact of ill-advised and ill-informed Christian witness is only part of the explanation for the hostile reception. Communists, nationalists, and the hierarchs of former state churches also oppose Evangelical missionaries because they are just as often warm, winsome, and loving as they are brash, brazen, and culturally clueless. Opposition, then, is as much a function of what Evangelicals are doing right as it is of what they are doing wrong. It may be argued that so many ministries are having such a beneficial effect, in so many places, in so many ways, that their detractors cannot tolerate it, and as a result seek to restrict freedom of conscience by erecting political barriers which discriminate against arbitrarily defined "non-traditional" faiths (Elliott and Corrado, "Protestant," 338-339)

Opportunities and Adversities Hand in Hand

In I Corinthians 16:9 Paul wrote that in Ephesus "a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries." By using the conjunction *and* instead of *but*, Paul seemed to recognize that opposition to the preaching of the gospel should be seen as a natural, predictable circumstance. In East European missions the challenge is to be able to discern, while on bended knees, when opposition stems from correctable miscues, and when it stems from adversaries one should come to expect as a matter of course. In witnessing to God's love, the challenge then is to avoid confusing opposition unnecessarily provoked with opposition that is bound to come no matter how gracious the proclamation. ♦

Mark Elliott is editor of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

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East European Missions: Taking Stock of the First Post-Soviet Decade

Mark Elliott

In terms of a rapid, positive reversal of fortune for Christendom and Christian mission outreach, perhaps the most meaningful comparison would be between post-Soviet territories in the past decade and the Roman Empire after Constantine's fourth-century conversion to Christianity.

Upheaval from Prague to the Pacific

In the past decade Christians in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe have borne witness to a dramatic alteration in political circumstances nearly unique in church history. The suddenness of the collapse of Marxist regimes over such an immense expanse—from Prague to the Pacific—and the halt to many decades of anti-religious campaigns underscore the improved prospects for the church and missionary outreach in the post-Soviet era.

Precedents Hard to Come By

The political upheavals of 1989–91 produced such a radically reconfigured landscape for post-Soviet Christians that meaningful comparisons are hard to draw. In the twentieth century, the West German church emerged overnight from Nazi captivity, but that was not accompanied by any particularly pronounced missionary impetus. Likewise in Japan after World War II, General Douglas MacArthur issued his famous call for a thousand missionaries to embark for this war-weary nation, but his plea went largely unheeded.

We can note other surprising reversals of fortune for the Christian church and missions in the twentieth century, however, not in terms of improved fortunes, but rather the opposite. Dramatically decreased possibilities for Christian proclamation and presence followed the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and Mao's 1949 victory in China. Christian retrenchment also followed other post-World War II Communist takeovers in Southeast Asia and the 1962 military coup in Burma (Myanmar). By way of contrast, one of the most sweeping missionary banishments in church history—the Communist expulsion of Western church workers from China

between 1949 and 1952—was separated exactly 40 years from one of the most sweeping new missionary opportunities in church history following the dismantling of restrictions to freedom of conscience in former Soviet territories between 1989 and 1991. Earlier, between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, Europe amassed colonial empires that presented expansive new opportunities for Catholic and Protestant missions. However, these possibilities did not present themselves overnight, as occurred in the 1990s.

In terms of a rapid, positive reversal of fortune for Christendom and Christian mission outreach, perhaps the most meaningful comparison would be between post-Soviet territories in the past decade and the Roman Empire after Constantine's fourth-century conversion to Christianity. Both involved sudden reversals, both involved great geographic expanses, and both were preceded by intense persecution of Christians. Finally, in both cases state preferences for officially favored churches quickly prevailed. By way of caution, serious students of church history will stress that state recognition for the church has always been, at best, a mixed blessing. When any church—be it ancient Roman, Russian Orthodox, French Catholic, or German Lutheran—has been privileged rather than persecuted, it has run the risk of conversions of convenience and nominal allegiance. State favoritism predictably weakens established churches by tempting adherents with material and political advantages that undermine spiritual vitality.

Religion: Once Reviled, Now Revered

We all witnessed with amazement the rapid transformation of Soviet and post-Soviet official attitudes, from derisive condemnation of religion as opiate, to the current understanding of religion as a moral and national bulwark. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in his Tashkent speech of November 1986 predictably railed against the harmful influences of religion, but only 17 months later came his televised celebration of the Russian Christian millennium with Patriarch Pimen. By that point, April 1988, Gorbachev was praising the Orthodox Church for its defense of the nation and moral instruction across a thousand years of Russian history.

From Prison Cell to Presidential Palace

I remember well my firsthand exposure to this startling about-face. While escorting a Western tour group in July 1989 I had Bibles and other Christian literature confiscated by Soviet customs officials. But just one year later in August 1990, as part of an exchange program with Moscow State University, I led a student group

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