



EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

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Religion and the Russian Press Since 1990

Yakov Krotov

While Russian journalistic coverage of religion entered a completely new phase in the 1990s, it retained some characteristics of its previous Soviet existence. Qualitative distinctions between Communist and post-Communist journalists require close inspection because writers either try to minimize the distinctions or state that they disappeared altogether under glasnost.

State Controls and Private Subsidies

One must understand the difference between Communist and non-Communist media in order to understand developments in Russian church journalism in the 1990s. After 1917 the Bolsheviks destroyed the free press, but at the same time created a system of propaganda that imitated the forms of a free press. This system of propaganda included nationalization and centralization of all printing houses and newsprint factories; government training of journalists, all of whom received government salaries; and transformation of newspapers into instruments of various government agencies.

In the media industry, state control of the means of production remains the case today. In modern Russia it is not possible to organize either private papermaking production or a private printing house that can print more than a few thousand copies of a book. The only exception in Christian circles is the Catholic Printing House "Istina i Zhizn' [Truth and Life]" headed by Fr. Aleksandr Khmel'nitskiy. It has only one printing press that can print no more than 5,000 copies at one time. However, since an edition becomes profitable only with a printing of more than 10,000 copies, publishing in the religious sphere is doomed to be unsuccessful. That is why Christian books, magazines, and newspapers are being financed either by overseas Christians if they are Protestant or Catholic or by the government if they are Orthodox. This leads to subsidized prices because those who pay for publications are not so much interested in profit as in widespread dissemination of the Christian message. Thus, publications are sold at less than their actual cost.

De Facto Orthodox Veto

Most central Russian newspapers are still being printed in the same two Moscow printing houses as under the Communists. New magazines and newspapers must either be printed in Finland or they must agree to the conditions of Russian monopolists. Thus in 1998, for example, the Moscow Printing House required the official Russian Catholic newspaper *Svet evangeliia* [Light of the Gospel] to provide a document from the Moscow Patriarchate affirming that Orthodox had no objection to this publication. (Khmelnitskiy's printing house could not provide the required circulation for an acceptable price.) Orthodox Metropolitan Kirill (Gundiaev) signed such a document, remarking that the law did not in fact require such a procedure. However, in the provinces, the Orthodox hierarchs have the opportunity to block the publication of non-Orthodox newspapers or magazines without any exchange of official documents because of the state monopoly on printing press production.

Heavy Hands on Church Journalists

The government also continues to control the training of journalists. The Department of Journalism at Moscow State University is headed by the same person, Yassen Zasurskiy, who was appointed to this post under Khrushchev. This department's Division of Church Journalism is headed by an Orthodox nationalist. Nevertheless, in the 1990s the Catholic mission, Aid to the Church in Need, managed to rent space in the department for an information center that prepared radio programs for Moscow and the Moscow Region. Orthodox and government attacks on freedom of the press from the mid-1990s included attempts to close down this Catholic information center, which finally succeeded in 2000. At the same time the government shut down the Russian branch of the Paris-based émigré paper *Russkaya mysl* [Russian Thought] because it carried a regular column dedicated to religion that was neither nationalistic nor pro-government.

Many papers and magazines take great pleasure

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in acknowledging awards received from the minister of defense for stories favorable to the army. Similarly, the mayor of Moscow grants prizes to journalists giving positive reviews for the work of the city council. Likewise, the patriarch does the same for favorable treatment of the life of the church. Unfortunately, the mass media do not see the granting of such favors as incompatible with journalistic ethics. It was common practice during the Soviet era for the government to reward journalists for Socialist propaganda and today it does the same for Russian Orthodox propaganda.

Official and Unofficial Orthodox Papers

The Russian Orthodox Church has created a network of church papers built on the model of different government ministry publications, such as the newspapers of the ministry of defense or the ministry of transport. Also, almost all dioceses publish their own newspapers, even though their circulation figures are low even by Russian standards. The central paper of this type is *Moskovskii tserkovnyi vestnik* [Moscow Church Herald], founded in 1988 by Boris Kozlov and Metropolitan Pitirim (Nechaev). The circulation of such papers is close to zero. It has proven impossible to make laymen, unlike members of Communist Party organizations in days of old, subscribe to these papers. Church newspapers that are not official are more noteworthy and livelier. They tackle issues of interest to church activists, issues that the hierarchy would prefer to solve behind closed doors without undue attention.

The leading paper of this kind is *Pravoslavnaia Moskva* [Orthodox Moscow] edited by Fr. Vladimir Kharitonov and Fr. Mikhail Dudko. Regular writers include Archimandrite Amvrosii Yurasov and Fr. Vladimir Vigilianskii, a former journalist of *Ogoniok* [Little Fire] who writes satirical press surveys on behalf of the Analytical Center of the Union of Orthodox Citizens. The patriarch has expressed strong support for this paper. *Radonezh*, the organ of the Radonezh Orthodox Union, keeps some distance from official church papers. It very aggressively indulges in personal attacks on its opponents, stressing that Jews, advocates of democracy, and Americans are enemies of Orthodoxy. In contrast, *Pravoslavnaia Moskva* does not engage in such tactics. *Rus' derzhavnaia* [Mighty Russia] is more militant towards the West but prefers to criticize the threat from secular organizations and powers without engaging in fights with church "liberals."*

While sources of financing for these papers are obscure, they probably receive government

subsidies. For both papers an active fight against "American type" programs of sexual education and freedom of conscience predominates. In new post-Soviet language the absence of freedom of conscience is called "freedom of conscience of the European type." The magazine *Prozrenie* [Insight] headed by Aleksandr Dvorkin under Bishop Tikhon (Bronnitskiy) of the publications department of the Moscow Patriarchate specializes in the fight against freedom of conscience. The practically unreadable magazines *Pravoslavnyi patriot* [The Orthodox Patriot] and *Russkii dom* [Russian House] take the same position, propagating extreme nationalistic views.

An Attempt at an Independent Stance

At the beginning of the 1990s the Russian émigré paper *Russkaia mysl* (Paris) organized a religious supplement *Tserkovno-obshchestvennyi vestnik* [Church and Society Herald]. The editor-in-chief of this paper was Irina Ilovaikaia who died in April 2000. She was an Orthodox believer who actively supported the idea of reconciling the Vatican and the Moscow Patriarchate. However, some journalists of the supplement opposed this position and put extremely heavy pressure on the editor to stop criticizing the politics of the patriarchate. On the other hand, liberal* priests Innokentii Pavlov, Georgii Chistiakov, and Vladimir Lapshin wrote against clericalization and did not support the restrictions on freedom of conscience proposed by the patriarch. Russian émigrés, for their part, criticized Ilovaikaia for too much "clericalization" of the paper. As a result, the supplement was closed and only two or three columns remained, penned by priests writing under pseudonyms or discussing innocuous matters. Since its demise in 2000 no paper of this supplement's caliber has taken its place.

Mixed Messages from Nezavisimaia Gazeta

Today, the only secular organ that has a regular and extensive unit dedicated to religion is *Nezavisimaia gazeta* [The Independent Gazette] with its supplement *NG-religii* [NGR]. For several years Maksim Shevchenko edited NGR, but in February 2002 he was fired, launching a trend towards greater liberalization. His replacement, Mark Smirnov, is a former priest who attempts to maintain neutrality in church politics, although he is pro-Western and non-fundamentalist in his orientation.

*Editor's Note: The author uses liberal in the classic political meaning of support for representative government and civil liberties, not theological liberalism.

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Russian Press Treatment of Religion

This chart identifies newspapers starting with those with the most pro-government and pro-Moscow Patriarchate positions and ending with those with the most independent positions. In general, this order corresponds to a ranking of papers from the most Slavophile (nationalistic and conservative) to the most pro-Western (democratic).

Newspaper	Audience	Degree of coverage of official Moscow Patriarchate activities	Position on freedom of conscience	Degree of criticism of the Moscow Patriarchate	Degree of willingness to publish views of atheists, anticlerics, and non-Orthodox
Rossiyskaia gazeta [Russian Gazette]	clergy	-	--	--	--
Trud [Labor]	peasants, workers	-	--	--	-
Nezavisimaia gazeta [Independent Gazette]	intelligentsia, bureaucrats	-	--	-	+
Argumenty i fakty [Arguments and Facts]	peasants, workers, professionals	-	-/--	+	+/-
Vecherniaia Moskva [Moscow Nightly]	workers, professionals	-	-/--	-	+/-
Moskovskii komsomolets [Moscow Komsomolist]	youth, workers, professionals	-	+/-	-	+/-
Sovetskaia Rossiia [Soviet Russia]	workers, intelligentsia	+	--	+	+/-
Izvestiia [News]	intelligentsia, professionals	-	+/-	-	+
Kommersant [Merchant]	intelligentsia, businessmen, professionals	+	-	-	-
Komsomolskaia Pravda [Komsomolist Truth]	youth, workers, professionals	+	-	-	+
Moskovskie novosti [Moscow News]	intelligentsia, professionals	-	+	+/-	+
Novaia gazeta [New Gazette] (Moskovskii komsomolets twin)	intelligentsia, professionals	+	-	+	+
Literaturnaia gazeta [Literary Gazette]	intelligentsia	+	+/-	+/-	+
Russkaia mysl [Russian Thought]	intelligentsia	+	+/-	+	-
Segodnia [Today]	intelligentsia	+	+/-	-	+
Obshchaia gazeta [Community Gazette] (Moskovskie novosti twin)	intelligentsia, professionals	+	+/-	+	+
Novye izvestiia [New News] (Izvestiia twin)	intelligentsia	+	+	+	+
Novoe vremia [New Time]	intelligentsia	+	+	+	+
Ezhednevnyi zhurnal [Weekly Journal]	intelligentsia, professionals	+	+	+	+
Inostranets [Foreigner]	intelligentsia	+	+	+	+

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Criteria for Ranking Leading Newspapers

1. Does the paper publish official, complimentary reports on the activities of the Moscow Patriarchate? Such reports do not satisfy the ambitions of the patriarch but support the political ideology of Orthodoxy as the basis for a "new Russia." Above all, *Rossiiskaia gazeta* fulfills this function. Almost every issue also carries a picture of an Orthodox church with a short and touching caption. At the same time this government paper avoids serious coverage of religion, whether critical or positive. In general, this style of treatment is typical of "old" Communist-era papers.

2. What is the paper's position on freedom of conscience? This issue was debated actively in the 1990s and led to the replacement of a very democratic law on religion (1990) with a highly restrictive law on religion in 1997. The decisive element here is not the paper's attitude to the slogan "freedom of conscience" because the worst opponents of religious freedom claim to be faithful to democratic ideals. Rather, the criterion hinges on the degree of defense of freedom of conscience for unpopular movements such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Krishnaists, or satanists. Many of the "liberal" papers agree that the activities of these groups should be restricted or forbidden as "dangerous to society." A good example of this is the position of *Russkaia mysl*. In the table a plus (+) means comprehensive defense of freedom of conscience (eligibility for status of juridical person and the opportunity to train clergy), including Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientologists, and Krishnaists. One minus (-) means freedom of conscience for all except "totalitarian sects." Two minuses (--) stand for the defense of privileges for the Moscow Patriarchate and support for discrimination against even "alternative" Orthodox.

We need to note that in the polemics over freedom of conscience the issue of foreign missionaries took first place, followed closely by the issue of totalitarian cults. *Russkaia mysl* defended freedom of action for foreign missionaries, with the exception of representatives of "sects." Some papers have both (+) and (-) because their positions are contradictory to such a degree that sometimes in one issue they publish editorials for and against unlimited freedom of conscience.

3. To what degree does the paper tolerate criticism of representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate? Even in the Soviet era, papers had the right to criticize individual Communists, but no higher than a certain level and never the general secretary of the party. Thus the central newspaper, *Pravda*, could criticize the leader of the Kazakhstan Communist Party, but in Kazakhstan no paper would dare criticize this person. This rigid, hierarchical principle is replayed in today's Russian press: practically any paper will publish materials

critical of individual priests, but some papers will not dare criticize either bishops or the patriarch (they have --). Other papers will criticize bishops but not the patriarch or his politics (they have -). Only a small number of papers dare to criticize the patriarch, the Synod, or high church politics (they have +). Those few papers that do actively criticize the patriarch and the Moscow Patriarchate are designated by (++).

4. Finally, to what degree is the paper willing to champion freedom of the press and free speech by airing the views of atheists, those with anticlerical views, and representatives of non-Orthodox confessions? Papers frequently differentiate in their coverage between leaders of confessions and rank-and-file adherents. For example, almost all newspapers regularly publish materials about the pope, although only a small number of papers concern themselves with Russian Catholics. Coverage of the pope sometimes reflects a more or less hidden yearning for an Orthodoxy that is cultured, polite, and civilized. Examples would be the extensive publications of Rome correspondent Alexey Bukalov in *Segodnia* and other mass media, general pro-Western tendencies as in *Itogi*, and official attention due to the head of a foreign country, as in *Rossiiskaia gazeta*. It is not always possible to divide one from the other. However, there is an evident difference between *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, which will publish speeches of the leaders of non-Orthodox confessions recognized by the government as "traditional" (the major rabbi, the highest imam, Archbishop Kondrusevich), and *Novoe vremia*, which will not publish a predictable, official speech of the major rabbi, but periodically will publish vivid and controversial interviews with Rabbi Steinsaltz or letters of atheists and agnostics criticizing the authorities for the "orthodoxization" of the country. In the chart, papers that exclude publications of representatives of all confessions other than the patriarchate are noted with (--). Papers that publish neutral speeches of representations of non-Orthodox confessions are marked with (-). Papers that publish speeches of atheists, non-Orthodox, and non-Christians criticizing the patriarchate are marked with (+). The contrast in this instance may be illustrated by the difference between *Nezavisimaia gazeta* and its religion supplement *NGR*. The mother paper will permit criticism of the patriarchate, whereas the *NGR* supplement will not. ♦

Yakov Krotov is a church historian and journalist living in Moscow. His informative Web site (<http://www.krotov.org>) focuses on Russian church history and contemporary church-state issues.

Editor's Note: The next issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report will carry biographical notes by Yakov Krotov on 43 Russian journalists who actively write on church subjects.

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Theological Education in Romania

Tiberius Rata

Before the fall of Romania's government in December 1989 the Communist dictator Nikolai Ceausescu greatly restricted theological education in Romania. Christian colleges were nonexistent and seminary education, although allowed, was closely monitored by the government. This was due in part to Ceausescu's desire to indoctrinate young and old in an atheistic mentality. He went so far as to imprison priests, pastors, and church leaders. In the realm of education Communist authorities restricted the number of students who could attend seminary. In the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest this number ranged between four and ten. After the 1989 Revolution conditions improved drastically.

Bucharest

The main bastion of Baptist education in Romania is the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest. Over the years it has prepared some of the best and most respected Baptist preachers in Romania. In 1991 the seminary merged with the University of Bucharest and now functions within the university as the College of Baptist Theology. It is led by Vasile Talpos, Ph.D., and Otniel Bunaciu, Ph.D. Dr. Talpos earned a Ph.D. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, under the leadership of Dr. Lewis Drummond, renowned writer and professor of evangelism. Dr. Otniel Bunaciu is representative of the new, brilliant generation of scholars who had the opportunity of studying abroad and then returning home to use the gifts entrusted to them by God. Dr. Otniel Bunaciu earned one of his degrees at Oxford. The students who study at the College of Baptist Theology come not only from Romania's evangelical churches, but also from Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. The school, which has some 300 students and 19 faculty members, has three primary majors: theology and social work, Romanian theology, and theology and foreign languages. Internationally, the school has a working relationship with Regent's Park College at Oxford University, London Bible College, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX. Occasionally, faculty members from these schools teach specialty courses that enhance the intellectual and spiritual experiences of the students. Locally, the school cooperates with Emanuel University in Oradea, the Pentecostal Theological Institute in Bucharest, the Romanian Bible Institute in Bucharest, and the Adventist Theological Institute. The theology taught at the school is thoroughly evangelical, with a strong emphasis upon inerrancy. The authority of the Bible is key to the school's mission of preparing pastors who can preach. In that respect, those who prepare for pastoral ministry complete a practicum under the leadership of local pastors throughout Romania.

The Pentecostal Institute opened in Bucharest in

the late 1970s and is trying to meet the need for leaders in one of the fastest-growing denominations in Romania. Pentecostals had to overcome the anti-intellectual prejudice of those who subscribed to the sentiment, "Don't give me exegesis, just give me Jesus." Thus, the older generation of Pentecostals in particular received the first seminary graduates with great difficulty. Although they vary in charismatic manifestations, most Pentecostal churches in Romania support the vision of the Pentecostal Institute.

Cluj-Napoca

One of the most impressive academic institutions in Romania is Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. The university is a modern institution that houses 19 colleges, including law, business, and theology. After 1989 the university reasserted its multicultural character and entered the mainstream of great European research and education institutions. Besides bachelor's degrees, the university offers master's and Ph.D. degrees. The university offers one of the widest ranging programs in theology in Europe, including degrees in Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant theology. Bishop Nicolae Ivan founded the School of Orthodox Theology in 1924. In 1952 Communists closed what was known as the Orthodox Theological Institute, replacing it with a theological seminary and a school for church singers. In 1990 the Orthodox Theological Institute reopened and now offers bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees. It offers bachelor's degrees in Orthodox theology, Romanian and foreign languages, and social work. Two-year master's programs are available in historical theology, systematic theology, and cultural theology. Ph.D. degrees are offered in dogmatic theology, church history, Romanian Orthodox history, and Byzantine studies.

The School of Greek Catholic Theology became part of the Babes-Bolyai University in 1991, but its origin lies with Regescu Theological School in Gherla (1853) and the Academy of Greek Catholic Theology (1931). In 1948 Communists closed all Greek Catholic schools. Today, bachelor's students may pursue majors in Romanian theology, theology and foreign languages, theology and social work, theology and iconography, theology and journalism, and didactic theology, besides a two-year master's degree in biblical archaeology. Presently, a collaboration in teaching and research is developing between the faculty and "Pázmány Péter" Catholic University, Budapest, Hungary. Babes-Bolyai University is also home to the prestigious College for Protestant Theology that offers bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees that focus on Reformed

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Communist dictator Nikolai Ceausescu went so far as to imprison priests, pastors, and church leaders. After the 1989 Revolution conditions improved drastically.

One of the most visionary evangelical schools in Romania is Emanuel University in Oradea.

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theology. It is the only Protestant school in Romania that presently offers the Ph.D. degree.

Iasi

The only evangelical institution currently present in Iasi is the Center for Biblical Instruction "Bethlehem." An unaccredited institution, Bethlehem has about 150 students, both from Romania and abroad. The school's theological emphasis is dispensational, strictly following the theology of Dallas Theological Seminary. At the University of Iasi, 800 students are enrolled in the College of Orthodox Theology studying Romanian theology, theology and foreign languages, theology and social work, or pastoral theology. Currently, 214 students study in the College of Roman Catholic Theology. A rigorous six-year program prepares students to become Franciscan priests. In 2002 the College of Roman Catholic Theology affiliated with the University of Iasi, adding majors in theology and Romanian languages and literature.

Oradea

One of the most visionary evangelical schools in Romania is Emanuel University in Oradea. Located in northwest Romania, Oradea seemed to be prepared for the post-revolution opportunities that arose, due in part to the presence of the growing Emanuel Baptist Church. The years of Communist persecution could not stop the work God was doing in Oradea, especially at Emanuel Baptist Church, through dedicated and visionary leaders such as Liviu

Olah, Joseph Tson, and Paul Negrut. Before achieving university status, Emanuel University existed as an underground training school and then Emanuel Baptist Institute. The vision of the school is to train young people to serve and work in the world in whatever capacity they choose, while also grounding them firmly in the Christian faith. The calling of God through the apostle Peter is at the center of the school's mission: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. . . . It is the Lord Jesus you are serving" (Colossians 3:23-24).

Presently the university consists of a school of theology and a school of management. The school of theology focuses on pastoral theology, but also offers double degrees in theology and church music, theology and social work, and theology and literature. The school of management offers courses stressing practical applications for accepted business theories. Management students benefit from practical teaching provided by Romanian and Western lecturers who are experienced in both the academic and business worlds. Emanuel University also houses three specialty study centers, namely, the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism, the Center for Reformation Studies, and the Center for Counseling Studies. In the future the university plans to offer degrees in information technology, journalism, law, and political science. Emanuel University has the foundation and the vision to become one of the main evangelical institutions in Europe. ♦

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Theological Institutions in Romania

Baptist Theological Institute of Bucharest
Str. Berzei nr. 29, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania
Tel.: 011-40-1-315-9108
E-mail: bbts@fx.ro
Web site: <http://www.unibuc.ro/faculties/en-TeologieBaptista.htm>

Babes-Bolyai University
Str. Mihail Kogalniceanu, nr. 1B, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Tel.: 011-40-64-198619; 011-40-194670
E-mail: staff@staff.ubbcluj.ro
Web site: <http://www.ubbcluj.ro>

Al. I. Cuza "University of Iasi"
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Emanuel University Oradea
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Web site: <http://www.emanuel.ro/Emanuel/Home.htm>

Evangelical Press Association Award

The *East-West Church & Ministry Report* received an Award of Merit for 2001 in the newsletter category from the Evangelical Press Association. The *Report*

previously received an Award of Merit in 1993, 1997, 1998, and 1999. ♦

Orthodox Pastoral Possibilities in Post-Communist Romania

Ovidiu Tamas

Little Children Shall Lead

There is a curious pastoral phenomenon in Romania at the moment: many people born and educated under Communism are receiving a religious education from their children! I have met such parents who tell me their children ask them to prepare suitable food for fasting periods according to what they have learned in their religion classes. The same is true for prayer; some parents learn how to pray from their children. Usually the children do not omit church attendance and very often the parents attend with them. Eventually this becomes a process of mutual encouragement. The school then becomes a marvelous pastoral possibility.

At the university level, students have formed the Association of Romanian Orthodox Christian Students. In January 1992 the Church of Saint Nicholas in Bucharest became a university chapel at the request of this association. In 14 university centers throughout the country there are 33 different courses (theology and social assistance, theology and philology, theology and the Romanian cultural patrimony, pastoral theology, and so on) with a total of 5,641 students (3,206 men and 2,435 women).

Theological Education

Theological education was very nearly abolished under Communism. There were only two theological institutes that could offer university-level degrees (Sibiu and Bucharest), and only four theological seminaries (Bucharest, Cluj, Neamt, and Caraensebes). When I was a student in Sibiu (1984-88) the total number of students was around 800. At that time the Theological Institute in Sibiu was the largest Orthodox theological graduate school in the world.

The number of Orthodox theological seminaries has now grown to 28; two of these are training nuns. The total number of students at this level is 5,524. Another seven colleges do not give a university-level degree but train teachers of religion with a lower diploma and qualified chanters for the churches. These colleges have 218 students. In addition, there are five higher medical-theological schools training nurses (with 296 students) and another 12 schools training chanters for the churches with a lower level of qualification in church music.

Orthodox Publishing

Theological publications, such as textbooks, reviews, and the like were severely restricted under Communism. There were five metropolitan

theological reviews, three central church reviews, and one newspaper, the *Romanian Telegraph*. Very few other theological publications were printed. Compared to the situation in other Communist countries, this was not too bad, but there was a shortage of Bibles, prayer books, theological books, and textbooks. What little was published during that period was printed in very small press runs.

Today we are witnessing an explosion of religious books. There are now 33 church periodicals. Hundreds of books written by Romanians or foreigners are published or republished. Three volumes of the *Philokalia* have already been reprinted. The Holy Fathers and ecclesiastical writers are being translated and published or reprinted. There are plenty of Bibles, prayer books, textbooks, liturgical books, books of liturgical music, and a very wide range of religious literature.

Orthodox Cultural and Charitable Work

There is a new flowering of Christian organizations: the Romanian Bible Society, founded May 1991, which is a member of the United Bible Societies; the Association of Romanian Orthodox Christian Students, mentioned above; the National Society of Orthodox Women of Romania; the Romanian Orthodox Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, reorganized in 1991; the Logos Literary and Theological Society; the National Conference of Priests; the National Consultative Conference of Orthodox Laity; and Christian medical organizations. One hundred sixty-eight priests give religious assistance in hospitals. Fifty of these are full-time hospital chaplains paid by the government. There are 33 prisons, each with a full-time chaplain paid by the Ministry of Justice. Forty-one priests work in homes for the aged. Sixty-five priests serve in orphanages. The largest Christian charitable work of the church may be seen in Christiana Hospital. This was the first Orthodox Christian hospital reestablished after 1989. It is jointly operated by the Christiana Association and the Ministry of Health. The principal work of the association is the hospital, which provides medical, social, and spiritual assistance to poor and sick people. The Christiana Association is also involved in Christian publishing and a school of nursing. ♦

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Many people born and educated under Communism are receiving a religious education from their children!

Fr. Ovidiu Tamas is a Romanian Orthodox priest and rector of the Orthodox seminary in *Văia Mare*, Romania.

Guidelines for Guest Preaching, Teaching, and Cross-Cultural Communication

Mark Elliott

Editor's Note: While recommendations relate particularly to the Russian cultural context, most apply as well in other countries of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe.

These guidelines are meant to serve the purpose of showing God's love with humility and without giving offense. Genuine love, kindness, attention, respect, and a willingness to learn in a new culture will contribute significantly to effective preaching and teaching—and these qualities of character and witness do not require translation.

Eliminate from your presentations any acrostics, alliteration, puns, and other plays on words that do not translate. Also, idiomatic and colloquial expressions rarely translate intelligibly.

Working with Translators

- ◆ Whenever possible, give your translator the text ahead of time. At the very least, provide a list of Scriptures to be quoted. Russian and English Bible chapters and verses do not always correspond.
- ◆ It is not necessary to read Scripture in English. Save time by giving the relevant Bible references, allowing the translator to read the text in Russian only.
- ◆ Do not quote Scripture from memory without informing translators beforehand. They will want to use Scripture exactly as written, rather than resort to their own Russian paraphrase.
- ◆ Keep in mind that poems and hymns are especially difficult to translate. Occasional brief quotes from such sources may be effective, but be sure to share such challenging texts with translators beforehand.
- ◆ Speak slowly and distinctly. Do not force translators to translate more than one or two sentences at a time. Keep sentences short. Because of the difference in Russian and English sentence structure, do not give half a sentence for translation.
- ◆ Keep in mind that in using a translator you will be able to cover only 40 to 50 percent of what you normally would cover.
- ◆ When your translator is speaking, keep your eyes on your audience or on your notes. In small group discussions, maintain eye contact with the person you are talking to rather than with the translator. In a sense, you have to ignore the fact that you are using a translator. On the other hand, you must not ignore the translator as a person. The better your relationship with the translator, the better the translation. The translator needs to understand your heart as well as the words you speak.
- ◆ When referring to a teacher, friend, or doctor, specify gender since the Russian language has different masculine and feminine endings.
- ◆ If you are in a major city, suggest attending a concert or visiting a museum with your translator—with you paying. You will get to know your companion in a different situation and you will understand the culture better. Do not go to plays because they involve demanding work for your translator, while the purpose of the outing is to have a relaxing time together.
- ◆ Eliminate from your presentations any acrostics, alliteration, puns, and other plays on words that do not translate. Also, idiomatic and colloquial expressions rarely translate intelligibly. Make a concerted effort to avoid using expressions such as “pulling someone’s leg,” “jumping to conclusions,” “eating humble pie,” and “beating others to the punch.” We have no idea how little standard English we speak until we begin leaving translators “out to lunch,” “throwing them curves,” and so forth.
- ◆ Before leaving home, consider how much of your normal speech is actually slang and how much is standard English. Even common expressions such as “half a dozen” make no sense to people who think by tens, and expressions such as “in the driver’s seat” or “I’m fixin’ to” are incomprehensible.
- ◆ Carefully consider your pronunciation and how hard it might be to understand—especially if you are from the deep South, New England, or the northern Midwest.
- ◆ Enunciate clearly and use plain English whenever possible. Otherwise, for example, the word “tithe” may be translated as “time.”
- ◆ Use personal names sparingly and be sure your translator understands when you are using them. An American speaker once referred to his daughter, Melody, but the translation came out, “My daughter is a musician.” If it is important to give the name, it is best to say, “The name of my daughter is Melody.” Or you could simply say “my daughter.”
- ◆ Try not to use contractions. It is best to say “I am going to go” rather than “I’m gonna go.”
- ◆ If the translator does not understand your meaning, rephrase the sentence. Simply repeating what you already have said, but in a louder voice, will not solve the problem and may embarrass your translator.
- ◆ If someone in the audience knows English better than your translator, never suggest a change. Let the assigned translator continue.
- ◆ Avoid using a large, complicated vocabulary. What students receive will be limited to what your translator thinks you are saying. The less complicated your speech and grammar, the

greater the accuracy of the translation.

- ◆ When using a famous quote, you may want to ask your translator ahead of time if it is familiar. If it is a well-known quotation by a key personality in church history, theology, or politics, it may already have been translated, with care having been put into shaping the language.
- ◆ Some translators may know little or no theological language. Even theologically trained translators may not know some specialized or recent theological terminology. Try to avoid such vocabulary, or at least discuss it with your translator prior to the lecture.
- ◆ Plan ahead, giving some or all lecture notes to your translator beforehand. Allowing time for the preparation of translated visual aids will also make your teaching more effective.
- ◆ Don Fairbairn writes, "I have observed many foreigners speak with translators. When there have been problems, in most cases, I would place the blame on the foreigner's inability to speak standard English, not on the translator's insufficient knowledge of English. Your goal should be to speak without slang or colloquialisms and with pronunciation that is as unaccented as possible."

Content of Lectures and Sermons

- ◆ Reduce to a minimum or eliminate altogether illustrations from Western life and culture. Leave analogies from baseball and American football at home.
- ◆ Do not use jokes in sermons, and use them very sparingly, if at all, in lectures. Russians generally do not consider theology a laughing matter. In addition, jokes rarely cross cultures with the meaning and the humor intact. In Central and Eastern Europe jokes against Russians were a staple throughout the decades of Soviet domination. But since ethnic jokes are always demeaning, it is advisable not to stoop to telling them. See Mark Elliott, "Moratorium on Russian Jokes," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 2 (Winter 1994), 8. On the other hand, making fun of oneself in a lighthearted way can help a lecturer avoid the appearance of being overly stiff and serious. Try to determine when it is appropriate to include a light remark so your audience will know you are human.
- ◆ Ray Prigodich is slightly more tolerant of humor: "In traditional churches, jokes must be omitted entirely. However, in many of the more contemporary congregations that have been planted in the last ten years, humor can sometimes be used tastefully and appropriately. And certainly in lectures in many settings in the former Soviet Union, humor can be used effectively. Humorous anecdotes from the indigenous context may serve a useful purpose.

The point to emphasize is that any humor used should not excessively reflect Western cultural values."

- ◆ Russians are highly literate. University graduates and students often know American literature and popular culture as well as or better than many Americans. However, as Perry Glanzer notes, "I have found that the cultural literacy of Russians is declining somewhat. In 1994 and 2001 I asked how many Russians had read certain books. I find that knowledge of the classics is decreasing."
- ◆ Russian Evangelicals frequently have more biblical knowledge than do American Evangelicals. At the same time, nonbelievers, nominal Orthodox, and new converts often lack even a rudimentary familiarity with the Bible. This requires care in lecturing to avoid condescension, on the one hand, and to avoid assuming theological understanding that may be lacking, on the other hand.
- ◆ Discuss ahead of time with your host any potentially controversial theological or cultural issues such as Arminianism vs. Calvinism, women's head coverings, jewelry, makeup, and use of alcohol.
- ◆ Encourage interaction with your students. Under the Soviet system the classroom was not a forum for discussion. The professor did all the talking and students "gave it back" during oral examinations. Use case studies and thought-provoking questions to facilitate discussion and "thinking on one's feet."
- ◆ Avoid using illustrations that have a materialistic overtone. Be sensitive to the economic situation by avoiding references to salaries, homes, and cars. Do not relate stories that paint the West as the "promised land."
- ◆ Teachers should not make reference to dating or joke about male-female relationships. In some parts of Eastern Europe dating before marriage is not a common practice and reference to it is ill advised.
- ◆ It is always important to assess the educational level of your class. Lectures often start at an inappropriately high or low level. Try to find out the perspective of other teachers and students. If possible, have another professor observe your first lecture and ask for feedback. Also ask several students if their needs and expectations are being met. In the past ten years quite a few gifted Western preachers and teachers have shared in the East, so elementary presentations may not be sufficient.

Conveying Biblical Truths Through Literature

- ◆ Read at least short selections from Russian literature to develop illustrations for lectures and sermons as a gesture of respect for Russian culture. Sources include Leo Tolstoy ("How

Reduce to a minimum or eliminate altogether illustrations from Western life and culture. Leave analogies from baseball and American football at home.

(continued on page 10)

The best policy is to never promise financial assistance to new friends or hosts. An unexpected gift is always better than a broken promise.

Guidelines for Guest Preaching (cont. from page 9)

Much Land Does a Man Need?" and "The Three Hermits"); Fyodor Dostoevsky ("The Grand Inquisitor" in *Brothers Karamazov*, "A Disgraceful Affair," "Dream of the Funny Man," and "White Nights"); Nikolai Leskov ("The Lady from Mtsensk," a few chapters of *Cathedral Folk*, and *Schism in High Society*); and Alexander Solzhenitsyn ("Matryona's House" and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*).

- ◆ Russians have a deep love for poetry and revere highly the great nineteenth century poets Pushkin, Lermontov, and Nekrasov. A respected poet of the twentieth century is Boris Pasternak, author of *Dr. Zhivago*. English translations of many Russian poems are available on the Internet.
- ◆ It is important to know one's audience. Russians are understandably proud of their contribution to world literature and will appreciate thoughtful, relevant allusions to such writers as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. However, many Russian Evangelicals, especially if middle aged or older, have had limited educational opportunities under Communism and will be less familiar with Russian literature. Also keep in mind that some Protestants consider classic Russian literature worldly.

Dress

- ◆ Dress appropriately. It is best not to stand out in a crowd. On the one hand, lecturing in very casual dress may surprise students. On the other hand, wearing a different shirt or outfit every day would underscore your affluence. For worship, coat and tie for men and dresses for women are preferred attire in almost all cases.
- ◆ Slavic people dress up much more often than do Westerners, but they often have only one dress-up outfit (and, for that matter, often just one moderately formal outfit and one set of work clothes). Do not hesitate to wear the same clothes for several days, but make sure that you have sufficiently formal clothes so that you do not offend people. A well-worn outfit is acceptable, whereas a new designer suit or dress or the latest in Western casual fashion may not be culturally sensitive in the present economic climate.
- ◆ Check ahead of time about the head-covering policy for women in Protestant churches. Practices vary widely from church to church, even within one denomination. Women in some churches may always—or never—wear head coverings or only during prayer. Whatever the practice, it usually applies to married women only. In Orthodox and Catholic worship, head coverings for women are always advisable.
- ◆ Avoid wearing excessive jewelry. Class rings and gold watches are pushing the limit. Even wedding bands can be out of place in some conservative congregations.

Giving Gifts

- ◆ Bring small, good quality gifts: scarves, calendars of your region or city, tea, instant coffee, pepperoni or summer sausage, children's vitamins, kitchen towels, and T-shirts with lettering identifying your city, church, or school. A "coffee table" book of photos of national parks or your city or nature scenes makes a nice gift for a special person or family.
- ◆ Lapel pins of various sorts, called *znachki* in Russian, are not as popular as they once were, but are still a good idea—and are easy to carry. Believers appreciate religious pins such as crosses, hearts, and fish symbols.
- ◆ Some—but not all—East Europeans are offended by gifts of hotel and airline toiletry items. Ask a missionary living in the region for advice concerning such items.
- ◆ Personal photos, especially of your family, make nice gifts for new friends. You will also find that many will want to exchange business cards.
- ◆ Pictures of your family and pets and postcards of your region, your city, and your school will be of interest. But use discretion: do not share pictures of your house, cars, ski vacations, etc. Your wealth will be obvious enough without rubbing it in.
- ◆ The best policy is to never promise financial assistance to new friends or hosts. An unexpected gift is always better than a broken promise. Ask a local missionary what amount is appropriate for a gift or payment for a certain task.

Cross-Cultural Communication

- ◆ Avoid negative comments about Russian life. Russians are painfully aware of their economic and political difficulties and are often vocal about them; but coming from foreigners, such criticism can be insulting. Refrain from repeatedly saying, "Back home we do it this way" or "Back home we have this or that."
- ◆ Instead, share compliments: a thousand years of Slavic Christianity, the endurance of the Russian people through centuries of hardship, the courage of Christians under persecution, the depth of friendships, the beauty of the countryside and historic churches, the excellent ice cream, the wonderful chocolate, etc. Such observations will do much to encourage your hosts.
- ◆ Learn the Cyrillic alphabet and carry it with you, practice sounding out signs as you travel, and learn a few words and phrases of greeting.
- ◆ Americans have a reputation for being loud. For safety's sake as well as cultural sensitivity, it is best not to speak English in public within earshot of strangers.
- ◆ Be careful how much and where you spend money. Your relative wealth can become a stumbling block for friends trying to cope in post-Soviet economies. Buying gifts for your

family and friends back home certainly is appropriate, but loud or frequent flaunting of “good buys” can be tiresome and offensive to nationals.

- ◆ If on occasion you have to deal with primitive conditions such as outdoor privies and lack of running water in rural areas, never use the phrase “Third World” to describe them. This is likely to give offense.
- ◆ Unless one is in conversation with an especially close friend in a post-Soviet society, avoid discussing standards of hygiene.
- ◆ Do not chew gum while preaching, teaching, or worshipping. There may be other public gatherings where chewing gum is not a good idea. Many Russians consider this practice to be *nekulturny* (uncultured).
- ◆ Lecturers should finish course preparations before traveling abroad. The better prepared you are when you arrive, the more time you will have for students.
- ◆ When teaching teachers, be sure to relate to them as peers and take advantage of opportunities to socialize with them.
- ◆ In post-Soviet societies—except in some Westernized, urban settings—relationships are more important than schedules or the completion of tasks. Relationships are everything; not a lot of shallow ones, but a few in depth. Look for those individuals the Lord brings your way and spend quality time with them in homes, small groups, and seeing sights they feel are important.
- ◆ In conversations with your hosts, try not to dwell on unexpected changes in plans or inconveniences. Many times what happened or did not happen was beyond their control.
- ◆ The one prediction in Russia that can be counted on is this: things will be unpredictable. It is extremely important to be flexible, recognizing that some things—sometimes many things—will not transpire as planned. Westerners often find it hard to adjust when schedules change, while Russians may regard complaints a sign of immaturity. Do not be surprised or irritated if meetings do not start on time or if changes occur in public address equipment, venue, teaching load, lodging, or food.

National, Cultural, and Religious Sensitivity

- ◆ In non-Russian, post-Soviet states, be sensitive about speaking Russian. Citizens of these countries treasure their freedom and national identity, and most are glad to be rid of everything Russian. They may be offended if you address them in Russian.
- ◆ People planning to visit non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union should not refer to these nations as “Russia” or to the inhabitants as “Russians.”

- ◆ Determine the ethnic composition of your congregation or class beforehand. Take care how you refer to the nationality or nationalities in your audience. See Mark Elliott, “What to Call It?” *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 8 (Spring 2000), 12-13.
- ◆ Be cautious about photographing strangers in public places as some people find this offensive. Sometimes mafia types will seize cameras or at least film if they become nervous about what is being photographed.
- ◆ One East European leader advises guest preachers and teachers to exercise humility by not assuming “they know everything” and “their theology is the best.” A servant spirit, in contrast to an attitude of arrogance, can convey spiritual truths as important as any found in a lecture.
- ◆ Because of the persecution and isolation of the Russian church during many decades of Soviet control, Western liberal theology did not influence Russian churches. Remember that Evangelical churches in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are very conservative in theology and conduct.
- ◆ Be aware that very conservative believers may feel out of place in restaurants they cannot afford and may consider worldly.
- ◆ When possible and applicable, make yourself available for individual time with students. You may have as much, if not more, impact through personal contact as through lectures.
- ◆ Foreign guests usually are given prominent seats in church services. Humbly accept the hospitality, but do not become addicted to such attention. Always point others to Jesus who allows you to serve Him.
- ◆ The sanctuary platform and pulpit are treated with reverence because the Word of God is proclaimed from this place. Therefore, sitting with legs crossed, sitting with one foot propped on a knee, and leaning back in a relaxed and leisurely position while facing the audience are considered disrespectful to people and to God. Do not show the bottoms of your shoes.
- ◆ Preaching (or worshipping) with hands in your pockets, on your hips, or behind your back is considered disrespectful.
- ◆ Treat and handle the Bible carefully and reverently. Folding back your Bible, dropping it on the pulpit, or pounding it with your hand is considered highly irreverent and disrespectful of God’s Word. Nonbelievers as well as believers find such behavior troubling.
- ◆ Be prepared to pray standing or kneeling, but never sitting. This applies to seminary and Bible school classrooms and both Evangelical and Orthodox worship. Praying with the assistance of a translator can be a delicate matter if the translator is not a believer. It is acceptable to give your entire prayer in English at once, with

The one prediction in Russia that can be counted on is this: things will be unpredictable. It is extremely important to be flexible.

(continued on page 12)

Richmond, Yale. *From Nyet to Da: Understanding the Russians*. Perhaps the best single treatment of Russians as a people. Frequent, insightful comparisons with Western ways.

Guidelines for Guest Preaching (cont. from page 11)

your translator providing the meaning of your prayer, rather than a word-for-word translation. Evangelical believers typically stand to pray before and after meals.

The author wishes to express his appreciation for the many helpful corrections and additions provided by readers of an earlier draft of these guidelines: Vitaliy Bak, John Bernbaum, Don Fairbairn, Deb Gallaway, Perry Glanzer, Viktor Hamm, Yvonne Hyma, Matt Miller, Alan Nagel, Nick Nedelchev, Gregory Nichols, Sandra Oestreich, Larry Ort, Katharina Penner, Peter Penner, Ray Prigodich, Andrew Semenchuk, Pauline Semenchuk, and Sam Slobodian.

Recommended Reading

Benn, Anna and Rosamund Bartlett. *Literary Russia, A Guide*. London: Macmillan, 1997. 495 pp. A wonderful entrée to Russia's literary heritage organized geographically by region, city, and in Moscow and St. Petersburg, street by street, and house by house. No country claims more literary museums than Russia, with the authors directing readers to all the major and many of the minor ones. Includes descriptions of landscapes and streetscapes, statues and monuments, homes and apartments that figure in Russia's literary legacy.

Dabars, Zita with Lilia Vokhmina. *The Russian Way: Aspects of Behavior, Attitudes, and Customs of the Russians*. Lincolnwood, IL: Passport Books, 1996. 99 pp. This handy guide will save many from multiple cultural miscues. The authors cover 73 features of Russian life, arranged alphabetically, including bribery, clothing, dating, family, flowers, gestures, greetings, hygiene, privacy, punctuality, superstitions, and telephones.

"Guidebook for Volunteer Missionaries in Russia." Central and Eastern Europe Team, International Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention. 10 pp. This carefully crafted document may be downloaded from www.khabarovskhorizons.com.

LeClair, Ray and Cindy. *Handbook for Christian Travelers to the CIS*. Wheaton, IL: Slavic Gospel Association, 1993. 79 pp. A practical, perceptive, and wide-ranging guide for Christians on a mission. Retains much of its relevance even though the latest edition is 1993.

Miller, Wright. *Russians as People*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1960. 205 pp. A classic anthropological portrait especially useful for a

retrospect on Soviet life, but retaining much value because of its insight into timeless Russian traits.

Okenfuss, Max J. and Cheryl D. Roberts, eds. *Reemerging Russia, Search for Identity*. Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster, 1995. 176 pp. An introductory reader on Soviet and post-Soviet Russian cultural life. Respected authors cover history, film, literature, art, women, religion, and minorities. Well done. Richmond, Yale. *From Nyet to Da: Understanding the Russians*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1992. 191 pp. Perhaps the best single treatment of Russians as a people. Addresses the impact of geography, climate, and history upon outlook, attitude, and behavior. Frequent, insightful comparisons with Western ways.

_____. *From Da to Yes: Understanding the East Europeans*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1995. 343 pp. Reviewed in the *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 4 (Fall 1996), 10-11.

An excellent, penetrating foray into what makes East Europeans tick. The author tackles every major nationality of the region, plus post-Soviet Balts, Belarusians, and Ukrainians.

Slobodian, Sam. *An Orientation Manual for Americans with Preaching or Teaching Opportunities in Eastern Slavic Countries*. Indianapolis: Baptist International Evangelistic Ministries, 1998. 190 pp. Includes an excellent discussion on "Speaking through a Russian Translator" and "Notes on Literary References for Use in Preaching to Russians."

The Bruderhof. *The Gospel in Dostoyevsky*. Farmington, PA: Plough Publishing House, 1988. 258 pp. This anthology of some of the great writer's most profound spiritual reflections includes appreciations by J. I. Packer, Malcolm Muggeridge, and Ernest Gordon.

Volovich, M., K. Zorky, and M. Makarov, eds. *Anglo-Russkii slovar' v pomoshch' khristianskomu perovodchiku [English-Russian Dictionary for a Christian Translator]*. Moscow: Association for Spiritual Renewal, 1997. 389 pp. Reviewed in the *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 2 (Fall 1994), 15. A labor of love that went through multiple editions over many years on its way to becoming arguably the best English-Russian theological dictionary for translators. ♦

Mark Elliott is editor of the *East-West Church & Ministry Report* and director of the *Global Center, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, AL*.

Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Ministry in Russia

Stas Karashev

Ministry in Russia is entrusted by God first and foremost to the Russian people. An effective mission agency will understand this and always try to facilitate local efforts. Even if Russian believers make mistakes, it is presumptuous to think the West always knows best. God may want to teach Russians even through failures.

Two Mission Philosophies

One common mission philosophy involves the implementation in Russia of ministry strategies that have proven effective elsewhere on the assumption that they are universal. In such cases local cultural sensitivities receive scant attention. A contrasting mission philosophy steers clear of instruction in transferable concepts. Rather, respect for the uniqueness of each context leads missionaries of this approach to meet with indigenous Christian leaders asking, "How do you view your ministry in your homeland? In your opinion, what shape should it take?" This strategy of facilitation consists of coming alongside local believers to assist them in their efforts. In my opinion the latter philosophy is more likely to succeed.

An effective ministry will include thorough training of missionaries in the cultural and historical sensibilities of the people. According to Lawrence Uzzell of Keston Institute, one of the foremost priorities should be acquisition of the local language. The accent may always be there, but as practice shows, even rudimentary language skills will help break the ice, even in the most hostile environment.

Avoid focusing on the number of new converts. The question missionaries must constantly ask, when so many people come to the church through the front door, is "How many are leaving through the back door?" An effective ministry also takes into account the factor of time. On the mission field, building relationships and being involved in lifestyle evangelism takes time and patience, as opposed to a fast-food style of witnessing.

The above-mentioned considerations are not designed to discourage Western missionary activity. The truth be known, the West has a lot to offer. In my opinion, Russians, who are often swayed by emotions, frequently need a more disciplined approach to ministry. If something goes wrong, Russians often adopt a fatalistic approach to life and ministry. At the same time, in the West with its culture of setting and achieving goals, a more responsible attitude towards ministry has developed.

Right and Wrong Approaches

Westerners have provided immense help in the reemergence of Russian theological education. They have helped to develop curricula and have provided staff for new Russian schools, for example, the Russian-American Christian University in Moscow, St. James College in Kyiv, the Methodist Seminary in Moscow, and scores of others. I am convinced that without Western help, Russians would not have been able to establish such educational programs.

The West also can offer expertise in teaching life skills to Russian believers. One example is a ministry based in Dallas, TX, that teaches computer skills to foreign believers. Also, a ministry in St. Petersburg trains Russian women in sewing skills to help them become self-sufficient. On the other hand, ineffective ministries continue to provide financial assistance and grants to Russian believers on every occasion (such as paying for train tickets, conference accommodations, etc.). Such ministries, in fact, stifle Russian initiative by providing an easy way out in every situation.

A couple from California who spent six years in Russia provides one example of effective ministry. They mentored a young Russian pastor, not only training him, but also providing an everyday example and encouragement as a Christian couple. Never once did they preach or speak to the congregation. Rather, they stayed in the background assisting him. From the very beginning their goal was to work themselves out of a job—and they were successful. The Russian pastor was entrusted with more and more areas of responsibility and trained to pour himself into other people's lives. When the American couple left, the church ministry continued to grow. Today this church has an effective community outreach through children's and discipleship programs and training for Russian parents in raising godly children. While the missionaries did teach the pastor certain American concepts and techniques, they also worked with him to rethink, rework, adapt, and apply appropriate methods to particular Russian situations. Today observers of this church would not see an American clone, but rather an effective Russian church. ♦

Even if Russian believers make mistakes, it is presumptuous to think the West always knows best.

Stas Karashev is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and works for Josh McDowell Ministry, Dallas, TX.

CORRECTION

While the *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 10 (Winter 2002), 15, reported correctly the number of missionaries in post-Soviet states, the subtotal and total for East Central Europe missionaries in 1994 was incorrect. The actual subtotal is 1,795 and the total number of missionaries in all post-Soviet states is 2,908. Also, the percentage changes between 1994 and 2001 were not accurate. The correct percentages are Belarus: +1,267; Estonia:

+111; Georgia: +200; Latvia: +148; Lithuania: +1,450; Russia: +336; Ukraine: +865; Albania: -59; Bulgaria: +71; Czech Republic: +167; Hungary: +130; Poland: +96; Romania: +175; Slovakia: +1,210; Former Yugoslavia: +653. To access the revised chart consult the Global Center Web site: <http://www.samford.edu/groups/global/ewcmreport/articles/ew10111.htm>. ♦

Report of the Belgrade Roundtable: Contribution of Religious Communities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Reconciliation, December 12–15, 2001

Paul Mojzes

Two topics animated most of the presentations and discussion. One was a certain anti-Communist tone, expressing satisfaction that the time of oppression and control of religious communities, as well as the recent wars, is over. There seemed to be less consensus as to what is to follow. A number of the Serbian Orthodox participants, including Bishop Lavrentije, placed all the blame for the [Balkan] wars on atheists, maintaining that religious people did not contribute to the war—an allegation refuted several times by non-religious, or less-religious, academics. Likewise, the large religious communities, both Orthodox and Catholic, expressed concern over sectarianism, with little clarity as to what this term subsumes. And one of the influential Orthodox academics was quite emphatic that pluralism in Yugoslavia ought to have limits and that mixed marriages ought to be discouraged. The Serbian Orthodox participants tended to stress return to past, pre-Communist traditions, including those of gender relations.

The second major topic was catechism in public schools. The Serbian government adopted rather hastily a law that introduces catechism into the schools—at this point as an elective subject—along with education for citizenship, likewise elective. Students can choose one or the other, both, or neither. Representatives of the Orthodox, Catholic, and Muslim religions all urged catechism as an obligatory subject, whereas a number of academics preferred the academic study of all religions. No real opposition to catechism in schools was expressed, although minority church

representatives were silent on the subject.

There was much ambiguity about the U.S., the western world, and NATO. One can definitely feel resentment because of the NATO bombardment. On the other hand, there were many who boldly, even haughtily, pressed for changes in the name of joining Europe and the West.

Let me conclude with a brief summary of statements by Dr. Chedomir Chupich, professor at the School of Political Science, Belgrade University, who urged that a radical break be made with the tradition in the Balkans that teaches revenge to each new generation. It is destructive as well as an impossible moral burden to require that each generation avenge or right the injustices of the past. Injustices should not be forgotten, but they should not become the task for today, because then one looks only toward the past rather than toward a better future. He also explicitly stated that he is ashamed as a Serb for what was done in their collective name by “Milosevic and Co.” If views such as Dr. Chupich’s were to become common, one could expect a dramatic improvement in the cultures of the Balkan people. ♦

Paul Mojzes is professor of religious studies at Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA, and author of The Study of Religion in an Age of Global Dialogue (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000) and Pluralism, Proselytism, and Nationalism in Eastern Europe (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1999).

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It is destructive as well as an impossible moral burden to require that each generation avenge or right the injustices of the past.

State-Inspired Communion (cont. from page 16)

the complete understanding of Orthodox and Muslims in his stance towards "sect members" who, he alleged, were using deception to woo the Jewish community. And even though the idea of sectarianism is alien to Buddhism, Damba Ayusheyev has branded the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of Dzogchen—ancient but only recently popular in Russia—as "sectarian," while criticizing "open missionary activity" by Buddhists from the West.

A Fraternity of Faiths—Soviet Style

In this artificial communion of "traditional" faiths, religious leaders are expected to support one another, however unlikely this may seem. When I asked Moscow Patriarchate spokesman Fr. Vsevolod Chaplin how the church felt about the construction of a Buddhist temple in Moscow, he appeared unconcerned: "It is fine—as long as they are traditional Buddhists." At "Faith and Civilization," a recent conference organized by the Russian Orthodox Church with the participation of representatives of the Islamic, Jewish, and Buddhist faiths (but no others), writer Mikhail Chuvanov commented that if there had been a Latin Yoke, Holy Rus would have been destroyed, but "the Tatar Yoke didn't touch the Orthodox faith." In June, Talgat Tadzhuiddin took it upon himself to criticize the "seizure of Orthodox churches by Greek Catholics in Ukraine" and "the deception of Russian believers" by Catholic priests. Using the proverb, "an uninvited guest is worse than a Tatar," he maintained that the Pope could not visit Russia until all disagreements between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Vatican were resolved.

Russian journalist Yevgeny Komarov finds Tadzhuiddin's statements unsurprising since "he was appointed in Soviet times and passed the muster of the Council for Religious Affairs and the KGB." He believes the entire blueprint for interreligious conferences led by the leaders of the nation's so-called traditional religions must have been "thought

up in the bowels of the Stalinist state apparatus." His view appears quite probable in light of the words of another Soviet-era religious leader at "Faith and Civilization," the now rival chief rabbi Adolf Shayevich. "I hope that the Russian Orthodox Church will work together with the traditional Jewish community," he told delegates, "as in Soviet times."

State Favors—Given and Taken

Albeit for financial and political motives, President Putin has gone a little way towards upsetting this cozy relationship. Over the past few years, Berl Lazar and his Chabad Lubavich organization have been built up into the new "traditional" Jewish organization in Russia—once Shayevich turned out to be supported by Kremlin archenemy Vladimir Gusinsky. Theoretically, the same could happen to any of the other confessions. The Russian religion law's preamble, which affirms recognition for the special historical contribution of Orthodoxy and respect for Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, rather than stipulating individual religious institutions, could thus prove to be the perfect instrument of divide and rule.

In his address at "Faith and Civilization," Putin did not make a single reference to the Russian Orthodox Church as an institution and the Church appeared not to notice. Patriarch Aleksii subsequently praised as inspirational Putin's comment that "traditional" religions cooperated in Russia, even though the Russian president did not use that word at all. Even without a clear cue, Russia's Soviet-era religious leaders are thus happy to follow their previous scripts. The yearning for state approval and protection is such that, at the same conference, the Orthodox Church did not balk at playing the reinstated Soviet national anthem in the assembly hall of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, the very same Cathedral so triumphantly destroyed by the Soviet regime. ♦

Geraldine Fagan is Moscow correspondent for *Keston News Service*.

Even without a clear cue, Russia's Soviet-era religious leaders are happy to follow their previous scripts.

REVIEW

Khachikian, Arthur. *Mapping Russia: Geographic and Cultural Diversity*. Stanford, CA: Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, 2001. \$21.95.

This 42-page curriculum, designed for upper secondary schools, would also work well as a resource for missionary orientation for career adults as well as short-term teenagers. *Mapping Russia* is part of a series of over 100 curriculum supplements produced by the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education

(SPICE) that stress the development of critical thinking and multiple perspectives. It features map exercises and case studies of the Caucasus and Siberia, with particular attention to ethnic, cultural, climatic, and ecological diversity. To order, contact the Institute for International Studies, Encina Hall East, 616 Serra St., Stanford, CA 94305; 800-578-1114 (U.S.) or 650-723-1114 (International); fax: 650-723-6784; E-mail: SPICE.SALES@forsythe.stanford.edu; Web site: <http://spice/stanford.edu>.

State-Inspired Communion among "Traditional" Religions

Geraldine Fagan

In February 2000, in the Russian city of Yaroslavl, an exhibit poster modeled upon Andrei Rublev's famous icon of the Old Testament Trinity caused an uproar. By artist Andrei Logvin, it depicted Christ, Mohammed, and Buddha seated around the table Russian-style, with vodka and pickles. "Rublev's icon has been defiled in such a base way," local parish priest Fr. Antoni Ilin told an *Izvestiya* newspaper reporter, "that I do not wish to comment on such elementary violations of theology as Mohammed drinking vodka." However, in response to the Russian state's attempts to construct confessional relations along the same lines as Logvin's work, no such criticism has emerged. On the contrary, religious leaders vie with one another for a place at the privileged table reserved for Russia's so-called traditional confessions—Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism.

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Alexander Nevsky Over Boris and Gleb

Such a place comes at a price. Like Mohammed in the painting, forging a common position sometimes entails skewing elements of individual doctrine in order to comply with state interests. Russian Orthodox tradition, for example, contains significant exponents of both pacifism—such as the martyr Princes Boris and Gleb, who refused to take up arms against their murderous brother Svyatopolk, as well as militarism—such as the warrior-hero Aleksandr Nevsky. The modern-day Moscow Patriarchate, however, appears to favor Nevsky over Boris and Gleb in its staunch support for the Russian state's preoccupation with military security. The introduction to the church's standard parish

reregistration application states categorically that the Orthodox confession does not disavow military service. Church spokesmen have consistently expressed support for "the anti-terrorist aims that the Russian state authorities have set before the army and law enforcement agencies [in Chechnya]," while remaining all but silent on moral issues such as Russia's phenomenally high abortion rate (70 per 1,000 women of child-bearing age per year). Interviewed by state television news on the Feast of the Annunciation, spring 2001, Patriarch Aleksii II used the occasion to accuse the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of using double standards in upbraiding Russia for human rights violations in Chechnya.

State Concessions at a Price

An audience clapping enthusiastically to a monastery choir singing Second World War songs in the assembly hall beneath Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is not too disconcerting, given Russia's warrior-hero tradition. From the mouths of Buddhists, however, the obligatory pro-military stance sounds strange. Russia's head lama, Damba Ayusheyev, proudly told me that Russia's Buddhists were "Buddhists with nuclear weapons." He is on record as saying that Buddhists should embrace military service as a "provision of assistance to one's country."

The "Foreign" Threat

Members of Russia's religious elite also express their loyalty to the nation by rejecting foreign influence within their own confessions, even if those deemed to exert it are doctrinally far closer than the other so-called traditional religions. Orthodox criticism of western Christian activities in Russia is well documented. Less so is absolutely analogous criticism by other religious leaders of foreign elements within their own confessions. Recently the leader of one of Russia's two principal muftiates, Talgat Tadzhuddin, publicly criticized those Muslims "who have brought heresies in from abroad." He also has called upon the Russian state to set up "barriers to foreign intervention in the spiritual realm of our country."

In May 2001 at a Moscow conference on "The Missionary Threat," Berl Lazar, chief rabbi of Russia's main state-favored Jewish body, similarly condemned missionaries from U.S. and Finnish groups, Jews for Jesus and Shma Israel, even though Lazar himself is a foreigner. He claimed to have had

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