



# EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

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## The Destruction of Serbian Orthodox Holy Places in Kosovo

Paul Mojzes

Mass communal violence in Kosovo in mid-March 2004 seems to have surprised many in the West, including United Nations (U.N.) civilian and military authorities<sup>1</sup> in this south Serbian province now under their supervision and control. But it did not surprise this author, or many others, who have some sense of the long-range relationships between ethnic Albanians and Serbs living in Kosovo. For some of us this is a “we told you so” case. In October 2003 a Russian policeman who served several years in Kosovo informed me during an interview in Ekaterinburg, Russia, that National Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led U.N. forces do not protect the province’s Serbs, who are rarely able to leave their homes. And this eye witness is Jewish rather than Orthodox. The ability of Kosovo’s Serbs to survive over the long term is questionable.

### The Violence in Summary

In mid-March 2004, mob violence in Kosovo left 28 dead (of whom eight were Serbs), perhaps a thousand wounded, and the destruction of several Serbian villages, including the torching of over 400 homes, the destruction of 30 churches, and damage to a further 11 churches.<sup>2</sup> The mayhem resembled old-style anti-Jewish pogroms involving pillage, destruction, and death. And this in a province “controlled” by some 18,000 U.N. Kosovo Force (KFOR) soldiers and several thousand United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) police. U.N. forces themselves came under attack, with several soldiers killed, some injured, and 72 U.N. vehicles destroyed. The U.N. did save some lives, but on the whole it could not stem the violence.

The drowning on 16 March 2004 of three Albanian children near Kosovska Mitrovica, a Serbian enclave in northern Kosovo, sparked mob action. Albanians assumed that Serbs were responsible because the sole surviving 13-year-old stated that Serbs had chased them and unleashed a dog against them. Albanian language press and media coverage inflamed emotions. Near Kosovska Mitrovica stone throwing Albanian mobs attacked Serbs. The fighting quickly escalated to the use of firearms. Almost

instantly the rest of Kosovo exploded as Albanians attacked everything Serbian that was in their way, especially monasteries, cloisters, and churches, many of which are centuries-old treasures of Orthodox spiritual creativity.<sup>3</sup> Serbian Orthodox Bishop Artemije (Radosavljevic) of Raska-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija described the attacks as another *Kristalnacht*, the infamous 1938 Nazi pogrom against Jews in Germany, while U.N. Governor of Kosovo Harri Holkeri called it “a crime against humanity.” For a senior NATO commander, March in Kosovo was “not far from ethnic cleansing.”<sup>4</sup>

According to *Forum 18*, 112 Orthodox churches and monasteries have been destroyed since 1999, obviously without adequate U.N. protection. Nor has anyone been apprehended for these crimes since the beginning of U.N. control. This time, however, events were more dramatic in that hundreds if not thousands of Albanians participated. At first it seemed that the action was spontaneous, but some U.N. authorities later claimed that these events were well organized. Some Albanian politicians and former Kosovo Liberation Army commanders were finally arrested and charged with orchestrating the destruction.<sup>5</sup> In the end an international prosecutor cleared Serbs of any involvement in the drowning of the children.<sup>6</sup>

### Ethnic Cleansing in Reverse

Readers should note first that the Albanian process of reverse ethnic cleansing against Serbs in Kosovo continues. It is taking place in the wake of U.S.-led NATO bombing of Serbia and occupation of Kosovo in 1999, purportedly to prevent ethnic cleansing of Albanians by Serbs.<sup>7</sup> The irony is that the NATO attack against Serbia was allegedly to protect the multi-ethnic character of Kosovo, yet Kosovo, under U.N. “protection,” has become more ethnically Albanian than ever before. This is the continuation of a much longer process of ethnic cleansing of Serbs by Albanians that had already been taking place prior to Slobodan Milosevic’s rise to power, which he attempted to curb by imposing a drastic repression of Albanians.

(continued on page 2)

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## The Destruction of Serbian Orthodox...

(continued from page 1)

What happens in Kosovo has an almost immediate impact in the region, not only on Albanian-Serb relations, but on Muslim-Christian relations across the Balkans. Another war is not excluded. Some Serbs view the events in Kosovo as the criminal activity of organized Albanian bands who are intent on wiping out the remnants of Serbian life and culture in a region that Serbs see as the cradle of their nationhood. Indeed, as soon as violence broke out in Kosovo, it was answered by mob violence that broke out in other parts of Serbia, where the sole mosque in Belgrade was set on fire,<sup>8</sup> as was one in Nis and Novi Pazar and an Islamic center in Novi Sad.

In other places, lacking Muslim targets, Protestant centers were attacked. In neighboring Macedonia Molotov cocktails were thrown at a mosque in Kumanovo, while, presumably in retaliation, two small Orthodox churches in that vicinity were attacked. In Bosnia Orthodox churches as well as mosques were reciprocally attacked, while in Montenegro mosques had to be protected.

Sacred objects, no matter how precious, historic, and important, are immediate targets of inter-ethnic violence. Some Albanians wrote, "Death to Serbs" and "Down with UNMIK" on church walls in Prizren, just as Serbs used to write on mosques, "This is Serbia," or as Macedonians once erected a cross on a Muslim building in Bitola.

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### Albanian and Serbian Goals at Odds

Even though a small number of religious fanatics may be involved in these attacks, I remain convinced of the fundamental correctness of my conclusion from the early 1990s that the Balkans are engulfed in religious wars fought by irreligious people.<sup>9</sup> The most immediate cause of these events is the radically different goals of Albanians and Serbs regarding Kosovo and the incredibly naïve expectation of Western politicians that where others failed over the span of centuries, they can in a short time create a multiethnic democratic community out of Kosovo.

But local aspirations are not multiethnic. Most Albanians want not only autonomy, but an independent state of Kosovo, ideally without any non-Albanians, and especially with no Serbs. Many aspire in the long run to unite with Albania and annex Albanian-populated areas in Macedonia, Southern Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece. They fancy that the U.S. is tacitly supportive of at least some aspects of a "greater Albania" project.

On the other hand, Serb appetites for a "greater Serbia" have been severely cramped and a much more realistic view prevails in Belgrade that an international supervision of the province is a current necessity. However, many still seethe with anger at U.S.-led bombing of Serbia in 1999 and all Serbs maintain that Kosovo is and should be Serbian. By now Belgrade would settle for a partition of Kosovo or for Serbs there to be granted broad autonomy in the context of renewed Serbian sovereignty. Neither

Albanians nor Serbs believe that peaceful coexistence in Kosovo is possible, making the Western dream of a multiethnic democracy in Kosovo absolutely unrealistic.

Looking back in history, Albanians and Serbs never cooperated as equals, though at times they lived alongside each other with minimal interaction and minimal violence. The usual pattern was that Serbs oppressed Albanians or vice versa. And in recent years when either side has been ascendent, the desire for revenge for former real or alleged atrocities has led to bloodshed. Sometimes these atrocities have taken on genocidal dimensions. While the conflict between the two is predominantly ethnic and nationalistic, five centuries of Ottoman Turkish designation of communities by religion rather than nationality often means the conflict is couched in religious terms. Since Serbs are historically Orthodox Christians and Kosovo Albanians are mostly Muslim, the conflict takes on religious dimensions.

I have argued elsewhere that belated international intervention in the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia only intensified the Balkan tragedy. The allegedly "preventive" humanitarian NATO attack on Serbia in 1999 over the Kosovo issue has only made matters worse.<sup>10</sup> Instead of contributing to the solution, the resulting U.N. administration of Kosovo has continued to be a tremendously destabilizing factor because none of the presently available solutions are acceptable to both Albanians and Serbs. Albanians are not willing to live any longer in any state structure in which they are together with Serbs, or even with Muslims belonging to other ethnic groups such as Roma, Turks, or Boshniaks. And Serbs realize that an Albanian-dominated state structure offers them no minority protection, not even elementary conditions for survival. In the meantime U.N. and European politicians still delude themselves with notions of multiethnic Kosovo democracy.

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### A Wake-Up Call

The March 2004 attempts at further ethnic cleansing of Serbs appear to have been a wake-up call to many European politicians, some of whom are now beginning to see the merits of a recent proposal by Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica for autonomous Serbian zones within Kosovo or an outright partition.

European politicians have come to realize that despite the priorities of the war in Iraq, the Middle East in general, and European-U.S. tensions, Kosovo needs to become again the focus of attention because, after all, it is in the European backyard. And as long as the Balkan Peninsula is unstable, it affects the rest of the continent.<sup>11</sup> As for the United States, as Lawrence Uzzell, president of International Religious Freedom Watch, has noted, "[a]part from verbal condemnations by the State Department and Congress, the U.S. has done little."<sup>12</sup>

In the meantime pictures of the destroyed churches and monasteries in Prizren, Devic,

The Balkans are engulfed in religious wars fought by irreligious people.

Djakovica, Kosovo Polje, Obilic, Lipljan, Pristina, Caglavica, Podujevo, Gnjilane, Belo Polje, Pec, Kosovska Mitrovica, and Svinjare are a testimony to the barbaric nature of conflict between Albanians and their Slav neighbors.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, it is doubtful that Albanian attacks on Orthodox Serbian sacred places are primarily religious in motivation. Probably only small groups are inspired by *Wahabism* from Saudi Arabia. It seems that the primary motive is the primal instinct of ethnic cleansing—Albanians desire to expel all non-Albanians and to appropriate real estate, legally or illegally. To that end most Albanians want to remove *everything* that is Serbian from their midst. Churches, monasteries, and graveyards are symbols of a people's presence and identity, and even hooligans instinctively know that by attacking these symbols one sends the unmistakable

signal that the enemy is to vanish.

In conclusion, while ethnic cleansing seems to be primarily a secular process, it does carry embedded religious overtones. Deep in the Balkan subconscious is the ethnoreligious identity marking people with the stamp, "Orthodox," "Catholic," "Christian," or "Muslim." All of these labels figure in the fabric of many centuries of enduring conflict. The antidote would be tolerance, human rights, and interreligious dialogue. But all three are in woefully short supply in the Balkans. ♦

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Tolerance, human rights, and interreligious dialogue are in woefully short supply in the Balkans.

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11. See B-92 Headline News.
12. Lawrence A. Uzzell, "Kosovo's Religious Tables Turned," <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0520/p09s02-coop.html>.
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# Traditional Pentecostals in Russia

Roman Lunkin

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## Introduction

The Pentecostal movement in Russia dates from the beginning of the 20th century. Dealing with a hostile Orthodox church, oppressive state authorities, and negative relationships with other Evangelical churches led to numerous theological and organizational difficulties within Russian Pentecostalism. Stalinist persecutions, in particular, interrupted the natural development of Pentecostalism and drove its followers underground. This in turn reinforced conservative beliefs within churches that literally were under siege. But state attempts first to uproot Pentecostalism and then to subsume it within the subservient organizational structure of state-sanctioned Evangelical Christians-Baptists both failed. Even in the difficult Soviet period Pentecostals continued to champion energetic missionary activity and social outreach. In the post-*Perestroika* period this boldness inclined Pentecostals to more readily accept new forms of church worship.

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## Edinstvenniki or Jesus-Only Pentecostals

Until the 1920s *Edinstvenniki* or the Jesus-Only movement prevailed within Pentecostalism in Russia. Like other Pentecostals, *Edinstvenniki* regarded *glossolalia*, or speaking in tongues, as a necessary sign of genuine baptism by the Holy Spirit. However, they differed from other Pentecostals in their understanding of the Holy Trinity, believing in baptism in the name of Jesus only and regarding Christ as "one God."

The first *Edinstvenniki* trace their roots back to 1911 to the city of Helsinki (present-day Helsinki), the capital of Finland, which at that time was part of the Russian Empire. Andrei Urshin, an American of Iranian ancestry, launched this movement, which today in the U.S. is the United Pentecostal Church. Also in 1911 Alexander Ivanov and Nikolai Smorodin, former members of the Evangelical Christian Church, established a congregation of Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles (*Evangel'skikh khristian v dukhe apostolov*, EKhDA) in St. Petersburg. Ivanov served as pastor of the mother church in St. Petersburg while Smorodin traveled the country organizing evangelistic campaigns. By the beginning of the 1920s Jesus-Only congregations in Russia numbered approximately 80.

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## Ivan Voronaev and Georgi Schmidt

The greatest growth of Pentecostalism in Ukraine, and then in Russia, stemmed from two other branches of Pentecostalism, those spawned by evangelists Ivan Voronaev and Georgi Schmidt. Their doctrinal teachings mirrored Baptist and Evangelical Christian theology apart from their emphasis upon the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially *glossolalia*.

The Assemblies of God sent Voronaev, a Baptist who had converted to Pentecostalism in the United States, to Ukraine as a missionary where he organized his first church in Odessa in 1921. In 1926 he initiated the organization of the first Union of Slavic Pentecostals. His followers came to be known as *Voronaevtsy*, Christians of Evangelical Faith (*Khristiane evangel'skoy very*, KhEV), or "those who wash" (*Omyvayushchie*), because they practiced foot washing during Communion. (Pentecostals and Charismatics frequently are identified by the names of their leaders.)

Georgi Schmidt and his followers also began preaching in Ukraine in the 1920s. Known as Christians of Faith, Evangelical (*Khristiane very evangel'skoy*, KhVE), this body established its own union in 1924 in Kremenets, Ternopol' Oblast, with Georgi Schmidt as its leader from 1927. This union, which also enjoyed the support of the U.S. Assemblies of God, practiced foot washing only on Maundy Thursday during Passion Week. As time went by, a less frequent practice of footwashing prevailed so that by the end of the 20th century almost all Pentecostals called themselves Christians of Faith, Evangelical (*Khristiane very evangel'skoy*, KhVE), and practiced foot washing only once a year.

By the end of the 1920s *Voronaevtsy* claimed more than 350 congregations and 17,000 believers, while followers of Georgi Schmidt numbered 18,000 in approximately 500 congregations. Pentecostals engaged in aggressive missionary work among followers of other Protestant movements, often leading to divisions that troubled leaders of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist movement. Pentecostals attracted new followers because of their socially oriented preaching and the emotional satisfaction new converts experienced in accepting the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In 1928 state hostility towards Pentecostals intensified, leading Voronaev and other ministers to preach baptism by suffering. *Evangelist*, the official KhEV magazine published in Odessa, Ukraine, reminded believers of sufferings and hardships. Ivan Voronaev himself died in Stalin's camps in the 1930s. Many Pentecostals understood the state's atheistic policies in apocalyptic terms, as a sign of the end times. In the 1930s Pentecostals-Zionists and Sabbath Pentecostals in particular placed a heavy emphasis on apocalyptic ideas.

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## The Forced Merger of Pentecostals with Evangelical Christians-Baptists

After World War II Soviet authorities forced Pentecostals desiring a legal existence to join the state-tolerated All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB). In 1945 certain Pentecostal bishops and leaders of the AUCECB

The greatest growth of Pentecostalism in Ukraine, and then in Russia, stemmed from branches of Pentecostalism spawned by evangelists Ivan Voronaev and Georgi Schmidt.

signed an agreement that disallowed tongues speaking in public worship. According to official figures, some 25,000 Pentecostals in more than 400 local congregations joined the AUCECB. The majority were from Ukraine, the Baltic republics, and Belorussia, with most Pentecostals in Russia preferring an illegal existence to AUCECB oversight. As early as 1948 Pentecostals began to leave the AUCECB. Most EKhDA churches, which had joined the AUCECB in 1944, left the Union. Finally, beginning in 1968, state authorities began selective registration of Pentecostal churches without requiring affiliation with the AUCECB.

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### **Unregistered Pentecostals**

At the same time, a majority of Pentecostals refused any contacts with atheistic authorities. The Union of Unregistered Pentecostals, founded in Ukraine in 1956, courageously proclaimed evangelism, which was prohibited by law, as its main goal. These unregistered Pentecostal churches came under the authority of the Pentecostal bishop of Kyiv because all the movement's major Russian leaders were still in prison camps. Finally in 1971 Ivan Fedotov, who had been imprisoned for his faith for 18 years, became the first Russian bishop of unregistered Pentecostals. Against all odds, he even managed during the Brezhnev era to conduct missionary work.

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### **New Freedoms for Russian Pentecostals**

*Perestroika* under Mikhail S. Gorbachev and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 opened new doors for Pentecostals. Adapting rapidly to unparalleled freedoms, many new churches, attended primarily by the younger generation, began to emerge. Also, Pentecostal movements that were new to Russia began to appear. The post-Soviet period has witnessed the mass registration of newly established Pentecostal churches of diverse persuasions under the legal protection of "umbrella organizations." As a result, a particular Pentecostal union may include congregations with very different views. Without any doubt this spectrum of "new" and "old" churches represents the modern Pentecostal movement. They are united in their recognition of the baptism of the Holy Spirit through speaking in tongues. However, they differ over which gifts Christians may possess, forms of worship, mission strategies, and what constitutes an appropriate relationship with secular culture. According to these distinctions, Pentecostals can be divided into three main branches: traditional Pentecostals, moderate Pentecostals, and Charismatics or Neo-Pentecostals. (The author will treat the Charismatic movement separately in a future issue of the *East-West Church and Ministry Report*.)

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### **Traditional Pentecostals**

Traditional and moderate Pentecostals hold to the same theological principles. Traditional or classical Pentecostalism may be found primarily in two unregistered church unions. First, the legendary hero of faith, Bishop Ivan Fedotov, who still refuses state

registration, heads the United Church of Christians of Faith, Evangelical (KhVE). From the beginning of the 1990s the Russian Association of Missions of the KhVE (*Rossiyskaia Assotsiatsiia Missii KhVE*) has handled public relations for Fedotov's Union. The *Fedotovtsy* (churches under Fedotov's leadership) believe that churches should not register, but that missionary organizations may do so because they are public charities.

Some churches of the Union of Christians of Faith, Evangelical-Pentecostals (SKhVEP), and the majority of EKhDA (the Jesus-Only Union with about 70 churches and fellowships), may be considered traditional Pentecostals. However, Fedotov's Union is the largest organization of conservative Pentecostals, including 400 churches and 70 missionary organizations. Its foundational beliefs include the doctrines of conversion, holiness, sanctification, and the baptism by the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues. Fedotovtsy consider themselves spiritual children of Ivan Voronaev, and the majority of pastors, though not all, hold to the practice of foot washing during the Lord's Supper. Followers of Fedotov do not accept innovation in worship, nor extreme expressions of emotion and external signs, which are prevalent in Charismatic churches. According to traditional Pentecostals, churches should avoid worldly influences, should not employ contemporary music in worship, and should be wary of any extreme attraction to spiritual gifts, which they observe in Charismatic churches. Traditional, conservative Pentecostals believe that by insisting on healing miracles and teaching that God will make believers "wealthy and healthy," Charismatics distort biblical theology and the image of Jesus Christ.

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### **Moderate Pentecostals**

Moderate Pentecostals belong primarily to the Union of Christians of Faith, Evangelical-Pentecostal (SKhVEP), but also to independent regional associations such as the Northeastern Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians and "The Tree of Life" (*Drevo zhizni*) Primorskaya Association of Christians of Faith, Evangelical. The Union of Pentecostals of Russia (SKhVEP), founded in 1990, consists primarily of autonomous churches and also those small congregations that earlier had belonged to the AUCECB. By the end of the 1990s this union of moderate Pentecostals numbered more than 1,500 churches which, according to its leadership, has up to 100,000 members. It has become a haven for diverse churches: conservative Pentecostals who were autonomously registered during the Soviet period and various independent Charismatics who needed its legal protection. Without any doubt, Charismatic churches that entered this union after 1997 exercise a great influence within it. In 1999 open conflict emerged in the SKhVEP Union between moderate Pentecostals and Charismatics over ideological and theological differences and divergent views on worship and missionary work. Traditional Pentecostals opposed Charismatic

Pentecostal churches differ over which gifts Christians may possess, forms of worship, mission strategies, and what constitutes an appropriate relationship with secular culture.

(continued on page 6)

Moderate Pentecostals adopt new forms of worship while traditional Pentecostals do not. But both resist Charismatic teachings on prosperity, insistence on signs of spiritual gifts, and ecstatic emotionalism demonstrated onstage.

## Traditional Pentecostals in Russia

(continued from page 6)

representation in the leadership of the Union. As a result of negotiations, the Union leadership formulated a letter that stated that because of the repressive 1997 Law on Religion, the Union of Pentecostals (SKhVEP) had extended a helping hand to Charismatic brothers. In spite of Charismatic influences, moderate Pentecostals who had left traditional churches and churches organized as a result of missionary work remain the nucleus of the Union. In addition, it should be noted that since the fall of the Soviet Union, many Charismatic churches have begun to gravitate toward more moderate forms of worship.

Typically, moderate Pentecostals adopt new forms of worship while traditional Pentecostals do not. But both resist Charismatic teachings on prosperity, insistence on signs of spiritual gifts, and ecstatic emotionalism demonstrated onstage. Nevertheless, moderate Pentecostals do make wide use of instrumental music, in some cases including rock, during worship services. Their praise and worship format, including the participation of youth in creative music and drama, differs little from what occurs in Charismatic churches. It is quite difficult to distinguish between many SKhVEP and Charismatic churches if one looks only at forms of worship and does not consider fundamental theological differences in the areas of spiritual gifts and "prosperity" teachings. Formally, SKhVEP consists of churches of Voronaev and Schmidt followers with both those who do and do not practice foot washing among its members. At the same time, many moderate Pentecostals do not consider themselves followers of these two movements, recognizing Voronaev only as a great preacher and evangelist. For newly planted Charismatic churches that do not practice foot washing, Voronaev is a missionary of "another" Pentecostalism, a more conservative one that they believe they have outgrown.

## New Pentecostal Associations

Many churches from Fedotov's Union have adopted new forms of worship. One of the characteristic examples is "The Tree of Life" Association, *Drevo*

*zhizni*, now "The House of Life," *Dom zhizni*, which was established by the youth of a church in Vladivostok. This new branch appeared among Fedotov's followers in 1993. In 2003 this association included 18 churches and fellowships in the Far East, Siberia (churches in Tuva and Gorny Altai), and St. Petersburg.

The Northeastern Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians is quite close ideologically to "The Tree of Life" Association. In 1996, its founder, evangelist Pavel Timchenko, who formerly was Baptist, united churches that recognize the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the gift of tongues but that reject such Charismatic gifts as shouting, tears, and laughter in worship services. Timchenko's Union includes 25 churches in different regions of the Russian Far North and Far East. Timchenko himself states that the theology of his Union is quite close to that of the SKhVEP.

## Conclusion

The majority of Pentecostal churches that were persecuted and closed by Soviet authorities were quite quick to adapt to changes in the post-Perestroika period. They are characterized by concern for social ills as opposed to the isolated siege mentality that prevailed prior to 1991. They cooperate with, or at least tolerate, new churches that often are led by children of traditional church pastors. All these factors ensure a proper succession of generations among Russian Pentecostals. The growing presence since the late 1990s of Charismatic missionary organizations from the West has not led to hostility among different Pentecostal groups, although local churches, as well as those in leadership positions, no doubt, face some conflicts. Traditional and moderate Pentecostals, while defenders of conservative theology, are no less zealous in their missionary and social work than Charismatic Christians. The doctrine of the gifts of the Holy Spirit has been the main source for unity and for social concerns among the various branches of Pentecostalism. ♦

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## Traditional and Moderate Pentecostal Unions in Russia

Association of KhVE "The Tree of Life" (*Drevo zhizni*), now "The House of Life" (*Dom zhizni*)  
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### Center of Spiritual Revival "Good News" (*Blagaia vest'*) (EKHDA)

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 Web-site: [www.good-news.ru](http://www.good-news.ru)

### Northeastern Union of KhVE Churches

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 Web-site: [www.unionchurches.ru](http://www.unionchurches.ru)

### Russian Association of Missionary Organizations of KhVE (RAM KhVE)

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### Union of Christians of Faith, Evangelical-Pentecostals (SKhVEP)

Pavel Nikolaevich Okara, bishop and chairman  
 Address: 125363 Russia, Moscow, ul. Fabritsiusa 31-a; Tel/Fax: 493-1541; 493-6295; 492-1701;  
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### Union of Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles (EKHDA)

Viktor Dmitrievich Shatrov, senior pastor  
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 Dmitrii Dmitrievich Shatrov, pastor  
 Address: St. Petersburg, ul. Ispytatelei 2a;  
 Tel: 812-510-6598

### United Church of Christians of Faith, Evangelical-Pentecostals (KhVE)

Ivan Petrovich Fedotov, presiding bishop  
 Address: 249050 Russia, Kaluzhskaia Oblast', Maloiaroslavets, ul. Zelionaia 9; Tel: 08431-31652;  
 Web-sites: [www.evangelist.ru](http://www.evangelist.ru); [www.pentacost.net](http://www.pentacost.net)

## Traditional and Moderate Pentecostal Unions in Russia

ENGLISH NAME	RUSSIAN NAME	NUMBER OF CHURCHES	FOUNDERS (F) OR CURRENT LEADERS (C)
Association of KhVE "The Tree of Life," now, "The House of Life"	Assotsiatsia KhVE "Drevo zhizni" ("Dom zhizni")	18	Roman Dombrauskas (C)
Northeastern Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians	Severo-Vostochnyi soyuz tserkvei evangel'skikh khristian	25	Pavel Timchenko (C)
Union of Christians of Faith, Evangelical—Pentecostals	Soyuz khristian very evangel'skoy piatidesiatnikov (SKhVEP)	1,500	Ivan Voronaev (F), Pavel Okara (C)
Union of Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles	Soyuz evangel'skikh khristian v dukhe apostolov (Edinstvenniki) (EKHDA)	70	Andrei Urshin (F), Alexander Ivanov (F), Nikolai Smorodin (F), Viktor Shatrov (C)
United Church of Christians of Faith, Evangelical (Unregistered)	Ob'edinennaya tserkov' khristian very evangel'skoy (KhVE)	400	Georgi Schmidt (F), Ivan Voronaev (F), Ivan Fedotov (C)

# Religious Freedom as a Condition for Russia's Revival

Anatoly Krasikov

*Editor's Note: The Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Washington, DC, hosted a presentation on 6 April 2004 by Anatoly Krasikov, director of the Center of Social and Religious Studies, Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Notes from the Kennan Institute event summary follow.*

Anatoly Krasikov noted that the Russian state has allowed greater religious freedom since the end of the Soviet period than it has at any other time in its history, and that religiosity among the general population has increased dramatically. However, he argued that the Orthodox Church is losing its historical position of dominance. Orthodox parishes account for the majority of registered religious organizations in only two of Russia's seven federal districts; they constitute a plurality in four districts; and take second place to Protestant groups in the Far East. Krasikov noted that the number of both Protestant and Muslim believers are increasing more rapidly than the number of Orthodox believers.

He contended that real religious freedom has not yet been seriously compromised by the culture of intolerance. Krasikov noted that religious and human rights groups successfully challenged the

restrictive 1997 law in the court system, leading to significant limitations on its enforcement. However, Krasikov warned that there are serious threats to continued freedom of religion in Russia. For his personal spiritual advisor, Putin chose a priest known for his undemocratic and intolerant views. Krasikov argued that, while many Orthodox believers are firmly in favor of religious freedom, the more intolerant segments of the Church have been able to influence public opinion and to ally with politicians who wish to use religion to further their own goals.◆

*Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Kennan Institute Event Summary #7, "Religious Freedom as a Condition for Russia's Revival in the 21st Century," 6 April 2004.*

The Orthodox Church is losing its historical position of dominance. Orthodox parishes account for the majority of registered religious organizations in only two of Russia's seven federal districts.

## Religious Freedom and the National Interest

Lawrence Uzzell

So far no foreign government anywhere has lost even one dollar of U.S. foreign aid specifically because of its religious freedom violations. But the threat of such cuts helped make a difference in Boris Yeltsin's Russia, which in 1997 enacted a harsh statute restoring state control over religious life—the first explicit, statutory rollback of the human rights reforms that Yeltsin himself had helped secure earlier in the decade. The unexpectedly strong reaction in Washington included an appropriations amendment crafted by Senator Gordon Smith (R-Oregon), which created a real possibility that the Kremlin would lose most of its bilateral aid from Washington.

Though the State Department was predictably horrified at the Smith Amendment, some of its own diplomats told me that they used it as a tool in their talks with the Russian government. The amendment set up a classic "good cop/bad cop" scenario, with the U.S. Embassy coaxing Russians for concessions to show hard-liners on Capitol Hill. What followed was a dramatic watering down of the 1997 law in its concrete implementation, especially as it affected Western missionaries and their Russian partners. The episode fits a larger principle noted by Allen Hertzke of the University of Oklahoma; as he put it to me in a telephone interview, "quiet diplomacy and

'blaming and shaming' are mutually reinforcing."

Unfortunately, the overall lesson of Yeltsin's religion law and its selective enforcement is that the game of "divide and rule" works. Since 1997 the Yeltsin and Putin administrations have discriminated not just between religions but within a single religion. For example, we now see both favored Baptists and disfavored Baptists in Russia, with the same fault line between them as in Soviet years. The disfavored are the independent "initsiativniki" Baptists, who split from the semi-establishment Baptist Union four decades ago because of its compromises with the Soviet state such as agreeing not to teach religion to children. The major American missionary organizations, such as those sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention, prefer to deal with the larger and better connected Baptist Union. Usually they have not spoken up for the increasingly isolated "initsiativniki"—nor has the State Department.◆

*Lawrence Uzzell is president of International Religious Freedom Watch, Waldorf, Maryland. Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from In the National Interest 3 (3 March 2004).*

# Hungarian Missionary Sending Efforts: A Case Study

Scott Klingsmith

*Editor's Note: The next several issues of the East-West Church and Ministry Report will feature case studies of indigenous Central and East European missionary sending efforts excerpted with permission from Scott Klingsmith, "Factors in the Rise of Missionary Sending Movements in East-Central Europe," Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity International University, 2002. As well as thoroughly reviewing existing literature, the author conducted 44 interviews with 50 respondents in four countries. The first case study, published in this issue, treats a joint effort of Hungarian Reformed and Lutheran churches sponsoring a missionary couple in India, as well as providing a thought-provoking critique of indigenous and Western efforts to promote this missionary sending effort. Other cases to appear in future issues examine a charismatic church in Timisoara, Romania, which has sponsored two missionary families to Albania; the Polish Biblical Mission Association, which has sent missionaries to Central Asia and other regions; and the Romanian International Mission, a broad partnership of mission agencies, denominations, churches, and training institutions, sending missionaries to a variety of countries. Scott Klingsmith's pathbreaking study deserves serious study by anyone with a concern for church growth and missions in Central and Eastern Europe. Please note that missionary statistics date from 2000-2002.*

Periodically, East European Protestants have served as missionaries. For a time between the two world wars, Romanian Baptists had their own missions agency and Hungarians served as missionaries with the American Southern Baptist Convention as well as with the interdenominational German Liebenzeller Mission. Today, Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC), Operation Mobilization (OM), and Youth with a Mission (YWAM) are active in most, if not all, East Central European countries. In some cases, most particularly with Campus Crusade, workers from the region have been sent to other countries long term. Hundreds of young people have participated in some kind of short term cross-cultural experience with OM or YWAM. Pioneers-Europe has recently been incorporated in Slovakia, with headquarters in Budapest. It currently has some 23 missionaries, many from Eastern Europe. In addition, in the 1990s indigenous missionary sending efforts began to emerge in the region.

## **Hungarian Missions Before 1989**

The best known Hungarian missionary was Maria Molnar, who was killed by the Japanese in the Admiral Islands in 1943. Many other Reformed missionaries served with other mission organizations. In Hungary in the 1950s, when no mission activity was possible and no money could leave the country, Lutheran Missionary Society women produced handcrafts that were sent to the West to be sold to support missions. Under the Communists, two couples were sent to Kenya in 1974 with an official agreement between the Reformed Church of Kenya and the Reformed Church of Hungary. One was a theologian and professor in a theological faculty. The other was an engineer. Some people looked on them with suspicion, wondering how it was possible in 1974 for someone from Hungary to be officially sent as a missionary. Nevertheless their sending was an important fact, showing the Hungarian Church that they could play a part on the world stage.

In the mid-1980s, after government restrictions began to be eased, the Balints family went to

Zimbabwe for six years as technical experts through the Lutheran World Federation (LMS). Their work in Zimbabwe was not necessarily related directly to missions, although members of the LMS viewed them as "real missionaries." After the 1989 Revolution, they served in Papua New Guinea helping with road and bridge construction. They were sent by a three-way partnership of the Bavarian Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, and the Hungarian Lutheran Church. Although they are Hungarian, they are largely supported from Germany.

## **Growing Hungarian Interest in Missions**

Missions interest in Hungary's historic churches is growing. A missions orientation course at Gaspar Karoli Reformed University enrolled a record 28 students in 2000. The Reformed Church offers a number of mission training events. The five Hungarian theological seminaries and universities offer missiological courses to approximately 100 students. Missionaries with mainline church roots serve, or have served, with Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT), Operation Mobilization (OM), Liebenzell, and Neuendettelsau missions in Central Asia, Ecuador, Peru, Spain, Ukraine, China, and on the OM ship Doulos. One Lutheran missions day in western Hungary drew over 400 participants. And 35 Reformed seminary students participated in short-term mission projects in Romania and Ukraine in 2001.

## **Anne-Marie Kool, Missions Catalyst**

Without question, the most influential person promoting cross-cultural mission awareness and involvement in Hungary, at least in historic church circles, has been Dutch Reformed missionary Anne-Marie Kool. She first came to Hungary in the 1980s with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). To get a visa, she came as a student herself, to do doctoral research on Hungarian Reformed missions history. Although people told her there was not enough material, her research uncovered far more than anyone expected,

*(continued on page 10)*

Scott Klingsmith's pathbreaking study deserves serious study by anyone with a concern for church growth and missions in Central and Eastern Europe.

Church members have not developed a habit of regular giving. A Lutheran pastor says that one of the biggest problems is that the church is 90 percent supported by the state.

## Hungarian Missionary Sending Efforts

(continued from page 9)

resulting in a dissertation of over 1,000 pages. Respondents, almost without exception, referred to her book as prompting their thinking about missions. Her research on two centuries of mission sending efforts encouraged Hungarians to see that what they once did, they can do again.

A second area where Anne-Marie Kool has been influential has been through the establishment of the Protestant Institute for Missions Studies (PIMS), an official program of the churches, offering a variety of mission-related courses. It also sponsors various consultations dealing with topics such as urban ministries and ministry among Roma (Gypsies). Formed at the suggestion of a Reformed seminary professor, and in consultations between Hungarian church and mission leaders and leaders of the Reformed Missions League of Holland, PIMS is recognized as the center of missions life among mainline churches in Hungary, and, to a certain extent, among free churches as well. Kool has also become a professor in some Hungarian state universities, where she has been able to bring an evangelical perspective into institutions that are theologically more liberal. The third area of Kool's influence has been through her networking ability. For example, when Wycliffe wanted to start work in Hungary, Dutch Wycliffe workers came to her for help. She put them in touch with many of the most important people in the churches, including missions professors, key pastors, and sympathetic bishops.

### Janos Bütösi, Missions Catalyst

Janos Bütösi is credited as being one of the most influential people in reviving a missions vision in Hungary. As a young pastor and evangelist he was active in the revival during and following the Second World War. In 1948 he was sent to Western Europe to study revivals, but he was not allowed to return to Hungary. He moved to the United States, finished a doctorate, and became a Hungarian Reformed bishop. In 1990, one of the bishops invited him back to Hungary to teach missions in the Reformed Seminary in Debrecen where he reestablished the chair for mission and ecumenical studies. According to Bishop Bölsckei, "his main task and main point was mission, mission, mission." He served as one of Kool's mentors on her doctoral thesis and was the founding board chair of PIMS. Bütösi energized and encouraged young people both to study missions and to consider missions for themselves. He promoted missions study and research, but always emphasized that missions was the task of the church. Influenced by David Bosch's book, *Transforming Missions*, he could communicate at a high academic level with church and theological leaders. As a teacher in Debrecen, he had the opportunity to touch a whole generation of young Reformed pastors. Further, since he was the board chair of PIMS, church leaders had to take the Institute seriously.

## Hungarians Serving in India

In 1999 the Hungarian Reformed and Hungarian Lutheran churches sent a young couple, Andras and Angelika Jo, to serve as schoolteachers in an international school in Kodaikanal, India, where they teach religious education, world religions, and values. Andras comes from the Hungarian Reformed Church and his wife, Angelika, is a member of the Hungarian Lutheran Church. They both studied theology—he at a Reformed seminary and she in a Lutheran seminary. In addition, they studied English at the Reformed Seminary in Budapest. In October 1998, they met an American missionary, David Zomer, who was teaching in the English department of the university. Around the same time they met Anne-Marie Kool, who also taught there. Starting in January 1999, during their final year of university study, they participated in a six-month-long study of missions at PIMS in Budapest, where both Kool and Zomer taught. Zomer contacted the school in Kodaikanal and potential sponsors in the United States. In the summer of 1999 Andras and Angelika began service in India. The situation is unique because the Reformed and Lutheran churches, which typically have very little to do with each other, agreed in this case to cooperate.

### David Zomer, Missions Catalyst

A missionary with the Reformed Church of America (RCA), and an English teacher at the Reformed University in Budapest, David Zomer taught the Jos and was a networker between American and Hungarian churches. When the Jos were considering further missions study in India, he arranged the connections for them with the RCA and the school in India. He has led several short-term experiences for university and seminary students, primarily to Romania.

## Missions and Money

Everyone interviewed says that economics is perhaps the biggest hindrance to Hungarian churches sending more missionaries. Many people say it will be impossible for Hungarians to be sent out by Hungarian churches alone. They are able to contribute in a small way, but for the near future Hungarian missionaries will require support from Western partnerships. Most churches are worried about meeting their own financial needs, paying pastors, and restoring church buildings. Church members have not developed a habit of regular giving. A Lutheran pastor says that one of the biggest problems is that the church is 90 percent supported by the state.

To the question of whether lack of financial giving is a true economic problem or a lack of vision, the typical answer was "both." A lack of vision is commonly cited as a cause for the economic weakness of Hungarian churches, particularly regarding missions. Although the economy is growing and many people are better off than they were under Communism, life is still not easy. In addition, materialism has become a major factor. Many people are now building their own homes, which demand financial resources.

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### **The Lutheran Church**

Over the years Lutherans have been involved in some mission projects. For example, for a few years during the 1990s, they supported a Finnish woman in Marseilles, France, who worked with Arab children. Each year they sent approximately \$200. They were able to raise around \$500 to buy Bibles for Papua New Guinea. These projects gave them the feeling they were partners in missions. At the same time, their missionaries in Papua New Guinea are supported almost totally from Germany. Their missions pastor reports: "Some churches give a small bit, I don't want to say nothing. I'll give a small example. I visited 30 churches with the Balints. We raised enough for flight tickets, not more. Nothing for the work. This shows how weak we are in financial readiness, that 30 churches could only raise enough for the flight." His point is not that the churches could not give more, but that they were not ready to give more. "If our churches would experience revival, financial responsibility would follow." He spoke repeatedly of "sleeping churches" that could give a lot more if they were properly motivated. "It's a two-way street, not only we give, but we also receive, spiritual treasure." One missions leader says: "Our biggest problem is with the pastors. They are over-worked and do not want to hear anything about missions. Mission seems for many pastors to be unimportant. They say, that's for Scandinavians, Germans, Americans who have a lot of money. We have too few pastors." People who have not grasped the vision and church bureaucracies that delay even the simplest procedures lead to a lack of activity.

In 1990, immediately after the 1989 Revolution, the Lutheran Missionary Society (LMS) was reconstituted, having been closed by the Communists in 1952. During the Communist years, members had continued to promote interest in missions unofficially, contributing money where possible and encouraging prayer for missions. They had published *sanizdat* documents, sharing information regarding world missions, giving items for prayer, and meeting regularly in small groups to pray for foreign missions. Most LMS members, whose average age is over 70, still have memories of the old, pre-Communist days. LMS members recognize they are old and feel they have lost their influence. Young people do not listen to them and they do not know how to communicate with a younger generation.

The Lutheran Mission Center (LMC), in contrast to LMS, involves a younger generation. A Lutheran pastor, Peter Gancs, is the director. Its focus is more local. Although the LMC sees the need for cross-cultural involvement, this occurs primarily in Hungary or countries nearby. The center publishes a monthly mission magazine and is involved in radio outreach. The magazine features articles about foreign missions, including reports about the Jo and Balint families. LMS and LMC together sponsor five missions conferences each year for children ages 10 to 14. Each issue of the magazine *Misszio* has something for children as well. Both groups see the need to reach the youngest generation.

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### **The Reformed Church**

The mission situation in the Reformed Church is mixed. Most people view its missions department with great suspicion because Communists used it to control the churches. Even though it no longer has this function, the effects of the past are not easy to throw off. In addition, because of its institutional history, a pro-clergy bias exists. The missions director at the time the Jos left for India is reported to have said, "We can't send him (Andras); he's not a minister." Apparently they were sent over his objections.

The missions department of the Reformed Church at this point concentrates almost exclusively on matters within Hungary. It sponsors drug rehabilitation programs, a handicapped children's center, and Reformed schools. No official missions body exists in the Reformed Church that focuses on cross-cultural missions. Some people have been agitating for two or three years for the Reformed church to develop its own sending structure, and the prospects seem good, but the process is slow. The bishop sees the need for a sending agency in the church, but nothing has developed yet. The question was posed, "What would a potential missionary have to do in order to be sent?" The answer was that nobody knows. Many different ideas were given, but none demonstrated clarity of policy or procedure. Some informants said they would need to contact a foreign agency, either German, Finnish, or maybe Swedish.

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### **Helping Hands**

In general the churches seem to look to PIMS to give them supervision and help. At PIMS the churches see experienced missionaries, with outside contacts and a paid staff. They feel that PIMS people are more qualified and capable to take care of the sending details. Zomer did the most to get the prayer letters for the Jos distributed, although the LMS helped, and their letters were occasionally printed in the Lutheran missions magazine *Misszio*. He also handled their schedule when they came back to Hungary for a few weeks after their first year in India. A difference of opinion between Kool and Zomer was apparent here. Kool wanted to encourage the Hungarians to learn to handle these matters themselves, while Zomer saw the need and simply did a lot himself. However, to be fair, he is also very concerned about helping Hungarians learn how to fend for themselves and to take ownership for their own missionaries.

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### **Overcoming Mission Impediments**

Naturally the coming of political and religious freedom does not automatically bring with it a change in mentality and worldview. The effects of 50 years of Communism can clearly be seen in the holdover of old patterns of thinking about mission. The restrictions that were placed on any kind of missions activity, whether within the country or cross-culturally make it difficult now to think about reaching beyond church walls. The Communist-era paradigm of

(continued on page 12)

The effects of 50 years of Communism can clearly be seen. The restrictions that were placed on any kind of missions activity, whether within the country or cross-culturally, make it difficult now to think about reaching beyond church walls.

## Hungarian Missionary Sending Efforts

(continued from page 11)

mission as almost equal to all regular church activities did not really have an outward component. Reports one Lutheran missions pastor: "We went through difficult decades. Forty years of dictatorship. 'Mission' was almost a forbidden word. I studied theology in Budapest and in five years I never learned missiology or missions history. The official ideology said, 'The church will die out step by step. You can do something in the church, worship services, but outside the church you can't do anything.'" The effects of this attitude persist among some people.

Some church people misunderstand the word "mission," thinking of it either politically (NATO bomb attacks on Serbia) or in terms of the way Western missions have acted in Hungary. "People think we want to win something by force. The word has been misused." Most people understand missions to mean work among Hungarians abroad. One view says, "We should help Hungarian speaking peoples worldwide, especially Hungarian minorities in neighboring countries: Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Ukraine." A contrasting view is that, even closer to home, Christians should reach out cross-culturally. This second view says, "Maybe we can't travel great distances, but why not reach out to Romanians, Slovaks, Bosnians, Albanians, or Gypsies?" This group points out the number of hidden minorities within Hungary, including Roma, Jews, Arabs, and Chinese. Someone remarked on the need for a paradigm change: mission is not just crossing geographical barriers, but also cultural ones. Kool reminds her Hungarian friends: "Mission is not only to Hungarians, but to all peoples. We need to read the Bible from a multiethnic perspective. Matthew 28 is not just a command to baptize, it is a command to reach the world."

LMS participants perceive that the current generation of young people considers the desire or demand that someone convert from his or her own religion to Christianity to be illegitimate. "They have this idea of honoring other peoples' ideas, leaving people in their own beliefs. They consider trying to change other people's faith a violation of human rights."

### Negative Perceptions of Western Missionaries

The attitude of most respondents toward the influx of Western, primarily American, evangelical missionaries in the past ten years is negative, despite the very significant role that two missionaries have played in the development of missions involvement. This attitude does not seem to be related to ethnocentrism or prejudice against Westerners, whom Hungarians generally like. It relates rather to their perceptions of how missionaries have operated. Newly arrived missionaries are seen as not having done their homework, not recognizing the historic

Newly arrived missionaries are seen as not having done their homework, not recognizing the historic churches as legitimate, and not starting with the Christians and churches who were already there.

churches as legitimate, and not starting with the Christians and churches who were already there. A Lutheran pastor says, "Many Western missions came without learning. They didn't learn Hungary. They acted like they needed to start from nothing." The churches are concerned with proselytism. A Reformed bishop confesses some sympathy with Orthodox churches in Romania and Russia who complain about the presence of evangelical missionaries who evangelize those the church considers to be Christian already. "It's very difficult to have these people here." Hungarian mainline churches are angered by what Miroslav Volf describes as Evangelicals "fishing in their neighbor's pond." They believe their members should be off limits to Evangelicals, even if those members are completely inactive.

### In Summary

Why did Andras and Angelika Jo go to India? First, several key people began talking about missions, spreading the idea within their circles of influence, and developing missions training programs. Second, the publication of a history of Hungarian missions alerted Christians to their heritage as a missionary-sending country and church. Also, political freedom opened doors for people to travel and put legs to a mission vision. Finally, the beginnings of financial support for missions demonstrated a growing desire for ownership of missions.

A concern for personal comfort and the renovation of church buildings usually overrides concerns for non-Hungarian peoples outside the borders of Hungary. However, new, younger, more missionary-minded leadership in both the Lutheran and Reformed churches has recently been chosen, which could change this pessimistic picture in the years to come. If a major missions movement is to begin, the churches have to gain a vision for mission in both its local and cross-cultural aspects, rather than rely on either foreign missionaries or a church-related educational institution. ♦

Scott Klingsmith is a missionary with CBI International, Vienna, Austria.

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Scott Klingsmith, "Factors in the Rise of Missionary Sending Movements in East-Central Europe," Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity International University, 2002.

# A Peacemaker President

Alex N. Grigor'ev

The Scripture marking the grave of Macedonia's late president Boris Trajkovski is Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Mr. Trajkovski died tragically on 26 February 2004, when his government airplane crashed in bad weather in the mountains of southeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. A verse from a gospel is as unusual for the grave of a Balkan politician as President Trajkovski was himself an unusual leader in the cauldron of Southeastern Europe. He was never considered a great politician, a father of the nation, or a mover and shaker of the universe. He was not even head of a political party. Nevertheless, he will be gravely missed for the rare gifts and qualities of character he possessed.

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## **At the Helm of a Fractious State**

Mr. Trajkovski was the second president of Macedonia after the country gained its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Besides Macedonians, this ethnically divided nation includes Albanians (almost a quarter of the population), Roma (Gypsies), Serbs, Turks, Bosnjaks, and Vlachs. In addition to this complication, Macedonia's neighbors have problematic attitudes toward the country. Greece does not recognize its constitutional name. Bulgaria does not recognize its language as being distinct from Bulgarian. And Serbia's Orthodox Church does not recognize the independence of Macedonia's Orthodox Church.

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## **A Gift for Calming Troubled Waters**

Boris Trajkovski was born in 1956 in southeast Macedonia. He graduated from St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje in 1980 with a specialization in commercial and labor law. His relatively short political career started on the local level in the capital city of Skopje. In 1998, as the newly-appointed deputy foreign minister, he oversaw Macedonia's handling of the refugee crisis spilling over from the fighting in the neighboring Serbian province of Kosovo. A year later, he was elected president after receiving 52 percent of the vote in the second round of the general election. Although in the past he had been a loyal member of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DMPNE), Mr. Trajkovski refused to follow the party line in 2001 during a short but bloody conflict involving an armed Albanian insurgency. The government favored a hard-line approach, using all possible military means to attack the rebels and the ethnic Albanian villages in which they hid. The president, however, adopted a moderate position, preferring a strong police action supported by negotiations.

Trajkovski was a major architect of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, signed by the leaders of Macedonia's four major political parties. This

accord successfully ended the armed conflict and opened the way for positive constitutional and legal reforms that gave more rights to ethnic Albanians and transferred considerable power from the national government to local municipalities. He also was behind efforts to establish the Adriatic Charter, a regional grouping that brought Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia together in their efforts to join NATO. He was a staunch supporter of dialogue in the Balkans, inviting regional leaders to Macedonia and establishing forums for politicians from neighboring countries. In addition, he worked hard to move Macedonia toward membership in the European Union.

If the Ohrid Agreement is fully implemented and the dialogue among the country's ethnic communities is institutionalized as Trajkovski wished, the country has a promising future. Through his promotion of sanity, peace, and reconciliation, Mr. Trajkovski earned great respect abroad, especially in the West. As the leader of Trajkovski's political party shared at the late president's funeral: "It is a tragedy for us, but a satisfaction for you, that today we have understood that you were respected more in the world than in your own country."

Even in his death Trajkovski managed to do something that others were not able to do—unite all Macedonian citizens regardless of their ethnic affiliation. It was a moving sight on the day of his funeral on March 5 to see several hundred thousand people forming a living corridor for the president's casket.

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## **A Leader of Character and Faith**

But there was more. And that "more" was perhaps the overriding reason President Trajkovski will be sorely missed by his own people and by the international community. Boris Trajkovski's character clearly distinguished him and set him apart. He was truly an unusual man, a quiet and honest president, respectful of others, open and frank, kind and soft spoken. Moreover, in a sea of corruption, he was never tainted by scandal. Nor did Boris Trajkovski shy away from sharing his faith. On one occasion he commented: "The key to the transformation of Macedonia can happen only through Jesus Christ, by encouraging people to know the Lord Jesus, and I know the only way to do this is through continual prayer."

In a predominantly Orthodox country with a large Muslim minority, Mr. Trajkovski was a Methodist. In fact, he pastored his own church before he became president and was the head of the United Methodist Church in the former Yugoslavia. Besides trying to bring his country's ethnic communities together, he sought to unite Christians as well. At one church gathering he shared, "I know that we come from different denominations, but in Jesus Christ we are the same. Our common denominator is that we can all say that we know the Lord Jesus Christ as our

*(continued on page 14)*

In a sea of corruption, he was never tainted by scandal. Nor did Boris Trajkovski shy away from sharing his faith.

### A Peacemaker President

(continued from page 13)

personal Lord and Savior, and I can say myself that He is my Lord and Savior."

I first met President Trajkovski at Macedonia's first National Prayer Dinner, which he organized. At that gathering, with leaders of Macedonia's religious denominations, government and opposition politicians,

as well as foreign diplomats in attendance, he quoted his favorite Psalm (133:1): "How good it is and how pleasant it is when brothers live together." There is another line from the Gospel of Matthew that precedes the one written on President Trajkovski's grave in Skopje: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." This is God's promise to Boris Trajkovski, no doubt fulfilled. ♦

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## Mission Education in Central and Eastern Europe

Peter Penner

The first formal meeting of the Central and Eastern European Association for Mission Studies (CEEAMS) was held at the Reformed Church Center, Budapest, Hungary, 12-15 May 2004. Representatives of diverse Christian traditions gathered in this missions studies conference to discuss the common task of mission education.

CEEAMS stands "in relationship to and in the tradition" of the International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS). It developed out of a World Council of Churches International Consultation on "Believing Without Belonging" held at Breklum, Germany, 26 June-2 July 2002. Conversation at this consultation among Dr. Vladimir Federov, Professor Dr. Anne-Marie Kool, and Dr. Peter F. Penner led a year later to CEEAMS's founding. Dr. Anne-Marie Kool provided vision and practical assistance by preparing a draft constitution and offering a site in Budapest for the first meeting. Conference sessions addressed the theme, "Mission Education in Central and Eastern Europe." Contributors included Dr.

Sergei Shirokov and Dr. Vladimir Fedorov from an Orthodox perspective, Dr. Jan Gorski from a Roman Catholic perspective, Professor Dr. Anne-Marie Kool and Dr. László Gonda from a Reformed perspective, and myself from an Evangelical perspective. Most other participants were Protestant-Evangelical in background, such as Dr. Scott Klingsmith from Vienna, Austria, who offered a workshop on the case study approach in missiological education.

All missiologists living and working in Central and Eastern Europe are invited to join CEEAMS and in this way become actively involved with other colleagues in developing missiological studies in this part of the world. The next meeting of CEEAMS is scheduled for Slovakia the first weekend of June 2005. The conference theme will be Roma (Gypsies) in Central and Eastern Europe. For further information, contact the chair of the association, Professor Dr. Anne-Marie Kool, Protestant Institute of Mission Studies, Budapest, Hungary, amkool@axelero.hu. ♦

Peter Penner is a professor of missions at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague, Czech Republic.

## Business "Salt and Light" in Kyrgyzstan

Juerg Opprecht

In 1998 I was surprised by the tremendous level of interest among church leaders in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in a presentation I gave on starting small businesses. Afterwards they pleaded with me, saying, "Please help us to provide work for our people." I was reminded of Matthew 25:35 (NIV): "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." I might also add: "I was unemployed and you gave me a job."

### Profile of Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan, an eastern Central Asian state founded in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union, has had basic democratic structures and a trustworthy president. Although about 80 ethnic groups live in Kyrgyzstan, the country is known for its comparatively high social stability, respect for human rights, and advanced process of democratization. Thus, Kyrgyzstan is a promising place to invest in aid projects.

Much of the economy, however, is based on bartering and the old Soviet infrastructure is in decay. Sixty-five percent of the potential workforce is unemployed, creating poverty and robbing young people of a vision for the future. The country's 70-year experience with Soviet Communism has also robbed people of practical knowledge

concerning business management. In spite of their poor social conditions, many of Kyrgyzstan's people have a good education, though influenced by the Communist system. By and large, they do not know how to take advantage of the new economic environment.

High tax rates make it hard for fledgling entrepreneurs to start businesses. The government also is little help in providing start-up capital. State loans are available only for a short time and with unrealistically high interest rates. It is not surprising, then, that Kyrgyz entrepreneurs often get involved with elements of the mafia. Thankfully, inconspicuous small businesses are not usually their targets of interest.

### The Business Professional Network

It is in this milieu of opportunities and challenges that the Swiss-based Business Professional Network (BPN) has been trying to make a difference. So far, we have been encouraged. We facilitate, stimulate, and empower individuals, existing businesses, marketplace ministries, churches, parachurch organizations, missionary societies, and service groups of all kinds to provide self-sustaining business development

and job creation. BPN brings together donors, investors, consultants, trainers, and participants qualified to receive financial and technical aid. In a nutshell, we seek to provide loans to new entrepreneurs so that they can start their own businesses, provide for their families, and strengthen their churches. We also seek to provide training in business management as well as Christian business ethics.

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### **Our Work in Kyrgyzstan**

At the outset, the goal of BPN in Kyrgyzstan, our first country of operation, was to establish 60 to 80 small businesses in the first three years and then to multiply the project in other countries. To date (2004) BPN has supported 104 enterprises, creating 2,200 jobs in Kyrgyzstan, and has begun work in the African country of Benin. Participants do not receive cash. We loan equipment worth no more than \$20,000 and expect repayment with interest within four to five years. But participants, in addition to loans, receive training in management, business ethics, technical assistance, and individual on-site counseling and coaching. We have translated *La Red*, an excellent small-group teaching curriculum that addresses specific business problems from a Christian perspective. We also have laid the groundwork for a Christian trade association and make available local Christian lawyers and tax advisors. By God's grace, most of our participants are developing big hearts to reach their nation with the gospel.

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### **CASE STUDIES**

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#### **Veronika**

After disappointment with disloyal business partners, Veronika, a trained dressmaker, decided to set up her own studio. Her loyal customers, for the most part, provide the sewing materials. Starting with 20 employees, Veronika's goal is to produce her own line of clothes in a business with 100 workers. Despite four other similar enterprises in the market, Veronika is convinced that the quality of her work will give her a competitive advantage. But she needs \$20,000 to purchase additional sewing machines and other equipment. She also needs instruction in basic business economics, so she is grateful for training provided by BPN.

However, Veronika faces more business uncertainty than does the average entrepreneur in the West. Seeking to buy a building to house her production facilities, Veronika's best efforts have come up short. Once she lost a building to someone who offered slightly more than she did—despite the seller's previous verbal commitment in her lawyer's presence to sell it to her. A guarantee in Kyrgyzstan means nothing if someone else makes a better offer. Yet by trusting in God and persisting, this petite lady eventually found a suitable building. Veronika quickly learned how to totally trust in Jesus despite being a relatively new Christian. She has committed her life to Jesus and is constantly surprised at what Jesus does for her. Formerly an object of discrimination because of her small frame and "insignificant" profession, Veronika has developed a healthy self-image. Different situations and setbacks do not stop her.

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#### **Olga**

With 62 employees at two locations, Olga and her son make men's pants and uniforms. They export to Russia some of the 60,000 trousers produced annually. Because of contacts they have made at trade fairs and exhibitions, they also have open doors to sell to Europe. First, however, they need to unite two production locations, modernize and obtain more machinery, expand the product line into ladies' wear, and increase the number of employees to 100. To do all that, they received a loan of \$20,000 from BPN in June 2000. Since that time, the number of employees has grown from 64 to 80.

However, this business, too, faces many obstacles. Corruption is an ever-present problem. On route through Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia, company representatives face blackmail and harassment by customs officers and police. They also must pay protective duties

on transit goods. Olga has joined forces with others who face similar situations. Together they have written an open letter to the government, describing the situation and asking that the nation's customs laws be enforced. Seeing how corruption has harmed their country, this group is facing it squarely according to the ethical instruction they have received from BPN. They seek to bring injustice into the open and make it a subject for discussion. Olga and other BPN participants have already taken their injustices to a daily newspaper several times.

Meanwhile, Russian Kyrgyz are strongly discriminated against in Kyrgyzstan, due to a history of Russian and Soviet domination of the country. Most Russian Kyrgyz have emigrated to Russia. While Olga, who is Russian Kyrgyz, suffers discrimination, she remains in Kyrgyzstan, which she regards as her home, so that she can use her business to help the country's economy and witness for Christ through her lifestyle.

Another obstacle is the presence in the market of cheap clothes from China. Although homemade products are of better quality, they are also more expensive. However, BPN participants are beginning to see that customer satisfaction is an important key to success and that they do not have to measure success by price alone. However, there is much to be done in addressing the subject of quality. Overall, their business success is a result of God's grace as well as their perseverance and determination. They have learned that when they walk in God's ways, God will always be with them.

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#### **Nurlan**

For several years, Nurlan led a state-owned business that registered and circulated economic data. His goal was to build up an independent printing and photocopy center. As part of the business plan, one of his employees completed an apprenticeship with a printer in Bishkek. With plenty of orders, the business developed very well. Starting in November 1999 with two employees, Nurlan now has six. However, he needed a loan of \$18,000 for the photocopier and printing machine. One of the Network's conditions for participation is that businesses have their own premises. This was difficult for Nurlan, but through determination and hard work he turned a dilapidated house into a sizeable production plant. He and his family did without personal comforts to raise the necessary funds. Nurlan is one of those people who lives for his goal and is totally absorbed in his assignment.

Of course, building in Kyrgyzstan is always difficult, requiring permission from ten to 20 different government departments. Not surprisingly, corruption is a problem and it can take months or years to receive necessary approvals. The process goes considerably faster when the officials are "appeased" in some way. Nurlan, however, knew that although corruption may produce results in the short term, in the long term it is destructive. As a Christian, he also seeks to be a good example to others by opposing corruption as best he can.

BPN participants believe we are a blessing to them, which is good. But we tell them again and again, "Now you must bless your church and your family. As a child of God, it is good to have a successful business. But this is not enough. Create eternal values by helping the poor and needy, by standing up against unrighteousness, and by establishing social justice." Nurlan, for example, wanted to impact the public schools. His marketing manager happens to be the niece of a famous Kyrgyz writer. This opened the door to the Ministry of Education. Eventually he received permission to print and distribute a special edition of the book of Proverbs in all public schools of Kyrgyzstan as part of an ethics study program. This is the kind of massive influence we can have if we are patient. ♦

*Juerg Opprecht is founder and president of Business Professional Network ([www.bpn.ch](http://www.bpn.ch)). The owner of a real estate company and a resort hotel, he lives in Faoug, Switzerland.*

*Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Juerg Opprecht, "Business in Kyrgyzstan" in On Kingdom Business, Transforming Missions Through Entrepreneurial Strategies, ed. by Tetsunao Yamamori and Kenneth A. Eldred (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossways Books, 2003).*

# Orthodoxy, Civil Society, and Democracy in Russia: A Meeting Report

James Billington

"Issues of Orthodoxy and democracy are very central to the broader question of where Russia is heading," according to James Billington, Librarian of Congress and former director, Woodrow Wilson Center. At a 25 March 2004 lecture, Billington spoke about the Russian Orthodox Church and the role it can play in the development of democracy in Russia. He noted that whether or not Russia is able to develop democracy and civil society "depends a great deal on the role that the Orthodox Church will play."

## Religion's Pivotal Role in Late 20th-Century Politics

Billington suggested that many scholars and policymakers in the United States, and the West in general, fail to understand the important role that religion plays in political life and that democracy in the United States itself developed out of both the rationalist ideas of the Enlightenment and the Christian, primarily Protestant, teachings that rejected top-down, hierarchical authority. Religion remains an important aspect of social and political life in the modern era. According to Billington, the two most important political changes of the late 20th century were both "fundamentally precipitated by religion": the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Empire that began with Solidarity in Poland and the rise of radical Islam that began with the Iranian revolution.

The central problem that Russia faces today, in Billington's view, is the need for legitimacy. He argued that in spite of the legal legitimacy embodied by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, and in spite of the popularity of the current president, the Russian people do not yet feel that they have found either a shared identity for their nation or moral legitimacy for its governance. "Ultimate legitimacy is either going to be found in some form of extremely autocratic neonationalism or in some Russian variant of a continent-wide federal democracy," he said. The influence of the Orthodox Church could push Russia in either direction.

## Orthodoxy Co-Opted by the State

At first glance, it might seem that the legacy of Orthodoxy would

be most likely to push Russia in the direction of autocracy. As Billington noted, "There is not a great history of compatibility between Orthodox Christianity and democracy." Orthodoxy developed primarily within the Byzantine Empire and has a long history of close association with the ruling state. The Russian Orthodox Church also was subject to 70 years of persecution by the Soviet state, which Billington described as "the first political system in human history whose very identity was based on the destruction of all religion." Although Soviet rule by no means destroyed the Church, he argued that Soviet persecution marginalized believers and severely limited the social, cultural, and educational role of Orthodoxy. Billington noted that the Communist Party succeeded in co-opting the Church's leadership, and argued that one of the great errors of the post-Soviet Church has been its failure to initiate a truth and reconciliation process to examine this cooptation. "The worst thing of all that has happened has been that people who were partly co-opted into the Soviet regime now claim moral authority on the basis of the martyrdom of other people who weren't co-opted but went to their death," he said. This apparent hypocrisy has cost the Church legitimacy in the eyes of many Russians.

## Orthodoxy's Potential as a Force for Democracy

In spite of all of these problems and limitations, Billington believes that the Orthodox Church can serve as a force for democratization in Russia. He explained that the Church today consists of four groups of people: a small number of ultranationalists who support authoritarian government, an equally small number of liberals who support democracy and ecumenism, a much larger group who have focused on restoring churches and rebuilding the Church as an institution, and a smaller but significant group of local clergy who are focused on meeting the spiritual and physical needs of their parishioners.

Billington argued that the fourth group, which he calls "pastoralists," is one of the best hopes for the development of democracy in Russia. In a country where reform has always come from the top down, he believes that building civil society at the grassroots is the best means of achieving democracy in Russia. He noted that "pastoralists"—by organizing parishes as social, educational, and cultural centers—are "beginning the general process of building democracy from the bottom up," using the same methods that Protestant churches used in 19th-century America. At present, the "pastoralists" represent a fairly small group, but there are indications that they have influence in the larger Church. Billington therefore remains hopeful that by promoting civil society and "the democracy of ordinary life," the Orthodox Church can help Russia in its "struggle to create some kind of a viable democracy in the large, continent-wide civilization that doesn't have that tradition." ♦

*Excerpt, edited by the author, is reprinted with permission from Kennan Institute Meeting Report 21 (No. 15, 2004).*

James Billington is the Librarian of Congress, Washington, DC, and former director of the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars.

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