



EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

Summer 2009

Vol. 17, No. 3

Russia and Its National Minorities: Christian Ministry in a Racially Charged Atmosphere

Peter Johnson

Contributing Editors

Canon Michael Bourdeaux
Keston Institute,
Oxford

Dr. Anita Deyneka
Peter Deyneka Russian
Ministries,
Wheaton, Illinois

Father Georgi Edelstein
Russian Orthodox Church,
Kostroma Diocese

Miss Sharon Mumper
Magazine Training Institute,
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Rev. Nick Nedelchev
Bulgarian Evangelical
Theological Institute,
Sofia

Dr. Peter Penner
International Baptist
Theological Seminary,
Prague

Dr. Walter Sawatsky
Associated Mennonite
Biblical Seminary,
Elkhart, Indiana

Mrs. Katya Smyslova
Haggai Institute,
Moscow

Rev. Larry Thompson
Campus Crusade for Christ,
International,
Budapest

Mr. Lawrence Uzzell
International Religious
Freedom Watch,
Fishersville, Virginia

Dr. Alexander Zaichenko
Gazeta Protestant,
Moscow

In Russia one frequent use of the word *nationalist* relates to the country's small, indigenous ethnic groups. Specifically, many Russians are alarmed by the thought of "nationalist" aspirations among their minority populations, seeing such sentiments as a serious threat that must be vigorously resisted. In the years in which I have worked with indigenous ethnic nations in Russia, I have come to understand that Russians disapprove of groups which stress their national identity through the use of their native language or culture. From the Russian perspective, it is problematic for national minorities to separate themselves from the larger majority culture. Like their attitude towards religious minorities, which they label "sects" or schismatics, many Russians fear the country's smaller ethnic groups setting themselves apart and creating divisions, in contrast to the traditional Russian world view which values unity.

If Christian mission in Russia's ethnic regions is to succeed, and if Russia as a federation is to be stable, it is essential that good relations prevail among ethnic groups. The goal of this essay is to highlight difficulties faced by Russia's smaller nationalities and to encourage reflection on how Western missionaries may best serve among them.

"Harmonious" Relations between Russia and Its Ethnic Minorities...

Russia's smaller, indigenous, ethnic nationalities constitute just over 13 percent of the country's population, some 19 million in number (http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_nac_02.php). Whereas the Russian Empire was referred to as the "prison of nations," Soviet ideology proclaimed the glorious coming together of all nations in what was supposed to be a union of equals. Stalin's Exhibition of Economic Achievement in Moscow embodied the party line on nationalities by means of a prominent ensemble of golden statues, each in the traditional dress of a different ethnic group, coming together in proclamation of a beautiful union of peoples.

According to current official reports, the situation of the indigenous minorities in the Russian Federation appears fairly positive. For example, in May 2007 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe noted the existence in Russia of thousands of minority associations, as well as many newspapers and radio and television programs produced in local languages. Officially, more than 6,000 schools in Russia provide teaching in a total of 38 minority languages (<http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/>

[monitoring/minorities/3_fcnmdocs/PDF_2nd_CM_Res_Russianfederation_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_fcnmdocs/PDF_2nd_CM_Res_Russianfederation_en.pdf)).

...And Less Than Harmonious Relations

Yet as with so much in Russia, a gap exists between the official position and reality. For example, a number of the national republics which make up the Russian Federation have had large celebrations recently to mark the anniversary of their "voluntary union" with Russia. Huge banners and carefully staged events have celebrated these mergers. But if one asks a member of one of these minority nations, the comment one often hears is, "We keep very quiet about this." In one instance, as a celebration of a "voluntary union" approached, local state intelligence officers called ethnic community leaders in for questioning out of fear of unrest.

Beneath the surface of the bright posters and official statistics, there exists a situation far more complicated and far more tense. While unrest is to be expected in the volatile Caucasus region, the ethnic groups with whom I work and who are the focus of this article live thousands of miles away in a totally different cultural and religious context. They are mostly animistic, not Islamic, and they are certainly not aggressive. In fact, in the face of opposition they are more likely to fall into depression than anger. Nonetheless, I have seen how Moscow keeps a very tight reign on its ethnic minorities.

Many indigenous, non-Slavic peoples can testify to incidents that show negative attitudes towards them. For example, it is not unusual for indigenous peoples visiting Moscow, walking the streets of the capital, speaking to each other in their native language, to be interrupted by strangers who tell them to "speak like a human" (*govori po chelovecheski*), which means, speak Russian.

Ethnic Tensions in Churches

Very often, churches in Russia's many indigenous regions also have a difficult relationship with non-Slavic peoples. Very few pastors are from the indigenous communities, and it is rare to find churches that tolerate ministry which uses indigenous languages and cultures. Native Christian activists who try to start indigenous work are often met with open hostility from church leaders. Even within churches that have permitted these ministries, it usually remains very controversial. Those who oppose indigenous Christian ministry commonly

continued on page 2

Russia and Its National Minorities (continued from page 1)

Singing Russian folk songs was considered patriotic. But if indigenous minorities sang their folk songs, that was viewed negatively as *nationalistic*.

argue that small, ethnic minorities still practice ancient, pagan, animistic religions. The conclusion drawn is that all aspects of their languages and cultures are too permeated with paganism to render them compatible with Christian faith.

While it is true that traditional animism and paganism still flourish among many of these nations, it does not automatically mean that the only way minority peoples may find salvation is by totally abandoning their indigenous culture. When Christianity reached the Slavic people a millennia ago, they also were pagans who worshipped *Chernobog* and *Belobog*, and yet their pagan word, *Bog*, was accepted by Christians and today is the common Russian word for the God of the Christian faith. But modern Bible translations that use non-Slavic words for *God* are controversial.

But is it really fear of paganism that drives resistance to indigenous Christian ministry? One incident I recently witnessed suggests that another dynamic is at work. At a service in a church in one of Russia's ethnic regions, a visiting pastor preached a sermon in support of indigenous ministry. The message stressed God's call to believers to accept those who are different, just as Abraham accepted Melchizedek. When the sermon ended, the senior pastor came forward and, as multiple sermons are typical in Russia, began another sermon. The pastor sincerely thanked the guest preacher and enthusiastically continued the same theme. But as he preached, a subtle shift occurred, apparently without his recognizing it. Later, a third preacher followed, again enthusiastically endorsing the first speaker but, step-by-step, without realizing it, the message continued to change.

Whereas the first sermon had said, "I need to accept those who are different from me," the second sermon's message was, "Those who are different have to accept me." By the time the third preacher spoke, the message was a specific application of the senior pastor's sermon: the indigenous minority has to accept the dominant Russian culture. Their indigenous language and culture separates believers from the Russian majority and therefore is an unloving and unacceptable division of the body of Christ. What happened during this service is sad confirmation that the issue is not fear of syncretism with paganism, but a desire for uniformity and a lack of toleration of different cultures.

Who is a Nationalist?

As previously mentioned, Russians typically use the term *nationalist* to refer to members of small ethnic groups who insist upon using their

own language and practicing their own culture. In contrast to the common Western understanding which equates Russian nationalism with exaggerated national pride, Russians themselves identify members of ethnic minorities who resist assimilation as *nationalists*. But as an indigenous Christian leader recently said with tears in her eyes, "I do not understand what this word means. I live in my own land, and I want to speak my own language. How does that make me a *nationalist*? How does that make me bad?"

A Double Standard at Work

I would argue that a very clear double standard is at work. Even during the Soviet period, singing Russian folk songs was considered patriotic. But if indigenous minorities sang their folk songs, that was viewed negatively as *nationalistic* because it was seen as members of a minority separating themselves from the larger Russian society. Celebrating one's cultural traditions and language is not wrong. In fact it is a necessary part of social cohesion, and beyond that, it is good to celebrate the beauty of culture which God has given to all peoples.

Today in Russia nationalism is associated with something evil. And it has at times become negative, for example, when the term has been used to disparage another nation or people. When celebrating one's culture includes denigrating another, then that brand of nationalism does become something evil. The indigenous nations I work with, however, simply want the right to use their language and culture. They do not wish to force themselves on others. Nor do they have any thought of separating from Russia. Typically, in Siberia and northern Russia, indigenous ethnic nations comprise between 5 and 35 percent of the population, even in their home territories. They recognize the importance of speaking good Russian. They simply want to be able to practice and celebrate their own culture and language. Unfortunately, in the Russian Federation, nationalism, as a negative phenomenon which demeans other cultures, is found primarily among Russians themselves when they refuse to tolerate indigenous, minority cultures. ♦

Editor's note: The concluding portion of this article will be published in the next issue of the East-West Church and Ministry Report.

Peter Johnson, a pseudonym, has worked as a missionary for many years among numerous ethnic groups in Siberia and northern Russia.

Evangelical Missions in Search of a New Paradigm (continued from page 16)

reality and a fight for people's lives and society as a whole.

I share the bright vision of Father Alexander Men: "Christianity is just beginning." We must believe that God is in control of history, and therefore crises are part of the historic path of the church and come before awakening and renewal. The mission of the church in the world should be

constantly reforming. In this lies the secret of the church's vitality and the guarantee of its success.

Edited excerpts published with the author's permission from a presentation given at the International Evangelical Missions Forum, Irpen, Ukraine, 24-25 October 2008.

Mikhail Cherenkov is vice-president of the Association for Spiritual Renewal, Kyiv, Ukraine.

The Restitution of Religious Property in Romania

Bogdan Mihai Radu

The restitution of religious property is part and parcel of privatization and the reintroduction of property rights in Romania. The starting point for understanding the context of property restitution policies is the Communist outlawing of private property. After the Second World War, private property was gradually eliminated (K. Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare; Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003]). In 1948, by Decree 176, Romania's Communist regime confiscated all educational property owned by churches and denominations.

Communist Banishment of Greek Catholicism

The Romanian Orthodox Church was allowed to keep only church buildings. However, buildings belonging to the Greek Catholic Church were "given" to the Romanian Orthodox Church as a consequence of placing the latter in an illegal status. (Greek Catholicism was a forbidden practice, the institution was outlawed, and many priests were imprisoned.) The Communist regime tolerated the Romanian Orthodox Church, with which it initiated a strategy of collaboration. Roman Catholic and Protestant churches were in a way also accepted, but without any support from the state. In contrast, the Greek Catholic Church was outlawed because of its direct relationship with the Catholic West, its large number of Romanian adherents, and its claim to represent Romanian national identity. The Greek Catholic Church in Romania, a casualty of the Cold War, was portrayed as a subversive institution, whose effect on the population would work against Communism. Consequently, the Romanian state broke relations with the Holy See in July 1948. Several Romanian Communist leaders denounced the Vatican as a promoter of Western imperialism.

The Privileged Position of Romanian Orthodoxy

In Romania, the Orthodox Church became an ally of the state, or in Vladimir Tismaneanu's words, it was "infiltrated" by the political class (V. Tismaneanu, D. Dobrinicu, and C. Vasile, *Final Report* [Bucharest: Humanitas, 2007]). The post-Communist Romanian government commissioned Tismaneanu, a Romanian professor of political science at the University of Maryland, to prepare a report on Romanian Communism and its relationship to Romanian civil society.) In exchange for Communist recognition of its dominant status within Romanian society, the Orthodox Church collaborated with the regime, including hosting political prisoners in its monasteries on their way to death, and torturing followers of other religions. A part of the Orthodox clergy became active members of the

Communist secret police, including Patriarch Teoctist.

Although press coverage detailed the affiliation of some members of the Romanian Orthodox Church with the secret police, the public did not believe it, or chose not to take back the trust it had invested in the church. Most Romanian Catholic and Protestant churches retained possession of their property, but the number of their adherents was much smaller than those of the Greek Catholic Church, which suddenly saw its members in the position of either having to abandon their religion or convert to Orthodoxy.

After the fall of Communism, a process began to return land that was previously nationalized. The main motivation behind this policy was the incapacity of the government to promote Communist-style, state-sponsored agriculture, because of its lack of profitability. In addition, the transition to democracy accentuated the need to reestablish private property (Verdery, *Vanishing Hectare*, 2003). Restitution was done according to case-by-case rulings. Slowly, policies of property restitution were formulated, but it took more than a decade for Romania to formally implement these policies. Therefore, the same case-by-case principle functioned in Greek Catholic Church property claims. Public opinion was favorable to restitution to some extent (according to Romanian Public Opinion Barometer in the early- and mid-1990s) and the fairness of the initiative was saluted by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the European Union.

Discrimination against Greek Catholics

When the Greek Catholic Church voiced demands for restitution, however, the government seemed to be oblivious and did not respond. In the early 1990s, the government recognized that there might be a conflict between Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, but it did not acknowledge responsibility for resolving it. Rather, the government encouraged the two churches to engage in a dialogue to resolve their litigations (www.mediauno.ro, 1993). Without a clear policy, restitution of Greek Catholic property proceeded in two unsuccessful ways.

First, one Romanian Orthodox regional leader recognized the right of the Greek Catholic Church to repossess what it owned before Communism, and thus agreed to give back some churches. Archbishop Corneanu of Timisoara also pledged support for friendly relations (R. Lazu, "Interculturalitate si interconfesionalitate: o alta perspectiva," in *Interculturalitate* [2002]). In cities and villages with more than one church, and with at least one of them having previously

Greek Catholicism was a forbidden practice, the institution was outlawed, and many priests were imprisoned.

(continued on page 4)

The Restitution of Religious Property in Romania *(continued from page 3)*

been the property of the Greek Catholic Church, Corneanu generally attempted to give the church back, but was prevented from doing so by the Orthodox hierarchy in Bucharest. In situations where only one church existed, Corneanu proposed that both confessions worship in the same church, but at different times. This principle was also adopted in other areas. However, the use of churches by Greek Catholics continues to be perceived as illegitimate by the Orthodox Church, which can block Greek Catholic worship at any time (*Ibid.*)

Second, Greek Catholics mobilized and took over some of their former churches by force, as in the case of Cluj-Napoca and Reghin (D. Ionescu, "The Orthodox/Uniate Conflict," *RFL/RL Research Institute Report on Eastern Europe* 2 [No. 31, 1991], 29-34). In the former city, the proportion of Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches is roughly equal, but the Orthodox still had full control of both Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches. Greek Catholics held their services in a public square. During the liberal government of 1996-2000, state officials and Greek Catholic hierarchs collaborated, allowing Greek Catholics to retake control of churches by force. In these cases, forceful occupation of one Orthodox Church by Greek Catholics triggered protest marches organized by the Orthodox Church. According to the 1992 Romanian census, the Greek Catholic Church had just over 200,000 believers, or one percent of the country's population. It also had two cathedrals and 212 churches, with only a minority being in use. In proportion to the number of Greek Catholic adherents, the Orthodox Church argued that it had sufficient places of worship.

Property Restitution with an Eye on European Opinion

Throughout the 1990s the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe repeatedly asked the Romanian state to ensure freedom of religion (Lazu, "Interculturalitate"). This external intervention was triggered by both the property conflict and the harsh reaction of the Romanian Orthodox Church to Protestant proselytism. The latter became widespread in post-Communist Romania, with the Orthodox Church resenting the loss of believers.

Given these increasingly contentious conditions, the issue of solving the Orthodox-Greek Catholic property conflict became a priority of the

Romanian government in the late 1990s.

The government wanted to demonstrate that democracy was working in Romania, and solving property conflicts became one way to demonstrate to international funders the success of democratization. In 2002 the government stated that all church property confiscated by the Communist regime would be returned, except those churches and their possessions that were in the hands of the Orthodox Church at the time of the 1948 law prescribing church confiscations.

The Romanian Orthodox Position

The Romanian Orthodox Church argues that Greek Catholic churches were not confiscated by the Romanian Communist state, but rather, were given directly to the Orthodox Church. Thus, the claim to restore property rights over previously confiscated goods should not apply (Candela Moldovei, 1997, <http://www.arhiepiscopeia-ort-cluj.org/cultural/revista/revista/news.php>). Additionally, many Greek Catholic adherents converted to Orthodoxy during Communism, and so did some of their priests. According to Orthodox doctrine, churches do not belong either to the state or the church, but to the community of adherents who are now Orthodox themselves (*Ibid.*). However, Orthodox ignore the fact that significant numbers of converts to Orthodoxy chose to go back to Greek Catholicism after 1989. Today, these people see themselves in a position of not having a place to worship (Lazu, "Interculturalitate").

The Greek Catholic Position

The Greek Catholic argument is that the churches were built by the Catholic Church and were taken away by the Communist regime, so the Catholic Church is entitled to full restoration of its property. The pope made an appeal to the Romanian government to restore Greek Orthodox property (*restitutio in integrum*), but the Romanian government denied his claim (Catholica, 2001, www.bru.ro).

The Romanian Government Position: In Flux

The Romanian government asserted the need to restore property rights but also expressed reluctance about how this could be done. In 2001 Prime Minister Nastase affirmed that the government might draft a law regarding restoration of property rights that would affect both churches and express a neutral point of view (www.mediauno.ru, 2002). However, Romanian President Ion Iliescu stated that because many Greek Catholics converted to Orthodoxy, there was no need for *restitutio in integrum* (*Ibid.*). He also cited problematic cases of communities in which one church existed but adherents of both confessions claimed the property.

State support for the Orthodox Church in these property conflicts oscillated between

The issue of solving the Orthodox-Greek Catholic property conflict became a priority of the Romanian government in the late 1990s.

obvious privileging when the government was composed of former Communist leaders (1989-1996, 2000-2004) and attempts at *restitutio in integrum* during the liberal government of 1996-2000. However, even during the latter, the parliament did not succeed in passing a law returning Greek Catholic churches.

Even in the few years when the courts granted the Greek-Catholic Church full ownership over its places of worship, the state refused to enforce the decision (*Ibid.*). Finally, in 2005, the Romanian state started to enforce the law on the restitution of property to the Greek Catholic Church, and consequently, the latter now has access to most of its former places of worship. Members of the Romanian Orthodox Church, especially Metropolitan Bartolomeu of Cluj, have criticized this government policy, advocating the need to return property according to the number of adherents in a given locale and not according to *restitutio in integrum*.

Church Positions Contrasted

The Roman Catholic Church and Protestant denominations managed to reclaim property from the state. Interestingly, the Roman Catholic Church did not offer to help its Greek Catholic sister church throughout the process of property restitution. On the one hand, Greek Catholics assert property rights over their

possessions at the beginning of Communism. On the other hand, Romanian Orthodox make reference to the moment of the creation of the Uniate Church, and how it took away Orthodox property at that point. ♦

Edited excerpts published with permission from Bogdan Mihai Radu, "Traditional Believers and Democratic Citizens, A Contextualized Analysis of the Effects of Religion on Support for Democracy in East Central Europe," Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 2007.

Editor's note: An abstract of Dr. Radu's dissertation follows: The author analyzes the effects of religious variables on democratic values in Central and Eastern Europe, based on statistical data drawn from World Values Surveys. In contrast to much of the literature, no direct correlation could be identified between religious and political values. Thus, in various countries, some Orthodox believers supported and some opposed democratization. Varied historical contexts seemed to best account for divergent opinions among coreligionists.

Bogdan Mihai Radu is a junior lecturer in the department of political science, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania.

The Rewards of Suffering: Ukrainian Evangelical Immigrants in the United States

Catherine Wanner

In 1987, as the Soviet Union prepared for the millennial commemoration of Christianity in Kyivan Rus', Mikhail Gorbachev took the bold step of announcing that all victims of religious persecution could apply to emigrate as part of his greater campaign of *glasnost*. Soon thereafter, in 1989, the U.S. Congress passed the Lautenberg Amendment which made religion the cornerstone of America's Soviet refugee policy and extended the benefits Soviet Jews already received to Evangelical Christian, Ukrainian Catholic, and Ukrainian Orthodox believers. Persons affiliated with any of these denominations who could demonstrate "well-established histories of persecution" under the Soviet regime became eligible to immigrate to the United States as refugees if they had family ties or some other form of sponsorship in the United States. Notably, they were not required to prove fear of *future* persecution; *past* membership in a persecuted religious group would suffice. As a result of these actions by Moscow and Washington, approximately 500,000 Soviet evangelicals immigrated to the United States, some as refugees, others, through family reunification.

"Push" and "Pull" Factors in Migration

For Soviet believers, 1989 proved to be an historic juncture: remarkably, the Soviet Union was willing to allow evangelical believers to leave, and the United States was willing to receive them. The

political liberalizations that occurred in the USSR in the late 1980s, while welcome, had a sharp, negative impact on all sectors of the economy. Nearly all Soviet citizens saw their standard of living plummet, which led to "instability emigration," a desire to escape the economic chaos of the so-called transition to capitalism. In addition to economic decline, other linkages with the United States were occurring at this time, and they stimulated a desire to emigrate. A barrage of American missionaries promising salvation arrived in Ukraine, right alongside American media and popular culture displaying images of glamour and wealth, and American multinational corporations offering a plethora of longed-for consumer goods. They served as magnets, as cultural bridges, transporting Soviet citizens from the "proletarian paradise" to the perceived land of milk and honey. These bridges fostered the illusion of familiarity and fed the desire to emigrate.

The rapid, massive exodus of longstanding evangelical believers that began in 1989 occurred at a critical juncture of religious revival in Ukraine. Just as it was becoming possible to create religious communities legally, to "harvest" new converts from among the many religious seekers, the majority of clergy and established believers emigrated. This was additional motivation for foreign missionaries to travel to the former Soviet Union to "plant" churches and to respond to the quests of the "unsaved" by

(continued on page 6)

Approximately 500,000 Soviet evangelicals immigrated to the United States.

The Rewards of Suffering (continued from page 5)

imparting *their* understandings of evangelical practice.

Settlement Locations in the United States

Across America in the 1990s, communities of Soviet evangelicals sprang up in residentially compact clusters of families and believers united around churches. This latest wave of refugees from Soviet Ukraine, compared to the previous waves that preceded them, and other immigrant groups more generally, has lost extraordinarily little in the process of relocating, prompting a Jewish émigré to claim enviously that evangelicals have a “moveable feast” (Interview conducted 6 May 2001). Highly favorable immigration policies have allowed nearly the entire membership of many Soviet congregations to relocate rapidly to the Pacific Northwest, to traditional Ukrainian immigrant communities in Pennsylvania, and to mid-sized American cities not formerly noted for their receptivity to immigrants. In particular, Soviet Evangelicals have settled extensively in Sacramento, California. Starting in the 1950s, a radio station based in Sacramento ran a Russian-language evangelical radio broadcast that was received in parts of the former Soviet Union. For the earliest evangelical refugees, this suggested that Sacramento might be a hospitable new home. Sacramento became the preferred relocation point for evangelicals and today has the largest Soviet evangelical community. Portland, Oregon, Seattle, Washington, and Pennsylvania became other key destinations.

The Role of Social Service Providers

The earliest evangelical refugees had no relatives in the United States, making it necessary for organizations such as the North American Baptist Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and Lutheran Social Services to sponsor these “free cases.” These religious organizations, in conjunction with individual congregations, assumed responsibility for the resettlement of refugee families. These intermediary organizations have played a critical role in organizing assistance to newly arrived families and, therefore, have directed immigrants to particular areas and have diverted them from others. The pivotal position of these denominational organizations also reveals why evangelical believers have become concentrated on the U.S. West Coast and Pennsylvania. In each instance, these communities would never have grown had it not been for such sponsoring church organizations. After 1992, immigration regulations changed, and emigrants were obliged to have some family connection in the United States. Congregations became clusters of residential and familial networks as local churches helped families who were in the United States to sponsor their relatives under the Family Reunification Act.

Limited English Limiting Evangelism

Virtually no one I interviewed regretted the decision to emigrate. Simply put, their biggest problem has been language. In addition to complicating the process of finding work, it is no

longer possible to missionize. As one pastor flatly said, “We understand that the central aim of our church is evangelization.” The old practices of going to prisons and orphanages, visiting the elderly, and traveling from village to village singing psalms and spreading the Gospel have come to an end. It is a bitter irony for them that language has created a barrier against proselytizing far more insurmountable than any the Soviet state could erect. Limited English-language ability among the first generation fuels a mission orientation to the homeland and helps maintain the ethnic nature of the community.

Missionizing in Ukraine: A Pennsylvania Case Study of New Slavic Immigrants

Even as the ethos of one Slavic evangelical community in Pennsylvania has Americanized by relaxing a long list of behavioral prescriptions, a mission orientation to the homeland, broadly understood as the former Soviet Union, has helped maintain the Slavic identity of the community and has held at bay the permissiveness of Americans, even of American Baptists. Extensive indirect missionizing occurs as the church sponsors two missionaries and annual youth mission trips to the former Soviet Union, usually to Ukraine or Belarus, and provides humanitarian aid to the needy in Ukraine. Two women with ties to Zaporizhzhia, an eastern Ukrainian city, organize bimonthly shipments of two or three tons of clothing, toys, food products, and other items to orphanages, boarding schools, and congregations. Gathering donated goods, organizing them, packing them, documenting everything for customs, and arranging for the goods to be trucked to Philadelphia, placed in a container, loaded onto a ship, sent to Ukraine, and distributed throughout villages in twelve oblasts is a colossal undertaking.

On the Ukrainian side the job is no less monumental. A small group of women in Zaporizhzhia provide close supervision of the distribution to the intended recipients to avoid seeing the goods end up for sale at some sidewalk bazaar. Relying on informal, local assessments of which families and institutions are in need, a small group of women on both sides of the ocean manage to deliver literally tons of aid directly to the needy, independent of their religious affiliation. (The church is categorically against restricting aid to Baptists out of fear that people will convert for the sole purpose of gaining material rewards.) These shipments go exclusively to Ukraine for two reasons: they graft onto preexisting informal networks that are highly efficient, and the Ukrainian government is one of the few in Eurasia that allows Protestant denominations to deliver humanitarian aid directly. These immigrants have simply reoriented their evangelical efforts to the former USSR with considerable zeal.

I see no signs of abatement in their attachments to the former Soviet Union, which take the forms of missionizing, charitable, and other outreach activities. The emerging religious marketplace in Ukraine, with its comparatively few legal restrictions, plus the personal networks of these members suggests that the era of closed, isolated communities

A small group of women on both sides of the ocean manage to deliver literally tons of aid directly to the needy, independent of their religious affiliation.

has indeed come to an end. In its place has emerged an active transnational social field of believers that is connected to both a country of origin and an adopted country via religious commitments to evangelize.

Religion and Missions Connecting Two Continents

If religion is the factor that made it possible to choose to emigrate, interestingly, it is also the factor that is almost always evoked to explain the choice *not* to emigrate. Those who refuse to emigrate often claim that the need for evangelization and proselytizing in Ukraine is more pressing because of the wounds inflicted by socialism. This overrides any desire for increased material comfort or fears of renewed religious persecution. For those who do leave, however, the obligation to evangelize remains. Migration situates this basic activity in a transnational social field, the essence of which is found in personal relationships that cross national borders.

As we have seen, members of Slavic immigrant congregations send missionaries, and themselves become missionaries to Ukraine, delivering money, medicine, information, and other forms of charitable aid. Given their transnational familial networks, missionizing projects, youth group exchanges, and other connections with the former Soviet Union, at virtually every church service, in the U.S. and in Ukraine, a half-dozen people stand and offer greetings or report back on a recent trip to another congregation abroad.

Soviet evangelicals blend aspects of their culture and a religious lifestyle in a setting of increased material comfort in the United States while retaining strong links and building social relationships with coreligionists elsewhere in the world. Many refugee networks are so embedded in religious communities that they are rendered inseparable. Religious institutions function as the nodes in interlinked networks that unite migrants spread across continents.

In Summary

The latest wave of refugees from the Soviet Union rapidly relocated entire congregations and the multigenerational families that constituted their membership. They are committed to maintaining some kind of an “ethnic” church in the United States, be it Russian, Slavic, or Ukrainian, and to providing charitable and missionary assistance to fellow religious communities in Ukraine. They have no desire to return to their homeland permanently, but they do evince a strong commitment to return frequently in order to missionize. ♦

Edited excerpts reprinted with permission from Catherine Wanner, Communities of the Converted, Ukrainians and Global Evangelism (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

Catherine Wanner is associate professor of history and religious studies at Pennsylvania State University, State College, Pennsylvania.

Members of Slavic immigrant congregations send missionaries, and themselves become missionaries to Ukraine, delivering money, medicine, information, and other forms of charitable aid.

Books of Note

The Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies are jointly sponsoring a new annual book prize in political and social sciences for the best monograph on Eastern Europe, Russia, or Eurasia. One of the two studies to receive honorable mention in 2008 was ***Communities of the Converted: Ukrainians and Global Evangelism*** by Catherine Wanner (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press). Following is an excerpt from the prize committee’s commendation.

An anthropologist, Wanner provides an expertly crafted and elegantly written study of the resurgence of evangelical Protestantism in Ukraine. Based on exemplary multi-sited ethnographic research in both the U.S. and Ukraine, the book combines thoughtful and thorough historical contextualization with extended forays into the evangelical worlds and shows the processes through which international movements were able to establish a presence in disenfranchised communities as well as what they contributed to those communities.

Editor’s note: Communities of the Converted was also a 2008 Choice Outstanding Academic Title and the 2008 winner of the Heldt Prize for the best book by a woman in Slavic/East European/Eurasian Studies; the William C. Douglass Prize for the best book in European anthropology; and the American Association of Ukrainian Studies Best Book Award. For a review, see East-West Church & Ministry Report 16 (Summer 2008): 13.

* * *

The Wayne S. Vucinich Book Prize for the most important contribution to Russian, Eurasian, and East European studies is co-sponsored by the Center for Russian and East European Studies at Stanford University and the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. The 2008 prize was awarded to ***Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia*** (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press). Following is an excerpt from the prize citation.

With a finely tuned appreciation for the work of historical consciousness, cultural frames, and theological reason, Adeb Khalid takes today’s “Central Asian problem,” and turns it on its head in this bravura study of how seven decades of Soviet rule deeply transformed religious and social action in contemporary Central Asia. Drawing on a diverse, polyglot range of sources, he shows the multiple ways by which socialist rule redefined the contours of Islamic practice in the USSR. Khalid offers close readings of archival sources, memoirs, ethnographic records, and interviews to suggest a predominantly Muslim world area that is by no means antiquated or isolated from the political transformations across the formerly socialist world. Canons old and new are challenged in this finely written and elegant study.

Editor’s note: Not surprisingly, Khalid has harsh words for evangelical missionaries in Central Asia, implicitly affirming the inviolability of the majority culture’s religious tradition at the expense of genuine freedom of conscience, the latter being dismissed as merely a Western construct.

Source: AAASS NewsNet (January 2009): 12-13. Excerpts reprinted with permission.

The Contextualization of the Gospel Among Bektashi Albanians

Richard William Shaw

Editor's note: The author's dissertation, from which this article is excerpted, focuses on the contextualization of the Christian gospel among Albanian Muslims. Contextualization may be defined as "clothing" the gospel in ways that make the Christian faith understandable in a given culture.

In 1995 The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) commissioned Richard William Shaw and his wife, Martha, as International Coordinators for Albanians, "with the task of making disciples and planting churches among Albanian diaspora populations." Following language study in Tirana, Albania, the Shaws and their children moved to Skopje, Macedonia, where they studied the Macedonian language and began to minister among the large Albanian minority in the Macedonian capital. The Shaws organized an Albanian-language Baptist church in Skopje and later a second church in Rahovec, Kosova.

In particular, the Shaws worked among Albanians of the Bektashi tradition, one of 12 orders (tariqat) of Sufi Islam, as distinct from the larger Sunni and Shiia Muslim traditions. Robert S. Ellwood and Barbara A. McGraw define Sufi Muslims as mystics who "seek not only to follow his [Allah's] external commandments, but to know him intimately and even to lose themselves in love into the depths of his being" (Many Peoples, Many Faiths: Women and Men in the World Religions, 6th ed. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999], 408. See also John Kingsley Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes [London: Luzac Oriental, 1937], 162-66). Westerners historically have characterized Sufi Islam as mystical and the Sufi Bektashi in particular as exotic ("whirling dervishes" being Bektashi adherents). Sufi Order Bektashi comprise the largest number of Albanian faithful in Albania, western Macedonia, and southwestern Kosova.

For his dissertation Shaw prepared and administered a questionnaire to 80 Albanians seeking to determine the best ways to present (contextualize) the gospel to Albanian Bektashi. He "also recruited 21 Albanian Bektashi Christian believers to assist in the process of relating elements of Bektashi belief and practice to Christian faith in ways that would be meaningful from a Bektashi cultural perspective."

* * *

Historically, Albanians have hailed from four major faith traditions: Sunni Islam, Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Bektashism, a branch of Sufi Islam. Perhaps because of the inter-religious conflicts which transpired through centuries of history, and in search of a unifying national identity, the Albanian Renaissance poet Pashko Vasa (1825-1892) declared, "The religion of Albania is albanianism."¹ Undoubtedly, the motivation for this statement stemmed at least partially from a desire for reconciliation among divergent Albanian groups.

Preparing for and Beginning Missionary Service

Following the completion of language study in Tirana, Albania, my family and I moved to Skopje, Macedonia, where we became acquainted with Albanians from many strata of society, from the very poor who reside as squatters in abandoned, condemned buildings, to ambassadors and world-class musicians and artists. We began Bible studies in the Albanian language, using the storytelling idiom prevalent within Albanian culture, and incorporating indigenous Albanian melody and poetry. We borrowed heavily from Christian Albanian writers and extracted excerpts from the writings of Albanian heroes and heroines who professed faith in Jesus Christ and were identified as Christians. We founded ministries of justice and mercy to orphans and other indigent children, widows, displaced persons and refugees, and urban and rural poor. Our closest friends were Bektashis, and we conducted many conversations with them and grew to love them as our own family.

Bektashi Converts

As our ministries and cultural adaptation progressed, waves of refugees began to pour out of Kosova due to the Serbian military and paramilitary policy of ethnic cleansing. Our Bible study groups swelled, with many of these Kosovar refugees searching for fellowship, solace, and community, in an often hostile Macedonian environment. I realized that many of these persons curious to dialogue about the parables of the Kingdom of God hailed from a Bektashi heritage.

Moreover, I sensed that many of these Kosovar Albanian Bektashi were either consciously or unconsciously responding to God's Spirit working in their lives. As several of these persons professed faith in Christ, I perceived their desire to understand the teachings of Christ as presented in the Albanian Bible. These new believers wrestled with issues of religious and cultural identity as they learned the commands of Christ for devotion, holiness, service, and community. Increasingly over time, I came to understand that if Albanian Bektashi were to ever become disciples of Jesus Christ and an indigenous church established among them, the gospel would have to be contextualized, appropriating indigenous language, symbols, and ceremonies.

Working to Contextualize the Gospel

One warm August day in 2006, after 12 years of ministry among Albanians, I realized that all the preparations I had made and all the years of establishing and nurturing relationships with Muslim peoples had reached a watershed as I sat in the sanctuary of the Kisha Baptiste "Udha e Shpëtimit" ("Way of Salvation" Baptist Church) in Rahovec, Kosova. I was listening to an often heated, though not polemical, discussion of how followers of Jesus Christ in a Muslim-dominated culture can make sense of the gospel and communicate their understandings to family members, friends, and acquaintances in the *umma*, or Islam community,

I came to understand that if Albanian Bektashi were to ever become disciples of Jesus Christ, the gospel would have to be contextualized.

and among Sufi Muslims. Kosovar Albanian Pastor Eliza Durguti,² whom I had guided some eight years before in identifying the god-man whom she had seen many times in visions, often called upon me to broker a consensus among the Christ-followers sitting in the large circle. Much to Eliza's chagrin, however, I often refused, choosing instead to reflect upon the process in which we were engaged.

Each of these Kosovar Albanians came to faith in Jesus Christ some time between 1992 and 2006. In many cases, I was privileged to be a link in the chain of belonging and belief, as these former Muslims entered the Kingdom of God.

Vjollca Gojani, an optimist and former Bektashi *myhype*, or second-stage Sufi mystic, challenged Pastor Eliza, also a Bektashi *myhype*, and the ensuing high-pitched, cacophonous exchange of these two women, quashed my reverie.³ "For a Bektashi, *nasipi*⁴ is a death, a ceremony of passage from death to life." Vjollca Gojani continued, "For Bektashis who accept Jesus Christ, *nasipi* is baptism – death to the old life and birth to the new life." Pastor Durguti added, "We must make that clear, but not to the point of insisting upon baptism as essential to acceptance in the Kingdom."

During the course of this discussion I realized that the process of contextualizing the gospel, putting new clothes on the ancient story, is arguably the chief end of church planting. Eliza and Vjollca and the others gathered in this sweat-borne building in this picturesque and fragrant hamlet were participating in the task of re-imagining the gospel story. This context-sensitive process takes culture (and sub-culture and counter-culture) very seriously, while upholding the non-negotiable biblical text.

As a Christian cross-cultural missionary serving among Muslims, I have endeavored to assist Bektashi to embrace and affirm both their Bektashi cultural and religious identity and their new identity in Jesus Christ. I have sought to lovingly guide the members of this new faith community to scrutinize their religious and cultural inheritance, challenging those elements which they deemed incongruent with the gospel, and affirming those which they deemed consistent with Christ's ethic and message.

In conclusion, the gospel of Jesus Christ, in order to be understood deeply and penetratingly by members of a given culture, must be contextualized, i.e. "clothed" in the forms of that culture. A contextualized gospel will be communicated in relevant ways that make sense and that engage a culture's worldview and cultural assumptions, allowing persons to come to faith in Jesus Christ while remaining true to their culture. ♦

Notes:

¹ Edwin E. Jacques, *The Albanians; An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995), 397.

²All Albanian Bektashi background believers identified by name in this dissertation have provided written consent for inclusion. Copies of these forms are held by this researcher and at the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky.

³The egalitarian nature and practice of Bektashi Muslim believers and Albanian Bektashi background Christian believers challenge the patriarchal patterns of Sunni and Shia Islam and many Christian traditions. Female Kosovar Albanian Bektashi background Christian believers who are leaders within local congregations add their voice to the discussion, taking their rightful place at the table.

⁴*Nasip* has been defined by Birge (1937: 162), as "'portion' or 'share allotted' and hence 'fate.'" "The word *nasip* has general use among Bektashis in the sense of formal acceptance by the initiation rite of Bektashi teachings."

Edited excerpts published with permission from Richard William Shaw, "The Contextualization of the Gospel of Jesus Christ Among Bektashi Albanians," Ph.D. dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2007.

Richard William Shaw is assistant professor of religion and missions at Wayland Baptist University, Plainview, Texas.

The process of contextualizing the gospel, putting new clothes on the ancient story, is arguably the chief end of church planting.

Christians in Central Asia

Sebastien Peyrouse

Christians in Central Asia constitute a unique case, having been subject to Soviet state atheism and constituting a religious minority in a Muslim region.¹ The five post-Soviet Muslim republics of Central Asia count many Christian minorities – Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant, with the latter group including Lutherans, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Presbyterians, and members of Charismatic churches. *Editor's note: While the present article classifies Jehovah's Witnesses as Protestant Christians, most churches consider Jehovah's Witnesses outside Christian ranks on the basis of this movement's denial of the divinity of Christ.* Unlike religious communities of the Near and Middle East, Christians in Central Asia consist primarily of Europeans – mainly

Russians, Germans, Poles, Armenians, and Greeks. At present, large Russian communities exist in Kazakhstan (4,500,000), Kyrgyzstan (600,000), and Uzbekistan (at least 500,000), with tens of thousands in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.² Over the last three decades their numbers have considerably decreased, as have those of other Europeans. Ukrainians number 500,000 in Kazakhstan, 100,000 in Uzbekistan, and 50,000 in Kyrgyzstan. A 1999 census recorded 47,000 Poles in Kazakhstan, which contains as well 111,000 Belarusians and 353,000 Germans. The communities exist in far smaller numbers in other republics.

Other Christian groups include Koreans, numbering 160,000 in Uzbekistan and close to 100,000 in Kazakhstan in 1999; Greeks, recorded

(continued on page 10)

Christians in Central Asia (continued from page 9)

at 10,000 in Uzbekistan; and Christian Tatars, the largest group consisting of 248,000 in Kazakhstan. A small Armenian minority numbers 42,000 in Uzbekistan at present, and 40,000 in Turkmenistan in 1995. In the post-Soviet era, Christian – particularly Protestant – missionary activity among Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and others has led to an increasing number of converts.

Christians After Independence

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Christians in Central Asia have had to confront two important phenomena: the extensive emigration of European populations and the arrival of new missionary movements. European out-migration from Central Asia, which began in the 1970s, peaked between 1992 and 1995, as European populations, acutely aware of their minority status, feared reduced power in the newly independent states and experienced increased economic difficulties. Half the European population, those with the means or the will, left.

This emigration posed a major challenge to Christians in Central Asia who saw many of their religious communities evaporate. The case of Lutherans is instructive. In Kazakhstan, heavy German out-migration led to the closing of several Lutheran churches; others are now dominated by non-Germans. Likewise in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, long-established Lutheran communities disappeared, weakened by competition from other Protestant denominations. Some relatively dynamic communities, such as those in large cities or in northern Kazakhstan, where the majority of the population is of European descent, managed to subsist, whereas groups situated in areas mainly peopled with Central Asians progressively died out. In the central Kazakhstani regions of Kyzylorda and Zhezkazgan, Lutheran communities consist uniquely of seniors, driving the church to consider measures to stop the hemorrhaging.

Proselytism and Conversions

Most Christian movements, except Orthodox, Uniate, and Armenian churches, use new conditions of religious freedom to proselytize. Missionaries from the West and from South Korea, as well as from congregations operating in Central Asia since Soviet times, have been working in the region since *perestroika* and independence. These efforts are seen as crucial tools for congregations to find new followers and reach necessary levels to be allowed to register with the state.

Christian missionaries feel that most Central Asian Muslims practice a tolerant and traditional Islam, sometimes without theological grounding; these factors, they believe, ease these believers' transition to Christianity. This perception is especially strong in areas of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that were Islamized much later, in the 18th century as compared to the 8th century for the oasis areas of Central Asia. Missionary movements are also driven by the biblical imperative to share the gospel with all peoples. This view has provoked conflict with Muslim leaders, who see all non-

European locals as *de facto* Muslims rather than potential Christians.

Religion as an Expression of Minority Identity in Central Asia

Individuals use religion as an expression of their minority feeling. As such, religion constitutes an important element of Christian daily life.³ Orthodox leaders have sought to exploit the national factor to gain support from Russians, who now must face a new status as cultural and political minorities. The link between religion, church, and nationality grows increasingly important as the more conservative republics in Central Asia – Turkmenistan, and, to a lesser extent, Uzbekistan – have progressively excluded European cultural expressions and no longer broadcast Russian television programs. In Kazakhstan, Russians have used the church to solidify a national identity in a different manner: the Orthodox Church claims the northern Kazakh steppes as a Russian “home.”

Emigration to “home” republics has strengthened the combination of ethnicity and religion in some cases, linking both to movement and territory, but has weakened it in others; for example, the Baptist Church has now replaced ethnic affiliations with the understanding that the gospel knows no ethnic boundaries. Other Christian churches and groups have tried to blend national allegiances and multi-ethnic configurations: Catholicism celebrates services in several languages, and the Baptist and Adventist churches have formed subgroups for locals (Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uyghurs) in order to mitigate their concerns of entering a European denomination.

Russian Orthodox Versus Other Christian Churches

The Orthodox Church seeks simultaneously to justify its predominance over other Christian movements in Central Asia and to assert its presence as equal to Islam. Church leaders argue that every Russian is inherently connected to eastern Christianity, with “Russian” and “Orthodox” used as virtual synonyms. Orthodox leaders consider the entire post-Soviet space their canonical territory, which gives them right of preeminence over all other churches today.⁴ This preeminence extends to non-Russians as well, who are also considered to be “automatically” Orthodox. Two exceptions exist: non-Slavs whose culture is bound to another religion (Islam in Central Asia and Azerbaijan and the Armenian and Georgian Christian churches for their respective populations), and those whose nationality is culturally linked to a church situated beyond the borders of the former USSR (Catholic Poles and Protestant Germans, for example). Yet Orthodoxy argues that activities of these churches should be limited, and they should not have the right to proselytize. Russians who convert to a denomination different from Orthodox Christianity are strongly criticized. Non-Orthodox Christian churches, not surprisingly, are strongly critical of this approach, and argue in particular in Central Asia that the

Orthodox leaders consider the entire post-Soviet space their canonical territory.

Orthodox Church is unable to meet the spiritual needs of all non-Muslim believers.

Christian Missionary Activity and Islam

Missionaries have continued their activities in Central Asia despite hostility from Orthodoxy and Islam. Missionaries use various tactics to proselytize, knocking on doors or meeting people in the streets in republics where such activity is authorized, or through humanitarian aid or various activities including foreign language or computer lessons, sporting activities, and summer camps for underprivileged children. Christians have also constructed large church buildings to attract individuals who may be seeking new spiritual values.

Muslim clergy across the region have reacted with hostility to the appearance of foreign Christian missions and to conversions among “their” local population. The mufti of Tajikistan, for example, declared that “it is intolerable that a Muslim leaves his religion.”⁵ Kyrgyz mosques have circulated petitions demanding a halt to all missionary activity, including that of Baptists, Adventists, and other Protestant denominations.⁶ And in Kazakhstan Muslims have tried to prevent Protestant movements from organizing summer camps. Throughout Central Asia a conversion to Christianity is considered treason and can cause tensions in the new convert’s social and family circles. ♦

Editor’s note: The conclusion of this article will be published in the next issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

Notes

¹ For Christianity in Central Asia after World War II, see Sebastien Peyrouse, *Des chrétiens entre athéisme et islam. Regards sur la question religieuse en Asie centrale soviétique et post-soviétique* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2003).

² Considering the absence of serious religious sociological studies in Central Asia, I do not give figures on believers, nor their national distribution. I prefer to give the figures of nationalities that constitute the majority of Christian believers, even though these figures should be considered

cautiously. Sources for these figures include: *Kratkie itogi perepisi nadeleniia 1999 goda v respublike Kazahstan* (Almaty: Agentstvo respublik Kazahstan po statistike, 1999); N. E. Masanov, Z. B. Abylhozhin, I. V. Erofeeva, A. N. Alekseenko, G. S. Baratova, *Istoriia Kazahstana, narody i kul’tury* (Almaty: Dajk-press, 2001); *Etnicheskii atlas Uzbekistana* (Tashkent, Fond Sodeistviia, 2002); C. Poujol, *Dictionnaire de l’Asie centrale* (Paris: Ellipses, 2001); Pal Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics* (London: Hurst & Company, 1995); Marlene Laruelle and Sebastien Peyrouse, *Les Russes du Kazakhstan. Identités nationales et nouveaux Etats dans l’espace post-soviétique* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2004).

³ Sebastien Peyrouse, “Christianity and Nationality in Soviet and Post-Soviet Central Asia: Mutual Intrusions and Instrumentalizations,” *Nationalities Papers* 32 (September 2004), 651-74.

⁴ G. Stricker, “Die Missverständnisse häufen sich . . .” *Glaube in der Zweiten Welt*, July/August 1995, 21; Stricker, “Fear of Proselytism: the Russian Orthodox Church Sets Itself Against Catholicism,” *Religion, State and Society* No. 2 (1998), 155-65.

⁵ F. Sharifzad, “Islam – ne politiki,” *Nauka i religiia* No. 11 (1994), 32.

⁶ These petitions were not only aiming at new movements such as the Unification Church of Reverend Moon, but at all Protestant denominations (Baptists and Adventists, for example); *Glaube in der Zweiten Welt* No. 718 (1992), 5-6.

Edited excerpts reprinted with permission from Sebastien Peyrouse, “Christians as the Main Religious Minority in Central Asia” in Everyday Life in Central Asia, Past and Present edited by Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 371-83.

Sebastien Peyrouse is senior research fellow, the Central Asia and Caucasus Institute, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC, and an associate scholar at the Institute for International and Strategic Research, Paris, France.

Muslim clergy across the region have reacted with hostility to the appearance of foreign Christian missions and to conversions among “their” local population.

Elnura, A Kyrgyz Christian

David W. Montgomery

In Central Asia new non-Orthodox Christian groups have proved to be a source of tension as they gain converts from Islam. The numbers of these new Christians, whose denominational affiliations include Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, Pentecostal, and non-denominational Protestant, are not large relative to the broader culture of self-proclaiming Muslims. But the perception is that these Christian groups pose a threat to a cultural understanding of Islam that has not included a tradition of religious pluralism.

Elnura is a young Kyrgyz girl who became interested in Christianity through regular visits to her Christian missionary neighbors who, according to her, offered the message of a “God of forgiveness and love” rather than a “God of fear.”¹ Russian Orthodoxy did not appeal to her because she was Kyrgyz, and she saw Orthodoxy as the faith of

Russians and Islam as the faith of Kyrgyz. That the missionaries she met were Kyrgyz piqued her curiosity, and in secrecy she accepted their invitation to learn more about Christianity.

When her father learned about her visits to their neighbors, he was furious and banned her from seeing them again. He immediately sent her to a mosque to begin regular studies with the *imam*. The response of Elnura’s father was curious only because he was not a practicing Muslim and had never been to a mosque. His conviction was that his ethnicity belonged to Islam, and he feared that if his daughter became Christian, she would lose her Kyrgyz identity.

New Christian converts challenge the conception of a mono-religious culture. They confront a population that will increasingly have to address

(continued on page 12)

Elnura's conversion, far from being an aberration, is one among a growing number of examples of religious diversity in Central Asia.

the issue of religious pluralism, as well as the problem posed by what one defines as ethnic and what another defines as religious. Elnura's Kyrgyz identity means that she should be Muslim, and her conversion is seen as a threat to the community. The reality is, however, that Elnura, far from being an aberration, is one among a growing number of examples of religious diversity in Central Asia.² ♦

Notes:

¹Some foreign Christian missionaries believe that the conversion rate in Central Asia has come to a plateau, which they explain as an aspect of new Christians trying to reclaim the culture that was at times discarded during the conversion process. This cultural reclamation is seen in people who, for example, define themselves as both Kyrgyz and Christian and use traditional symbols in worship, such as the cross patterns common in the *shyrdak*

(traditional Kyrgyz felt carpet).

²For more on the conversion of Kyrgyz to Christianity, see Alyona Faletskaya, "Identity Among the Kyrgyz: Moving Tent Towards Christ or Christianity," master's thesis, Department of Anthropology, American University in Central Asia, 2005.

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from David W. Montgomery, "Namaz, Wishing Trees, and Vodka: The Diversity of Everyday Religious Life in Central Asia," in Everyday Life in Central Asia, Past and Present, edited by Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 366 and 370.

David W. Montgomery is assistant professor of anthropology, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Post-Soviet Protestant Missions in Central Asia

Andrew Christian van Gorder

Editor's note: The first portion of this article was published in the previous issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report 17 (Spring 2009): 3-4.

Outreach through Education

In addition to humanitarian and medical ministry, another focus of mission organizations working in Central Asia has been education. In 1990, the Southern Baptist International Service Corps (ISC) began placing church volunteers in two-year teaching assignments in Central Asia. Some groups, such as Open Doors International, have organized training seminars examining the nature and history of Muslim-Christian interaction. Others have organized short-term educational programs (S.T.E.P. seminars) addressing such themes as leadership training, biblical studies, the Qur'an, and theological education for parishioners. In addition, Bible Mission International (BMI) sponsors a Missionaries in Training (MIT) Program which enables Central Asians to establish their own mission organizations to other Central Asian republics.

Missionaries have also established schools for both their own and local children. The Association of Christian Schools in Central Asia (ACSA) has opened elementary and primary schools, educational summer camps, educational clubs, and after-school programs, along with children's homes and orphanages. The major concentration of efforts has been in northern Kyrgyzstan, but these educational programs are also underway in other parts of Kyrgyzstan, as well as in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.¹ U.S.-based Teach Overseas.org also works in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, providing English language teachers who use their instruction as a "starting point for deeper conversations about life and faith."²

Some universities and other educational programs within Central Asia are designed to host visitors who are learning various Central Asian languages. Missionaries have been instrumental in either organizing or participating in a host of

linguistic study centers designed for the study of Central Asian languages.

Outreach through Economic Development

In addition to growing educational resources, increasing global economic interdependence is also creating new business opportunities in Central Asia. Kazakhstan, for example, is working extensively with a number of large, multinational oil companies such as Chevron to develop the enormous Tengiz oil fields. A number of Protestant missionary organizations in North America and the United Kingdom – including Frontiers, People International, and Interserve – are involved in job-placement programs for "tentmaker" missionaries willing to serve in Central Asia.

A pressing need exists for business educators who will assist Central Asian nations in economic development. Related to this are opportunities for teachers of English, the international language of business. After 1991, one of the first acts of newly independent Uzbekistan was to encourage the widespread teaching of English.

Outreach through Christian Media

Christian media also have been a means of outreach in Central Asia. Christian television programming is broadcast into the region via satellite. In October 2002, Finnish-based International Religious Radio and Television (IRR/TV), the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Russia, and Campus Crusade for Christ jointly launched a Christian Radio and Television Association in Central Asia. IRR/TV sponsored a media mission conference in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which included over 80 missionaries from across Central Asia.³ In addition, a number of Central Asians have received further training in media evangelism in Moscow.

In addition to humanitarian and medical ministry, another focus of mission organizations working in Central Asia has been education.

Radio traditionally has been a major means of Christian outreach to restricted access countries. Producers of Christian programming in Central Asian languages include the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company (FEBC), Evangeliums Rundfunk/TransWorld Radio (TWR), and HCJB World Radio. Many Central Asians who would never read a Christian book or attend a Christian service will listen to a Christian broadcast. Christian radio ministries report that they receive many letters asking for follow-up literature. These requests are forwarded to Christians living in Central Asia who mail personal responses to each inquirer.⁴

Some missionaries have shown the Jesus Film produced by Campus Crusade for Christ. Other evangelistic productions as well have been translated into the major languages of Central Asia.⁵ Such films have been aired on some local television stations which suffer from a shortage of programming in a given language. Television stations within Central Asia have, at times, benefited from technical assistance provided by expatriate Christians. Certain churches have established video libraries as a way to encourage their congregants. In addition, pastors have distributed cassette tapes and videos for training.

Outreach through Christian Literature

Christian literature is not abundantly available in the various languages of Central Asia. And the distribution of this material, when it is available, is not always done in a systematic way. For example, 10,000 copies of a Tajik translation of the Bible were printed, but only handfuls were distributed. Some evangelical groups organize programs in Central Asia in which individuals, often in response to radio programs, come to churches or neutral sites to participate in simple evangelistic Bible studies.⁶

Some Central Asian Christians may still not have Bibles available in their own languages. Organizations like Open Doors International remain active in distributing Bibles and other Christian materials in Central Asia. Immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union, a host of Central Asian countries shifted from the Cyrillic to the Roman alphabet, which has affected the publication and distribution of the Bible and other religious literature. To this day, some specific dialects remain without their own written language. This is the reason that a number of Bible translation organizations are active in Central Asia, including Slaviska Missionen (Bromma, Sweden), People International (Tunbridge Wells, England), the International Bible Society (Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Stockholm, Sweden), and Wycliffe Bible Translators (Dallas, Texas). A long tradition of Bible translation characterizes Christian mission efforts within the region. Uzbeks gained access to a translation of the Bible in their own language in 1913, but it was in an Arabic script that was not used under Soviet rule. A recent translation of the Bible into Tajik improves on an earlier version, while revisions to translations of the Bible continue in both the major and minor languages of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

Short-Term Missions

A number of Western ministries sponsor short-term missions in Central Asia. One group that works exclusively in this region, People International, organizes short-term programs that focus on evangelism or service projects.⁷ Open Doors International (Whitney, Oxon, England), Youth With a Mission (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), and U.S. Southern Baptists also sponsor short-term missions in Central Asia. Unfortunately, many of these initiatives do not adhere to the Lausanne mandate to exercise cultural sensitivity and do not link such efforts with long-term, indigenous programs and objectives. Some short-term ventures barge into the situation offering answers, instead of humbly listening and asking questions. Other groups distribute money, physical goods, and resources in ways that are indiscriminate and inappropriate.

Sister-Church Partnerships

Several Protestant mission organizations working in Central Asia are active in linking Eastern and Western congregations in sister-church partnerships. First Baptist Church of Woodway, a mega church in Waco, Texas, has developed prayer groups within its congregation which not only pray for Central Asian Christians, but also have organized repeated visits to the region, with some members even moving to Central Asia and living there for years at a time.⁸

In Conclusion

Christians in Central Asia continue to adapt to a changing social context. In spite of difficulties and large-scale out-migration, Christianity remains a visible presence in contemporary Central Asia. As Christians become increasingly adept at relating to the questions their Muslim neighbors have about their presence in society, they will become better able not only to maintain but also to increase their level of influence. Toward this goal, Christians from around the world can offer encouragement without imposing their own critical expectations on Central Asians. ♦

Notes:

¹ acsa.narod.ru/indextest.htm

² <http://www.teachoverseas.org/locationskazakhstan.html>

³ <http://www.irrtv.org/training.html>

⁴ [http://www.twr.org/index.php?option=content & task=view&id=59&Itemid=77](http://www.twr.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=59&Itemid=77)

⁵ Campus Crusade for Christ; Gospel Recordings International.

⁶ More information is available from the Bible League, <http://www.bibleleague.org/persecuted/asiapers.php>.

⁷ <http://www.gopeople.org/faqs.php>

⁸ Erich Bridges, "Pioneering Path for Others – Church Sends Nucleus to Central Asia," Baptist Press News, 13 October 2005; <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=21847>.

Edited excerpts reprinted with permission from A. Christian van Gorder, Muslim-Christian Relations in Central Asia (London: Routledge, 2008).

A. Christian van Gorder is professor of religion, arts, and sciences, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

In spite of difficulties and large-scale out-migration, Christianity remains a visible presence in contemporary Central Asia.

Leadership Styles in Russian and Ukrainian Evangelical Seminaries

Igor Petrov

Editor's note: For his dissertation on post-Soviet evangelical seminary leadership styles, Igor Petrov interviewed 41 stakeholders: 24 students, 13 teachers, and 4 leaders of three institutions: one in northwest Russia, one in northeast Ukraine, and one in southern Ukraine. Although the seminaries are not named, from the descriptions provided, the three institutions in St. Petersburg, Odessa, and Donetsk are among the best-known evangelical theological schools in the former Soviet Union, each with substantial residential campuses. The 13 faculty interviewed (eight male and five female) included 80 to 90 percent of full-time indigenous faculty at the three institutions.

The author's interviews, conducted between February and April, 2004, sought to identify "assumptions and perceptions of students, teachers, and leaders within three evangelical schools regarding preferred leadership characteristics." Petrov's hope is that his research will discourage the continuation of authoritarian leadership styles in favor of leadership inspired by a spirit of "care, support, heart for others, servanthood, and love."

In researching leadership styles in Russian and Ukrainian evangelical seminaries, eight themes emerged with implications for the development of effective leadership in evangelical institutions.

Theme 1: Spiritual Characteristics

Humility is one of the most important parts of spirituality (*duchovnost'*) in a leader's character and style. This emphasis upon humility stems from at least two sources: a desire for an Eastern Orthodox type of spirituality, deeply rooted in the Slavic mentality and well represented in Russian Orthodox Church history through the lives of saints and spiritual leaders, and a desire to restrict strong, authoritarian tendencies which are deeply imbedded in leadership styles in the former Soviet Union.

Respondents strongly rebuked any kind of pride, using biblical references to support their position. Instead, they stressed trust in God in spite of changing situations, pressures, and uncertainties faced by evangelical schools in Russia and the Ukraine.

Leaders with a pastor's and father's heart and an attitude of spiritual servanthood will be respected and will be able to serve effectively in the evangelical school environment. Leaders who have a strong, caring relationship with a support group with whom they can share their burdens and pressures will be better able to sustain a healthy spiritual life and will be better able to guard against burnout.

Theme 2: Practical Skills and Personal Traits

Living in countries with high levels of corruption, respondents strongly emphasized the importance of honesty and sincerity in their leaders, especially in relationships, decision-making, and financial management. All of those interviewed emphasized so-called "soft" characteristics and personal traits of leaders: humility, understanding, tenderheartedness, kindness, attentiveness, love, and a forgiving, tolerant spirit. Only a few respondents recommended such "hard" characteristics as decisiveness, courage, strength, strictness, and confidence. No one mentioned strong will or determination as desirable characteristics. Russian respondents showed some preference for strong, and even strict leadership, while the majority of Ukrainian respondents preferred "soft" characteristics in leaders.

All respondents strongly demonstrated a dislike for any form of ambition or career pursuit. This does

not mean that school leaders never have ambition and never want to pursue careers. Rather, these characteristics are often strongly present, but well disguised.

Theme 3: Relational Characteristics

The character and quality of relationships is very important within Russian and Ukrainian collectivist cultures, which emphasize building and maintaining deep personal ties and friendships. Since a respect for authority is strongly affirmed in Slavic cultures, leaders, by their example, play a very significant role in building relationships of trust, care, mutual support, and sincere fellowship.

The primary means of teaching and learning throughout the ten centuries of Orthodox culture in Russia has been by example through relationships, narratives, ceremonies, and visual representation. (The Orthodox Church laid the foundation for the Russian and Ukrainian worldview, mentality, spirituality, arts, literature, architecture, music, and lifestyle.) An effective evangelical school leader will not reject this cultural and historical foundation, but rather, will learn to "ride the wave of culture" (A. Trompenaars and C. Hampden-Turner, *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Global Business*, 2nd ed. [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998]).

As regards undesirable relational characteristics in leaders, respondents identified arrogance, coldness, a top-down approach, and indifference to the needs of co-workers and students. People do not like to be manipulated or used by leaders. Rather, people appreciate leaders who personally relate to them. Still, most Russian and Ukrainian respondents believe leaders deserve respect. The familiarity of "hey buddy" type relationships between leaders and followers is considered inappropriate.

Unlike many Western cultures, in the former Soviet Union competitiveness in relationships is viewed negatively. Therefore, it follows that an effective leader will need to find ways to demonstrate and develop a spirit of cooperation, support, and servanthood. Ideal leaders will build God's Kingdom, not their own personal "kingdoms."

Theme 4: Approach to Decision-Making

Societies and cultures with strong collectivistic values seem more accepting of authoritarianism in their leaders than do more individualistic cultures.

Leaders with a pastor's and father's heart and an attitude of spiritual servanthood will be respected and will be able to serve effectively.

They are far quicker to allow leaders to make major organizational decisions. Part of the explanation may be found in a paradoxical feature of Slavic culture. As one respondent noted, “We want a strong leader, but at the same time, we rebel against a strong leader.” Russians historically have had to endure severe laws and at the same time have survived by regularly disregarding laws. “Why is our leadership so authoritarian,” one respondent asked. “Because we do not follow our laws.” This dynamic is true in Russian and Ukrainian seminaries in which “the leader’s word happens to be the last word.”

However, several recent examples in evangelical schools in Russia and Ukraine show that the formerly effective and mostly authoritarian decision-making style no longer works so well. Seminary leaders will be more effective if they learn to share decision-making with a leadership team, as well as with school workers and the student body.

Russian and Ukrainian respondents demonstrated contrasting attitudes towards leaders’ approach to decision making. The majority of St. Petersburg school respondents tended to support an authoritarian style of leadership, even idealizing authoritarianism. Several respondents fervently defended authoritarianism because it was said to eliminate anarchy, bring order, make organizational structure clear, and maintain proper subordination in relationships. In contrast, no Ukrainian respondents supported authoritarianism. Instead, they preferred to see decisions made by a leadership team. All Ukrainian respondents favored the development of a more democratic style of leadership in their schools.

Theme 5: The Leader’s Role in the Development of Vision

One respondent effectively summarized the leader’s role in casting vision. An effective school leader “understands the organization, foresees future developments, predicts challenges to come, and takes necessary steps to deal with these challenges.”

Theme 6: Styles of Motivation

Russian and Ukrainian church leaders generally practice less positive motivation compared to Western leaders, employing discipline and punishment too often. In general, people do not like authoritarian ways. Nor do they respond well to the use of manipulation as motivation. In the long run positive motivation—including encouragement, love, support, care, prayer, and financial support—produces better results than strict discipline, fear, and words of rebuke.

Biblical and spiritual motivations remain essential means of motivation in evangelical schools, especially in situations where financial rewards are limited. Leaders are best served – and serve best – who generate trust and show personal interest in faculty and students and empower them. In short, leaders in theological education lead best who employ reward more and punishment less.

Theme 7: Cultural and Social Factors Influencing Leadership Style

“An instinctive love-hate relationship to the West is a historically rooted facet of Russian mentality” (Miriam Charter, “Theological Education for

New Protestant Churches of Russia: Indigenous Judgments on the Appropriateness of Educational Methods and Styles,” Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1997, p. 206). Teachers and students in the St. Petersburg school were more critical of the indigenous approach to leadership and more positive about the Western approach because they had experienced good examples of Western leadership in their institution. In contrast, Odessa and Donetsk respondents tended to see positive characteristics in both Western and Eastern styles of leadership.

Russian and Ukrainian leaders pay close attention to relationships, which makes for better understanding and better cooperation between leaders and faculty. On the other hand, Eastern leaders benefit when they adopt such positive characteristics of Western practice as punctuality, attention to organization, realistic planning, and goal orientation. Eastern leaders who learn from Western leaders how to function in a democratic manner, how to be better organized, how to plan ahead, and how to build a better organizational structure, are able to model these characteristics for the benefit of new leaders and students. Finally, during conflict resolution the Western tendency to depend more on rational thinking and less on emotion has also been instructive for Russian and Ukrainian leaders.

Theme 8: Biblical and Theological Insights That Provide Guidelines for Building Leaders

The majority of respondents employed Scripture to best characterize spiritual traits needed in a leader. In particular, biblical examples were cited to stress the need for leaders with humility, wisdom, and a pastor’s heart for people. Respondents cited several biblical figures as examples of effective leaders, including Jesus, Paul, Moses, Joshua, David, and Joseph.

Interestingly, respondents rarely cited Bible verses describing strong leadership characteristics such as courage and decisiveness. They did not describe the strong spiritual warrior for Christ dressed and equipped for battle. Rather, “soft” characteristics of biblical leaders were commended including kindness, humility, spiritual depth, and a caring heart.

Perestroika in Evangelical Schools

A number of evangelical schools in the former Soviet Union are in the process of redefining their school goals and objectives. They are also considering substantive changes in school structure and curricula. Several institutions are seeking to adjust their educational approach in order to respond to the challenges of a changing economy. Increasingly, evangelical schools are seeking to bring their educational programs directly to students in churches via various forms of distance learning. ♦

Edited excerpts published with permission from Igor Petrov, “Leadership Styles in Russian and Ukrainian Evangelical Schools,” Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2007.

Igor Petrov serves as distance education coordinator for Trinity Bible College, Kursk, Russia.

A number of evangelical schools in the former Soviet Union are considering substantive changes in school structure and curricula.

Evangelical Missions in Search of a New Paradigm

Mikhail Cherenkov

How are we to determine the role of mission work within an extremely complicated world? Previously, in a bipolar context the Western “Christian world” stood up to the Communist “empire of evil.” But today we are undergoing tectonic changes in global affairs. Now it is more accurate to speak of the socio-culture divide between North and South, with the Third World resisting developed countries. Since the inequality in the distribution of world resources is only increasing, and the might of Pax Americana has been broken and is less and less able to control the outside world, the example of “developed” countries has lost its former authority and attractiveness for the Third World. In missions cartography this means that many in the Third World no longer accept what they consider to be imported Christianity as relevant in their context. Traditional missionary sending-countries have become mission fields that must be reabsorbed into the Christian fold. Missions, the Protestant work ethic, and the spirit of capitalism have, through their inter-connectedness, enjoyed success at a certain stage of historical development, but today this connection is viewed negatively and hinders a renewal of missions.

The Impact of Economics and Politics on Missions

The global economic crisis and the instability of a multi-polar world negatively affect possibilities in missions. The financial depression in the United States has led to donors scaling back their investment in missions. This limits the opportunities for missions in the former Soviet Union. Interest in ministry in the region is catastrophically decreasing. Unfortunately, a majority of missions and donors do not presently see ministry in Russia and the rest of the former Soviet Union as strategically important.

Politics is once again becoming a significant factor in the life and ministry of churches. Today thousands of Russian evangelicals, obeying orders from the Kremlin, see Georgians, Americans, and Ukrainians as their main enemies. Meanwhile,

in such an aggressive environment, hundreds of Ukrainian missionaries working in Russia find it increasingly difficult to serve. In addition, dozens of American missions are under pressure from authorities; and while leaders of some Russian churches gloat, missionaries are being forced to scale back their activities.

Dissatisfaction with an American Approach

Irritation with the methods and principles of Western missionaries (mostly American) is commonplace today. In fact, to many missiologists the inadequacy of an American approach has long been apparent. Consequently, J.E. Haggai created his institute for the preparation of leaders of evangelism on the basis of experience in missions in Third World countries. It turns out that instead of sending American missionaries to other countries, it is much more effective to prepare national leaders and help them develop their ministries.

The Need for Quality Theological Education

Even leaders of the old system admit that quality theological education is necessary. “Today everyone involved in ministry must have a spiritual education. This must be made a requirement,” announced Peter Konovalchik, former president of the Russian Evangelical Christian-Baptist Union. More and more of those involved in Christian ministry are now recognizing the necessity of higher education, professional skills, and expertise. It is clear that if the level of scholarship (and not just the level of diplomas) of church leaders increases, then new social groups will be attracted to the church, which will change the demographics and shift the emphasis in ministry and teaching.

Hindrances to Effective Cooperation

Effective international missionary cooperation is hindered by the collective irresponsibility of churches; a fear of standing out or taking a risk by doing something different; self-assured conservatism and combative separatism; rivalry over souls and money; orientation towards utopian, quantitative results; “project thinking”; incompetence of Western and Eastern leaders; the belief that one is an exception; and possessiveness. Leaders of national churches say, “These are our churches,” while leaders of international organizations say, “This is our money.”

The tendencies listed above testify not only to a crisis, but also to new opportunities for the church in the world. The crisis of modern Christianity is turning out to be beneficial for it. Unlike other religions, Christians preach not Christianity, but Christ. The church is not an institution doomed to remain in the past, but a living community of believers. Therefore, a people-oriented gospel remains extremely important. We must remember that evangelism is not passing on knowledge of doctrines, but telling a story of a wonderful meeting that changes an individual’s life. Even conservative Baptist missiologists warn pastors that churches should not be islands, but must become border regions where there is a living connection with

Leaders of national churches say, “These are our churches,” while leaders of international organizations say, “This is our money.”

The quarterly *East-West Church & Ministry Report* examines all aspects of church life and mission outreach in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe as a service to both church and academia. Letters to the editor are welcomed. Annual subscription rates are \$49.95 (individuals, U.S. and Canada); \$59.95 (individuals, international); \$53.95 (libraries, U.S. and Canada); \$63.95 (libraries, international); and \$22.95 (e-mail). Reprint and photocopy policy: 1) Quantity photocopies or reprints of up to three articles from a single issue may be distributed or reprinted at no charge. 2) Written permission is to be secured for each distribution or reprinting. 3) The following statement is to be carried on each photocopied article reproduced and each article reprinted: Reproduced (or Reprinted) with permission of the *EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT*. Currently indexed by American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies (ABSEES), OCLC Public Affairs Information Service (formerly PAIS), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Zeller Dietrich (formerly Zeller Verlag), and Christian Periodicals Index.



ASBURY
COLLEGE

©2009

ISSN 1069-5664

Mark R. Elliott, Editor
EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT
Asbury College
One Macklem Drive
Wilmore, KY 40390
Tel: 864-633-9666
E-mail: ewcmreport@gmail.com
Website: www.eastwestreport.org