



# EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

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## The Church and Western Ministry: What Russian Christians Think

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### Issue One: Authoritarian Leadership Style

The command style of leadership practiced in the former Soviet Union will surprise visitors to Russian churches and those unfamiliar with Russian culture. Russian leaders inside and outside the church traditionally exercise more authority than their counterparts in the West. They are more directive, have more power, and are more prone to rule by fiat. In addition, strong, authoritarian leadership usually is respected and expected in Russia.

While foreign workers adjust with difficulty to a top-down approach to church life, it can present problems for indigenous churchgoers as well. One young Russian man interviewed described the leaders in his church as distant, stiff, and untouchable. He said that the young people had no one to whom they could go to discuss issues that were important to them as they entered adulthood.

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### Issue Two:

#### *Legalism and Isolation in the Church*

To Western Evangelicals, their counterparts in Russia appear to be burdened by legalism in their approach to such things as clothing and, consequently, are isolated from the very culture in which they live. Although this situation is improving, new converts attending Evangelical churches can still feel isolated and rejected unless they conform to a list of lifestyle rules for which they do not see the sense. During the Communist era church members were social outcasts because of their nonconformity to Marxism. Their appearance was a kind of badge. Now it is a hindrance, but one that many still insist upon as a sign of spirituality essential to the Christian life.

Given the situation as described, most interviewees spoke of the need to plant new types of churches in Russia. A variety of churches would serve a more diverse range of people. While seeing the need to assist in and train for the planting of new churches, all agreed that continued cooperation with the established denominations is desirable and necessary.

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### Issue Three:

#### *Christian Literature—Expediency Over Quality*

Foreign workers involved in preparing and translating literature need to be aware that Russians are a literate and intelligent people. Workers fluent in the Russian language report that a large proportion of the evangelistic material available from the West is so poorly translated that workers cannot use much of it without almost insulting people's intelligence, or giving them the impression that the Gospel is for simple-minded people. Many translations and tracts prepared for use in Russia have been of an extremely poor quality. Undoubtedly, Western missions' sense of urgency, approaching a chaotic rush, has been a factor. Sometimes the texts, even in their original language, were poorly conceived and written. Unfortunately, many Russians in both business and church report that Westerners they work with tend to "have all the answers" and are unwilling to learn from or be corrected by their Russian partners.

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### Issue Four:

#### *Foreign and National Lifestyle Disparities*

In many reported cases Western missionaries to the former Soviet Union have expected to be "served hand and foot," or to have the same type of accommodation they were used to in the West. One missionary family reportedly required five helpers: a chauffeur, a cook, a shopper, a teacher, and a baby-sitter. Part of the help served to acclimatize the newcomers and prepare them

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Western missionaries [who] live alongside, not above, the people to whom they minister... will end up closer to the hearts and burdens of the people they serve.

for service. But most of the Russians with whom I spoke protested that the majority of the help given to missionaries serves to make them comfortable and to "protect" them from stresses and strains that are normal to every Russian family.

Life in the former Soviet Union can seem difficult and chaotic. With Western money a person can avoid most of the difficulties of daily life. Speaking pragmatically, missionaries can save much time by making the most of Western funds, but the believers I interviewed prefer that missionaries live as Russians do. The Western preoccupation with "time is money" is particularly foreign in Russia where time simply is, and people are usually much more willing to help one another and build relationships than are time-oriented Westerners.

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#### Issue Five:

#### The Limitations of "Unlimited" Funding

Many Western evangelistic projects in the former Soviet Union have involved the use of large sums of money for publicity, transportation, media coverage, and the like. Such spending does not model outreach that the Russian church, with its limited resources, can imitate. Thus, Western ministries can give the impression that what they do is only possible with Western money, or that they have more faith in money than in God.

Western workers should adjust Western methods for use in Russia, by Russians, with available means. A move is afoot to send Third World workers to Russia because they do not import with them the same problems that Western workers do; nor do they need the same expensive resources to accomplish their work.

Western workers who channel financial aid to Russia should practice great discernment and use local agencies to determine how money is distributed. A governing board responsible for allocating funds should be very wary of benefiting directly from the use of donated money. It is a very poor idea to support workers directly, without the mediation of a local church or indigenous mission. This is especially questionable when done in Western funds. Such an action smacks of the privileges previously enjoyed by Communist Party members and tends to separate recipients from their social context.

When Western missionaries live alongside, not above, the people to whom they minister, there is greater identification, a mutual experience of difficulties, and perhaps eventually growth on the part of the Westerners, to be able to help more effectively. It is probably utopian to think that Westerners could make a complete lifestyle shift, but all foreign workers who make an honest attempt will end up closer to the hearts and burdens of the people they serve. ♦

Hatred of Russians (among Central Asian Muslims) often includes deep hatred of Christianity.

## Islam in Pre-Soviet Eurasia

Don Fairbairn

Muslim expansion into lands which would later become a part of the Russian Empire began with Islam's conquest of Azeri tribes in the Caucasus, in what is now Azerbaijan, in about 645. Some nomads of Central Asia came under Islamic sway between 650 and 750. Thus, the Muslim roots of these lands were in place more than two centuries before the first Christian missionaries came to East Slavic regions, long before Russia itself became a world power. However, conversion to Islam proceeded more slowly east of the Caspian Sea. Significant portions of the populations of Central Asia, in what is today Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, began to convert to Islam in the tenth century, but the people of Kazakhstan, not until the fifteenth century.

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#### The Mongol Empire

During the thirteenth century, the vast armies of Genghis Khan and his successors swept out of Mongolia and ran roughshod over the lands of Eurasia. This empire, which included all of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the Caucasus, and Tatarstan, ushered in a long period of decline in

the emerging Islamic civilization there.

As the Mongols organized their imperial government, they showed considerable tolerance in allowing subject nations their religious freedom. However, they completely destroyed the administrative and economic foundations of the societies they had conquered, replacing them with governmental structures led entirely by their own officials. This action meant that the *mullahs*, spiritual leaders who previously had exercised influence on all aspects of their societies, were now powerless in any sphere save of that religion. As a result, Muslim authorities became increasingly dogmatic and strict in their control of religious life—the one aspect of society over which they still had power. This rigid control expressed itself most prominently in the reestablishment and close application of the *shariah* (Islamic law).

The combination of Mongol oppression and a demand for strict conformity by native *mullahs* provoked a reaction from many Central Asians. In many parts of what would later become the Soviet Union, but especially in Central Asia, a number of secret societies emerged, offering a more private and less rigid version of Islam.

## The Rise of the Russian Empire

As the Mongol threat receded in the fifteenth century, a growing religious and political zeal led Russia to turn its attention to the Islamic lands on its borders. Tsar Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) undertook the conquest of neighboring Muslim states with the same determination that Western Christendom had mustered during the Crusades a few centuries previously. The first Muslim land to fall was Tatarstan on the middle Volga. Ivan's forces, using the most explosives ever assembled to that point in history, captured its capital, Kazan, in 1552. After the fall of the city, the Russians forced massive numbers of Muslims to convert to Russian Orthodoxy, and the quest for a "Christian" empire was under way. Ivan had St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square in Moscow built to commemorate his victory at Kazan. Its eight colorful domes represent the turbaned heads of the eight Muslim chieftains who were beheaded after their capture at Kazan.

From 1552 until the eve of the October Revolution, the tsarist regime systematically extended its conquests of Muslim lands and incorporated them into the Russian Empire. In the eighteenth century Russia gained control of the Crimea, followed by virtually its entire Muslim population migrating to Turkey between 1783 and 1893. By 1848 all of Kazakhstan and Central Asia, as well as Tatarstan, lay in Russian hands. In every case, a conquest was followed by massive migration of Russians into a conquered territory and the replacement of the native governing classes.

Because of the sense of Christian destiny propelling the Russian advance, the conquerors showed none of the religious tolerance Mongol rulers had exhibited. Campaigns against Islam were common, as were forced conversions of Muslims to Orthodoxy, like the ones which had followed the capture of Kazan. And up to the mid-eighteenth century Russians destroyed mosques, prohibited schools in which the Koran was taught, and executed those who sought to proselytize for the Muslim faith.

By portraying its conquests in such overtly religious terms, Russia made it impossible for conquered Muslims to regard their situation simply as that of subject nations. Instead, the issue became one of whether Islam or Christianity was the superior religion. Thus, it is hardly surprising that the advance of the Russian Empire met with massive religious resistance in Central Asia.

Russian tactics had implications which extended far beyond the original conflicts they provoked. Virtually all of the peoples subjected to Russian rule are intensely antagonistic toward their former masters. However, we need to remember that in the case of Muslims, this antagonism toward Russia derives ultimately from a religious clash and from the inexcusable tactics tsarist Russia used to demonstrate Christianity's "superiority" over Islam.

This hatred and the events which have given rise to it are not simply of historical interest to evangelicals working among Eurasian Muslims. For many of these people, Russian Orthodoxy is the only form of Christianity they have ever met, and to be Christian is to be Russian. As a result, hatred of Russians often includes deep hatred of Christianity in general, and perhaps of all Westerners as well.

## Islam on the Eve of the Revolution

Resistance by Eurasian Muslims to the Russian occupation did not express itself solely in opposing the conquerors' efforts to convert them to Orthodoxy. In the nineteenth century a reform movement developed within Islam, the purpose of which was to modernize and unify Muslim groups within the Russian Empire so that they could effectively resist tsarist rule.

This reform movement had four basic components: religious, cultural, educational, and political. In matters of faith, many Muslims sought to break with the traditionalism which since the Mongol invasion had invested absolute authority in the *mullah*. Instead, reformers sought to bring reason and critical thinking to bear on religious questions. Practically, this meant the right of each individual to personally read the Koran and the *Hadith* (Muhammad's extra-Koranic sayings), rather than relying upon *mullahs* for guidance. Educational reform saw a similar modernizing influence, as Muslim schools began to teach reading phonetically and to include secular subjects in the curriculum.

Culturally, the reform movement sought to revive Tatar, Azeri, and Kazakh as literary languages, in order to enhance people's recognition of their Islamic heritage. Finally, political efforts sought to unify various Muslim groups in order to strengthen them and enable them to stand as a united front against the Russians and the West.

This movement resulted in a Muslim contingent within the Empire which was a good deal less "backward" than Muslims in other parts of the world. Reform-minded Muslims were able to stand as virtual equals with their Russian conquerors, both educationally and culturally. However, the goal was not to emulate Russians or simply to gain rights equal to theirs, but to gain leverage so as to be able eventually to oust tsarist forces from Muslim lands and to reestablish autonomous Muslim societies. ♦

**Don Fairbairn**, academic dean at Donetsk Bible College, Donetsk, Ukraine, will analyze "Islam in the Soviet Era" in the next issue of the EWC&M Report. His unabridged 93-page paper, "The Straight Path or the Way of the Cross?" (1993) is available from the Institute for East-West Christian Studies, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187-5593 U.S.A. for \$10.00 (IL residents add 6.75% sales tax) plus postage/handling \$2.40 (U.S. and Canada, 1st class) or \$4.75 (Europe, printed-matter airmail). Contact the East-West Institute for mailing rates outside North America and Europe.

## Recommended Reading on Islam in Eurasia

Bennigsen, Alexandre and Marie Broxup. *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.

Bennigsen, Alexandre and Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay. *Islam in the Soviet Union*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

Bennigsen, Alexandre and S. Enders Wimbush. *Muslims of the Soviet Empire: A Guide*. London: C. Hurst and Company, 1985. £27.50

Carrere d'Encausse, Helene. *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1988. £35.

Taheri, Amir. *Crescent in a Red Sky: The Future of Islam in the Soviet Union*. London: Hutchinson, 1989. £7.99

**Editor's note:** The last three titles are still in print. The London phone and fax for the three relevant publishers are:

Hurst (44-71-240-2666; 44-71-240-2667); Tauris (44-71-483-2681; 44-71-483-4541); and Hutchinson/Random House (44-71-973-9000; 44-71-233-6058).

# A Russian Homegrown Cult

Wil Triggs

*Alarming cults, such as the Great White Brotherhood, provide both a look at the spiritual searching of post-Communist society and a frightening Russian national spin on Western extremist cults such as David Koresh's Branch Davidians. Such groups hold a strong and powerful appeal, especially in light of emerging nationalist sentiments. As the governments of Russia and Ukraine struggle to frame legislation related to religion, how they handle extremist cults may determine their interpretation of religious liberty for all minority religious groups.*

Ancient pre-Christian practices in Rus find contemporary interpretation and revitalization in the teachings of new religions like the Great White Brotherhood.

## **The Great White Brotherhood**

The leaders of one of Ukraine's and Russia's new religious movements, the Great White Brotherhood, predicted the end of the world for November 14, 1993. After traveling throughout Russia and Ukraine and gathering followers from as far away as distant regions of Siberia, the new religion's founders, Maria Devi (former Komsomol leader) and Yuri Krivonogov, remained in Kiev awaiting an apocalyptic end. Many of the cult's followers had abandoned homes and families, prompting distraught parents to appeal to local authorities, the media, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to help them get their children back.

One mother wrote:

"My 19-year-old son recently joined the White Brotherhood cult. Before that he was a student at the institute of transportation engineering....One day he met some 'White Brothers' and two months later he left home. The main thing that the White Brotherhood urges is to save oneself from 'demonic parents.' Our family has joined the Committee to Save Young People From Pseudo-religions. To date it has more than 100 members—desperate parents whose children gave in to the call to leave their jobs and families."

On November 9, just five days before the world was to end, one group of White Brothers in Arkhangelsk declared war on Orthodox believers. They interrupted Orthodox services, urging churchgoers to turn from Christianity and to embrace Maria Devi as god.

As November 14 approached, Maria Devi reportedly prepared herself to be crucified and resurrected in Kiev as part of a last judgment. Rumors spread of impending acts of terrorism and of mass suicide. Parents in Kiev were afraid to allow their children on the streets. In response, Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk gave government authorities power to expel nonresidents from Kiev. Authorities detained or arrested hundreds of followers of the Great White Brotherhood.

## **A Parallel to Western Extremist Cults**

At the time, some Western observers drew obvious and legitimate parallels between the cult of the White Brotherhood and the Branch Davidians who had so recently followed self-proclaimed deity David Koresh to violent deaths. While Koresh and his followers mirrored aspects of popular culture and at the same time strove for separation from it, the White Brotherhood links its teachings to Slavic people and practices from the past, making this new religion appealing to a broad segment of the population of Russia and Ukraine. Thus, the teachings of the White Brotherhood, and other new religions emerging in Russia, have a power that likely will outlast their more sensationalistic apocalyptic teachings. Without Western money or influence, Devi and Krivonogov gained thousands of followers, caused great distress in homes across Russia and Ukraine, and garnered the attention of the world media.

## **The Distinctive Appeal of National Cults**

In claiming to be the reincarnations of early-twentieth century artist and mystic Nicholas Roerich and his wife, Krivonogov and Devi gained an audience among Russians alarmed at the foreign inroads of many of the new religious voices in the country. The two also have been part of a resurgence of interest in Roerich's theosophical teachings. For example, Maria Devi's claim to be the reincarnation of the Holy Spirit, Helena Roerich, the grandmother of Vladimir, the Virgin Mary, Exeda, Radha, and Eve mirrors theosophy's attempt to unify all religions into one. A missionary in Russia recently reported that Roerich's philosophy is even being taught in some public schools as part of a social studies curriculum.

In contrast, many foreign evangelical workers are not familiar with the history of national Protestant missionary work in Russia, so they rarely ever link themselves or their ministry with national movements in Russia's history. Evangelicals would do well to acquaint themselves with the past history of Protestant movements on Slavic soil.

Russia's new religions often appeal to folk traditions and practices that predate Orthodox Christianity, a development in some ways even more alarming than the overt connection with Roerich's theosophy. Ancient pre-Christian practices in Rus find contemporary interpretation and revitalization in the teachings of new religions like the Great White Brotherhood. In times of crisis, Slavic people often resorted to the *volkhvy*, magical priests of pagan Russia, because these ancient sorcerers reportedly foretold the future.

In *Russian Folk Belief*, Linda J. Ivanits describes one act of pagan Russian sorcery:

"The person desiring to receive mysterious powers, or, as the peasants often phrased it, 'knowledge' removed the cross from his neck, stomped on an icon placed face down, and renounced God, his mother and father, and, sometimes, the earth, sun, and moon" (p. 96).

While this may read as strangely pagan to many Western people, followers of the Great White Brotherhood renounced their parents, declared war on the Orthodox church—even reportedly disrupting places of worship—and believed, for a time at least, that their leaders could indeed foretell the future. Although their prediction for November 14 did not come to pass, leaders of the Great White Brotherhood, along with other extremist religious groups, may unwittingly play a decisive role in the shaping of Russia's future where legislation related to religious liberty is concerned.

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### **Laws on Religion, New Cults, and Minority Religious Groups**

The final document adopted unanimously by participants at the seminar, "Totalitarian Cults in Russia," held in Moscow May 16-20, 1994, addressed the issue of legislation on religion as follows:

"We believe that legislation in Russia on religious activities still needs further improvement. In particular, the current legislation is weighted in favor of those religious groups who evade registration as religious associations. ... We consider it expedient to create an interdenominational expert commission at the Russian Ministry of Justice and the Russian Ministry of Education, without whose recommendation it would be impossible to introduce religious education programs in state schools and institutes."

This document, jointly drafted by Orthodox, Catholics, and Protestants, reveals widespread Christian concern over the growing influence of cults in Russia. Yet it does not address the problem of how cults or new religions—or any minority religious groups—fit into a society attempting to create a pluralistic democracy guaranteeing freedom of religion. During the eleventh century, when Orthodoxy was new to Russia, government authorities sometimes killed pagan *volkhvy* who were attempting—and often succeeding—in turning people away from newly adopted Christianity (Fedotov, p. 394). As Russia and Ukraine seek to develop modern democratic governments, legislators must seek options that do not rely on violence or persecution to contain extremist cults.

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### **Practical Preparation**

Careful preparation and study would best serve Western evangelicals working in Russia and

Ukraine as they confront followers of alternative religious movements. The following guidelines and recommended readings provide places to start:

- **Know the history of Protestant movements in Russia and Ukraine.** Protestant Christianity predates the Communist era. Such knowledge can only help in discussions with nationals who may mistakenly assume Protestantism is new to Russia. Recommended reading: *In the Cauldron of Russia, The Life of an Optimist in the Land of Pessimism*, Ivan Prokhanov, available from One Body Ministries, Box 645, Joplin, MO 64802-0645.
- **Become acquainted with ancient Slavic traditions which continue to shape the hearts and minds of the Russian people.** Russian folk traditions have their charms as well as their superstitious elements. Whenever possible, develop an appreciation for those traditions which are compatible with Christianity. Recommended reading: *Russian Folk Belief*, Linda J. Ivanits, available in hardcover (\$42.50) and softcover (\$16.95) from M.E. Sharpe Inc., 80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, NY 10504; tel: 914-273-1800 or 1-800-541-6563; fax: 914-273-2106.
- **Be aware that not all religious impulses in Russia or Ukraine are compatible with Christianity.** Though Orthodox Christianity has a thousand-year history in Russia and Ukraine, pagan practices go back even further. Don't mistakenly consider every Russian tradition to have a basis in Orthodoxy. While some of the new cults of Russia express open hostility to Russian Orthodoxy or any form of Christianity, others falsely claim to be Christian. Recommended reading: *The Russian Religious Mind*, George P. Fedotov (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1946); for more on new religions in Russia and Ukraine, see the thematic issue on "Tomorrow's Paganism" in *Update and Dialog on New Religious Movements 2* (February 1993). Dialog Center International, Katrinebjergvej 46, DK-8200 Aarhus N, Denmark; tel: 45-86-10-54-11; fax: 45-86-10-54-16. ♦

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**Editors' Note:** For statistics and available resources on cults in the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe, see "Cult Membership Estimates for the Former Soviet Union and East Central Europe," *EWCM Report 1* (Fall 1993), 5-6.

Wil Triggs is director of publications for Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries and coeditor of the East-West Church and Ministry Report.

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# What People Think About Religion

Current comparative data on religious attitudes in various countries of the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe are rare. Roger Russell Research (RRR), in conjunction with indigenous research institutes, has performed a valuable service by conducting such survey research recently (1991-93) and in quite diverse settings (from the Czech Republic to Latvia to Tatarstan). It is true that East Central European results from 1991 may not permit definitive comparisons with 1993 results from the former Soviet Union. Nevertheless, a two-year differential does not seriously detract from the exceptional opportunity to make substantive comparisons among four nations of East Central Europe and four republics of the former Soviet Union

concerning religious affiliation, frequency of religious observance, and knowledge of the Bible.

Principals in the project, in addition to the British-based RRR, were the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the Far East Broadcasting Company, Institut pro vyzkum verejneho mineni (Public Opinion Research Institute-Prague), Szonda Ipsos Media (Opinion and Market Research Company-Budapest), PENTOR Instytut Badania Opinii i Rynku (Public Opinion Research Institute-Warsaw) CESSI (Institute for Comparative Social Research-Moscow), the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences-Kiev, and Latvian Facts-Riga.

## Comparative Survey Data on Religious Attitudes in Post-Soviet Societies

	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Hungary	Poland	European Russia	Tatarstan	Ukraine	Latvia
Sample Size	1,950	961	1,000	995	1,456	228	1,000	1,000
Survey Date	3/91	3/91	3/91	7/91	2/93	2/93	1/93	2/93

Using a scale of 1 ("not at all favorably") to 10 ("extremely favorably"), how favorably do you rate the Church?

Mean response	4.8	5.7	5.3	6.5	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.4
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Tell me, other than for special events such as weddings, baptisms, bar mitzvahs, funerals, and excluding recitals, how often do you attend services, liturgies, or prayers in a place of worship (church, mosque, temple, synagogue, etc.)? Note: All replies in percent.

Never	42	22	38	2	46	56	31	25
Several Times a Year	8	11	13	17	15	11	16	7
Once a Week	6	21	7	46	1	1	3	4

Many people can say they are Christian, Orthodox, Baptist, Moslem, Buddhist, and so on. Please tell me how you would describe yourself.<sup>2</sup> (\*Less than 0.5%)

Russian Orthodox					66	29	21	23
Ukrainian Orthodox					*	0	38	1
Old Believer					*	0	*	3
Other Orthodox		2	*	*	*	0	1	1
Lutheran/Slovak Evangelical	*	10	3	*	0	0	0	27
Evangelical/Slovakian—Baptist					*	*	1	1
Pentecostal/Apostolic	0	0	*	*	*	0	*	*
Czech Evangelical Brethren	3	*						
Reformed/Calvinist	0	2	20				*	
Adventist	1	*						
Other Protestant	1	1	*	*	*	0	*	*
Czech Hussite	3	*						
Roman Catholic	42	60	64	96	0	0	1	17
Greek/Uniate/Old/Other Catholic	*	4	2		*	0	3	3
Moslem	0	0			5	40	*	*
Atheist/No Religion	49	20	8	2	17	15	16	9

How favorably do you rate the Bible?

Unfavorable (1-3)	23	17	12	5	6	5	5	5
Favorable (7-10)	34	47	46	68	56	50	64	56

If you think of your own world view, in which group would you put yourself?

Religious	33	54	50	80	20	32	22	22
Marxist/Atheist	14	11	3	*	19	14	17	13

Tell me, do you believe in God?

Yes	25	51	52	91	46	62	49	53
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Tell me, do you believe in the existence of life after death?

Yes	16	36	22	61	21	33	27	29
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	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Hungary	Poland	European Russia	Tatarstan	Ukraine	Latvia
Which ONE of these statements comes closest to your understanding about God? (* In Poland respondents were able to select all responses that they agreed with, whereas everywhere else they could choose only one option.) <sup>3</sup>								
People can have a personal relationship with God	20	42	22	*60	15	12	16	16
I don't know whether God exists, but I would like to know	25	19	25	*26	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
I don't know if he exists, but I would like him to	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	26	18	22	22
There is no God, spirit, or anything like that	19	10	10	*2	6	3	5	3
Can you tell me, what is the Bible? (Open Question)								
Don't Know	12	10	23	10	27	38	23	38
And what is the New Testament? (Open Question)								
Don't Know	40	29	52	29	67	76	52	60
Which of the following Bible stories do you know of? Sum of responses giving "know it well," "know it partly," and "know it slightly." <sup>4</sup>								
The Creation of the World	87	93	87	87	67	52	83	78
The Great Flood/Deluge/Noah's Ark	81	91	87	88	63	47	78	74
David & Goliath	69	76	78	66	36	28	47	60
The Birth of Jesus	83	91	90	90	70	51	85	83
Is there a Bible or New Testament in your home? <sup>5</sup>								
Yes	33	48	60	57	34	21	54	62
How often do you read the Bible?								
Several Times a Week	2	4	5	2	2	1	5	8
Occasionally	18	25	40	39	25	18	41	39
Never	71	58	49	51	67	75	44	38
Would you buy a new Bible now or in the future?								
Yes	31	40	31	28	40	32	47	36

Source: *Religious and Social Attitudes and the Book Market, Central and Eastern Europe, 1991-1993; Thematic Tabulation and General Summary*. Swindon, United Kingdom: Roger Russell Research, 1993. (122 pp., £102 or U.S. \$170 for Europe; £109 or U.S. \$180 for U.S.A. & other international; £98.50 for U.K.). To order send payment to RRR's distributor: Cornerstone International LTD, Park House,

25-28 Shrivvenham Hundred Business Park, Swindon SN6 8T2 United Kingdom. Tel: 44-793-783-300; fax: 44-793-783-558. See *EWCM Report 1* (Winter 1993), 14, and 2 (Spring 1994), 13, for a complete list of RRR publications on religious attitudes in East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Poles are by far the most frequent church attenders: half attend weekly and three-quarters are in church at least once a month. Next are Slovaks with about one-third attending weekly.

<sup>2</sup> Affiliations denote nominal attachments, not church membership or active adherence. Poland (especially), Slovakia, and Hungary (to a lesser extent) are predominantly Roman Catholic. Hungary has a large Reformed minority and Slovakia an Evangelical Lutheran one. Russia is predominantly Russian Orthodox. Ukraine is primarily Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic. Latvia is Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox. Tatarstan is predominantly Moslem (Sunni), with a large Russian Orthodox minority. Protestants, apart from Hungary and Latvia, represent a tiny minority in all the countries surveyed. The Czech Republic seems the most secular country with half the population claiming to be either atheist or attached to no religion.

<sup>3</sup> This question draws out some important perspectives about how people view God. An error in translation that was only picked up after the event enables us to have an insight that might otherwise have been missed. An option given to people in Central Europe was for the respondent to reply that *s/he did not know whether God exists but would like to know*. Replies give an idea of people's openness to finding out more—an evangelistic opportunity. A quarter of Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians indicated that they would like to know more, as did one in five Slovaks. However, in former Soviet republics the option was translated to read: *s/he did not know whether God exists but would like him to*. A quarter in Russia and one in five in Tatarstan, Ukraine, and Latvia were effectively saying that they wished God did exist.

<sup>4</sup> Greater awareness of the various parts of the Bible listed was generally in countries with a Catholic tradition. By summing the percentage responses given for each section, the "league table" appears as: Slovakia 248, Hungary 239, Poland 226, Latvia 185, Ukraine 163, Czech Republic 140, Russia 76, Tatarstan 56. The lack of awareness is understandable in Moslem Tatarstan, but in European Russia as a whole it is not much better. It is also notable that despite Poland's record as a religious country, people have relatively little awareness of different parts of the Holy Scriptures.

<sup>5</sup> Latvia, Hungary, and Poland would appear to have the widest distribution of Scriptures, with at least one Bible or New Testament in six of every 10 homes. The Scriptures can also be found in half the homes of Ukraine and Slovakia, and in a third of the homes in European Russia (with wide regional variations) and the Czech Republic, and in one in five Tatarstan homes. It should be borne in mind, though, that nearly two years separate the first polls in Czech and Slovak lands and the last in Russia, during which period the level of Scripture ownership no doubt grew in Central Europe. In Russia and Ukraine half the owners had purchased Scriptures, but in Latvia, only one-third. In Russia four out of five Bibles had been obtained within three years preceding the survey, i.e., since the beginning of 1990. In Ukraine and Latvia this period had accounted for three in five Bible acquisitions.

# A Summary of Trifa's *What is the Army of the Lord?*

Tom Keppeler

Iosef Trifa, a Romanian Orthodox priest, founded Oastea Domnului (Army of the Lord) in 1923. This spiritual and moral renewal movement gained steady strength even through 40 years of communist rule in Romania. Today, Army of the Lord faces new challenges as a legal religious association in a chaotic and changing nation.

In 1934, three years before his death, Trifa published *Ce Este Oastea Domnului?* (*What is the Army of the Lord?*), which outlines the purpose and strategy behind the movement. Four key themes stand out in this foundational text:

- "Christ the crucified" stands as the core principle in Army of the Lord teaching. The cross is the door to salvation and the key to victory over temptation and sin.
- The struggle against sin and the importance of living righteous lives comes through a true understanding of Christ's victory on the cross. Trifa writes that the sign of the cross "has the power to drive away Satan only when we put it in the understanding of the sacrifice of the cross, especially as we receive the gift of the sacrifice, Jesus the Savior, and his victory."
- Personal moral and ethical renewal come through personally encountering Christ at the cross. Trifa emphasizes the receiving of Jesus and His gifts, the need for the church to wage war against sin and evil, regular Bible study

Trifa's silence on the role of liturgy, the church, and icons in salvation and spirituality help explain the controversy surrounding his writings.

as a foundation for personal piety, and the dangers of alcohol consumption, which curse not only individuals but whole nations.

- Army of the Lord exists through lay and voluntary involvement. Trifa defines the Army of the Lord as a grassroots, Bible-based force for revitalizing the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Trifa also commends five specific means of evangelism: 1) the daily life of a Christian, which he defines as the best sermon; 2) acts of mercy; 3) love and prayer; 4) forgiveness and suffering; and 5) the distribution of Christian literature. Trifa's silence on the role of liturgy, the church, and icons in salvation and spirituality helps to explain the controversy surrounding his writings and the movement he founded. Rather than the traditional Orthodox emphasis upon mystical union with God, he expresses his understanding of salvation and witness in language more commonly associated with Western Protestantism.

His ideas, in fact, became so objectionable to the hierarchy of the Romanian Orthodox Church that he was excommunicated in 1936. However, Trifa's legacy lives on as Army of the Lord, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, continues to define its mission within the Romanian Orthodox Church and within Romanian society as a whole. ♦

## Two Factions in Romania's Army of the Lord

Tom Keppeler of Church Resource Ministries interviews Vasile Suci, an Army of the Lord leader in Cluj, Romania

**Army of the Lord is a religious movement in the context of the Orthodox Church. How would you describe its current relationship with the Orthodox Church in Romania?**

In the eyes of Father Iosef Trifa, the founder of Army of the Lord, the Orthodox Church had departed from the fundamental values of the Bible and so it needed Army of the Lord. Trifa, as well as his successors Ioan Marini and Traian Dorz, saw very clearly that people needed to come to the gospel and that the Orthodox Church in Romania needed to return to her true mission: to serve God and to represent God in the midst of our nation.

During the Communist era, the Orthodox Church and many who today claim to be leaders in Army of the Lord's national leadership council, did not want to know or hear of Army of the Lord. Now these same individuals claim to

embrace Army of the Lord's ideas and ideals. However, the ideas these individuals embrace do not reflect the true and traditional ideals of the movement. Instead, they seem to reflect primarily whatever ends the Orthodox Church has in mind. This was not the original ideal of Army of the Lord—to make of the Orthodox Church a political power, nor to put the Orthodox Church in a role of supremacy in Romania, but rather to produce a change in people and the Orthodox Church.

**Today, some say two factions coexist within the Army of the Lord movement as a whole. What is your view in regard to this claim?**

There seems to be a clear distinction between what I would call a legalistic faction, which in my opinion is too intimate with the Orthodox Church, and a faction which is more renewal- and

reform-minded. The Lord's Army cannot be identical with the Orthodox Church. It must be the ferment which can produce renewal and change. The renewal-oriented group, in my opinion, remains loyal to the ideals of the movement's founders. This part of Army of the Lord is still in tension with the Orthodox Church today.

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***How would the other faction you described characterize the fellowships you represent?***

They would contend that we represent only a neo-Protestant faction and that we are an affront to Orthodoxy and that purely and simply we've sold out to organizations or interests from abroad. But this conception is not true at all.

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***You've personally had contacts both before and after the revolution with individuals from outside Romania. What is the danger for Army of the Lord to be in collaboration with Christians from abroad, and do you see positive aspects of such collaboration?***

We need a filter because we could easily contaminate ourselves with dangerous or heretical theology from the West. Before the revolution this wasn't as much of a danger but now with the openness it is a danger—and not just for Army of the Lord but for other churches and denominations as well. In a positive sense Christians from abroad had on their heart to help Army of the Lord and in the difficult years brought us Bibles and instructional materials to aid in the spiritual growth of our fellowships.

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***You've had a lot of contact and help from abroad. Some would criticize you for that, saying as a result of this contact and help, the character and tenor of your fellowship has changed into something that is no longer really Army of the Lord. How would you respond to this criticism?***

Certainly, if you'd compare our fellowship in Cluj with a fellowship from, say, Moldova, you would find significant differences. I see at least two reasons for this. First, Cluj is a university center where the general level of education is much higher than in other areas of Romania. The different way in which people understand and view life and worship has put an imprint on our fellowship. The second reason is the number of relationships we have with Christians from abroad. They've put an imprint on us, but their imprint on us has been positive because the things they've brought with them have had an impact especially on our young people.

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***In June 1993, there was a meeting in Cluj of more than 100 leaders from Army of the Lord. What was the purpose of that meeting and what was discussed?***

Immediately after the revolution, when we initially organized, we called ourselves the

Evangelical Association of Army of the Lord. The word "evangelical" disturbed the Orthodox Church hierarchy and they convinced a number of the more legalistic and traditionalistic members of the national leadership council that this word "evangelical" was a compromised word. We had intense debate and discussion surrounding this issue, namely, how could the word "evangelical" be a compromised term?

Finally, a number of those individuals went to the city hall in Sibiu and reconstituted the statutes of Army of the Lord. Those that were not in agreement with the change were without a statute; thus, technically, those fellowships, of which we were one, had no legal status. We found out that the "Evangelical Association of Army of the Lord" had been changed to just a religious society and that the former statute had been dissolved. This change was not just a cosmetic shift but represents a significant ideological shift as well. Therefore, we called a convocation in Cluj of all those fellowship leaders who were not in accord with this maneuver in order to discuss our future and how we understand the mission of Army of the Lord.

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***After this convocation and your discussion, what will be the future of Army of the Lord?***

We don't want to make a break, but it already exists. The views of the purpose and mission of Army of the Lord are different in the two factions. But I'd like to add an historical footnote here. In 1935 there also was a separation. When Trifa was excommunicated, one part of Army of the Lord went with Metropolitan Balan and the rest with Trifa. When the era of persecution came under the communists, the Army of the Lord loyal to Balan died out and the Army of the Lord loyal to Trifa flourished. I believe that in a sense this history will repeat itself.

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***If Father Trifa were alive today, would you say he'd be in agreement with the direction and vision you have?***

A difficult question. I didn't know him, but I know his writings. I know he accepted suffering. He accepted his excommunication instead of compromising. He was a very strong and decisive man. When he was confronted by Metropolitan Balan, who had a key role in the government of Romania back then, he stood his ground. I believe he would be a man that would give impulse and focus to contemporary spiritual life in Romania. ♦

*Tom Keppeler, formerly of Biblical Education by Extension, currently serves in Cluj, Romania, with Church Resource Ministries. In addition to four years of ministry in former East Germany, he has worked with the leadership of the Lord's Army since 1985.*

# Longer-Term Solutions for Romanian Orphans

Caroline Swartz

The aftermath of the 1989 Romanian Revolution has been compared to the "Wild West" period of United States frontier expansion between 1850 and 1890. Immediately following the Revolution the influx of foreigners and foreign aid proved impossible to coordinate or control. As the London *Sunday Times* put it, "New charities sprung up like dandelions in wet grass" (Carol Sarler, "Shame About The Babies," 20 January 1991, 18-30). Well-meaning people with little or no experience in Central and Eastern Europe came to Romania prepared to do anything they could to help. The free-for-all in aid distribution caused confusion and an overlap of efforts. Consequently, orphanages in the northern and western parts of Romania received more aid than they could handle, while many orphanages in other parts of the country received very little.

The popular view that "some help is better than no help at all," spurred an inestimable number of Westerners to travel to Romania with loaded cars and trucks. Material goods flooded through the doors of orphanages with the natural assumption that the children would be relieved of some of their suffering. As more and more foreigners were exposed to the orphanages, stories spread of the vast number of institutions and widespread abuse of children. The conditions were appalling, and the response was to provide better equipment, more supplies, and volunteers to lighten the workload of the small number of staff in each facility. Some groups addressing these needs believed that the best solution was for the children to be adopted by foreign families. They assumed that Romanians could not manage adoptions because of their poverty and political instability.

The "AIDS epidemic" further highlighted the plight of Romania's orphans to the world. Doctors fanned across the country, bringing with them disposable syringes and other AIDS-prevention techniques. People sought to bring any comfort possible to these suffering children as they attempted to understand how such an atrocity could have been overlooked or ignored under Ceausescu's regime.

Now, more than three years later, many still assume that this type of crisis relief and care is what is needed. Yet experience has shown that the roots of the problems lie much deeper than emergency relief can penetrate. Immediate needs, in most cases, are being met with medical supplies, building equipment, and personnel. However, the increasing concern now is that emergency aid progress to a strategy of development.

According to UNICEF, recognized as the most reliable source, there are 628 residential institu-

tions in Romania. These are estimated to house approximately 142,000 children up to the age of 18, at which time children legally become adults. These estimates, however, do not include other institutions: for example, those run by the police. The actual number of children, including these additional institutions, is thought to run closer to 200,000.

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## Emergency Relief

Much has improved since the pre-Revolution days when the lives of the children centered on survival. Emergency relief supplies have provided much-needed nourishment and clothing, as well as toys and medical supplies. New problems have emerged, however. Often the supplies "went in the front door and out the back." Many of the orphanage staff workers, with survival needs of their own, took supplies home with them or sold them on the black market. One man from a California church brought jackets for all the children in an orphanage. He took pictures to show in his church. When he returned six months later, not one child had a jacket.

The lack of foresight or planning of many foreigners also became evident. Reports started to surface of cases of soda being delivered where baby food and powdered milk or diapers would have been more appropriate. Another reported cartons of tennis balls being delivered to a school for the blind. In such instances, the supplies would sit in storage or be stolen. (To order a report on *Romanian Relief*, see p. 11.)

Still another problem is the lack of education or understanding of the staff. Supplies arrive without proper explanation or training for their use. These supplies sometimes remain in storage for months on end. Much to the amazement of the donor, the staff contend that if toys are not to be broken or mistreated, they should be kept out of the reach of children.

After the 1989 Revolution, an active baby market developed in Romania. Although precise numbers are not known, it is estimated by the U.S. State Department that over 10,000 Romanian children were adopted by foreigners in the first year following the Revolution. Many of these were not adopted from orphanages; rather, they were adopted from their biological parents as part of an illicit baby trade.

In November 1992, approximately 1,200 people from more than ten countries, who work with Romania's children, gathered for the first time in Bucharest for the National Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Workshop, organized and

The Romanian Information Clearing House (RICH), established in 1991-92, gathers and disseminates information on humanitarian activities in Romania. To obtain a list of relief organizations working in Romania, contact RICH at Str. Ministerului Nr. 1-3, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania; tel: 40-1-6137544 or 6150200, ext. 384; fax: 40-1-6137544.

financed by the Romanian Government, UNICEF, USAID, and the European Community. This proved to be a step towards cooperation with 183 nongovernmental organizations represented, 63 of which were Romanian and 120, foreign.

During his opening address, Romanian Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan emphasized the importance of moving beyond emergency child care to a policy of long-term assistance based on a well-defined legal framework. Especially important was his definition of child-protection policies as necessarily "applied first to integrate the child back into the family or into foster homes and, only if that fails, into governmental institutions."

Today, NGOs in Romania are trying to establish a foster-care program. The Romanian Orphanage Trust from England, in cooperation with the government, has developed a foster-care program with Romanian families for children from birth to age three. The hope is that the children will be adopted by these same families within one to two years. Holt International Children's Services, from the United States, is also working to implement a foster-care program. Its approach is to provide foster-care until a more permanent situation or adoption within Romania can be secured. Other groups, such as Project Concern International of the United States and Teddy Bear Project, are also attempting programs for the deinstitutionalization of children.

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### ***Social Work and More Coordinated Efforts***

Social work has become a crucial means in preventing the institutionalization of children without families. Nongovernmental organizations are attempting to organize training for social workers. At the NGO Workshop, Rosemary McCreery, UNICEF representative in Romania, said, "More courses for the training of specialized social workers should be organized to fill the existing needs."

NGOs are also beginning to work toward a unified approach in their presentation of a family atmosphere and experience for each child. This is happening in particular with Christian organizations and churches. There is a long way to go to find any real unity among the NGOs, but organizations such as World Vision are making significant progress in incorporating an integrated approach to ministry through work with children, handicapped services, and primary health care in connection with local Romanian Christians.

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### ***The Church and Its Response***

In the eyes of many Romanian Christians, Western churches have provided an overflow of generosity towards Romania. They note a difference, however, between the approaches of the churches in Europe and the churches in North America. European churches have traveled consistently with material supplies, delivering them, and exiting quietly. Due to distance, churches in

North America have largely taken a one-shot approach, but provided much greater manpower. When asked about this difference in strategy, one Romanian Christian worker said that Europeans were more dependable and their strategy more helpful. This could be because the European approach allows for Romanians to do the main work themselves. But he noted that North American churches have also made a great impact by continuing to send workers to train Romanians.

The Orthodox Church has done significant work in focusing on the street children in major cities. In a Romanian Orthodox church in Dobroteasa Bucharest, Father Sima is taking up the cause for children he refers to as the lost generation. His goal is to "rehabilitate the community, to teach people to live for others, take initiative and try to help one another." He is hoping to one day start an orphanage, one run on the principles of Christian love, free of the corruption found in the present system.

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### ***Conclusion***

After the Revolution, many tried to give a "quick fix" to the problems and many mistakes were made. Limited foresight, poor planning, and emotionally driven help brought workers and money into the country to simply improve upon the old institutions. The focus of foreign assistance must shift to equipping Romanians to address their own society's problems. Material goods, funds, and short-term volunteers must be channeled into long-term development plans that, ideally, are the initiatives of Romanians. ♦

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Edited excerpt of *The Romanian Orphanages* (December 1993) reprinted with permission of SEN-Research (formerly Mission Forum), Box 150, 81000 Bratislava 1, Slovakia; tel: 427-312-629; fax: 427-312-238. Copies of the full 17-page report may be ordered for £10, plus £1.5 postage and handling (checks payable to CEMF), from Central European Mission Fellowship, 3 Springfield Rd., Hinckley, Leicester LE10 1AN England; for OS 180, plus OS 24 postage and handling, from Mission Forum, Kerngasse 4, A-2353, Guntramsdorf, Austria; tel: 43-22-365-3750; fax: 43-22-365-2390; and for \$15 plus \$2 postage and handling from CEMF, Box 2191, La Habra, CA 90632; tel: 310-697-7143; fax: 310-691-3468. Mission Forum's 20-page report, *Romanian Relief: A Donor's Guide to Aid; A Receiver's Guide to Aid* (September 1991), by Kathy Rogers, Art Moore, and Marsh Moyle, is available for the same cost and from the same sources as *The Romanian Orphanages* report.

*Caroline Swartz is a journalist who has worked for International Teams in Central and Eastern Europe since 1991.*

The focus of foreign assistance must shift to equipping Romanians to address their own society's problems.

## PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

### Rail Passes in Russia and the Baltics

Rail Europe and Russian Railways have joined forces to provide train travel passes for North American travelers. A Russian Flexipass is valid for unlimited rail travel on selected major routes in Russia and neighboring republics. The pass may be used for any four days in a 15-day period—and must be purchased in advance in the U.S. or Canada. A first-class pass costs \$298; second-class is \$198. Contact a travel agent for details. MTS>Travel News 4 (Summer 1993), 2.

According to the *Chicago Tribune* (22 August 1993, S12: 15) "a Baltic Rail Card, introduced in July 1993, allows for unlimited train travel through the three Baltic republics [Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania]. The passes are also good for free reserved sleeping accommodations and discounts on some Baltic ferries and on connecting routes to the Baltic republics from Sweden, Norway, Finland, eastern portions of Germany and sections of Poland. Cost: \$50 for 8 days; \$100 for 15 days, plus \$15 handling fee for each card if bought in the U.S. Contact:

Eurocruises, tel: 800-688-3876 or 212-691-2099;  
or  
Uniontours, tel: 800-451-9511 or 212-683-9500."

## NEWS NOTES

Delegates at the European Convention of Christians in Broadcasting in Brussels, Belgium, voted unanimously to establish the **Fellowship of European Broadcasters (FEB)** as a membership organization. Under the direction of board member David Olson, the Fellowship is creating "Euronet 2000"—a computerized directory of Christians in Broadcasting. "Euronet" will be available through electronic network systems or the Fellowship office in 1995. For further information, contact:

FEB  
23 The Service Road  
Potters Bar, Hertfordshire  
EN6 1QA, England  
Tel: 44-707-649910  
Fax: 44-707-662653



The **International Airline Passenger Association** advises against flying over the territory of the former Soviet Union. "Overloaded airplanes, lack of cockpit discipline, pilot error, aging aircraft," are all common, the agency said, in the first such warning it has ever issued. The passenger association noted that many routine safety and maintenance procedures regulated in the West are not followed by airlines of the former Soviet Union. (*New York Times*, 12 May 1994, A7). While *EW&M Report* editors share IAPA's concern regarding domestic air travel in the former Soviet Union, flights originating from the West to the region have an acceptable safety and performance record.



**Lufthansa** now flies direct routes to the Urals and Siberia: Frankfurt-Ekaterinburg and Frankfurt-Novosibirsk. The German airline makes two weekly flights on the new routes

### Specialized training for individuals ministering in Central Asia

Seven organizations are working in partnership in the Central Asia Study Center (CASC). The Zwemer Institute directs the Center. The curriculum focuses on language-training, Islam, Central Asia's peoples, history, culture, Muslim evangelization, and church planting. The next session is 19 September–25 November 1994. Contact:

Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies  
Box 41330, Pasadena, CA 91114-8330  
Tel: 818-794-1121; fax: 818-798-3469

### Phone adapter for computers, phones, and faxes in Russia

Russian Information Services, Inc. has a phone adapter suitable for connecting computer modems (e-mail), phones, and fax machines to Russian telephone wall jacks. Cost: \$22.50, plus \$3 shipping/handling (note item #A710). Contact:

RIS  
89 Main Street, #2, Montpelier, VT 05602  
Tel: 800-639-4301; fax: 802-223-6105

without refueling in Moscow. Lufthansa is now the primary volume carrier in the Russian market with 53 flights each week to and from Russia, more than its major competitors, British Airways and Delta. Dutch **KLM** has opened a cargo service center at St. Petersburg's airport providing freight and logistical services, including customs clearance, storage, transport, and packaging. Source: *Russian Travel Monthly* 2 (March 1994), 1. Finally, **Austrian Air** now has a direct flight from Vienna to Odessa on Mondays and Fridays. Source: *Greater Europe Mission, Odessa Gazette* 4 (June 1994), 2.



The **Montenegrin Orthodox Church** in the Yugoslav republic of Montenegro has declared itself an autocephalous church, independent of the Serbian Orthodox church, and elected Bishop Antonje Abramovic as its leader. Serbian church leaders immediately denounced the move.

The Montenegrin church merged with the Serbian church in 1920. The Orthodox church in neighboring Macedonia proclaimed its independence from the Serbian church in the 1970s, but the Serbs have consistently refused to recognize it, thus blocking the acceptance of the Macedonian church by other Orthodox churches worldwide. *Frontier* (1994 January-February), 25.



The **Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy**, an international congregation, has provided hot meals for the elderly poor of Moscow since December 1991. This ministry has grown from serving 150 meals up to nearly 1,200 meals a day, six days a week, at a cost of \$.50 per meal. The Chaplaincy also financially assists Moscow Baptist and Orthodox Churches in similar social outreach programs. Since church volunteers administer the program in Russian cafeterias, none of the funds

received from gifts is allotted to administrative overhead. Donations may be made to the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy Food Program  
c/o George Hyslop  
American Embassy Moscow  
PSC 77 PAE  
APO AE 09721, USA



**Open Letter to Patriarch Alexis II on the Need for Liturgical Renewal.** Twenty-two theologians and priests of the Russian Orthodox Church sent an open letter to Patriarch Alexis II of Moscow at the beginning of May 1994 concerning problems linked to "the ability of modern man to understand liturgical texts." The continuing debate on possible liturgical reforms, notably the use of the Russian language in place of the Slavonic language, is in the process of being stifled, state the signatories of the letter to the Patriarch. It is urgent, they feel, to open a broad collegial discussion on all problems connected with liturgical practice, rather than allow the current trend to "hunt the enemy." To contribute to this debate, the signatories suggest, in the form of questions, a set of points for reflection: "Is it possible to celebrate in the Russian language in some parishes in large towns, or, at least, if that can only happen sometimes, to read the Epistle and Gospel in Russian? Should we encourage the development of congregational singing? Can we go back to certain liturgical practices of the ancient Church which the Russian Church has specifically given up? What can we learn from the liturgical experience of other autocephalous Orthodox Churches?" Excerpted from *Service Orthodoxe de Presse et d'Information* 189 (June 1994), 4-5.



In a typical Russian city of 500,000 people, it is believed that nearly half of the adult male population is alcoholic, according to Alexander V. Nemtsov, head of the drug and alcohol department for the Russian Institute of Psychiatry in Moscow. "We're the heaviest drinkers in the world. And our people don't consume it gradually." *The CoMission Biweekly Update* 1 (10 June 1994). **Approximately 18 Alcoholics Anonymous offices are now open in the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe.**

In addition, **Al-Anon support groups**, fellowships of relatives and friends of alcoholics, **total 62 in Russia and 234 in Poland.** For a complete list of offices and groups in former Soviet-bloc countries contact:

General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous  
Grand Central Station  
Box 459  
New York, NY, 10163  
Tel: 212-870-3400  
Fax: 212-870-3003; and  
Al-Anon Family Groups  
Midtown Station  
Box 862  
New York, NY 10018-0862  
Tel: 212-302-7240  
Fax: 212-869-3757



LOGOS Biblical Training International (BTI), Fresno, CA, and International Slavic Christian Institute (ISCI), Tulsa, OK, organized Bible training courses for Slavic immigrants and resident Russian-speaking individuals beginning in 1989. Students, mostly studying by means of extension courses, live throughout the U.S. and Canada. Leadership for the program has now shifted from LOGOS BTI to ISCI. **ISCI's goal is to prepare future missionaries and ministers for Russia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet republics.** Enrollment is approximately 400 students. For further information contact:

Michael Gavrilov  
Director  
ISCI  
Box 692029  
Tulsa, OK 74169-2029  
Tel: 918-437-0801  
Fax: 918-371-0434



## RESOURCES

"Beyond the News: Hope for Bosnia" deserves a wide audience. This 30-minute color video highlights Christian attempts at reconciliation in the midst of the merciless Yugoslav civil war. Skillfully edited interviews with Catholic, Orthodox, and Evangelical Christians effectively drive home this Mennonite production's theme of loving one's enemies. However, the tight focus on attempts at overcoming the war's hatreds, framed by a lively musical backdrop, lends an oddly upbeat air to an awful war. Still, this 1993 production's successful combination of inspiration and education makes it ideal for ministry orientation and church discussion groups. Equally thought-provoking and informative handouts, including recommended readings, accompany "Hope for Bosnia." All in all, a valuable tool for making some limited sense of this senseless war. The cost is \$24.95, plus \$2 shipping. No rentals.

Contact:  
Mennonite Media Ministries  
1251 Virginia Ave.  
Harrisburg, VA 22801-2497  
Tel: 800-999-3534  
Fax: 703-434-5556

Reviewed by Mark Elliott,  
EWC&MR Report coeditor.



Josh McDowell Ministries provides Russian and English evaluation copies of **More Than A Carpenter** free of charge to ministries interested in using the book in Russia. Other Russian-language publications available in Moscow include: *The Deceiver*; *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*; *Jesus: A Biblical Defense of His Deity*; *The Resurrection Factor*; *Evidence for the Resurrection*; *Four Spiritual Laws*; and paperback *New Testaments*.

Quantity discounts are available. Contact:

Rodney Love  
Josh McDowell Ministry  
Foreign Resource Sales  
Box 1000  
Dallas, TX 75221  
Tel: 214-907-1000 ext. 1334  
Fax: 214-669-4053



According to *Pulse* (21 January 1994, p. 5), **Reference Guide to English: A Handbook of English as a Second Language**, 400 pp., by Dr. Alice Maclin, has been selected by the U.S. Information Agency for worldwide distribution. Contact:

Dr. Alice Maclin  
1723 E. Clifton Rd. N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30307  
Tel/fax: 404-377-3178



The **Russian Research Institute** distributes critical tracts on Mormonism and the Jehovah's Witnesses in Russian, Ukrainian, and Latvian. The cost is \$.15 each or \$10.00 per 100. Contact:

Christian Research Institute  
Box 500  
San Juan Capistrano, CA  
92693-0500  
Tel: 714-855-9926 or  
800-443-9797  
Fax: 714-855-9927



## RESOURCES

The Churches' East West European Relations Network (CEWERN), a network of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, publishes the *East-West* newsletter two to three times per year. CEWERN offers annual international subscriptions for £20. Contact:

Dr. Philip Walters  
General Secretary  
81 Thorney Leys  
Witney, Oxon OX8 7AY  
United Kingdom  
Tel: 44-99-377-1778  
Fax: 44-71-916-2021

"The overwhelming majority of the 150,000 Gagavuz in Moldova are of the Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox, or Pravoslavnyaya, as they are called in Russian, comprise approximately 98% of the people," reports Kirk Johnson in *Moldovan Memories: A Visit to the Christian Gagavuz Turks of Moldova, September 17 to October 3, 1993* (Grand Junction, CO: Friends of Turkey, 1993): 7. Order from: Friends of Turkey  
Box 3098  
Grand Junction, CO 81502  
Tel: 303-434-1942  
Fax: 303-434-1461  
(\$3 plus postage/handling fee).



### Electronic Mail Services

In 1993 the Central European Foundation, Bratislava, Slovakia, published a guide to *Electronic Mail Services in Central and Eastern Europe*, by Miro Jurik. The guide described the e-mail situation in Russia and 14 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, described publications that were available through the Internet, listed network access providers by country, and gave telephone numbers for obtaining network access....

With the situation changing so rapidly, Jurik has decided to publish a revised edition of his guide and is asking people to send him updates. He is particularly interested in knowing:

- who is providing connections to the Internet and other networks
- charges for connections and other fees
- contact name and address, e-mail and snail mail, phone and fax
- the cities for which service is provided

Responses should be sent to Miro Jurik at:

Central European Foundation  
Box 150, 81000 Bratislava 1, Slovakia  
Tel: 42-7-312-629; Fax: 42-7-312-238

E-mail: miro@sen.ext.eunet.sk or 100273.270@compuserve.com

Reprinted with permission of *Civil Society...East and West* 2 (April 1994), 3. For cost and order information for *Electronic Mail Services* see *EWC&M Report* 2 (Spring 1994): 13.



### Slavic Gospel Association's Computer Services Manager, Doug Smith, comments on *Electronic Mail Services*:

Stories of communication difficulties in post-Communist countries abound. Electronic mail solves problems of bad lines, busy signals, and time zone differences, and at lower cost than postal mail or faxes. But where does the novice begin? *Electronic Mail Services in Central and Eastern Europe* collects the essential information, defines e-mail, and gives the details of equipment, services available, and contact information. Charts organized by country show the cost options for comparison. But remember: this type of information dates quickly. Use it as a starting point, but be sure to confirm current costs before making plans.



*To Write an Icon* is a six-hour video course produced by Canada's Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies. This informative and thorough introduction to iconography is both a how-to video series and a theological introduction to the tradition of icon painting. The videos provide a fascinating blend of practical information and theological explanation. The majority of the teaching is done by the iconographer, Schemamonk Damian. Early in the course, Father Damian admits that he has had no artistic training, though it is apparent that he has a natural gift for producing (writing) icons. The term "to write" comes from a direct translation of the Slavonic and is appropriate for the concept of the icon in that it is a pictorial presentation of the Gospel. A live audience of three, Rev. Andrey Chirovsky, Christine Granger, and Lesya Chabursky, asks pertinent questions and provides spiritual and theological insight. While Eastern Orthodox and Protestants will find the series helpful, it should be noted that the videos were prepared under Eastern-Rite (Byzantine) Catholic auspices.

The videos cover an amazing amount of detail, from the selection and preparation of the wood panel to the various layers of gilding and painting. Nevertheless, whether a person could by studying the videos "write" an icon seems to be an open question. On the one hand, the technical details are very complete. On the other hand, the spiritual nature of icon production is so strongly stressed that it would seem that some type of involvement in a worshiping community would be mandatory. Indeed, each video begins with the participants conducting a prayer service for divine guidance and illumination as they undertake the writing of the icon. The series actually is dedicated to reviving the tradition of icon making in this generation.

The cost is U.S. \$100 plus 10% shipping and handling.

Contact: Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky  
Institute of Eastern Christian Studies  
St. Paul University  
223 Main St, Ottawa, ON K1S 1C4 Canada  
Tel: 613-782-3031; Fax: 613-782-3026.

Those who do not have the opportunity to view this video series may be interested to learn of the *Sacred Art Journal*, a publication of the St. John of Damascus Association of Orthodox Iconographers, Iconologists, and Architects.

Contact: Dennis Bell  
1157 Crescent Dr., Painesville, OH 44077  
Tel: 216-352-0194

An annual membership is \$25, which includes a one-year subscription to the *Journal* (Canadians add \$10; other overseas add \$12).

Reviewed by James J. Stamooolis, author of *Orthodox Missions Theology Today* and dean of the Wheaton College Graduate School.



Video participant Fr. Andrey Chirovsky, director of the Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, is featured in "*Ukrainian Perspectives on Russian Orthodoxy*," a 30-minute video available for \$30 from:

The Communication Resource Center  
Billy Graham Center  
Wheaton College  
Wheaton, IL 60187-5593  
Tel: 708-752-5061; Fax: 708-752-5555

For a list of all videos in the "Heritage of Russian Orthodoxy" series, contact the *EWC&M Report*.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**30 September-2 October 1994**  
**Russia's Dissident Old Believers, 1650-1950, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN**  
 Cost: \$30 U.S.  
 Contact: Robert Nichols or Georg Michels  
 St. Olaf College  
 Dept. of History  
 1520 St. Olaf Ave.  
 Northfield, MN 55057-1098  
 Tel: 507-646-3163 or 3167;  
 507-645-3066  
 Fax: 507-646-3523



**4-8 October 1994**  
**Consultation on Theological Education and Leadership Development in Post-Communist Europe, Oradea, Romania**  
 Contact: Mr. Charles F. Schukar, Director  
 Project CARE  
 Postfach 37  
 Vienna A-1184, Austria  
 Tel: 43-222-442701  
 Fax: 43-222-442078



**6-8 October 1994**  
**Bridge to the Future: Values to Promote in the Bioethical Debate between Western and Eastern European Countries, University of Pecs, Pecs, Hungary. Sponsor: European Association of Centres of Medical Ethics.**  
 Contact: Prof. Paul Schotsman  
 Catholic University of Leuven  
 Centre for Bioethics  
 Kapucijnenvoer 35  
 3000 Leuven, Belgium  
 Tel: 32-16-33-69-51  
 Fax: 32-16-33-69-52



**12-14 October 1994**  
**Spiritual Enlightenment in Russia, History, and the Contemporary Era, Smolensk, Russia**  
 Contact: Archpriest Viktor Savik  
 Smolensk Eparchy Spiritual College  
 Organizing Committee  
 ul. Timiryazeva 5  
 Smolensk 214000, Russia  
 Tel: 08100-9-42-74; 9-42-75



**20-23 October 1994**  
**European Symposium on the Church and Disability, Hotel Dunakeszi, Budapest, Hungary**  
 Cost: \$200 U.S.  
 Contact: Myriam Van Der Doef-Arneart  
 Joni and Friends Ministries Europe  
 69 Avenue des Pagodes  
 B-1020 Brussels, Belgium  
 Tel: 322-245-54-02  
 Fax: 322-245-51-86



**5 November 1994**  
**Christian Renewal Effort for Emerging Democracies (CREED), 14th Annual Conference, Mackay Center, Princeton Theological Seminary. Featuring Fr. Gleb Yakunin and George Gallup.**  
 Contact: CREED  
 787 Princeton-Kingston Rd.  
 Princeton, NJ 08540-4165  
 Tel: 609-497-0224  
 Fax: 609-497-0622



**17-18 November 1994**  
**CAREE Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL**  
 Contact: Dr. Paul Mojzes  
 Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe  
 Rosemont College  
 Rosemont, PA 19010  
 Tel: 215-696-2425  
 Fax: 215-696-8970



**25-26 November 1994**  
**How to Open and Operate a Bookstore in a Free Market Economy, Timisoara, Romania. Registration by application only.**  
 U.S. Contact: Mr. Willard Dickerson, Jr., Director of Education  
 American Booksellers Association  
 828 South Broadway  
 Tarrytown, NY 10591  
 Tel: 914-591-2665 Ext. 281;  
 800-637-0037  
 Fax: 914-591-2720

Romania Contact: Soros Foundation for an Open Society-Timisoara  
 Semenic 10  
 1900 Timisoara, Romania  
 Tel/fax: 96-190-804



**15-18 December 1994**  
**Christian Models of Business Development in Central Europe, Bratislava, Slovakia**  
 Sponsors: Integrity in Business Partnership (Ethics Development Initiative-UK, Opportunity International-Bulgaria, and SIS Management Services Ltd.-Slovakia).  
 Contact: Luke Bretherton  
 Ethics Development Initiative, CARE  
 53 Romney Street  
 London SW1P 3RF, England  
 Tel: 44-71-233-0455  
 Fax: 44-71-233-0983  
 E-mail: 100136.3672@compuserve.com



SEN-Research, which assisted in preparing the Calendar of Events, provides a more complete calendar service for East Central Europe for 200 Austrian Schillings or \$20 U.S. per year (plus \$10 charge for all checks from non-Austrian banks).

**23-27 January 1995**  
**Mission After Communism in Central and Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union, New Haven, CT**  
 Lecturers: Peter Kuzmic and Leonid Kishkovsky. Eight sessions cost \$95.  
 Contact: Overseas Ministries Study Center  
 490 Prospect Street  
 New Haven, CT 06511-2196  
 Tel: 203-624-6672  
 Fax: 203-865-2857



**2-5 March 1995**  
**Christians in European Broadcasting Convention, Hanau, Germany**  
 Contact: Fellowship of European Broadcasters  
 23 The Service Road  
 Potters Bar  
 Hertfordshire EN6 1QA  
 England  
 Tel: 44-707-649910  
 Fax: 44-707-662653



**7-10 July 1995**  
**The Russian Philosophical Tradition, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH**  
 Contact: Clinton Gardner, President  
 The Transnational Vladimir Solovyov Society  
 The Norwich Center  
 Box 710  
 Norwich, VT 05055  
 Tel: 802-649-1000  
 Fax: 802-649-2003



This calendar service is distributed every six to seven weeks. Contact: SEN-Research  
 Box 150  
 81000 Bratislava 1, Slovakia  
 Tel: 310-697-7143  
 Fax: 310-691-3468

# Uproot in Order to Plant

Dennis Kinlaw

Could it be that when...a society permits itself to be built without its Maker at the center, it must come apart before it can be put together?

Of all the beautiful things that come in life, one of the greatest is the moment of illumination. It may come in a conversation, a book, someone's sentence, or a thought. Suddenly pieces of information that seemed unrelated or even antithetical to one another fall into a pattern and you see a picture instead of meaningless data. Recently this happened to me. It was in a conversation with Vasily Talos, a Baptist pastor from Romania.

Last fall an alliance of five denominational groups in his country united in a common effort to reach Romania with the Gospel. They aired, in cooperation with CBN, a series of children's programs on Romanian TV. The response was overwhelming. One million two hundred thousand letters came in. (There are only twenty-four million people in the whole country.) Those were requests for Bibles, for more information about Christ, and just expressions of thanks.

An analysis of these letters indicated that the children's programs had reached some 700,000 families. In early January 1994, in an effort to respond to this great interest, the alliance mailed 600,000 packets of six Bible lessons per packet. On 15 January the responses to this effort began. Each day since, the mail has averaged 3,000 letters per day. All indications are that in most cases the lessons are being used, not individually, but by whole families.

My response to this was almost one of incredulity. Where in human history has one seen such a hunger for knowledge about the Gospel?

What made all of this so moving was the knowledge of what Romania has experienced in recent years. Ten years ago it was a brutal dictatorship ruled by a government totally hostile to Christianity. That government collapsed. The church found itself free but in a society in great trauma.

Then I remembered the commission which the Lord gave to Jeremiah. It contained four crushing negatives before any word of promise. "See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10, NIV).

Could it be that when a culture or a society permits itself to be built without its Maker at the center, it must come apart before it can be put together the way God wants it? That may not be pleasant to think about, but it is surely the case in many individual lives. Is this why in Scripture judgment and salvation are so intimately associated?

As I listened to Pastor Talos, a hope arose within me. If it is in the shambles that Christ has His best opportunity to get our attention, this is a good day. In fact, it may be the best day that we have had. As the false crumbles, the true has a chance to be seen. It is a great moment to live. Let us seize it. ♦

*Dr. Dennis Kinlaw served for 18 years as president of Asbury College, Wilmore, KY. He currently is president of the Francis Asbury Society, Wilmore, KY. Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from The High Calling 5 (Spring 1994), 2.*

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