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Options for Missionary Kid Education in the Post-Soviet Era

Laran Lofton

Missionaries living abroad rightly rank the education of their children as a major concern. Some home school while others put their children in national public schools; some opt for local Christian schools while others place their children in boarding schools. A survey of missionaries serving in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe conducted by the author in March 2000 provides insights into educational options available in this region.

Location typically plays a major role in the decisions of missionary families. The available options in urban areas may not necessarily be available in rural areas. In cities, one missionary noted, the possibilities include national public or private schools, Christian schools, international diplomatic schools, boarding schools, as well as home schooling and correspondence programs. A few missionaries still choose to leave their children with relatives back home. In some cases the entire family may leave the field to allow children to receive some portion of their education, usually high school, in their home culture.

National Schools

Missionaries surveyed do not often choose national public schools. Respondents from Moscow, Kazan, Irkutsk, and Rostov in Russia and from the Czech Republic noted that from a Western perspective, national schools are "rigid and have one way of doing things." These missionary parents did not wish to place their children in settings where they felt they would be "ridiculed, belittled, embarrassed, shamed, and humiliated." Another reason some children are not placed in national schools is the language barrier. David Broersma, a missionary in Moscow, said that some children easily learn the language because they start their schooling in a national school. In addition, learning a second language allows children to socialize with nationals. However, older children, who have already had many years of schooling in their home country, come to the mission field unable to speak the language in their new home. Without extensive help from language tutors they are unable to cope successfully in national schools. Cynthia Storrs also points out that some teachers in national schools will not work with missionary kids (MKs) to

help them learn a second language.¹

While many missionaries object to national schools for their children, others, such as Holly Carden in Serbia, note that "putting your children in the national school not only enhances ministry but helps both parents and children in their own cultural understanding and to be more well accepted in their community." Although it may be difficult for her children, she believes it is good for them because it "helps them grow into more realistic people who are willing to take on challenges and look for solutions." National schools allow children to learn a second language so they can stay on the mission field longer; the family is more readily accepted by the community; and the family is at ease in its surroundings and has larger ministry opportunities. On the other hand, Carden does recognize that children with learning disabilities may not do well in national schools.

Home Schooling

Many missionary respondents are engaged in home schooling, an option open for those living in urban and rural settings alike. One missionary volunteered, "I know that our kids are better able to handle the culture stress that they have because there is so much security in the home." Schooling at home seems to help the transition from one culture to another. Also, Dr. Paul Ridgeway, a missionary in Sofia, Bulgaria, commented that "home schooling gives a solid family foundation and closeness that cannot exist in other educational systems." But this closeness does not come without a price. Families have to work hard to always "maintain healthy and peaceful relationships" because of the many hours they spend together. On the positive side, home schooling allows children to receive individual attention that they could not receive in other types of schooling. However, parents may not have adequate skills to teach their children everything they need to know. In addition, several missionaries noted that either the mother or the father had to step out of ministry either partially or fully to teach their children.

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Not only do parents lose time in ministry, but they also may lose the respect of the people they are trying to reach because home schooling, as Kara Moran observed, "is socially unacceptable in Russia." Two missionaries conceded that their children lacked friends because of home schooling. But Mark Harris in Ryazan, Russia, shared that his daughter was still able to have friends, just "in a more controlled atmosphere." In Russia some Westerners believe that national schools still evidence a strong "influence of the Soviet, atheistic past." For this reason, these parents see home schooling as a way to provide for their children's education while sparing them exposure to values and influences that run counter to their beliefs. Simply put, some respondents favoring home schooling just do not want their children "influenced that many hours a day by another adult or other children."

Some missionaries remarked that they favored a combination of home schooling and national schools. Since home schooling must contend with parents ill equipped to teach at least some subjects, and since home schoolers lack libraries, science labs, and extra-curricular activities, some missionaries place their children in national schools for certain classes. This can help children develop skills in socialization as well.

Correspondence Schools

Schooling by correspondence is an option that two of 28 families surveyed had adopted. According to David C. Pollock, correspondence schools have "good instruction" and are "academically sound."²² This type of instruction gives parents more time for ministry because much of the curriculum is self-guiding. But one family surveyed noted a rash of computer problems and lost E-mails. Even without computer glitches, correspondence programs require "children to be exceptionally self-motivated or parents who can provide the motivation and oversight."

Christian Schools

Some missionaries who live in larger cities place their children in Christian schools because, as one respondent shared, their child received strong spiritual nurture there. Also, missionary David Broersma explained that Hinkson Academy, which his children attend in Moscow, "is an oasis in a fairly stressful life in a big city." The spiritually safe environment notwithstanding, does such schooling limit missionaries from knowing the people they are trying to reach? This possibility did not emerge in any of the survey responses.

Another type of schooling involves the recruiting of a Western teacher to instruct the children of one or more missionary families. The Nielsen family, missionaries serving in Moldova, at first taught their children themselves. But in their second year of service, they hired a teacher to instruct their children

at home. The Niensens were happy to have the help because previously it had been draining to combine teaching and ministry. Heather Godfrey, a missionary to Irkutsk, Siberia, shared her desire to locate a teacher willing to work with 12 expatriate kids in a one-room schoolhouse. This type of education can have some of the same drawbacks as home schooling, such as limited socialization and limited facilities, but it does allow parents more time for ministry.

Boarding Schools

Missionary opinions on the longstanding option of boarding schools are mixed. On the one hand, most of those polled favored other alternatives. On the other hand, while the Christian boarding school option does not appear to be popular in Budapest, the number of boarding school students at Black Forest Academy in Germany is growing. Loneliness, the bane of boarding school students separated from their families, has been minimized to some extent with the advent of E-mail. One missionary family surveyed reported that their daughter attended boarding school for her last two years of high school before entering college. For her, boarding school was a positive social and educational experience and prepared her for postsecondary studies. Black Forest Academy, according to Academic Dean Richard Derksen, has hired a Korean-American educator to help ease the cultural transition of its increasing number of Korean MKs.

None of those surveyed chose to leave their children at home with relatives. All options chosen shared one common characteristic: an unparalleled crosscultural experience. Four respondents noted that their children's international opportunities had broadened their worldview and perspective. Living abroad is seen as an "educational experience that is better than what they would have had" in their home country.

Weighing the Options

Missionaries must continually weigh the pluses and minuses of various educational options. Learning disabilities and children's personalities must be taken into consideration, and older children need to be involved in the decision-making process. One missionary family reassesses the educational needs of its children on a regular basis, making a fresh decision each summer about schooling for the upcoming year. According to survey responses, families evaluated their options with the help of other missionaries, their sending agencies, pastors, home country friends, and friends in their country of service. Many of those surveyed mentioned SHARE, a ministry based in Budapest, Hungary, that helps missionaries weigh various educational options for their children. Besides providing information about schooling options, SHARE also administers achievement and diagnostic tests and participates in conferences where it addresses curriculum, learning style, member care, and transcultural kid issues.

With each type of schooling, missionaries must balance the benefits and sacrifices for children and parents, recognizing that decisions affecting their children's education will also affect their ministry.

The decision on how to educate children is not easy for missionaries. They must consider the needs of their children, their own needs, and the Lord's leading. It is clear at least that no one option is best for all. Above all, with each type of schooling, missionaries must balance the benefits and sacrifices for children and parents, recognizing that decisions affecting their children's education will also affect their ministry.

Notes

1. Cynthia Storrs, "My Child in the National School," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 35 (April 1999), 166-71.
2. David C. Pollock, "Strategies for Dealing with Crisis in Missionary Kid Education," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13 (January 1989), 13-19.

Editor's Note: See also Martha J. Strickland, "National Schools and Missionary Kids," East-West Church & Ministry Report 2 (Spring 1994), 6; Children's Software Review; Interact Magazine, published by Interaction, Inc.; Brian V. Hill, "The Educational Needs of the Children of Expatriates," Missiology 14 (July 1986), 325-46; Cathy Duffy, Christian Home Educators' Curriculum Manual, Grove Publishing (16172 Huxley Circle, Westminster, CA 92683); and the ACSI Directory, published by the Association of Christian Schools International (Box 35097, Colorado Springs, CO 80935-3509).

Laran Lofton is a student at Sanford University, Birmingham, AL, majoring in human development and family studies.

"MK" Education Contact Information

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Educational Consultants

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The purpose of SHARE Educational Services is to provide counsel and human resource support for expatriate Christian families serving in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Founded in 1994, SHARE's headquarters is in Budapest, Hungary, with additional resource centers in Bucharest, Romania, and Prague, Czech Republic. SHARE also assists missionaries serving in Western Europe and Central Asia.

Selected Christian Schools

Black Forest Academy
Postfach 1109
79396 Kandern, Germany
Tel.: 49-7626-91610 (high school)
Tel.: 49-7626-7991 (elementary)
Fax: 49-7626-8821
E-mail: BFAK@BFAcademy.com
(high school)
E-mail: BFASitz@compuserve.com
rderksen@bfacademy.com
Web site: www.bfacademy.com
Tim Shuman, Director
Hans Fung, Principal
Richard Derksen, Academic Dean
Current enrollment: 336 (216 in 1995), including 293 MKs, representing 59 mission agencies

Hinkson Academy

39A Novocheryomushkinskaya ul.
Mailing address: Box 144
Varshavskoye SH. 37
Moscow, Russia 131000
Tel.: 7-095-733-9740
Fax: 7-095-733-9062
E-mail: thompson@online.ru; hca@maf.org
Tim Thompson, Director
Current enrollment: 186 (90 in 1995), almost all MKs, representing 42 mission agencies

International Christian School

Ifjusag utca
2049 Diósd, Hungary
Tel.: 36-23-381-986
Fax: 36-23-381-552
E-mail: registrar@icsbudapest.org
Kenny Young, Director
Current enrollment: 130, including 70 MKs, representing 20 mission agencies

Correspondence Schools

University of Nebraska

269 Nebraska Center for Continuing Education
Lincoln, NE 68583-9800
Tel.: 402-472-4324; 402-472-4422;
877-243-4747
Fax: 402-472-1901
E-mail: jes@unl.edu
Web site: http://www.unl.edu/ISHS
Jim E. Schiefelbein, Principal of Independent Study High School

Offers 160 courses for grades 9-12 with an annual course enrollment of approximately 16,000 students from 50 states and over 135 countries. Approximately 5,000 students are enrolled annually with a minimum of 200 graduates/year.

A Beka Correspondence School for Homeschoolers

Pensacola Christian College
Box 18000
Pensacola, FL 32523-9160
Tel.: 800-874-3592; 850-479-6585
Fax: 850-479-6549
E-mail: info@abekaacademy.org
Web site: www.abekaacademy.org
Troy Shoemaker, Principal

More than 23,000 students were enrolled in A Beka correspondence and video courses, K through 12, in 1999-2000, in addition to A Beka curriculum in use in 10,000 U.S. Christian schools and for more than 250,000 U.S. home schoolers.

Selected Online Christian High Schools

North Star Academy

Brett Bowers, Director
(brett@northstar.academy.org)
Web site: www.northstar_academy.org

Pacific Academy Global Education Community

Doug Lamer, Director
(dlambier@lightglobe.com)
Web site: www.lightglobe.com

Potters School

Jana Gilbert, Director
(mrsjg@pottersschool.com)
Web site: www.pottersschool.com

Other Schools

American English Academy of Sofia,
Bulgaria, Ruth Munsey, Director

Bucharest Christian Academy, Romania,
Roger Dyer, Director

Greater Grace Christian Academy,
Budapest, Hungary, Carol Vreeland, Director

International School of St. Petersburg,
Russia, Michael Kennedy, Director

Klaipeda International Christian School,
Lithuania, Karen Rafferty, Director

Komensky Academy of Prague, Czech
Republic, Eric DeHaan and Gary Hildebrand,
Co-Directors

New Hope Christian School, Kyiv, Ukraine,
Dirk Mroczek, Director

Vienna Christian School, Austria, Phil
Paden, Director

Vilnius International Christian School,
Lithuania, Mary Beth Holladay, Director

Editor's Note: Special thanks to Ruby Frerichs (RubyFrer@cs.com) and Nancy Elwood (nelwood@elender.hu) of SHARE Educational Services and Richard Derksen of Black Forest Academy for their help in providing contact information.

Peter Deyneka, Jr.: In Memoriam

Longtime missionary and mission advocate Peter Deyneka, Jr., was diagnosed with lymphoma cancer at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN, in late June 2000, and died on 23 December 2000. His funeral on 12 January 2001 at College Church, Wheaton, IL, was attended by over 600 people. Dr. Joseph Stowell, president of Moody Bible Institute, gave the eulogy, which was accompanied by numerous tributes, including addresses by Peter Konovalchik, Gregori Komendant, and Alexander Firisiuk, leaders respectively of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist Churches of Russia, Ukraine, and Byelorussia.

Chronology of the Life of Peter Deyneka, Jr. 13 September 1931-23 December 2000

- B.A., Wheaton College (1953)
- M.Div., Northern Baptist Seminary (1957)
- Slavic Gospel Association missionary in Alaska (1955-56, 1959-60); Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and Ecuador (1960-63); and South Korea (1963-65)
- Assistant Director (1966-74) and President (1975-91) of Slavic Gospel Association
- Married Anita Jean Marson (1968)
- Adopted Mark and Liliana from Manizales, Colombia (1986)
- President of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries (1991-2000)
- Honorary Doctorate from Northern Baptist Seminary (1996)
- Executive Committee of CoMission (1992-97) and Chairman of CoMission II (1997-2000)
- Board of Directors of the Russian-American Christian University, St. Petersburg Christian University, Odessa Theological Seminary, Media Associates International, and Romanian Missionary Society
- Author of *The Most Important Book in the World* and *What Are People Striving For?* (in Russian)
- Coauthor with Anita Deyneka of *A Song in Siberia, Christians in the Shadow of the Kremlin*, and *Peter Dynamite*

Tributes to Peter Deyneka, Jr.

12 January 2001

By Kent Hill, president of Eastern Nazarene College, Quincy, MA

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard asserted that "purity of heart is to will one thing." Peter Deyneka embodied the truth of those words. He was absolutely and totally committed, as were his parents before him and his wife Anita now, to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to those in need of forgiveness and hope.

I first met Peter and Anita in the early 1980s in relation to the struggle to win the freedom of the Siberian Seven—Russian Christians holed up in the American Embassy in Moscow for five years. That began a relationship between my family and the Deynekas that has lasted nearly two decades and has been among the most precious in our lives. When my family and I were living in Russia for seven months during 1991, the Deynekas took our children in for ten days when Janice faced emergency surgery in a Moscow hospital. Our children, then eight and ten, still remember visiting a Russian orphanage with the Deynekas.

What made Peter so special was the quality of his commitment to Jesus Christ and the church in Russia. It was virtually impossible to have a conversation with him that did not turn eventually, and usually quickly, to the topic of the work in Russia.

Utterly unusual and remarkable was Peter and Anita's selfless devotion to the task. What made the Slavic Gospel Association, and later Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries, so special was the willingness of the Deynekas to assist other organizations in doing what each was uniquely equipped and called by God to do. Peter was a facilitator. He cared not a whit who got the credit and in that he was utterly unique. I believe God blessed his work precisely because he so beautifully reflected the spirit of Jesus Christ: selfless giving for others with little or no personal concern for himself or the credit that his organization might or might not receive. What God can do with such an attitude has been admirably reflected in what God chose to do through the lives and ministries of Peter and Anita.

Peter Deyneka has always represented for me, personally, and I believe for the Christian church as a whole, and particularly those committed to mission among the Slavs, the highest example of devotion to Jesus Christ. I count it a great privilege to have worked with him for two decades. Although my wife and I are deeply saddened by his homegoing, today I thank God for loaning Peter to us for so many decades to do His work upon this earth.

Somehow the transition from this life to the next for Peter must surely have been much more natural

and relaxed than it will be for most of us, for Peter always seemed to reflect the presence of Jesus Christ and His radiance in a way that made one aware that he was already in some profound and unusual way in the company of his Lord. If ever an individual has deserved to hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," it is Peter Deyneka.

The best tribute we can all give to Peter is to continue the work he dedicated his life to. In the divine mystery of God's providence and sovereignty, the work and commitment of Peter will continue. His influence will echo down the corridors of all eternity through those who have found the Christian hope and salvation to which he was such an eloquent witness.

By John Bernbaum, president of the Russian-American Christian University, Moscow, Russia

I want to praise the Lord for the role Peter Deyneka played in my life. Peter and Anita Deyneka came into my life in the late 1980s, and my life has never been the same since. Peter made it clear to me that God had a wonderful plan for my life, and that he, Peter, knew what it was! Peter was the one who encouraged me to leave my work with the Christian College Coalition to go to Moscow to establish a Christian college. To me, Peter was a mentor, an older brother in the Lord, a model.

I also want to praise the Lord for Peter's integrity. He was a man of his word. He said what he meant and did what he said. He did not exaggerate what he did—which I find to be a rare characteristic. Thirdly, I want to praise God for Peter's role as an encourager, as an enabler. So many times in the early years of my work in Russia I was very discouraged. But then Peter would call or we would meet together over a meal and he would encourage me. He would lay out the big picture and ultimately remind me that God was in control.

This leads to my fourth word of praise. Peter was a true servant, a humble man who took great joy in enabling others to achieve their goals, without expecting or asking for recognition for his role. This is an extraordinary characteristic that he modeled for me. Recently I read that "nothing of value was ever accomplished in this life in a spirit of arrogance." Peter's spirit was always a spirit of humility, of service. I love and admire Peter for this quality.

I asked Peter to give the first graduation address of the Russian-American Christian University on 19 May 2001 since he, more than anyone else, was the visionary behind the school. He was the one who had the dream and who wanted to see it made into reality. But God had different plans for Peter. Marge and I will miss him greatly. He is one of my heroes.

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

I am deeply honored to have this opportunity to pay brief tribute to my friend, Peter Deyneka. Peter in so many ways was a model missionary who taught us much by his effective but quiet example. Peter was a peacemaker, often pouring oil on troubled waters. He had indomitable optimism about the Lord's work. He was a bridge builder, bringing all sorts of folk together in all manner of creative ways to help build the Kingdom. Peter also recognized the benefit of research and academic studies for ministry, and made sure that insight and compassion informed each other. Over decades, Peter and his wife Anita have lived to partner and to network, long before ministry collaboration became a popular concept.

Remarkably, Peter managed to be both a bona fide visionary and a street-leather pragmatist at one and the same time. He dreamed dreams, he infected others with his dreams, and at the same time he got things done. Peter was contagious in the best sense of the word.

Peter always seemed to have boundless energy, for years juggling multiple and diverse responsibilities.

Peter trusted people. Occasionally this led to disappointment, but more often it led to people realizing potential they had not known they had. Peter also was imminently trustworthy: The people and missions that benefited from his sober, solid counsel number in the many hundreds. And who received the credit for Kingdom work well done? That was always the least of his concerns.

But I think I will remember Peter above all as an encourager—an encourager of his dear wife Anita, their children, and many others engaged in the Lord's work. At a conference on Russian children at risk in Atlanta in 2000—which was a dream of Peter and Anita's—Russian Christian workers Galina Obrovets and Natalia Loginova shared with me that in June 2000 Peter and Anita gave over four hours of their time in Moscow to discuss how best to help Russian orphans, right before leaving for the U.S. for medical treatment.

At the same Atlanta conference, Phyllis Kilbourn of Rainbows of Hope shared that a homeless Russian boy was once asked how to define loving-kindness. This young orphan said that kindness is giving a homeless child bread, and loving-kindness is when you put jam on it. Thanks, Peter, for the bread and the jam.

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Lessons for Ministry from the Life and Example of Peter Deyneka, Jr.

Mark Elliott

1. Be single-minded and focused in devotion to Christ and in witnessing to his Truth.
2. Love and respect those whom you seek to reach with the gospel.
3. In cross-cultural ministry, concentrate on ways to assist nationals to reach fellow nationals.
4. Say what you mean and do what you say you will do.
5. Never exaggerate one's accomplishments. Give no concern for who receives credit for God's work well done. Do not seek recognition, but if it comes, point always to Christ, our true enabler.
6. Encourage and value others, assisting them in realizing their unique gifts and potential in ministry. Concentrate on building one another up, rather than tearing one another down.
7. Be a peacemaker, concentrating on bringing people together and on reconciling differences.
8. Partner and network whenever possible because more can be accomplished together than in isolation.
9. Be open to insights and fresh approaches to ministry from any and every quarter.
10. Recognize that research and various academic disciplines have much to contribute to evangelism and missions.
11. Be open to counsel from others, especially a spouse, who can provide wisdom, perspective, and needed corrective to any leader's creeping assumption that "my way must be the right way."
12. Be so preoccupied in the Lord's work that there will be no time to dwell on, or be handicapped by, real or perceived ill treatment.
13. Honor equally the gifts of the visionary, capable of mapping out the big picture, and the pragmatist, intent on realizing results as soon as possible.
14. Be of good cheer. We worship a mighty God and we have every reason for joy and hope in serving him.

Be so pre-occupied in the Lord's work that there will be no time to dwell on, or be handicapped by, real or perceived ill treatment.

Central and Eastern Europe: Trends in Evangelical Churches and in Society

Juraj Kušnierik and Marsh Moyle

The End of the Charismatic Wave

The end of the 1980s was the peak period of a charismatic wave in Central Europe. New churches and fellowships were set up. Charismatic Christianity was full of life and, as such, was attractive and engaging for a cynical and skeptical Central European population. Charismatic fellowships and denominations were growing, while other Christian denominations were stagnating or even declining.

This period of rapid growth seems to be more or less over. Charismatic churches are now eager to grow spiritually and show great interest in theology as well as in a Christian worldview. Some of the leading evangelical theologians in the region come from a Charismatic tradition. Charismatic fellowships are often the initiators and movers of evangelical cooperation in their countries. It is interesting to note that the only two Christian newspapers with a readership broader than their denomination in the Czech Republic and Slovakia are run by Charismatic groups: *Život vřiv* in the Czech Republic and *KROK* in Slovakia. It is also interesting to note that both of these periodicals give considerable space to issues of public life, such as parliamentary elections, economics, nationalism, and the plight of refugees and ethnic minorities.

The Rediscovery of Theological Roots

Evangelicals in Central and Eastern Europe are discovering that they are not the first generation of Christians in this world. The richness of Christian history was neglected in the past. Most Evangelicals would refer only to 19th century revivals and, eventually, to the Reformation as the only significant periods of church history. An unintended result of this reductionism was that those who longed for deeper spirituality and who discovered the writings of Augustine, Anselm, or Francis of Assisi were discouraged in their quest by narrow-minded pastors. Although this situation has been changing recently, it is still far from ideal. The fact that key books of the Reformation (Luther's *Bondage of the Will*, Calvin's *Institutes*) are not available in Czech or Slovak translations proves the point.

Ecumenism

Under Communist oppression various churches cooperated closely. Stories of Christian prisoners or soldiers of various denominations reading the Bible, praying together, and supporting each other are well known. State oppression and marginalization brought together those who believed in God. Theological differences were set aside. Now, in societies where

freedom of religion is guaranteed, the external pressure for unity and cooperation has gone. This has led to strong denominationalism. One can hear talk of "sheep stealing" at many church conferences. Small evangelical denominations are afraid of each other.

As a reaction to this situation, there is a strong tendency towards institutional ecumenism. All denominations create various coalitions and associations. There is also a renewed willingness to cooperate at the grassroots level. Some influential church leaders and theologians try to put forward a concept of "mere Christianity"—that which is common to all Christians. Being aware of the changed landscape of a post-Christian culture, they are trying to concentrate on the essence of Christianity in apologetic dialog with their non-Christian fellow citizens.

Truth versus Relationship

Relationships are held in high regard in Central and Eastern European societies for both pragmatic reasons of survival and because Christian faith expects it. This is in sharp contrast to the West, where the massive inroads of modernism and economic necessity have made mobility for the sake of work a virtue. Thus the West has little experience with the viability of the extended family and multigenerational relationships so common in Central and Eastern Europe. Families do not expect to move away to get work. Young people will move to a major town to study, and that will be perhaps the one transition they will make in their lives. In a society where trust is very limited, relationships are very important. Close-knit relationships have many benefits, but questions of boundaries and uniformity must also be considered.

Boundary Violations

It is sometimes hard to know where a lack of a common opinion might be taken to be a lack of loyalty. The space for the individual in the context of the community is not clear. There is a temptation to sacrifice truth to relationships, keeping lines blurred in order to avoid the danger of putting a relationship at risk. At the root of this is a lack of categories for dealing with differences objectively. If I disagree with you it means our relationship is no longer viable. This is not always the case, but it is common enough.

The Emphasis on Uniformity Instead of Unity

This results at the personal level in vague communication about activities and information. At the communal level there is a lack of clear definition,

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Evangelicals in Central and Eastern Europe are discovering that they are not the first generation of Christians in this world.

East European Christians try to see the impact of their faith not only on their private lives, their family, and other relationships, but also on their professional, political, and social involvement.

Trends (cont. from page 7)

which leads to shallow communication, superficial agreement, and a loss of content. This can be seen in doctrinal issues in churches, where one would rather leave definitions vague than be exclusive. What is the solution to this? We have to learn and teach others how to live with differences. True tolerance does not violate respect for real beliefs. A false tolerance does not allow for the expression of real difference. Many communication problems can be traced back to a lack of understanding of diversity.

The World as a Spiritual Battleground

Many activities of Christians have now moved beyond church walls. The world has become a "spiritual battleground." The battle is between God and the powers of darkness. Christians, fighting on the side of God, organize marches for Jesus, prayer chains, or evangelistic campaigns. These activities are based on the understanding of the world as the realm of the devil who eventually will be defeated. But now a war rages and it is difficult to avoid seeing non-Christians as enemies and all secular institutions as inherently evil.

The World as a Place to Live and Work

The divisions so typical for Communist societies are all but gone. Religion does not have to be kept to one's private life. Christians do not have to hide their Christianity at their place of work. Churches are seen as important components of national culture. The world is not as hostile as it used to be. Many

Christians ask new questions and face new issues. There are Christian business people, politicians, scientists, artists, teachers, lawyers, journalists, and athletes. They live and work in the world. Some of them still divide their lives into religious and secular components with little connection between the two. More of them try to live lives of integrity. They see their work as an important part of their Christian lives. They try to live in the world as Christians because the whole world was created and is sustained by the sovereign God.

The World Transformed

Salvation does not mean only personal salvation. It includes the redemption and restoration of the whole created world. This holistic understanding of salvation is quite new for many East European Christians. They try to see the impact of their faith not only on their private lives, their families, and other relationships, but also on their professional, political, and social involvement.

Juraj Kušnierik works at ArtForum, Bratislava, Slovakia, and **Marsh Moyle** is director of SEN, Bratislava, Slovakia.

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Cinema, Contextualization, and "Redemptive Analogies"

Mark Elliott

The Gospel According to Saint Matthew

In the late 1960s, while a student at Asbury College, I happened across a foreign film that had a powerful impact on my spiritual formation. Shown across the street on the campus of Asbury Theological Seminary, it was *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (1964), produced by famed Italian filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini. As this avowed atheist himself related, he once found himself with time on his hands in Assisi, Italy, while the town prepared for a visit of Pope John XXIII. Out of boredom, he picked up a New Testament and read through its entire first book, Matthew's Gospel, at one sitting. Struck by its power and the commanding forcefulness of Jesus' personality, he decided to produce a film portrait based solely on Christ's words as recorded by Matthew, with no other mediating text or narrative. Pasolini also selected primarily untrained actors based

on the character of their faces; he used background music ranging from Bach to a Congolese Mass; and he set his film in the rugged terrain of southern Italy, which mimicked the harsh landscape of ancient Israel. Although a nonbeliever and Marxist himself, Pasolini faithfully recounted Jesus' miracles and resurrection as related by Matthew.

At the time I saw the film I had no basis for comprehending what a provocative statement Pasolini was making in his secularized milieu. But eventually I learned that leading Italian Catholic intellectuals, while wary of Pasolini's politics and lifestyle, nevertheless came to praise the film. And *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, "in the minds of most critics, is still the greatest, most authentic and the most religious film on Jesus ever made."¹ But when I first viewed it I just knew I had witnessed an unforgettable rendering of Jesus as a supremely powerful personality who was frequently angered by

prevailing unrighteousness and injustice. And to this day, I believe if one were to stumble upon Christianity exclusively through the eyes of St. Matthew, one would understand Jesus' indignation with hypocrites and unrepentant sinners and his equally pronounced joy over sinners come home as among the most powerful motifs of the Gospel.

Contextualization

As regards missiology, the study of the propagation of the Gospel across cultures, Pasolini's film illustrates that secular agents of culture, in this case even a Marxist, can bear witness to Christian truth. Non-Christian artists, writers, thinkers, and even non-Christian folk practices and religions can harbor clues and lend witness to God's biblical revelation. Missionaries understand this adaptation and "redemption" of culture as contextualization. In Burma in 1819, Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson adapted for Christian use Buddhist *zayats*, roadside shelters used for relaxation and discussions of current events. Judson and his wife Nancy attended Buddhist services held in *zayats* to become acquainted with seating patterns and other associated traditions. The Judsons' employment of *zayats* for Christian purposes quickly led to the first Burmese converts to faith in Christ. Similarly in India in the 1930s, Methodist missionary E. Stanley Jones adapted for Christian use the Hindu *ashram*, or spiritual retreat, leading to Christian conversions among high caste Brahmans. Jones's *ashrams* also modeled the possibility in India of Christian community freed of race, caste, and political barriers.

Redemptive Analogies

The idea that many cultures and folk traditions have embedded within them silent pointers to Christ was championed perhaps most powerfully in the twentieth century in the writings of Canadian Don Richardson, who served in New Guinea in the 1960s and 1970s under Regions Beyond Missionary Union. His books, *Peace Child*, *Lords of the Earth*, and *Eternity in Their Hearts*, develop the concept of "redemptive analogies," the discovery and application of spiritual truths derived from local customs and traditions that are compatible with Christian teaching. Don and his wife Carol and their seven-month-old son began work in 1962 among New Guinea's Savi tribesmen, who practiced cannibalism and headhunting and idealized treachery. Murder and fear of death constantly plagued Savi villages, which regularly raided one another. Richardson quickly recognized that the concept of a loving Savior who died for all was incomprehensible to the Savi: "In their eyes Judas, not Jesus, was the hero of the Gospel. Jesus was just the dupe to be laughed at." Finally, however, he discovered a redemptive analogy in the tribe's rarely employed Savi peace ritual, which involved a warring village offering a "peace child" as a guarantor of peace. The author of *Peace Child* actually witnessed such a ritual and noted that the

Savi "had found a way to prove sincerity and establish peace. . . . Among the Savi every demonstration of friendship was suspect except one. If a man would actually give his own son to his enemies, that man could be trusted!"² Richardson was able to use this analogy to point the Savi to God the Father's sacrifice of his son and thereby lead many Savi to faith in Christ.³

The growth in the United States in recent decades of Christian schools and Christian home schooling has its commendable features. However, the tendency sometimes found in such circles to raise suspicions against all expressions of culture that are not explicitly Christian can actually undermine educational excellence and witness. Not only can such suspicions thwart genuine Christian liberal arts education, seeking God's truth wherever it may be found, they also can rob those educated in Christian schools and home schools of the prospects of discovering "redemptive analogies" in American culture—or in any other culture.

Discrimination in the Positive Sense

It is critically important for any thinking Christian to develop the power of discrimination in the positive sense of the word, that is, the ability to search out grain in a field of chaff, to detect a spiritual diamond in the rough, to uncover a peace child in a cannibal culture. This means that to be Christians with our minds as well as our hearts we are obliged to garner truths from every conceivable and seemingly unlikely quarter.

For several decades now as a student of modern European and Russian history, I have been appalled by the physical suffering, the torture of mind and body, and the death perpetrated upon untold millions of people in the name of Marxism. But at the same time I should not be blinded to the fact that Karl Marx, like an Old Testament prophet, was right to rail against the exploitation of workers that attended the initiation of heavy industrialization in Europe. We should be able to learn from Marx, to discern and discriminate among his ideas, rather than equate him in simple-minded fashion with the devil incarnate.

Speaking of the Devil

Speaking of the devil, biblically based believers take seriously Christ's triple temptations in Matthew 4:1-11. Jesus was truly tempted to turn stones into bread after 40 days of fasting. Jesus was truly tempted with spiritual manipulation, as the devil proposed an angel's rescue if he would but dive off the temple in Jerusalem. And Jesus was truly tempted with earthly power as the devil promised him "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory." These were real because if the devil had not been speaking the truth in these enticements, then the temptations he placed before Christ would not have been genuine temptations. And if Christ had not been truly tempted, then the historic, biblical teaching would be called into

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question that Christ on earth was not only wholly divine, but also wholly human, facing temptations as do mere mortals. Again, the point to be underscored is that truth and insight that can direct us to Christ may be found in unlikely locations. And for Christian witness across cultures, it would appear to be an absolutely essential exercise, as the ministries of Adoniram Judson, E. Stanley Jones, and Don Richardson suggest.

A Rich Christian Heritage

One of my greatest concerns for Western missionaries serving in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union is that “redemptive analogies,” readily retrievable, are infrequently employed. Drawing straightforward spiritual and moral insights from the rich Christian heritage of these regions should be a much easier task for missionaries serving east of the old Iron Curtain than it was for Judson, Jones, and Richardson. In Eastern Europe, for example, spiritual truths may be drawn from the prolific and insightful writings of Eastern church fathers (starting with the *Philokalia*); from the mystic *hesychast* tradition embodied in the Jesus Prayer (exemplified in the anonymous *Pilgrim and Pilgrim on the Way*); from Leskov, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Solzhenitsyn; from “secular” writers with deep moral insights such as Polish novelist Czeslaw Milosz and Czech dissident dramatist-turned-president Vaclav Havel; and even from heavily censored Communist-bloc cinema.

Moral and Spiritual Reflections in Soviet Cinema

In 1987 filmmaker Elem Klimov, in *Farewell*, depicted the degradation of the environment and Soviet life in general as he dared to challenge a Siberian electrification project—this in a country whose leader, Lenin, had declared electrification and Communism synonyms. *Farewell* also more than hinted that the act of flooding the good earth and a church built on it in the name of progress was actually an act of desecration and destruction. Likewise, in 1987 Georgian filmmaker Tenghiz Abuladze managed to steer through landmines of censorship to produce *Repentance*, perhaps the most celebrated film of glasnost, which not only struck at the very heart of Stalinism, but openly challenged the entire Soviet experiment. At the same time, the film’s last line poignantly and hauntingly bemoaned the sacrifice of the sacred that consistently characterized Soviet Communism: “What good is a street if it does not lead to a church?”⁴

Andrei Rublev, The Stalker, and The Decalogue

In a way, this essay is preface for an endorsement of the work of Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky and Polish filmmaker Krzysztof Kieslowski for the insight they bring to bear on Judeo-Christian ethical themes and truths, Marxist censors notwithstanding. Admittedly, these artists produced films that average moviegoers dismiss as “highbrow”—not easy viewing by any stretch of the imagination. Nevertheless, their work can point searching audiences toward the gospel as they examine the theme of Christian sacrifice in the body of Tarkovsky’s work, especially in *Andrei Rublev* and *The Stalker*, and as they wrestle with timeless ethical dilemmas, as in Kieslowski’s *Decalogue* series.

To yield their full treasures, the works of these filmmakers may require patience, careful attention, possibly multiple viewings, and forbearance in their treatment of some subject matter. Without endorsing every turn of plot or portrayal, these filmmakers still deserve careful attention from anyone who would seek to understand East European culture and who would seek to share Christian witness in it.

What Gregory Schreck and Rodney Clapp have to offer in their accompanying articles about Andrei Tarkovsky’s uncompromising spiritual vision and Krzysztof Kieslowski’s moral insights will not readily translate into three-page tracts, four-minute testimonies, or five-minute sermonettes. However, properly digested over time, the work of these film artists can provide compelling theological insights, especially for the region’s intelligentsia—and missionaries seeking to reach them.⁵

Notes

1. Lloyd Baugh, *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1997), 94. See also Ivan Butler, *Religion in the Cinema* (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1969), 50–54.
2. *Peace Child* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1974), 206.
3. Ruth Tucker, *From Irian Jaya to Jerusalem: A Biographical History of Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1983), 481–83.
4. On *Farewell and Repentance* see Mark Elliott, “Glasnost and the Church: Is the Window Half-Opened or Half-Closed?,” *This World, A Journal of Religion and Public Life* 24 (Winter 1989), 131.
5. Helpful descriptions of the religious import of the work of Tarkovsky and Kieslowski may be found in Baugh, *Imaging the Divine*, 172–84 and 230–33.

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

Andrei Tarkovsky: The Redemptive Vision of a Soviet Filmmaker

Gregory Halvorsen Schreck

Editor's Note: Professor Schreck's critique of The Stalker by Andrei Tarkovsky will appear in a future issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

The films of the late Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky represent an exceptional Christian vision. His artistic vision was profoundly original and provocative, yet also profoundly Christian. It is impossible to separate his art from his faith. A Russian Orthodox Christian, Tarkovsky stated that his films "are one thing, the extreme manifestation of faith." At the base of his work, at the very conception of his ideas about form, lies his spirituality.

Tarkovsky's artistic sensibility necessarily runs against the market values that guide the film industry and mass culture in general. His films are highly unusual because they were entirely conceived and produced outside of a market economy. His vision began and ended with a profound sense of calling, of obedience to an inner voice that originated from his relationship to God. This sensibility stands in sharp contrast to the concerns of Hollywood, which begin and end with marketability and mass appeal. It is especially exceptional in the film industry, where the high cost of production always seems to require keeping an eye toward the public. Given this posture, even more astounding is his success. Critical recognition and myriad awards followed Tarkovsky's films as a matter of routine, despite deep opposition by the state cultural apparatus of the Soviet Union. He was able to keep working only because embarrassed censors were unable to silence an international Russian talent, who many thought was the best director since the renowned Sergei Eisenstein.

A Radical Christian Message

Tarkovsky's films offer a redemptive vision that expresses a solution to society primarily in terms of spiritual regeneration. As he wrote, "The allotted function of art is not, as is often assumed, to put across ideas, to propagate thoughts, to serve as example. The aim of art is to prepare a person for death, to plough and harrow his soul, rendering it capable of turning to good." (Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time: Reflections of the Cinema* [Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986], 43). Tarkovsky's radical Christian message offers an idea of redemption that addresses many human concerns. Moreover, he offers viewers the possibility of an inner healing that goes beyond the scope of any political theory. This notion that the artist makes a sacrifice, that he becomes a servant accountable to God and to society, is clearly expressed in Tarkovsky films, *Andrei Rublev*, *The Stalker*, and *The Sacrifice*.

Tarkovsky, a devout Christian, spent his career fighting against a Marxist state apparatus that sought to censor his work. Official objections to his films included complaints that they were elitist and too religious. A member of the Russian Orthodox Church, Tarkovsky made assessments and proposed solutions to contemporary problems that were necessarily antimaterialist in nature. He hoped for a renewed and revitalized relationship between humankind and God, one that would cause humans to hear, heed, and obey an "inner voice" that could guide them away from the values of a materialist, consumerist society.

Andrei Rublev

During the second half of the 1960s, the Kremlin began a new era of repression. Numerous films were delayed and took years to reach the screen. The most prominent "shelving" was Tarkovsky's epic *Andrei Rublev*, the story of a fifteenth-century icon painter. It was heralded as the most innovative historical film since Eisenstein's historical epics. Tarkovsky evoked the conditions of Rublev's great national painting, the Trinity Icon, a work of deep spiritual inspiration and human empathy. This was depicted against a backdrop of tremendous brutality and bloodshed. Authorities thought it too "dark" (and probably too religious) for release during the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. The film was eventually released years later and reedited to remove the most objectionable material. Even so, the film was showered with critical accolades and won the top prize at the Venice Film Festival. Soviet authorities then forbade its entry in other festivals. Eventually, it won the International Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Work in Exile

By the time Tarkovsky finished *The Stalker* in 1977 he suffered a heart attack brought on by stress, debt because of budget overruns, and restrictions placed around all his films. Tarkovsky and his wife Larissa defected to Italy in 1982. The planned departure of their son Andrei was foiled and he was made to stay in the Soviet Union. Tarkovsky spent the rest of his life trying to make the political contacts that would enable his son to emigrate and live with them. In 1985 he began production in Sweden of his final film, *The Sacrifice*. He used members of Ingmar

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Tarkovsky (cont. from page 11)

Bergman's production crew to complete the film, most notably cinematographer Sven Nykvist. The 1986 release of the film won the Special Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival. Tarkovsky, diagnosed with a brain tumor during the filming, died of cancer in Paris at the end of 1986, only weeks after his son was

released from the Soviet Union. Ironically, his death coincided with the early days of perestroika, which would have enabled him to return to Moscow to work unfettered. Tarkovsky's films had been banned in the Soviet Union since his exile in 1982. Since 1987 seminars and conferences have been regularly held in Russia to celebrate his work.

Gregory Halvorsen Schreck is associate professor of art, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

Signs and Wonderings: Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Decalogue*

Rodney Clapp

The Decalogue

In spring 2000 Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski's masterpiece *The Decalogue*, after being tangled up in rights and distribution disputes for nearly a decade, was finally released to video in North America. I have been enamored of Kieslowski's cinematic vision since the early '90s. I read hints about a series of films that surpassed everything else Kieslowski had done—a tour de force that, on top of its extraordinary qualities as film, took on the Ten Commandments. The films, premiered on Polish television in 1989, showed up at film festivals, but never played regular and ongoing runs in the U.S. Kieslowski died in 1996, unleashing a fresh round of publicity about his work, with critic after critic averring that *The Decalogue* was the crown jewel of the master's oeuvre. All I could do was wait, tormented by frustrating notes here and there on the Web about how video rights to *The Decalogue* remained stuck in an indefinite legal limbo. Then, finally, last spring . . .

The idea for Kieslowski's masterwork was not his own. It came from a friend, lawyer Krzysztof Piesiewicz, who met Kieslowski in 1982. Piesiewicz, who has described himself as "Christian rather than a Catholic" (whatever that means), said someone ought to make a series of films based on the Decalogue. Kieslowski was intrigued and eventually the two collaborated on screenplays for ten one-hour films. "Our idea," said the director, "was very simple. The Decalogue is one of the ethical foundations of today's society. Everyone is more or less familiar with the Ten Commandments, and agrees with them, but no one really observes them."

Each film features as main characters residents in the same apartment complex in Warsaw. This allows protagonists in one film to show up, occasionally and briefly, in other films. By such inconspicuous artifices, Kieslowski reminds his viewer that every life is a dramatic story, that behind the faces of such familiar strangers as postal clerks and anonymous neighbors lie "mysteries, secret zones in each individual," churning with yearnings, insecurities, and ethical quandaries.

Sin Lacking Glamour

Kieslowski, who himself professed to be an agnostic, was not interested in presenting religious object lessons or simple exemplary tales. Only a few characters are professing Christians, such as the loving Catholic aunt in *Decalogue One*; most have a remote if any sense of the living God; and others not only lie, commit adultery, steal, and kill, but struggle with incestuous feelings and voyeuristic urges. But Kieslowski's protagonists are, for the most part, not spectacular sinners. Kieslowski never glamorizes them or their actions. The illicit sex, non-graphic by contemporary standards, is desperate and anything but titillating. The violence is also not aestheticized. *Decalogue Five*, on "You shall not kill," depicts a pointlessly cruel teenager strangling and then bludgeoning a taxi driver to death, sloppily and brutally, and ends with an equally difficult scene of the youth's executionary hanging.

Nor are most characters presented with moral dilemmas in stark outlines. Kieslowski recognizes the difficulty, amid the complexities of modern, mass, technological, and bureaucratized life, of knowing when we are or are not breaking certain Commandments. *Decalogue One* (against idolatry) gives us a loving father who is a genius at computer programming. When his young son wants to go ice skating, the father plugs temperatures and body weights into his computer and calculates that it is safe for the boy to skate. He is a low-tech as well as a high-tech empiricist—and a genuinely caring and careful parent—so he also takes a stick onto the frozen lake himself, double-checking. Yet the next day his boy goes through the ice and drowns. The god of nature-subjugating science proves false. But it is impossible not to empathize with the father and, perhaps to a large degree, identify with him. At what point did his trust in technology go too far? At what point does my own?

Moral Choices with Consequences

What *The Decalogue* gives us, then, are plausible people plausibly adrift in a post-Christian and

Kieslowski's moral skeleton has a backbone. Those who make any advance on becoming better and more mature persons are those who grapple with one kind or another of repentance.

postmodern world, with their moral and spiritual lives tinted in varying shades of gray. But Kieslowski's moral skeleton has a backbone. These characters' choices have consequences (a son dies!), and those who make any advance on becoming better and more mature persons are those who grapple with one kind or another of repentance. *Decalogue Eight* (against false witness) features a university professor who lectures on ethics. One day, as she presents case studies, an American visitor offers her own case, one which, she says, has the advantage of having happened. She describes an eight-year-old Jewish girl turned away from shelter in a Polish Catholic home during World War II. The American is the Jewish girl, now grown up; the woman who turned her away is

the professor. It turns out the professor had considerable "reason" for refusing the child—she and her husband were in the underground resistance, and taking the girl might endanger their efforts to save many others. Still, the (now) old woman says, it can never be right to fail a child, no matter how principled the motivation. On this basis, the Catholic professor and the Jewish woman are reconciled.

Fifty years, and maybe more, hence, *The Decalogue* will repay careful attention. Thank God we can watch—and rewatch—it today.

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Rodney Clapp works for Brazos Press, Grand Rapids, MI, and lives in Wheaton, IL.

Reflections on Contemporary Russian Orthodoxy and Latvian Lutheranism

Paul Valliere

The challenge in Russian Orthodoxy today is the age-old religious tension of keeping the spiritual and material sides of life in the proper hierarchical relation, so that the material does not overwhelm the spiritual, nor for that matter, the other way around. For spiritual concerns can overwhelm the material side of life with pathological consequences. This, for example, is the subject of an article by a Russian Orthodox medical doctor about the biology of fasting practices, his point being that "a neophyte's zeal can threaten his health." (Mikhail Anokhin, "Kak postit'sia i kak razgovliat'sia. Vzgliad vracha," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 4 June 1999, 11.) Citing instances of people having to be taken to the hospital for resuscitation after excessive fasting, the physician calls for moderation in the practice of religion, admonishing his readers with the Russian proverb that runs, "Make a fool bow down to God in prayer, and he'll crack his head on the church floor" (*Zastav' duraka Bogu molit'sia, on i lob rasshibet*). The author explains why, according to him at least, Orthodox priests tend to be fat. The reason, ironic as it may seem, is the extensive fasting required of Orthodox clergy. The Orthodox compensate for meat and other protein-rich foods during fasts by consuming large amounts of highly soluble carbohydrates, such as starchy dishes and sweets, and so gain weight. The problem got worse, according to the author, after the introduction of the potato and sugar into the Russian diet in the 18th century; and he recommends banning the potato during fasts, as the Russian church did originally, viewing it as a *bludoliubivoe rastenie*, a "lecherous plant."

I realize this subject matter is classifiable as religious trivia, and yet there is more to be said about it than that. The fact that such an article—and I've chosen only one among many—appeared in a

mainline national newspaper, and not for the Soviet-era purpose of *oblichenie mrakobesov*, "unmasking of obscurantists," but rather to nudge Orthodox people to be sensible about the practice of their faith—this is evidence for the return of a kind of religious normalcy to Russia. Moreover, the promotion of moderation and balance in religious life is actually a very important thing in a country full of neophytes, among whom more than a few can be described as extremists and outright fanatics. There is even a new word in the Russian vocabulary today to describe this kind of Orthodox zealotry: it is called *ortodoksii*—not *pravoslavie* (normative Orthodoxy), but "orthodoxy" in a negative sense, "Orthodox fundamentalism" as we might call it.

The danger of fundamentalism is omnipresent in contemporary Russian Orthodoxy. Shifting to another sector, one can see it, for example, in the ferocious hostility toward ecumenism in the Orthodox Church today. In the last decade a great retreat from ecumenism has occurred throughout the Orthodox world. Two national churches—the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church—have formally terminated their membership in the World Council of Churches and the Russian Orthodox Church has suspended active participation in that body, while not actually formalizing its withdrawal. The Moscow Patriarchate's refusal to embrace Pope John II's much-reiterated request to visit Russia is another case in point. And even a notorious Orthodox book-burning in Ekaterinburg in 1998 is part of this story because one of the main charges in the neo-traditionalist brief against Fathers Alexander Schmemmann, John Meyendorff, and Alexander Men, whose writings were burned, was that these men

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promoted the worldwide ecumenical movement (which of course they did). Father John, indeed, was for a number of years the chairman of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, arguably the most substantive office in that organization.

Let it not be thought, however, that the wave of anti-ecumenism betokens unity within the Orthodox world. On the contrary, the Orthodox churches are more afflicted by schisms and jurisdictional disputes today than they have been in many years. The worst of these situations on the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church is in Ukraine, where no fewer than three church organizations, each with its own hierarchy, dioceses, and parish network, claim to be the legitimate Orthodox church in that country. And this tally does not include the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, also a church of the Eastern Rite, which has a huge following in Ukraine. The wrangling among these groups is bitter and occasionally violent. Thus, Pan-Orthodox unity must be put on the list of challenges of the spirit not likely to be surmounted any time soon. (Editor's Note: See also Janice Broun, "Divisions in Eastern Orthodoxy Today" and "Jurisdictional Conflicts Among Orthodox and Eastern-Rite Catholics in Russia and Ukraine," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 5 [Spring 1997], 1-3, and [Summer 1997], 7-9.)

One of the unintended but inevitable consequences of religious rivalries is the opportunity which these afford for state intervention in religious affairs. Obviously, if the supposed bearers of the ministry of the Prince of Peace are exchanging blows in the street, or for that matter in their churches, civil authorities cannot wait until a Pan-Orthodox Council reconciles these differences some time in the 21st century. And, of course, authorities are usually eager enough to get involved in any case because of the considerable political advantages to be reaped from collaboration with religious forces in the post-Soviet era.

The last challenge of the spirit is the formidable task of religious education and spiritual formation in the post-Soviet era, the challenge that Patriarch Aleksy II already in 1989 described as "the second great catechization of Russia," second to the original Christianization of the Russian people in the Middle Ages. This

challenge, namely the inculcation of basic religious values and a theological worldview, seems to many people both in and outside of the region to be even more daunting than it was ten years ago. This is because the vacuum created by Soviet-era atheism is being filled more often by the nihilism of the post-Soviet kleptocracies than by Christian or other religious values; and also, let it be admitted, by modern secular consumerist civilization. All responsible religious leaders in the region understand their communities have a very long way to go on this front, even on such a basic level as the preparation of clergy, never mind the much more daunting challenge of mass religious education.

Nevertheless, unrelieved pessimism about this task is not really justified, for many creative experiments are underway. Take, for example, contemporary Latvian Christianity. In recent years the eminent young Lutheran pastor of the Martin Luther Church in central Riga, the Rev. Juris Rubenis, and his Roman Catholic artist friend, Maris Subacs, have collaborated on a series of five short books of religious instruction that have captured the imagination of a sizable audience, even making it onto the bestseller lists published by the leading book review in Latvia. (Editor's Note: See also Juris Rubenis, "Rebirth and Renewal in the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 5 [Fall 1997], 9-10.) One of the five, entitled *God is Here: A First Look at Christianity* (Riga: Azaizgne ABC, 1997) is a volume of short essays on theological topics in non-technical language and with whimsical illustrations. The other four books are collections of original parables, proverbs, and brief morality tales. The main concern of Rubenis and Subacs is to make the Christian gospel intriguing to a highly secularized, humanistically inclined audience. They do not do this by attacking secularism or humanism with the club of tradition or divine dogmas, but by bringing Christianity down to earth, by providing a basis for the humanity of the gospel, and by appealing to people's philosophical curiosity. And they do this with a great deal of charm and humor. The fact that author and artist bridge the divide between the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches in Latvia is also testimony to the humaneness of their approach.

Paul Valliere is McGregor Professor in the Humanities in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN.

RESOURCES

Mirga, Andrzej. *Roma and the Law: Demythologizing the Gypsy Criminality Stereotype*. Princeton, NJ: Project on Ethnic Relations, 2000. This is the eleventh report on European Roma (Gypsies) published by the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) since 1992. For a gratis copy contact PER, 15 Chambers St., Princeton, NJ 08542-3707; tel.: 609-683-5666; fax: 609-683-5888; E-mail: ethnic@com-puserve.com; Web site: <http://www.netcom.com/~ethnic/per.html>.



Cynthia R. Nielsen completed an M.A. thesis in 1999 in missions entitled "A Look to the East: An Examination of Eastern Orthodoxy in Light of Essential Biblical Doctrine" at Tyndale Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX. To obtain a copy, contact the author at Kristinichka@aol.com

"Developing Rural Life and Church Planting," a pilot project proposal to help those planning to minister in rural areas of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe, is available at no charge. To obtain a copy, contact Ardo Parna at ardo.parna@mail.ee..



The first issue of the *Journal of European Baptist Studies* (September 2000) includes articles on "Hungarian Baptist Beginnings" by Rev. Istvan Gergely and "East and West: A Theological Conversation" by Dr. Parush R. Parushev. Annual subscriptions for three issues per year are \$10 in Europe and \$15 in the U.S. The *Journal* is published by the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Nad Habrovkou 3, Jenerálka CZ-164 00 Prague 6, Czech Republic; tel.: 420-2-35-35-39-51; fax: 420-2-35-35-39-57; E-mail: denise@ibts.cz. To submit articles contact Dr. Ian M. Randall, IBTS academic dean, at randall@ibts.cz. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters in response to Anne-Marie Kool, "Are Western Ministries Serious about Partnership with Hungary's Historic Churches?"

I don't know if Hungarian churches need to repent, but most American churches need to. It is hard to believe anyone would go to Hungary without making reference to existing churches, or presume to be planting churches where no one else allegedly had planted them before.

John M. Lindner, Editor
Christian Mission
Christian Aid Mission
Charlottesville, VA

[Dr. Anne Marie Kool's editorial] offers insight into an area I have been concerned with—working with established churches in Eastern Europe who received the gospel centuries ago. The challenge appears to be integrating the old and new streams of Christianity—maybe love and compassion will go a long way toward arranging it.

Jack Wallace
Mir Children's Foundation

Letter in response to Mark Elliott's editorial, "I Will Not Leave You as Orphans"

Sorry—please forgive me, but I believe ecumenism is wrong!

In Christ,
Nikolaj <Pravoslavie@mail.ru>

Letter in response to "The Role of Luck," Sharyl Corrado

I read your editorial in EWCMR 8.1 with great interest. We are feeling acutely the struggle to balance teaching responsibilities with the need to build a solid foundation for living here. We are also homeschooling our three children and struggling with helping them fit in Ukraine. You are right in saying that these other responsibilities severely hamper our freedom to learn Russian. Your words spoke immediately to me, encouraging me to not give up in pursuing this elusive language. My wife is tired and feeling like she wants to give up studying Russian "just for now, so I can get some other things done." I will show her what you wrote. Thank you for your word of encouragement.

Brian Jones
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FRANKLY SPEAKING: ORTHODOX INCOME

(cont. from page 16)

Yuri Luzhkov); the second subgroup donates out of gratitude for discounts or profitable contracts through the church; and the third subgroup gives sincerely in accordance with the blessing of its spiritual fathers. Overall, today this group is the Moscow Patriarchate's main source of income.

6. Economic Grants from [Ecclesiastical] Organizations. The problem of relations with non-Orthodox churches only in part belongs to theological dialogue. Grants from various charitable organizations and funds (mostly Roman Catholic and Lutheran) were significant factors in Church economics in the first half of the 1990s. The Episcopal Church of America supported thousands of Orthodox initiatives. These sums for the most part were given in cash and were not subject to any formal accounting procedures.² In the second half of the 1990s this "source of income" yielded its leading role to "donations from business and private individuals."

7. Commercial Projects of Priests and Bishops (church-related and private). Here the largest undertakings are the art and production enterprise of Sofrino, the Danilovsky Hotel, and the Sretensky Monastery Publishing House with its many related firms.

8. Traveling Expositions of Relics and Other Sacred Items. Despite its "exoticness," this traditional source of income for the Church has brought in serious profits. This year the relics of the great Martyr Panteleimon visited Kyiv, St. Petersburg, and Moscow from the Russian Monastery on Mt. Athos. How much money was collected in connection with this event? We don't know, just as we don't know what this money was spent on. For comparative purposes, we can cite figures from a report to the Patriarch by the Ekaterinburg clergy in 1998. During the visit of the miraculous Chimeev Icon of the Mother of God to Ekaterinburg, over the course of a month \$100,000 dollars was collected.

9. The National Government. In addition to the above, there remain unknown direct and indirect contributions from the federal budget, which finance programs of the Moscow Patriarchate. The president and heads of state were led by simple logic: the Church is a large structure and the state should help her leadership to politically and economically protect her status. Based on such reasoning, the Patriarchate was offered a huge quota from oil exports in 1994. (Editor's Note: See "Orthodoxy, Oil, Tobacco, and Wine: Do They Mix?" in the East-West Church & Ministry Report 5 [Winter 1997], 7.) It is possible that it was these free funds that allowed the Patriarch to cover the budget deficit for five to six years.

Notes

1. "The introduction of prices for *treby*, which has created certain problems for parishioners of modest means, has led to not a few reprimands. It is necessary to work towards allowing parishioners' sacrifices to be deeply voluntary and not perceived as a 'tax' for 'ritual service' (from the Report of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia at the Jubilee Episcopal Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, 13–16 August 2000)."
2. Among the largest ecumenical projects, it is worth mentioning the fund of the Patriarchal publishing center at Holy Trinity Lavra in Sergiev-Posad, to which Western sponsors gave about one million dollars.

Sergei Chapnin is editor-in-chief of the Internet magazine Sobornost.

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The Income of the Russian Orthodox Church

Sergei Chapnin

Today it is practically impossible to construct a general picture of Church economics.

Money Not Monitored

What do we know about the financial activity of the [Orthodox] Church? In the 1990s, the answer to this question was clear. Around the country, thousands of churches and hundreds of monasteries were rebuilt, seminaries and religious schools were opened, charitable organizations were founded. In a word, it was clear what the Church was spending her money on. Mass media regularly reported about who was sponsoring the rebuilding of which church. Tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars were spent restoring churches and monasteries. How effectively were these resources used? Today it is extremely difficult to assess. No one expected a detailed financial accounting from priests and bishops. Sponsors (who were generally relatively far from the Church) were satisfied with a thank-you note, and sometimes just seeing the gold onion domes and new walls of a church was enough to justify the money that was spent.

The clergy and hierarchy, who were in the "Babylon captivity" of having to deal with huge amounts of management issues, gave practically no thought to evaluating the effectiveness of this use of the Church's resources. There was no one to plan the financial-management activity on such a large scale. As a result, the Patriarch's financial account-giving at bishops' councils was limited to "percentage presentation." No real numbers were given. Today it is practically impossible to construct a general picture of Church economics. It is not coincidental that in the 1990s not one document on this topic was published.

How Does the Church Earn Money?

1. **The Cup.** This is direct donation from parishioners and all who pray in a particular church. After the economic shake-ups of the 1990s, these donations comprise only a small part of the Church (predominantly parish) budget, but like the widow's mite, they are the most valuable, because these donations are truly from the heart.

2. **Candles and Zapiski** (prayer lists [invoked] during Divine Liturgy and *molebens* [public prayers]) are the most commercial and almost the most significant part of income. In many parishes and dioceses it gives up to 50 percent of income. In essence, buying candles for a price significantly higher than their basic cost is also a donation to the church. However, candles sold to visitors—to those who simply stop by the church to light a few more candles in front of icons and then leave—make up the lion's share of sales. Donations made in order to "buy out" of a true spiritual life may be very significant, especially in large cities. This is its own form of new paganism, subconscious magic, based on the principle of "ty-mne, ya-tebe" (if you do something for me, then I'll do something for you). Despite the ambiguity of this situation, the Church relates to what is happening rather calmly, keeping in mind first of all its economic benefits. "The *Zapiski* Cult" is one of the characteristic traits of modern Russian Orthodoxy.

3. **Treby** (services performed by request). Here we are speaking about serving *molebens*; baptisms; funerals; blessings of apartments, cars, and offices; anointing; communing parishioners at home . . . in a word, "private services." Providing such services is becoming a significant source of income, especially in cities. The Patriarch spoke about this at the General Council: "We must admit that there are clergy for whom profit is more important than either their pastoral responsibility or concern for their moral reputation. Some clergy, spending most of their time outside of their parishes and even outside the diocese, live in large cities, serving *treby* on their own, and sometimes even advertising this service."¹ *Treby* are more and more becoming the main source of a priest's income, more than 3-4 times his modest income.

4. **Rental Properties.** This source of income plays an important role in big cities, most of all in Moscow, where a series of buildings in the center of town have been given to the Moscow Patriarchate.

5. **Russian Sponsors.** We can divide this group into three subgroups: political, economic, and "spiritual children." The first subgroup donates because of political considerations (Moscow Mayor

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