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Bishop Borys Gudziak of the Ukrainian Catholic University

The Ukrainian Catholic University

by Robert Brinkley

This talk was given at the Keston AGM on 7 November 2015 by Robert Brinkley, a member of Keston's Council of Management and a former British Ambassador to Ukraine.

Since 2013 I have been a member of the Ukrainian Catholic University's (UCU) governing body, the Senate, which means that – at least at UCU – I can answer to the title 'Senator'! I am proud to be associated with and to represent this dynamic young institution, which is the only Catholic university on the territory of the former Soviet Union, indeed between Poland and Japan. When I became British Ambassador to Ukraine in 2002, I soon got to know UCU. The then Rector, Fr Borys Gudzi-

Also in this issue:

Anniversary of Fr Men's Murder . . . *p.13*
Musicians & Religion Persecuted . . *p.18*
Nursing in Lithuania p.25
My Week in Ukraine p.33
Catholic-Orthodox Relations *p.37*
Home News p.41

ak (now a bishop), showed me around the university building in Lviv. On my first visit I was particularly struck by the little one-room museum commemorating the martyrs of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the 20th century. Items like a suitcase with a false bottom to hide sacred vessels and vestments reminded me of similar things I had seen as a boy at Stonyhurst in the collection of artefacts from the underground English Catholics of the 16th century. But at UCU I came face to face with much more recent history, still within living memory of people who had grown up in the underground church.

In this talk I shall first set the context by sketching the history of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Then I will trace the development of UCU within that context, before I describe UCU as it is today and its vision for the future.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

For this first, historical, part of my talk, I have drawn on the work of Dr Oleh Turij, now a Vice-Rector at UCU.

First, a word about terminology. Ukrainian Catholics of the Eastern rite call their church the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. You may be more familiar with the term 'Uniate'. This has a negative connotation for modern Greek Catholics, rather as the term 'Papist' has for the Catholic Church as a whole. As I will explain, the Union of Brest of 1596, which the hierarchy of the Kyivan Metropolia established with the See of Rome, is only a part of the identity of Catholics of the Eastern rite. But centuries of Russian imperial repression of the Uniates, followed by decades of Soviet indoctrination and propaganda, have given this term a pejorative nuance.

The Christian heritage is dominant in the Ukrainian religious tradition. It has a documented history of more than one thousand years. In 988 Prince Volodymyr the Great – whose statue can be seen in London opposite Holland Park tube station – established Christianity in its Eastern (Byzantine-Slavic) rite as the state religion of Kyivan Rus'. The Kyivan Metropolitanate was created as a single hierarchical structure for the Eastern Slavs. This Baptism of Rus' occurred before the Great Schism of 1054 that divided the Christian East and West. It also came over 150 years before Moscow was founded, in 1147. The Rus' church was an integral part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and followed the traditions of the Byzantine East, even though it remained in full communion with the Latin West. Even after the Schism of 1054, the Kyivan Metropolitanate remained open to mutual relations with its Western neighbours and seldom entered directly into the disputes between Constantinople and Rome.

It is true that the arguments between the Christian East and West were keenly felt in the Ukrainian lands from the very beginnings of its Christianisation. This, however, was much more evident after the lands of the former Kyivan Rus' lost their national independence and most of its territory passed under the domination of the neighbouring nations of Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. The majority of the ruling élite in these countries was Roman (Latin) Catholic and the faithful of the Eastern rite suffered discrimination. With the support of the civil authorities Latin parallel hierarchical struc-

tures arose in the 14th century alongside the ancient episcopacy of the Kyivan Metropolitanate. This spread the Latin influence and catholicised and polonised portions of the local population.

Though geopolitical conditions discouraged it, the Rus' hierarchy made serious efforts at restoring Christian unity. Representatives from Rus' took part in the Western councils in Lyon (1245) and Constance (1418), and the Union of Florence (1439) was positively received in the Ukrainian and Belarussian lands. Kyivan Metropolitan Isidore was himself one of the creators of this union. Political struggles and religious prejudice, however, prevented the desired union from occurring.

Refusal to accept the Union of Florence, together with other factors, led the Church of Moscow to separate from the ancient Kyivan Metropolitanate, and in 1448 it announced its autocephaly (self-governing status). In 1589, taking advantage of the subjugation of Greek Orthodoxy to Turkish domination, the Church of Moscow became a Patriarchate. This supported the plans of Moscow's secular leaders for political rule over the lands of the ancient Kyivan state and also advanced its claims to the leading role as the 'Third Rome' in the Christian world.

The episcopate of the Kyivan Metropolitanate at the end of the 16th century, however, had a very different orientation. Its synod decided to pass under the jurisdiction of the See of Rome, provided that its traditional Eastern rite was preserved and its own ecclesial and ethnic-cultural existence was guaranteed. This came about because of the bishops' desire to bring the church out of a serious internal crisis and because of their concern about the aggressive challenges of the Protestant Reformation and Post-Tridentine Catholicism (the Counter-Reformation) in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

This model of church reunion was confirmed at the Council of Brest in 1596 – the beginning of the institutional existence of the church reunited with Rome and known as Uniate or Greek Catholic. Not all the hierarchs and faithful of the Kyivan Metropolitanate supported this; some were dissatisfied with the Roman vision of union and insisted on maintaining canonical dependence on the Patriarchate of Constantinople. They demanded the ordination of a parallel hierarchy (1620) and its official recognition by the secular authorities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1632). The result was the confessional division of the Rus' Church into two jurisdictions.

Throughout the following centuries bitter polemics took place, and continue to this day, between supporters and opponents of the Union of Brest. Socio-economic, ethno-cultural and national-political conflicts manifested themselves in the form of religious disputes. As a result, in 1654 the central and eastern regions of Ukraine passed under 'the high hand of the ruler of Moscow, which had a single faith'. The Orthodox Kyivan Metropolia was soon under the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate (1686). From this time on, the Russian civil and ecclesiastical authorities used all their efforts to root out any distinctive features of the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition, to unify the religious life of the faithful and to transform the Church

itself into an instrument for russifying the Ukrainians.

Increasingly, these features of the state and church politics of Russia were evident in dealings with the united (Uniate) Church. Each time the Tsarist Empire extended its power in the adjacent Ukrainian land, it began repressions against the Uniates and forced their conversion to Russian Orthodoxy (1772, 1795, 1839 and 1876). The close connections of the Russian Orthodox Church with the imperial power and Great Russian national interests led to dissatisfaction among the Orthodox clergy and laity of Ukraine and the birth of Ukrainophile movements at the end of the 19th century.

Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky

After the 1917 revolution a movement arose in favour of autocephaly for Ukrainian Orthodoxy. But attempts to proclaim autocephaly in the 1920s and 1940s were severely opposed by the Moscow Patriarchate and repressed by the Soviet authorities.

The Western section of Ukraine, however, remained a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and with the support of the civil authorities by the end of the 18th century the Church united with Rome encompassed all the faithful of the Eastern rite. Though the Polish secular and ecclesiastical élite attempted to transform the church union into an instrument for full latinisation, the Church played the leading role in preserving the cultural and religious independence of the Ukrainian population.

When the Western Ukrainian lands passed under Austrian rule, the Greek Catholic hierarchy received the support and the protection of the imperial government. It was under this Habsburg rule that the former Uniates began to be officially called Greek Catholics. The civil authorities encouraged the formation of an ecclesiastical administrative structure for the Greek Catholics. In 1771 the independence of the Mukachiv eparchy in Transcarpathia was declared and in 1807 the Metropolitanate of Galicia in Western Ukraine was restored.

The educational reforms of the Habsburg rulers Maria-Teresa and Joseph II gave Ukrainians access to education in their native language. Greek Catholics were given equal legal status with the faithful of the Latin rite and their spiritual leaders were provided with a minimal material subsistence. This led to the close integration of the Greek Catholic Church with the national political structure and social life, and the active participation of the clergy in the Ukrainian national movement.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Greek Catholic Church in Galicia was led by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky from 1901 to 1944. He was born 150 years ago. His spiritual leadership coin-

cided with two world wars and seven changes of political regime (Austrian, Russian, Austrian again, Ukrainian, Polish, Soviet, Nazi and Soviet again). Nevertheless his tireless pastoral work, his concern for education and culture, his defence of the national and social rights of his people, his charitable activities and his ecumenical efforts made Sheptytsky the undisputed leader and moral authority of Ukrainian society. The Church itself became an influential social institution in Western Ukraine.

Under Soviet rule, the premeditated persecution of religion and the propagation of atheism became an integral part of the bloody tragedy in Ukraine. Eager to solidify its totalitarian rule, the Communist regime could not tolerate the existence of a structure that proclaimed other values. The war on religion became the government ideology. Church buildings were ruined, burnt down and profaned. Priests and faithful, Orthodox, Catholic and representatives of other denominations and religions were shot or arrested and deported to the Siberian Gulag. Churches and other religious communities were persecuted or driven underground, like the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church at the beginning of the 1930s and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1946 in Galicia and in 1949 in Transcarpathia.

Having largely decapitated the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church through murders and deportations, in 1946 the Soviet authorities arranged for a fake 'synod' to be held in Lviv, which declared that after 350 years the Union of Brest was revoked and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church would 're-join' the Russian Orthodox Church.

This reflected another notable aspect of Soviet religious policies. After Stalin made a corrective manoeuvre during World War II, the legally functioning church structures became instruments used to further the political goals of the atheist regime. A special place was reserved for the Russian Orthodox Church. Having achieved a *modus vivendi* with the Communist authorities, the Russian Orthodox Church had certain advantages. The attempts at autocephaly in Ukraine were paralysed, the Russian Orthodox Church extended its canonical territory and increased the number of its churches and faithful at the expense of the liquidated Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. It also brought some Orthodox dioceses and churches under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate that had never before belonged to it. The influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in world Orthodoxy and in the Christian Oikumene in general was strengthened.

With the crisis of Soviet power and Gorbachev's *perestroika* at the end of the 1980s, however, all these 'advantages' showed their other side. The Russian Orthodox Church was discredited in the eyes of a portion of its clergy and faithful and it became the object of criticism by dissidents and the national-democratic movement. With the emergence of the formerly banned Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from the underground and the creation of communities of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1989, the Russian Orthodox Church began to lose its former monolithic status. At the same time the unprecedented rise in religiosity in the new conditions of freedom was accompanied by increasingly bitter conflicts in Ukraine, which seriously complicated

international ecumenical relations. The declaration of Ukrainian independence in 1991 created a new national-political context for the activities of all the churches in this territory.

Despite the fact that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was officially forbidden after the Second World War and harshly persecuted, it preserved its hierarchical structures in the underground and diaspora. For over 40 years it was the largest banned religious community in the world. In December 1989 it requested official legalisation. In spring 1991 Cardinal Lubachivsky, then the head of the Church, returned from exile to his see in Lviv.

Today the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is the largest of the Eastern rite Catholic churches. Bishop Borys Gudziak, of the Eparchy of Volodymyr the Great for Ukrainian Catholics in France, Benelux and Switzerland, said recently:

> 'when our church came out of the underground in 1990 [it] had been decimated by decades of intense Soviet persecution. The ranks of our clergy had been reduced to only 300, mostly elderly priests with an average age of 75. Today, our church in Ukraine … has grown dramatically, with more than 3,000 priests with an average age of 38. Our seminaries are producing hundreds of new priests every year and vocations are strong. This year, for instance, at the Holy Spirit Seminary adjacent to the Ukrainian Catholic University, there are 179 seminarians.'

Indeed, when the Prior of Ampleforth Abbey visited that Seminary in 2014, he could hardly believe the numbers who were training to become priests. Today the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has four to five million faithful and nearly 4,000 parishes.

Lviv is the only Christian place I have been where Divine Liturgy is broadcast over loudspeakers to the overflow of faithful standing outside the church in all weathers. The Muslim world does not have a monopoly on the use of loudspeakers to amplify religious observance!

Since Ukrainian independence the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has again strongly promoted the revival of Ukrainian national culture and language. Pro-Western and pro-European, as a result of its experience in emigration as well as underground, it actively supported the Orange and Euromaidan revolutions, ensuring regular prayers and liturgies on the Maidan and working with other churches, except for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). It coined the name 'revolution of dignity' for the 2013-2014 uprising, articulating the moral aspect of the protest against Yanukovych's corrupt and brutal regime.

History of UCU

Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky took the first step towards creating a Ukrainian Catholic University when he founded the Lviv Theological Academy in 1928. The first rector was Fr Josyf Slipyj. The Soviet authorities closed the Academy in 1944, but its alumni formed the backbone of the underground Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church during the Communist persecution.

In 1939 Sheptytsky had ordained Slipyj as Archbishop, with the right to succeed him as head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. This was done in secret because of the Soviet presence in Galicia following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Sheptytsky died in

Cardinal Josyf Slipyj

1944 and Slipyj succeeded him. In 1945 Slipyj was arrested, with the other Ukrainian Greek Catholic bishops. He was deported to Siberia, where he spent 18 years in the Gulag and his health deteriorated.

In 1963 the Soviet government finally allowed Slipyj to go into exile, probably believing that he was weakened and would not live long. In fact he lived until 1984, and died at the age of 92. In 1963, the year he was freed, he attended the Second Vatican Council and founded the Ukrainian Catholic University in Rome. This offered a small seminary programme and summer schools for students from the Ukrainian diaspora. In the 1960s and 1970s Slipyj developed international branches of the university in Europe and the Americas, including what is now the Ukrainian Institute in Holland Park in London. Slipyj was made a Cardinal, and his life was the inspiration for Morris West's 1963 novel *The Shoes of the Fisherman* about a Ukrainian who becomes Pope.

In 1992, soon after the declaration of Ukrainian independence, faculty and alumni of the university in Rome began planning the revival of the Lviv Theological Academy. This is the moment to introduce the third significant figure in the history of UCU – Borys Gudziak. Born into a Ukrainian-American family in Syracuse, New York, in 1960, he studied theology in Rome in the early 1980s and got to know Josyf Slipyj. In 1993 Fr Gudziak, by now in Lviv, was appointed Chairman of the Commission for the Revival of the Lviv Theological Academy. He was Vice-Rector from 1995 to 2000, Rector from 2000 to 2001, then Rector of UCU until 2013 when he was appointed a bishop and became President of UCU. He still chairs the UCU Senate, but is no longer in day to day charge of the University.

So the Academy was re-established in 1994, with a broad student body of male and female lay people and religious, as well as seminarians. In addition to the core subjects of philosophy and theology, the curriculum put an emphasis on a broad classical education with attention to language learning and the use of primary sources. In 1995 the first summer schools in English and theology began. In 1998 the theological programme of the Academy received recognition from the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic

Education and in 1999 the first class graduated.

In June 2001, during his visit to Ukraine, Pope St John Paul II blessed the corner stone of UCU's new building. The following year, the university was ceremonially inaugurated as the first Catholic university on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Also in 2002, the university was legally registered in Ukraine and received recognition for its undergraduate history programme from the Ministry of Education.

The UCU press, founded in 2003, has earned respect in Ukrainian academic circles for publishing original scholarly works and Ukrainian translations of important Western works in the fields of philosophy, theology, humanities and the social sciences.

Since Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004, UCU has been increasingly involved with important social issues such as the reform of education in Ukraine, freedom of speech and ethical issues. UCU enabled thousands of young people and students to come to Lviv from Eastern Ukraine during Christmas 2005 and 2006. In 2006 Ukraine's Ministry of Education finally accredited UCU's theology programme. That summer UCU was at last able to award government-recognised degrees in theology to its graduates. (In the Soviet Union theology was not recognised as an academic subject, and it took some years to overcome this legacy.) The university also had its first history graduates in summer 2006. That autumn UCU started a Bachelor's degree programme in social pedagogy, giving a Christian emphasis to social work.

In 2007 the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church decided to hold an annual church collection for UCU. Apart from the financial benefits, this helped to create a sense of participation in the 'UCU project' for a larger church community.

Students and staff from UCU were active in the Revolution of Dignity from November 2013 to February 2014. Bohdan Solchanyk, a 29 year old UCU history lecturer, was one of the unarmed demonstrators killed by government snipers on 20 February 2014, the last day of the protests. At that time I was in Lviv for an UCU Senate meeting, and I attended the very moving Panakhyda (service of mourning) for him in one of the city's main churches. It was packed, with the congregation overflowing onto the street.

Since the Euromaidan UCU has again organised many visits to Lviv by young people from Eastern and Southern Ukraine. Its project 'From East to West' brought almost 2,000 students from those regions to spend a weekend in Lviv to familiarise themselves with its culture and people, and to discuss the future of Ukraine.

The development of UCU in Lviv can be summed up in three phases:

Phase 1: 1992-2002

- Renewal of the Lviv Theological Academy
- Establishing identity and values
- Return of theology to Ukraine
- Creation of research institutes
- Laying the foundations of international cooperation

- Forming the team
- The building on Sventsitskoho Street
- Creation of the Ukrainian Catholic Foundation in North America

Phase 2: 2002-2008

- The Lviv Theological Academy is transformed into UCU
- Opening of the humanitarian faculty with various teaching programmes
- State recognition of theology in Ukraine
- New building for the Philosophy and Theology Faculty on Khutorivka Street
- Opening of the Emmaus Centre for the support of people with special needs

Phase 3: 2008-2015

- Start of building of new campus
- Development of professional education
- Certificate programmes (in addition to existing bachelor's and master's degree programmes)
- Vatican accreditation of the theological faculty
- Research programme on 'Kyivan Christianity'
- Renewal of activity of UCU affiliates in Rome, London and Buenos Aires
- Broadening the geography from which students come
- Global (fund-raising) campaign for the development of UCU

UCU today and in future

UCU is all that its name suggests – Ukrainian, Catholic and a university. It describes its mission like this:

> *The Ukrainian Catholic University is an open academic community living the Eastern Christian tradition and forming leaders to serve with professional excellence in Ukraine and internationally – for the glory of God, the common good and the dignity of the human person.*

UCU is open to representatives of all churches and confessions. Students and lecturers include Greek Catholics, Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jews. Over 2,000 students are enrolled in UCU's educational programmes. Its library houses the largest collection of theological literature in Ukraine.

A new campus is being built, overlooking Lviv's Stryisky Park. In 2012 the Collegium opened. This is not simply a hostel or hall of residence but a community of students, staff and visitors, as well as home to Redemptorist sisters and a small Emmaus community for disabled residents. Liturgy and prayers are said every day in the chapel. Bishop Borys often talks of two important points of reference for UCU: the martyrs and the marginalised. He describes the residents with learning disabilities as 'our professors of human relations'. The American author George Weigel, in his book *Evangelical Catholicism*, names UCU as an

UCU's new campus by Stryisky Park

example of a flourishing campus ministry and of missionary Catholicism in action.

In 2013 a multi-purpose academic building was opened, which now houses the Humanities Department (history students in particular), alongside the Lviv Business School, the Institute of Leadership and Management – which provides training for non-governmental organisations, the School of Bioethics and the School of Ukrainian Language and Culture. It also contains a canteen and café which have become popular with visitors from outside, as well as members of the UCU community.

At the heart of the new campus is the Church of St Sophia. The church building is almost complete and a competition is under way for the interior decoration. Next to the church, work has started on building the new library and information centre.

You may be wondering how all this is financed. UCU receives no funding from the government of Ukraine – which has given it valuable independence in the face of government pressures over the years. It operates thanks to the support of benefactors. The University works hard to raise funds from a range of donor organisations and private philanthropists. Just over a third of its income comes from Ukrainian Catholic Educational Foundations in the United States and Canada, another third from European foundations, about a tenth from donors in Ukraine and the remainder from tuition fees and payment for services. The cost of educating a student for one academic year at UCU is about £2,100. But tuition fees are set at only about a quarter of this, to enable students of all backgrounds to attend UCU.

UCU has developed a strategy with its vision for the next five years:

2015-2020

- Opening of new academic programmes to serve society
- Development of teaching and research in theology
- Doctorate school
- Innovations in teaching approaches
- UCU centre in Kyiv
- Creation of a student careers centre
- Creation of an alumni association
- Attracting state financing.

UCU's vision for 2020

This is summed up in three words: witness, service and association. It envisages:

- A university, whose identity as a Ukrainian, Catholic and academic environment is guaranteed through spiritual formation, the synergy of faith and reason and the daily practice of association, service and witness of its lecturers, staff, students and alumni in various spheres of social and church life in Ukraine and the world.
- A university with a high corporate culture: the absence of corruption; academic pastoral work, not only for internal needs, but also external; service to the poor and inclusion of the marginalised in the life of society; hospitality and an atmosphere of communication; an orientation towards beauty in human relations, teaching programmes and the results of work in all areas; a creative approach in management, whose basic characteristics are responsibility, effectiveness, transparency, collegiality and lack of bureaucracy.
- A financially stable university, for which the proportion of non-fundraising income for operational activity is at least 50%.
- A modern university with national and internationally competitive status within its (subject) profile, with research schools and the status of a leader in online teaching and the use of information technologies in the teaching process.
- A university with a broad academic menu and teaching programmes which are topical (responding to 'the signs of the time'), unique (from the aspect of differentiation) and innovative (moving in the direction of a classical university).
- A university in which the teaching process is oriented towards knowledge, habits and values and guarantees a high 'added value' of teaching for the student on the programme; teaching programmes built on the principle '*ad fontes*' (using the sources), which have a mandatory theological and humanitarian core and systematic approaches foreseeing the study of the English language (to B2 level) and the education of leaders.
- A university in which the professor is a personality, a first-class expert at an international level in his or her field, capable of leading his or her own academic school, of securing grant-funded projects, of being an authoritative expert for wider society, and of taking an active part in the academic societies of Lviv, Ukraine and the world.
- A university which attracts the best students and finds the best lecturers and workers for responsible positions with a worthy salary.
- A university which cooperates closely with employers to form in students the habits necessary for the world of work in various spheres of social, political and economic life.

- A university with a modern campus, which meets the needs of students for accommodation and teaching resources, and makes UCU a leader in campus life.

Conclusion

The struggle continues in Ukraine between the old and the new: between the corrupt, authoritarian and amoral legacy of the Soviet Union and the transparent, accountable ways of free societies, which respect human dignity. For Ukraine today those two poles are exemplified by Russia on the one hand and the European Union on the other. Ukraine has made much progress, but the struggle is far from over. UCU has no doubt where it stands in this struggle. Indeed it is recognised on all sides as a protagonist for a modern Ukraine, freeing itself of corruption. It sets high moral as well as academic standards.

The Yanukovych government regarded UCU as a foe. The Minister of Education dragged his feet on accreditation of UCU's degree courses and other issues. Bishop Borys Gudziak was put under pressure when a member of his family in Ukraine was harassed. The Security Service of Ukraine (the SBU) came round to give him a warning, which he parried by informing the international media. It was not an easy time. Since last year's Euromaidan revolution the situation in Ukraine and the environment for UCU has been transformed. Parliament has adopted a new higher education act, giving more freedoms to private universities. UCU has a high reputation with the new authorities and among Ukraine's active civil society. UCU's leaders, including Bishop Borys Gudziak and Vice-Rector Myroslav Marynovych, who was imprisoned by the Soviet authorities for standing up for human rights, are widely regarded as moral authorities for the whole Ukrainian nation. UCU now has friends and alumni in high places. The Finance Minister, Natalie Jaresko, was a UCU Senator. The previous Economy Minister, Pavlo Sheremeta, has returned to UCU to run a new Master's course in public administration.

UCU is still a young, small and growing university, based in Lviv rather than Kyiv. It has to work hard to raise sufficient funds, to broaden its student base, which is mostly from Western Ukraine, and to reinforce academic standards and the teaching of English and other foreign languages. It must be careful not to take on too much. But these are the problems of growth and success. UCU is right to have high ambitions, and in only 20 years it has made remarkable progress.

I am fortunate and proud to be associated with UCU, and glad of this chance to tell you about it. If any of you have an opportunity to visit Lviv, I encourage you to go and see UCU for yourself.

Robert Brinkley *served as a British diplomat for 34 years. After two postings in Moscow, both during the Soviet period and following the fall of Communism, he served as British Ambassador to Ukraine, 2002-2006. Following that posting, he served as High Commissioner to Pakistan, 2006-2009. Since leaving government service in 2011, Robert Brinkley has taken on chairing the BEARR Trust as well as the steering committee of the Chatham House Ukraine Forum.*

Anniversary of Fr Alexander Men's Murder Memorial Conference

by Alastair Macnaughton

Woe to you! for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and you build their tombs. (Luke 11: 47-48)

For the last three years amidst a struggle with cancer I have been translating Fr Alexander Men's *In Search of the Way the Truth and the Life.*

In 1976 I was part of a group organised by the University of Leeds which sent students to Leningrad, Minsk and Voronezh. For three months I was based at INIAZ, the Institute of Foreign Languages in Minsk, Belarus. Then 15 years later, in 1991 two weeks before Mikhail Gorbachev was put under house arrest, I was lucky enough, with my wife and young family (aged 9, 7 and 5) to spend a week living with a Baptist family in Minsk. In a flat on the outskirts, reached by bumping our car across a field track at the abrupt end of a boulevard, we had a reunion with a couple of friends from INIAZ. It was one of those cross-cultural meetings where blindfolds fall away, lights come on and all sorts of things fall into place. There needs to be a special word for this sort of meeting: epiphany or transfiguration, or even 'taste of heaven' perhaps. I put this kind of meeting in the same bracket as Isaiah Berlin's visit to Anna Akhmatova amidst the grim life of Leningrad in the 1940s. (see Michael Ignatieff: *Isaiah Berlin,*

Fr Men's grave

Vintage 2000, chap. 11). In 1991 much water had passed under the bridge since 1976. There was lots of laughter as we recalled the conditions at INIAZ in those early days. My friends were not at that stage believers, though in 1976 they had once accompanied me to the only Pentecostal church in Minsk. They asked me whether I had heard of Fr Alexander Men and related how influential he had been in the Soviet Union, amongst believers and non-believers alike. They also spoke about his murder just a year before.

Fifteen years later one of these friends sent me a web-link which enabled me to read his works on-line. I found myself printing out a chapter or two at a time, and taking this to read on train journeys.

My then church Adult Education work for the dioceses of Durham and Newcastle provided me with plenty of opportunities to travel. As a classicist I was particularly interested in volume 4 of *In Search of the Way the Truth and the Life: Dionysus, Logos, Fate* about Greek religion and philosophy from the Colonial Period to Alexander the Great**.** Alexander Men's ability to imagine and to etch out clearly the philosophical searchings of the Greeks I found inspiring – whether Anaxagoras, the pre-Socratic, wondering at the nature of the universe as he walked high up on the Acropolis, or the immense legacy of Plato, not least on the civilising aspects of Alexander the Great's rule – Fr Men's work was fresh, inspiring and colourful. I found myself translating short paragraphs on the prophets and putting them in presentations for Old Testament seminars.

Completely by accident, I discovered in 2012 that there was to be a conference about Fr Men in Moffat, Scotland. I had about four days warning and had to change commitments so as to get to a few hours of it. I came away all fired up: there was so much interest in Alexander Men, here in Scotland, in the Borders, too! A month or so later a thought occurred to me: this great work *In Search of the Way the Truth and the Life* did not exist in English (except for the 7th volume, *Son of Man*) and perhaps I might try to translate more of it, or even the whole thing. Then I was 59, and it seemed this would be a good retirement project! Three months later I was diagnosed with Stage 4 Cancer in the bowel and the liver. It was very uncertain how long I would live. By August of 2013 I had retired so as to be free to fight the illness and pursue whatever other goals I could. One of these of course was the translation. A high point came when in the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle, recovering from another major crisis and doing a bit of translation, I reached Fr Men's statement in volume 1 that healthcare has more often than not been inspired by and derived from Christian faith. Rather than science being atheistic and separate from faith and medicine detached from spirituality, our healthcare today in large part is due to earlier peoples' Christian faith. This passage was like a shining light as I lay in my hospital bed. Two years later, by God's grace, and thanks to superb NHS medical care, I am still active enough to be translating, and, thanks be to God, was even able to go to Moscow in September 2015. I hope that volume 1 *The Wellsprings of Religion* will soon be published by the St Vladimir Seminary Press.

I was excited to be attending the Moscow conference. I had learnt a year before that, despite my being treated for terminal cancer, it was my duty to attend thanks to a summons from Ekaterina Yurevna Genieva, the Director of the Russian State Library of Foreign Literature, herself a friend of Fr Men, and a witness of the veiled threats on his life during his last few days. The conference was organised by the library and by the Alexander Men Foundation at the splendid new Dubrava Cultural Centre at Semkhoz, near Fr Men's home and the site of his murder. The ceremonies involved an impressive range of speakers from different countries, including Jewish and Muslim representation.

Metropolitan Yuvenali and a large crowd watched as flowers were laid at

Metropolitan Yuvenali blesses the crowd

I have learned gradually, at conferences with visitors from the said library to Scotland, and at this conference in Moscow, that although on the one hand it is a vote of confidence in Russia and its literature that people like me want to translate works into English, on the other hand there is a reserve – that foreigners want to read Fr Men in their own language is not celebrated.

the site where Fr Men was attacked. Newly built alongside was the Church of the Beheading of St John the Baptist – owning as it were the tomb of the prophet. The Moscow Patriarchate used the occasion to launch volume 1 of its forthcoming complete works of Alexander Men. In my view it was a pity that this edition *began* with volume 7, *Son of Man,* which Fr Men saw as the climax to his seven volume *In search of the Way the Truth and the Life.* The three days of events went with a swing, though I picked up signs of embarrassment and attempts to cover up the question of who commissioned the murder.

One conference speaker pointed out that Fr Men urged the church to move away from its comfort zone, the great Russian stove at home, into the future; away from its security, tradition. A leading cleric rose to his feet to argue 'a lot of people think the hierarchy were against Fr Alexander but in fact it was the middle-ranking laity!'

At the conference there was a stream of secondary literature or 'readings' about Alexander Men, but very little opportunity for the text to speak for itself. It was almost as though the legacy was being kept carefully locked away. I was told that the Church of SS Cosmas and Damian in Moscow had been entrusted with promoting the legacy, while at the same time many other parishes told their people to stay away from there because the Alexander Men legacy was the work of the devil!

My main impression of the conference was that although many attended who genuinely appreciated Fr Men's life and work, the Moscow Patriarchate and the State were in charge so as to keep the hound of heaven on a leash. Church-state collaboration and its history was explored by Michael Bourdeaux in *Keston Newsletter* No 22 (pp.17-19):

'[…] most of the bishops and senior clergy exhibit an unswerving dedica-

Church of the Presentation of the Infant Christ, at Novaya Derevnya, Fr Alexander Men's parish church

> tion to the political powers that be […] There has been no act of repentance for collaboration with the Soviet regime.'

Peter Pomerantsev in his book *Nothing is True, Everything is Possible* (Faber & Faber, 2015) described current policy:

> 'the brilliance of this new type of authoritarianism is that instead of oppressing opposition it climbs inside all ideologies and movements; the Kremlin's idea is to own all forms of discourse.'

Be that as it may, Ekaterina Yurevna Genieva liked to say 'some are just pretending, there are different levels of engagement, but we are glad if they take any interest in the legacy of Fr Alexander.' Sadly she died of cancer six weeks before the conference. She was a courageous advocate of good literature and freedom of expression; in Soviet times she had resolutely encouraged writers of many types despite the authorities' opposition – (see her obituary: http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/obituaries/article4505618.ece http://www.ritmanlibrary.com/2015/07/in-memory-of-dr-ekaterina-genieva/).

The colour and eloquence of Fr Men's work, the wealth of metaphor and the gently ironic pun are a constant source of delight. Volume 1 shows how faith, at least on the intuitive level, is needed by us all for everyday existence. He gently removes the chocks that hold atheism and scientific materialism in place. He did not need to come out as a dissident: his writings and his parish-based catechetical work spoke for themselves. Now I am keen to read his *Domashnie besedy* (*Conversations at Home*) which are said to be his most profound theological work. The 'at home' suggests where his heart was – in the parish, though, in the words of Wesley, the world, or at any rate the Russian-speaking one, fast became his parish.

Appendix

I have come to the conclusion that people outside Russia need to know why Fr Men is so relevant. On the basis of just volume 1 of *In search of the Way the Truth and the Life,* I have listed the following burning questions which Fr Men discusses:

- How should contemporary believers relate to science?
- How does suffering in the world affect our faith?
- How can I pray?
- How can we best explain the meaning and the results of sin for the modern world?
- How can we encourage this generation to read widely (from books or internet) material from many countries, churches, religions and cultures?
- If nature really is suffused with the presence of God, how does that affect us?
- What is Man? (see Psalm 8 v. 5) What is the role of humanity in the universe?
- Where do we (*homo sapiens*) originate?
- Technology, civilization…but what about morality?
- The poverty of materialism. ('The person who has not responded to God is a spiritual desert' Alexander Men, volume 1, chap. 4)
- How can we best appraise and understand the human search for the divine?
- How can we further strengthen ecumenical and interfaith relationships and activity?
- How are we to understand the Hebrew scriptures and how does Christianity relate to Judaism?
- How can we best understand the New Testament?

Alastair Macnaughton *has served as an Anglican parish priest in the Black Country, in Nottingham, Northumberland and Newcastle, and recently in Lay Discipleship with the Lindisfarne Regional Training Partnership. He hosted and organised a missionary visit to Northumberland of a Baptist choir from Kobrin, Belarus. He learned Russian at school and then developed an interest in Christianity in the former Soviet Union after attending the Communist Countries Prayer Group while at Oxford University in the 1970s.*

The Whitley Lecture 2016

The printed version of Joshua Searle's **Whitley Lecture 2016** entitled ***Church Without Walls: Post-Soviet Baptists after the Ukrainian Revolution, 2013-14*** is available to purchase online. The lecture makes use of some of the sources which Joshua Searle discovered during his period of research in 2013 in the Keston archive, the Keston Center for Religion, Politics and Society, Baylor University. This lecture is available here: http://spurgeons-college.myshopify.com/collections/events

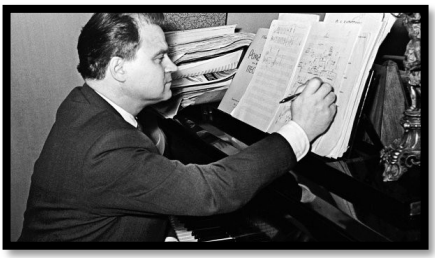
Goskontsert: Soviet Persecution of Musicians and Religion

by Michael Bourdeaux

The Soviet concert agency, Goskontsert, was, in effect, an arm of the KGB and, as such, censored not only music, but those who played it and it became an instrument for persecuting religion. Goskontsert was all-powerful. It not only prevented some musicians from performing in public, but also dispensed the ultimate prize – the right to undertake coveted trips abroad; it heavily censored the repertoire at home and overseas.

Dmitri Shostakovich

1936 was a bad year for Soviet people, not least for Shostakovich, who, already as a young man (born 1906), had made a huge impression on Russian musical life. His new opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, looked set to astonish the Soviet public. It astonished Stalin, too, but in the worst sense. On 26 January Shostakovich attended an early performance of the Bolshoi premiere. He arrived to see that Stalin and some of his henchmen were seated in the royal box. In letters written to a friend, Shostakovich recounted the horror with which he watched Stalin shudder every time the brass and percussion played *fortissimo*.



Tikhon Khrennikov

Even more terrifying was the way Stalin and his companions laughed at the love scene between Sergei and Katerina. Eyewitness accounts testify that Shostakovich was deathly white when he went to take his bow after the third act. A series of attacks on him in *Pravda* soon followed, in particular an article entitled, 'Muddle Instead of Music'.[1]

The Great Patriotic War, in which Shostakovich played a heroic part as a fireman in the defence of Leningrad, saw his rehabilitation. Then the unspeakable Tikhon Khrennikov, whose valueless music I endured live several times during the winter of 1959-60, when I lived

in Moscow, attacked him again in 1948. Martin Sixsmith, former BBC correspondent in Moscow, interviewed Khrennikov in his old age and reported him as saying:

Maya Plisetskaya as the Dying Swan

'My word was law. People knew I was appointed personally by Stalin and they were afraid of me. I was Stalin's commissar. When I said No! it meant No. But at least, under me no composer or musician was ever executed.'[2]

Sixsmith went on to write:

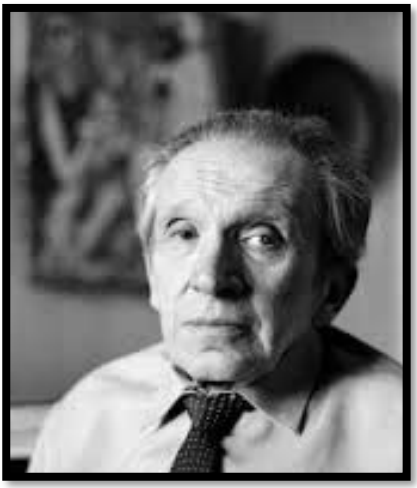
'Shostakovich's widow Irina told me that "Dmitri was like the little bird in the Old Russian folktale – they stamped on his throat and then told him to sing. Fear was his constant companion".'[3]

I can bear this out. On 10 April 1960 US Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson invited me to a concert of Soviet-American Music, with an instruction to detain Shostakovich in conversation at the following reception (he normally attended such events for ten minutes at the outside). If ever I have seen terror etched on the face of a man, this was it, but eventually he warmed to this young and very nervous student and remained for an hour and a half or more, during which I also interpreted between him and Aaron Copland, whose music had also been played in the concert.

Arvo Pärt

The ballerina, Maya Plisetskaya, was ubiquitous on the Bolshoi stage when I lived in Moscow, despite her father having been shot in 1938. She died in May 2015, aged 89. Prokofiev was terrorised, his Spanish wife Lina barely surviving imprisonment. Much later, Arvo Pärt, an Estonian convert to the Orthodox Church, wrote a work entitled *Credo* in 1968, after which his music was banned for 20 years. Eventually he was forced into exile. As his wife and children were at the airport before flying out with their tapes and scores, they were

humiliated and strip-searched. In exile, he dedicated works to the murdered journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, and to the imprisoned financier, Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Tonu Korvits (an Estonian Protestant) researched Lutheran chorales, but his work went unpublished until after the collapse of Communism.



Mieczyslaw Weinberg

There is a strong parallel with Nazi Germany, which suppressed music by Jews, Communists and even American jazz. The worst Soviet example was of the Jewish Mieczyslaw Weinberg, a brilliant Polish composer who fled to Moscow to avoid the Holocaust. He married the daughter of Solomon Mikhoels, the great Soviet theatre director, who would later be executed. After years of suppression, during which he survived by teaching, Weinberg was imprisoned in 1953, during another outbreak of anti-Semitism. To his undying credit, Shostakovich interceded on his behalf, Stalin having just died, but he was not musically rehabilitated and he now survived by writing film music and circus scores. Nineteen years after his death he is still being discovered. David Pountney produced *The Passenger* at the English National Opera in 2010, to brilliant acclaim, and he was BBC Composer of the Week in May 2013.

Wagner might have seemed suitably anti-Semitic, but he was unperformed, presumably because of his Nazi associations, although he himself had been director of the Riga opera house early in his career. The sole production, by the great man of the cinema, Eisenstein, was of *Die Walküre* in 1940, but the imminent Nazi invasion was to put a peremptory stop to any further such enterprises and the first complete production of the *Ring* was not until 2003.

So Goskontsert controlled the repertoire, too. During my year in Moscow arguably the greatest composer of 20th century, Stravinsky had not a note of his music played, his crime having been his emigration. Many other 'modernists' were also banned. Béla Bartók had emigrated from Hungary; Janáček, who had died in 1928, had an excessive flavour of Czech nationalism (which did not apply to Dvořák or Smetana, 19th-century nationalism presumably being acceptable). The whole of English music, from Purcell to Britten, was a blank, probably through ignorance rather than censorship. It would be interesting to know the process by which the one outstanding exception came about. In 1983 a British choir trained by Richard Hickox was invited to perform Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* in Moscow with a Russian orchestra. Doubtless the heroic Evgeni Svetlanov, who conducted, was behind this. Mahler was unplayed for being Jewish and there were dozens of others.

Contemporary Polish music was banned as being far too experimental. At the same time, the great Russians, from Glinka to (the now-rehabilitated) Shostakovich were played *ad nauseam*. Borodin, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov were constantly seen on stage as well as heard in the concert hall. Rachmaninov was a special case. Although he had left Russia, he was far too great, in Soviet eyes, to be ignored, so his symphonies were played, though not of course his *Vespers.*

The most complete and sustained act of censorship by Goskontsert was of Christian music – or at least Christian words set to music. Excluded, therefore, were all Bach's vocal music, his Passions, Mass in B minor and cantatas. I recently heard that Stalin, in his early days in power, had one of Bach's Passions reset to secular Russian words, but at the moment this remains a rumour. Handel's secular music, including all his operas, was as unperformed as his oratorios. There was a wall of exclusion shutting out Renaissance choral music, masses by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, requiems by Brahms and Verdi, and a huge amount of other Christian music of all ages and traditions. The great secular classics featured from time to time, of course – symphonies, and string quartets by Beethoven, piano music by Chopin and Schumann – but the impression was constantly that these all paled beside Tchaikovsky. I once heard an organ recital of Bach's chorale preludes rendered indecipherable. They are always identified by the Christian words of the chorale melody, which could not of course be printed in Russia. Instead they were all listed by key signatures, forming an incomprehensible jumble on the page of the printed programme.

You can take the words out of Bach, but not the spirituality. When Rostropovich played a solo cello suite, the audience would sit in rapt contemplation, many no doubt immersed in the deep Christian feeling behind it (and Rostropovich later identified himself as an Orthodox believer).

Mstislav Rostropovich

This led to a huge upsurge of interest when the shackles fell off in the late 1980s. Our former Ambassador to Kyiv, Roland Smith, tells the story of the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Kyiv in 1992 by an American conductor Roger McMurrin; he then returned repeatedly with this whole 'new' repertoire of masses and requiems to great acclaim.

The Tchaikovsky Piano Competition was frequently the source of conflict. Leonid Brezhnev had to be consulted before the prize could be awarded to the British pianist, John Ogden. Vladimir Ashkenazy recounts that Ekaterina Furtseva, Minister of Culture, forced him to play Prokofiev's Second Piano Concerto, despite the pianist's complaint that his hands were too small for this work.

Andrei Gavril won the competition, but this did not prevent his being interned in 1977 in a mental asylum, his career resuming again only in 1984.

This negative legacy had an effect even on someone born as late as 1981, for example Baiba Skride, the great violinist from Riga. In 2013 she said:

> 'Growing up in Latvia at the end of the Soviet era meant there was a lot of music and performers I just wasn't aware of. We only heard Soviet artists like Leonid Kogan and David Oistrakh. But when I went to study in Germany, it opened up a whole new world for me. I really had no idea there was such a thing as baroque music, apart from the Bach solo Partitas.'[4]

Foreign travel was the highest privilege for the chosen few, though their families were kept at home as hostages. As late as 1989, the *New York Times* reported:

> 'The horror stories of the tangled bureaucracy of Goskontsert, their woeful tales of lost telexes, late visas, ignored artists, wild goose-chases and last-minute cancellations make one wonder why anyone would bother to bring over any Soviet ballerinas and pianists at all.'[5]

The answer, of course, is that there was an array of world-class musicians ready to present to the West some of the greatest performances anywhere (Richter, the Oistrakhs, Lev Oborin, the Bolshoi, the Kirov and many others).

Janine Ross recently published a book on Leonid Yakobson, choreographer of the hugely popular ballet, *Spartacus*. He was let out to Italy to produce 15 performances of a new ballet by Luigi Nono. The deal was that he would repay 70% of the fee to Goskontsert – but he received all the money in cash and on his return to Moscow claimed to have spent it all. There was a huge scandal and he never travelled abroad again.

Especially revealing is the story of the great Borodin Quartet, as recounted by Rostislav Dubinsky, founder and first violin, in *Stormy Applause,* the 'biography' of the chamber group. It is a brilliant though little-known book, of which Wikipedia says:

> 'Its insight into the anti-Semitism, professional corruption, political arm-twisting, and general fear which permeated the Soviet cultural scene during the period it describes (1949-75) offers a vital complement to the parallel narrative in *Testimony*' [a controversial and unauthorised biography of Shostakovich].

After interminable squabbles with Goskontsert about their repertoire and trial runs in the provinces (where sometimes they slipped in banned works) they were eventually given permission to travel abroad. Still suspect – and with a Jewish member – they had a minder, who at least had the grace to show them his reports before submitting them. Eventually the minder no longer travelled with them, so immediately all four knew that one of their members must be reporting back on them. But which one? This was not exactly good for the morale of the quartet. Suspicion eventually fell on their cellist, Valentin Berlinsky. Dubinsky defected to the West in 1976 and told the

– often-hilarious – story of what went on behind the scenes of world-class music making, Soviet style. I need not underline the well-known stories of how ineffective Goskontsert was in preventing defections: Ashkenazy, Nureyev, Baryshnikov, Barshai, Mullova, eventually Rostropovich after he had defended Solzhenitsyn, were only the tip of the iceberg.

Vishnevskaya & Rostropovich

On one occasion Rostropovich did something more impressive than defecting. On 20 August 1968, the day that the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia, by an astonishing coincidence he was to play Dvořák's concerto at a Promenade Concert. At the end of a heart-stopping performance he held the score aloft in a gesture of open defiance. Does a recording nestle in the BBC archives?

My last illustration is the little-known story of the world premiere of Britten's *War Requiem*, in which I was involved on the periphery.

Benjamin Britten wrote this for the dedication of the new Coventry Cathedral, following the destruction of the great gothic edifice by a German incendiary bomb during the war. Preparations and the first performance in the cathedral were beset by many practical problems. Most were musical, but one was political. Britten's deeply symbolical scheme was to incorporate three soloists of different nationalities signifying reconciliation: Galina Vishnevskaya (wife of Rostropovich), Peter Pears (UK) and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (West Germany). German money had partly financed the restoration. Thus, the symbolism, the Christian venue and the perceived religious propaganda through a worldwide broadcast were all too much for the Soviets. They brought pressure on Vishnevskaya to withdraw, but she refused. Britten wrote to the Ministry of Culture on 14 December 1961. How did Vishnevskaya come to possess the text of this letter? The recipient tore it up and threw it in the waste-paper basket, from which a cleaning lady retrieved it and passed it on, so Vishnevskaya could quote it in her autobiography. Many years later I was able to confirm the text from a carbon copy in the Britten-Pears Archive in Aldeburgh. The text reads:

'I have been very sad to hear of the letter from Mr Shashkin, the Director of Gosconcert, to the Director of the Coventry Festival, indicating that this visit will unfortunately be impossible. May I ask you to reconsider this decision? This Requiem is perhaps the most important work I have yet written, and the dominating soprano part has been planned from the start for Madame Vishnevskaya. When I heard her sing in England this last summer I realised that she had the voice, the musicianship and the temperament that I was looking for. Since then, writing the work, she has

been in my mind planning every phrase of the music. I am sure you will realise in this case how extremely difficult it would be to replace Madame Vishnevskaya, and why I am therefore writing to you personally, and ask you to reconsider this decision.'

The Ministry was adamant. Ekaterina Furtseva summoned Vishnevskaya and said: 'How can you, a Soviet woman, stand next to a German and an Englishman and perform a political work?' The row went on all winter. By coincidence, Vishnevskaya came to London to sing *Aida* at Covent Garden just before the Coventry premiere of the *War Requiem*. Britten and Peter Pears came to Vishnevskaya's hotel room and found her greatly distressed – she had just received a final refusal. A Soviet press statement stated that she was having to withdraw through illness (no mention of her being in good voice at the Royal Opera House at that very time). Astonishingly, the British press, parrot-like, repeated the lie and not one journalist investigated. A week before the premiere, after the last performance of *Aida*, Vishnevskaya was forced to get on a plane back to Moscow, the hostage back home being Rostropovich. The Soviet authorities seemed oblivious to the humiliation of such a famous composer as Britten and of the whole Soviet musical establishment. In Moscow Rostropovich complained, but was rebutted by the statement that this was because the performance was to be in a *cathedral,* restored by the despised West Germany, to boot.

Shostakovich, speaking up for the Rostropoviches, said he would never forget this insult to Soviet music. Vishnevskaya heard the broadcast (with Heather Harper, superb as a late replacement) and said, 'I sat at home in Moscow, weeping bitter tears'.

When the cathedral event was in the past the religious aspect could be ignored by Goskontsert, so Vishnevskaya could come to London to sing it in the Royal Albert Hall. I had the privilege in January 1963 of singing with the Philharmonia Chorus in this first performance by the soloists for whom Britten had written the *War Requiem*. I met Vishnevskaya later and she gave me a signed copy of her book *Galina: a Russian Story,* which I reviewed for the *Church Times.* This is now in the Keston Archive. When Vishnevskaya died in 2012, I wrote a supplementary obituary in *The Times.*[6] It read:

'I asked her how it could be that a person who had never written for publication could produce a classic worthy of its place in the Russian canon as literature. The essence of her reply was: "It was all inside me; it just had to come out. Some outside force guided my pen..." Her book undermined the state agency, Goskontsert's reputation for all time.'

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1. 26 January 1936
2. *BBC Music Magazine,* March 2014, p.44.
3. Ibid., p.45
4. *BBC Music Magazine*, August 2013, p. 114.
5. *New York Times*, 12 February 2015.
6. 13 December 2012.

Spiritual Care and Nursing in Lithuania

by Olga Riklikiene

In 2015 a national survey of student nurses and nursing educators was carried out in three universities and six colleges in Lithuania with the aim of discovering perceptions of spiritual care in a country which had experienced 50 years of Soviet occupation and anti-religious propaganda. This exercise was a first important step in a long-term plan to investigate the phenomenon of spiritual care in a former Soviet country.

A questionnaire was distributed to 316 student nurses in their 3rd and 4th year of study and to 92 nurse educators. Both groups acknowledged the importance of spiritual care for patients and nurses, and in many cases defined such care in terms of religious faith. Four categories associated with perceptions of spirituality in nursing care emerged from the responses of the student nurses: a) attributes of spiritual care, b) advantages of spiritual care, c) religious faith and spiritual care, d) and nurse-patient collaboration and communication. Themes from the responses of nurse educators paralleled the same first three categories but not the fourth.

Benefits of spiritual care

When health care providers support the spiritual needs of patients, those with advanced disease use fewer health care resources with less aggressive treatment (Balboni et al., 2013). By being aware of a patient's spirituality, nurses are able to support the patient as an individual and to draw upon a patient's ability to cope with complex health conditions. This holistic paradigm guides nurses when they carry out careful whole-person assessments.

Nevertheless, providing spiritual support can be foreign to health care professionals in training and practice (Penman, 2009). Both student and practising nurses report a lack of knowledge and skill in this field (Stern & James, 2006) which may result from the ambiguity surrounding the word 'spirituality' (McSherry and Cash, 2004; Sessanna, 2007): there is no consensus on a formal definition or even if the term should be defined at all (Lazenby, 2010).

In the Lithuanian survey, however, 'spirituality' meant the meaning or purpose which a person ascribes to life, and 'spiritual support' meant facilitating a patient's search for meaning or purpose which would help him or her cope with illness (Ferrell, Smith, Juare & Melancon, 2003) or find meaning or purpose as he or she prepared for the end of life.

The Lithuanian context

It is argued that although many people express their spirituality through religious observances, not everyone who is spiritual has a religion: anyone who searches for ultimate meaning or purpose in life can be said to have a spirituality (Sulmasy, 2002). In Lithuania the concept of spirituality has been

complicated by its history of enforced atheism which during Soviet rule severely restricted the religious life of the population, the majority of whom were Catholics. It was difficult to integrate spirituality into health care practice (Balboni et al., 2014) as the approach to the latter focused on a practitioner's duty to provide technically competent, medically focused care, without any consideration of a patient as a whole person with a spirituality. Once Lithuania was liberated in 1991 and gained religious freedom, nursing training developed as an academic discipline within university education. But with no tradition to draw upon, academic nursing in Lithuania tried to develop new approaches to teaching and practice, which integrated spirituality and enabled nurses to think of patients as whole people, with spiritualities which could help them in coping with illness.

The nursing profession in Lithuania in the past was based on a framework of moral values: during the Second World War for example Lithuanian nurses demonstrated a Christian ethic of caring and self-sacrifice (Karosas, 2003). Then followed 50 years of Soviet occupation when laws were passed which banned priests from entering hospitals to minister to the sick and when it was dangerous to express religious faith. After 1991, in contrast, religious practice was not only permitted, but viewed as a sign of a person's virtue and national loyalty; for some, it even became fashionable.

Nursing care after independence

Today spiritual care, once taboo in the Soviet era, is increasingly being explored within nursing practice, education and research (Seskevicius, 2010). Around the same time as independence, palliative care developed as a health care discipline. By 2007 Lithuania adopted a Law on Palliative Care which established in-patient palliative care services, introduced out-patient palliative care consultations, formalised evaluation of palliative care services, and provided undergraduate and continuing professional training in palliative care. In 2012, the first 14-bed hospice was established. This development was important as one of the eight elements of palliative care, which all palliative care services and training must reflect, is 'spiritual, religious, and existential aspects of care' (National Consensus Project, 2013).

During the last two decades of change in Eastern Europe, Lithuanian nursing has been rapidly evolving away from socialist principles of scientific and technical materialism (Blazeviciene and Jakusovaite, 2007). As a condition for membership in the European Union, nursing education was elevated from a diploma to a university-based system, and nursing research and policy development were expanded (Karosas and Riklikiene, 2008). As nursing education moves away from a strongly biomedical, technical approach, towards a more sensitive, patient-centred, holistic approach, the nursing curriculum has had to take into account socio-cultural, religious and spiritual customs and practices.

The spiritual, religious, cultural, or human values of students may nurture their vocation for the health professions (Puchalski et al., 2014), that is, their

choice of a career serving others and attending to the whole patient – body, mind, and spirit (Balboni et al., 2014). Therefore when thinking about the nursing curriculum and spirituality, especially in post-Soviet Lithuania, it has been important to consider the attitudes and views of students and not just those of the educators.

The national survey

The questionnaire used for the national survey was developed by Scott (1959) and supplemented by Martin Johnson (1983). We chose this one because it was the only one specific to nursing students and their educators, while it also had an open-ended question allowing for context -specific answers, which was thought to be important given Lituanian nursing's historical context. This questionnaire assesses general (that is, more personal) and professional values: 408 respondents participated; 316 student nurses in the 3rd and 4th year of study and 92 nurse educators. The response rate for students was 80% and for educators 69.7%. The final question of the survey which was a question about spiritual care was completed by 183 respondents – 148 (46.8%) students and 35 (38%) educators. The length of answers to each question varied from one word to 25 words. The mean age of student nurses was 24.39 years. Of the student nurses 97.8% were women, while 82.6% of the nurse educators were women; 20% of the nurse educators had more than 21 years of teaching experience.

The survey revealed that the majority of student nurses (65.5%) and educators (63%) always/usually admired the religiously devout person. Both groups of respondents expressed equal admiration for those who regularly attended religious services. Students and educators, alike, were neutral regarding atheism. Less than half of the student nurses (41.2%) disagreed with the statement that 'nurses ought to have a religious faith,' while half the educators (51.1%) had no clear opinion about this statement. There were no significant differences between students and educators as regards attitudes towards general and professional values; however, the students tended to dislike atheism more than the educators.

Analysis revealed that those students and educators who considered themselves to be religious expressed significantly more admiration and agreement with a person's general and professional religious behaviour as compared to students and educators who considered themselves to be atheists or were unsure about their religion. Students responded more positively than educators to the general value question 'Do you have spiritual aspects to your life?' Furthermore, students (but not educators) who reported having spiritual aspects to their lives more often supported the expression of religious faith in others either as a general or professional value. Nurse educators agreed with the notion that religion has no relationship with a spiritual way of life, whereas students did not.

Attributes of spiritual care

To student nurses, spiritual care involved personal qualities such as honesty and respect, tolerance and responsibility. It meant being sincere and kind, 'showing goodness, tenderness,' 'showing respect

for another person, for their dignity and independence,' 'showing respect for their faith and values'. To student nurses the professional skill and behaviour of a nurse in delivering spiritual care integrated moral norms and values: 'there are very important values in the work of nurses such as compassion and understanding,' the provision of 'spiritual care is shown through mercifulness.'

A nurse should be non-judgmental and altruistic when providing spiritual care and 'doesn't take into account her own personal attitudes but provides holistic care through being kind and patient.' Students perceived spiritual care as providing 'help and comprehensive support' and linked it to the primary responsibilities of professional nurses and to inner strength, adding that spiritual care 'needs unending patience, endurance, love and understanding.' At the same time, providing this kind of care 'helps one understand the person better.'

This notion of mutual understanding between nurse and patient figured frequently in students' responses. The autonomy and individuality of a patient were important elements: 'it is essential to listen to the patient and consider their wishes, the principles of humanity and autonomy,' 'each person is an individual.'

Nurse educators emphasised the importance of respect and human dignity, human values and spiritual beliefs, including warmth, tenderness and love: 'respect for people, for their dignity and individuality,' 'loving people as they are,' 'hands ought to be tender in taking care – no ambiguity!' They did not emphasise patience and understanding as much as the students but included new concepts such as empathy and humanity: 'it is more empathy,' 'a nurse not only takes care of a patient's body but maintains his/her humanity,' 'humanity ought to be the foundation of nursing philosophy.' At the same time nurse educators associated the traditional personal characteristics of a nurse with the delivery of spiritual care: 'attentiveness, selflessness, professonal responsibility, mercifulness as well.' Having been trained in deontological ethics, they emphasised that when thinking about the delivery of spiritual care, 'it is necessary to follow ethical rules' and 'to make sure that professional ethics are understood.'

Advantages of spiritual care

Survey respondents demonstrated the greatest consensus when describing the advantages of spiritual care for patients and providers. From the patient's perspective, spiritual care guaranteed equality and humanity. As one student put it, '[the nurse] delivers care without regard to the social status of the patient.' Spiritual care 'saves human lives.' Student nurses described a patient's sense of being safe and cared for: 'every person has a right to support and caring.' One student nurse said that :

> 'the patient has to feel safe while talking to a nurse and not alone with their problems; for example, when I went to the operating theatre with a patient who was very worried and I calmed her down.'

Moreover, students linked spiritual care with end-of-life care. Hopefulness and inspiration were the right nursing

attitudes in spiritual care: 'to believe in a patient's recovery and in the ability to help him feel better,' 'to bring relief and hope to dying patients.' According to students, providing spiritual care was advantageous not only for patients but also for nurses: 'a person with spiritual values has compassion and helps the weak and ill,' 'it helps to understand patients' problems and empathise with them,' '[a nurse] will cope with difficulties at work more easily and feel reassured in various situations.' Nurse educators supported the view of students that spiritual care enables patients to feel safe and to experience wellbeing: 'a stronger feeling of safety makes it easier for the patient to cope with infirmity.' They agreed that nursing went beyond physical care to include spiritual care: 'nursing is not just physical help, it is most important to help the soul.' They also emphasised the link between the existential attitudes of the inner lives of nurses and patients:

> 'using an existential perspective to help the patient preserve the harmony of body, mind and spirit; seeing the person's internal world, ensuring that patients understand and accept the spiritual world, not necessarily religion.'

Spiritual care was required in palliative care: 'hope and trust for the patient even in difficult situations,' 'a nurse has to maintain [a] patient's faith and hope for recovery or a dignified death, when death is inevitable.' They agreed with the students that providing spiritual care benefitted the nurse as well as the patient: 'a spiritually strong nurse concentrates better on her work and is more gentle.'

Religious faith and spiritual care

Student nurses considered a patient's attitude to religion to be an important element in the provision of spiritual care. One reply to the questionnaire stated that nurses are guided by 'basic moral rules which could also include the Ten Commandments.' Spiritual care was related to religious resources and 'help for the soul.' Students mentioned freedom from religious prejudice: 'a nurse has to respect a patient's religion and cannot criticise religious beliefs, sometimes it is better to encourage...to give hope.' They thought a nurse should be 'aware of many religions and be able to adapt to patients and their religious views.' Student nurses suggested that a nurse has to pay attention to a patient's religion, as 'human life depends not only on medicine, but on a higher power, God – He will always help and make things better.' The link between spiritual care and religion, especially at the end of life, was clearly presented by students: 'religious support and understanding is especially necessary at [the] end of life for patients and their relatives.' A practical suggestion from one student was that a nurse has 'to pay attention to whether the patient is a Catholic or a Muslim or a member of another denomination because much may depend on religion.' Nurse educators agreed with students that 'faith helps a person; sometimes it is good to know, especially for children, that life is not over after death.' They supported the beliefs and religious practices of patients through encouraging clergy to get involved and to minister to patients: 'respect and help for the dying' was part of a nurse's duty of care.

The nurse-patient relationship

Students, but not educators, considered that the process of nurse-patient collaboration and communication was part of spiritual care which involved not 'just working with patients, but also includes understanding.' From the students' point of view, spiritual care was an interaction, and even possibly, a therapeutic intervention for the patient's mental health. One reply to the questionnaire stated:

> 'Often when exploring the patient's psychological problems, it is interesting how he accepts the changes in health and [the nurse], by listening to him and sharing his burden, helps the patient to feel less pain and psychological distress.'

Another reply stated:

> 'If a nurse sees a patient suffering from depression, he/she must talk with the patient, explain to him/her that life is beautiful, that not everything is so bad and he/she has to love [life].'

Spiritual care in nursing, to students, was 'not simply mechanical work, but activity based on spiritual collaboration.' Students adopted the attitude of 'a healthy spirit in a healthy body' and believed that 'sometimes interaction, sincerity, good words, faith and hope are enough for patients to feel better and to recover faster.'

A divergent view

A small number of student nurses (4.7%) and nurse educators (17.1%) expressed a different opinion: in their view the provision of spiritual care was separate from nursing *per se*. Several students argued that 'spiritual values in care are very important, but the professionalism in practical matters cannot be forgotten.' Another responded that 'it is an obligation for a nurse to be compassionate and to console, but it is not compulsory to pray for a patient's health; this is nonsense!' Other statements of educators indicated that nursing care has to be strictly separated from spirituality and moral values: 'spiritual values are important but not a priority'; and 'nursing care is not related to spiritual values at all.' One nurse educator rigidly interpreted spirituality as religion: 'I think that religion [...] should never be included in questionnaires.'

Nursing is an art and a science

According to the vast majority of student nurses and nurse educators, spiritual care involved a complex mix of character, behaviour and social skills, supported by particular values and attitudes. Generational differences stemming from the experience of political events might explain differences in perception between younger student nurses, who grew up in a post-Soviet environment, and older nurse educators, who developed professionally under the Soviet regime which suppressed religious and spiritual expression.

Health care education of the post-Soviet era emphasises interaction and communication as a crucial part of nursing. In contrast almost all nurse educators were trained according to the bio-medical model which involved not only personal values such as honesty, responsiblity and professionalism but also Marxist materialist values – technical and scientific advancements. According to this more technocratic model, the nurse-

patient relationship was not an equal one but paternalistic; the nurse or physician made every decision about a patient's treatment.

Spiritual care in the survey was associated with 'human values of love, compassion and altruism,' 'maintaining relationships,' 'participating in religious practices' and 'culture,' as described by Penman et al. (2013). Both students and educators related such care to personal moral and belief systems. For students it entailed respect, independence, support, and the preservation of human life. They thought that such care involved being present to the patient and listening to his or her story (Balboni et al., 2014). To them nursing was an art as well as a science. Educators also cited respect but emphasised more the duty of care; they stressed the importance of professional ethics, which was consistent with their training in medical deontology. Younger students, born after Lithuanian independence, who had not experienced this training, had internalised the importance of the ethical principle of autonomy. While student nurses considered interaction, reciprocal understanding, and human relationships to be aspects of spirituality, nurse educators did not cite these; they did not think 'relationship' was an important element in the provision of spiritual care. However, although the two groups in the survey had some slightly different perceptions, both considered the spiritual domain to be an important aspect of nursing care. Student nurses and nurse educators believed that when patient care was provided in a holistic manner, the ability of patients to cope with illness was enhanced. Providing spiritual care had benefits for nurses as well; it decreased burn-out and promoted quality in the delivery of care.

Conclusion

There are generally speaking four spheres when considering the quality of life: physical, psychological, social, and spiritual, according to the Quality of Life model (Ferrell et al., 1991). The spiritual sphere includes meaning, religious faith, and hope, among other elements. The whole-person care perspective (Balboni et al., 2014) combined with the bio-psycho-social-spiritual model of care (Sulmasy, 2002) should guide the formation of a nurse through scientific, intellectual, personal and spiritual development. Providing spiritual care is important in order to ensure quality care (Wittenberg et al., 2015) and integrates ethical principles with health care practice. The student nurses and educators in the survey also pointed to the benefits for themselves of providing spiritual care: a nurse was inspired and empowered by inner-peace, mindfulness, mercifulness and increased professional responsibility. Descarte's dualistic philosophy separated body from soul: a more holistic philosophy restores the spiritual dimension. Spirituality is an integral component of nursing since, for the body to be healthy, the soul must be healthy too.

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My week in Ukraine

by Lorna Bourdeaux

British Christians (Lorna Bourdeaux, back row 3rd from left) at aid depot in Eastern Ukraine

As a student of Russian almost 40 years ago I lived for three months in Leningrad in the Former Soviet Union (FSU). I was profoundly struck by the way in which people lived so closely together in a confined physical space and how the concept of 'private space' seemed to be entirely lacking. As students, not surprisingly, we lived in dormitories, five Brits and two Russians per room, each with a narrow bed, a shared cupboard and a storage space under the bed. I got to know ordinary Russians who lived in communal flats – one family of four to a single room – with a shared kitchen and toilet and no bathroom. We did not get to know our Russian room mates as, naïve as we were, we knew that they were there as 'minders' reporting back on our every move.

Outside the confines of the dorm it was a different matter. Ordinary Russians were overwhelmingly hospitable and went out of their way to be generous and thoughtful hosts. You could never enter a home, however humble, without the table immediately being spread with food and drink – no matter what time of day or night – and you were constantly urged to '*kushaite*' – 'eat up'. Being hugged and kissed on alternate cheeks was the norm. It was commonplace for a stranger to come up to you in the street (we stood out as Westerners) to tell you to button up your coat or wrap your scarf correctly (it was still cold in April when we arrived and spring was late). When, for the first time, I ventured nervously into an Orthodox church during a service an elderly lady approached to tell me I must stand 'correctly' – arms straight down by my sides. None of this gave offence – it just felt strange and I attributed this mixture of warmth, tactile behaviour and admonition to a considerable cultural difference between East and West.

In Ukraine in February I experienced the exact same warmth – the hugging and kissing, the overwhelming hospitality, the sharing of food and drink, and being told to 'do up your coat' – it was minus five in Vasilkivka, a small town in East-

British group visit a feeding point for the homeless in Zaporizhye

ern Ukraine where we were guests for two nights. It was reassuringly familiar and also deeply humbling. These were poor people struggling to make ends meet, but willing to share whatever they had with strangers.

Since my time in Leningrad in the 1970s there have been seismic shifts in the region of the FSU – geographical boundaries have changed as have political, cultural and linguistic ones. Ukraine gained its independence from the FSU in 1991 and has a population of 44 million of whom three million live in the capital, Kyiv. For the past 25 years its citizens have endured corrupt, wasteful and criminally inefficient governance. Past attempts at reform have failed. Renewed attempts appear to be faltering. The war in Eastern Ukraine has cost at least 8,000 lives and there are 1.7 million internally displaced people. You have to be self-sufficient in order to survive and you rely on family and friends to help out when things go wrong, otherwise you easily slip through the cracks and become destitute. The state does not appear to be willing or able to help – or indeed, to care. We met many such desperate people during our week in Ukraine.

It was immensely encouraging to see that some of these needs are being addressed by members of Evangelical churches, Baptists, Mennonites and Pentecostals. We visited a feeding point for the homeless in Zaporizhye run by Christians from the 'School without Walls' project. Zaporizhye is a large industrial town roughly 150 kilometres from the war zone in the far east of the country. Its population has been increased by thousands of refugees from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions – possibly as many as 200,000 – and among them are many alcoholics and drug addicts.

Lorna Bourdeaux (back to camera) talks to a woman in a home for the elderly outside Zaporizhye

'School without Walls' started as a movement within the Baptist community about 15 years ago, and its primary aim was to teach the basics of the Christian faith and ministry to future church leaders. Involvement in aid work has evolved from this and Evangelical Christians in Zaporizhye are at the forefront of work with the homeless, refugees, prisoners and with a state-run rehab centre for addicts. They also run an active youth programme. All of those we met who are involved with rehab work are themselves former convicted criminals and drug addicts who have served time in prison. We heard some extraordinary personal testimonies.

One of our most moving encounters was with a group of refugees. They are housed in a Soviet-era 'Pioneer camp' on the outskirts of the city on land which now belongs to the Pentecostal church. The trip was organised by a wonderful Mennonite pastor, Roman, who visits the camp regularly. We took food parcels to be shared amongst all the families. Currently there are approximately 30 families, including small children, living in dormitory-style accommodation with one room per family and very basic shared kitchen and toilet facilities.

Natalya, an Orthodox believer, told me that she and her husband, Nikolai, were from Donetsk (now in the rebel-held territory). They used to live in a quiet area, their daughter and two children living nearby. When the bombing started they became very frightened. Natalya's son, age 26, was shot dead on his way back home from work. Natalya and her husband fled leaving everything behind – their home, some land, a car and a vineyard. Her daughter moved to Luhansk (also in rebel-held territory) where she had friends and she has started a small sewing business. Nikolai has had a stroke and can no longer speak. We asked Natalya what were her hopes for the future: 'I just want to return home when the war is over. My roots are there – my vineyard and my rose garden.' She was delighted to receive a Bible from Roman. 'I left my Bible behind when I fled – I'm so glad to have another one.'

Later on the same day Roman took us to meet a group of his fellow Mennonite pastors over lunch. They wanted to tell us about their humanitarian work on the front line. One of the most striking things they emphasised was their conviction that the future direction of their church will be determined by the stance they take towards the victims of the war and the soldiers fighting in it. 'We think the church is called to respond to the challenges – we can't stand aside. We can't call ourselves a church if we seal up our walls and refuse to care about the

outside world.' They have responded by making weekly trips to the front line with food and clothing, and have delivered more than 120 tons of food in the past eight months. Some of the food staples come from overseas, but the bulk of it is bought locally and paid for by the local community. They also distribute Bibles, New Testaments and children's literature. When we asked them what was the most important aspect of this work they told us: 'Building good relationships with the people still living there. People call us – they have our phone numbers – to ask advice about life and spiritual questions.'

They are hoping to start a new church close to the front line:

'We want to use the experience we have gained to help and serve people. Before the war there were about 40,000 people in Avdiyivka (about seven kilometres from Donetsk) and now there are 18,000. We are working in the schools there, and a wide range of people are open to collaborating with us, including school principals and city governors. We are planning a big event for the school children there.'

Fighting continues, mainly at night, in the villages around Avdiyivka. All the teachers are trained to know what to do in the event of an attack. This is supposed to be the responsibility of local government but, in reality, in many places local government has disappeared and local activists and teachers have stepped in to fill the gaps. Roman told us that the teachers have asked them to organise an event for them. 'So much attention is focused on the kids – take us for a day out too!' The pastors are planning a summer training seminar to equip teachers to work with children affected by post-traumatic stress and to run children's summer camps. Roman has posted a video with English subtitles showing the work of some of the pastors we met – distributing aid to people on the front line.: https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=Eq4JGJ3br0M

When members of our group asked what we could do to help when we returned to the UK, we were told: 'It means so much that you have come to visit us and listen to us – tell people the truth about what is happening in Ukraine.'

Visit to the 'School without Walls' youth group in Zaporizhye

Lorna Bourdeaux *worked for Keston between 1978 and 1999, and has subsequently worked for Age UK Oxfordshire specialising in dementia care.*

Relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church

by Hugh Wybrew

Pope Francis & Patriarch Kirill meet in Havana on 12th February 2016

The meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia in February 2016 came for the secular media out of the ecumenical blue. *The Week*, published after the media had moved on to other matters, mentioned the meeting briefly, saying that it was the first meeting of a Pope and a Patriarch for nearly 1,000 years. Earlier and fuller reports carried headlines suggesting that perhaps the Great Schism was about to be healed. In view of such ill-informed reporting it might be helpful to present a brief over-view of the present state of relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

The historical background is one of hostility. Tensions between Rome and Constantinople go back at least to the 5th century. From 482 to 518 they were in a state of schism, provoked by the emperor Zeno's Henoticon, an attempt to reconcile Chalcedonians and Monophysites in the East. Rome saw it as undermining the Chalcedonian definition of the person of Jesus Christ and so denounced it. In the 9th century Rome and Constantinople were again in a state of schism over the case of Patriarch Photius. Pope Nicholas I claimed jurisdiction over the Eastern Church; Photius accused the West of introducing the filioque into the Nicene creed.

These were just two instances of gradually worsening relations between Constantinople and Rome. From 800, when the Pope crowned Charlemagne emperor, political rivalry between the East Roman Empire and the Carolingian Empire in the West combined with doctrinal disagreements and ecclesiastical jurisdictional clashes to worsen relations. They were further strained in the 11th century

when Pope Leo IX and Patriarch Michael Cerularius suppressed Greek and Latin customs in their respective jurisdictions. In 1054 Leo's legates to Constantinople excommunicated the Patriarch, and were in their turn excommunicated by Cerularius. By this time Leo was dead, so Cardinal Humbert's action was of doubtful validity. In any case these were personal excommunications only. But they gave rise in time to the habit of referring to the incident as the Great Schism, and that myth has been perpetuated. There is evidence of Greeks and Latins receiving communion together long after 1054.

Far more serious in creating a lasting breach between Rome and Constantinople was the capture of the East Roman capital by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and the creation in Constantinople of a Latin Empire and Patriarchate. Neither the Council of Lyons in 1274 nor that of Ferrara-Florence in 1438-9 were able to bring about lasting reconciliation. The union proclaimed at the latter council was formally repudiated by Constantinople in 1484, after Constantinople had fallen to the Turks in 1453. Hostility between Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics was exacerbated by Latin missionary efforts to bring the Eastern Church into communion with Rome, which resulted in the formation over several centuries of what were called Uniate churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The First Vatican Council's reiteration of universal papal jurisdiction and its proclamation of papal infallibility in 1870 provoked the Orthodox once again to reject Roman claims.

While the Patriarchate of Constantinople played an active role in the 1920s in bringing the modern ecumenical movement into being, Rome refused all part in it. The first step towards reconciliation between the two churches was taken in 1964, during the Second Vatican Council, when Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I met in Jerusalem. *The Week*'s claim notwithstanding, that was the first meeting of a Pope and a Patriarch for 'nearly a thousand years'. Two years later the mutual anathemas of 1054 were lifted, and declared to be a tragic mistake. Since then there have been regular friendly contacts between Constantinople and Rome, and other meetings of popes and patriarchs. Patriarch Kirill was almost the last of the heads of the 14 autocephalous Orthodox churches to meet a pope. Successive patriarchs of Moscow have declined to meet successive popes on the ground that the time was not yet right. As recently as January 2016 Metropolitan Hilarion, head of the External Church Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, repeated what Jonathan Luxmoore in *The Tablet* of 13 February 2016 called 'the long-held mantra that "objective conditions" had not yet been met on the "main issues" dividing the Catholic and Orthodox Churches'. Chief among those issues is the existence of the 'uniate' Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, formed in 1596, suppressed by the Soviet government after the Second World War, and revived in 1989 together with other Eastern Catholic churches suppressed by Communist regimes.

The sudden change of mind on the part of the Moscow Patriarchate came as a surprise not only to the secular media. Behind the scenes it is probable that it owed a good deal to President Putin. Media reporting has certainly helped to

create an impression that the Patriarch of Moscow is the leading figure in Orthodoxy, an impression welcome to Patriarch Kirill, keen to enhance his influence at the forthcoming Great and Holy Pan-Orthodox Council. The Council, first mooted in 1960, was to have been held in the 4th century Church of Aghia Eirene (Holy Peace) in Istanbul, where the Second Ecumenical Council was held in 381. Because the Moscow Patriarchate said it was impossible for the Russians to go there, given the present state of Russian-Turkish relations, it is now planned to be held in Crete from 16—27 June, still within the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Ecumenical Patriarch, as the senior Orthodox Patriarch, will convene the Council of which he has been a main promoter, and preside at it. Taking part will be the heads of all 14 autocephalous Orthodox Churches. Churches not recognised as canonical, such as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate) and the Orthodox Church of America will not be represented. It is not quite clear how decisions will be taken, whether by majority vote or consensus. If the latter, then each church would presumably possess a veto.

Both Putin and Kirill have been busy promoting the ideology of Moscow as the Third Rome, the true successor both politically and religiously of the Second Rome, Constantinople, with implication that the Patriarch of Moscow should be the leading Patriarch in the Orthodox Church. When the meeting was announced, an American Orthodox commented:

> 'For Pope Francis, the Havana meeting holds a promise of fraternal cooperation with the leader of an estimated two-thirds of the global population of Orthodox Christians. For Patriarch Kirill, the same meeting is an opportunity to overshadow his rival Patriarch Bartholomew, on the international arena, and possibly to gain the Vatican's stamp of approval on Moscow's aggressive geopolitics.'

Meanwhile the official theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches has been pursuing its way. Set up in 1976, it so far has published three agreed statements: Munich 1982, on *The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity*; Bari 1987, on *Faith, the Sacraments and the Unity of the Church*; and Valamo 1988, on *The Sacrament of Ordination within the Sacramental Structure of the Church*. While the Roman Catholic Church has recognised the validity of Orthodox sacraments at least since the Second Vatican Council, the meeting at Bari failed to achieve a consensus on the part of the Orthodox regarding Roman Catholic sacraments, including baptism. A meeting at Balamand in 1993 produced an agreement that Uniatism was not an acceptable model for reunion, and included several references to the recognition by each Church of the sacramentality of the other. It was not therefore anything new when the statement issued by Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill included an agreement on the unacceptability of Uniatism. The Balamand statement also affirmed the validity of the sacraments of both Churches, and referred to them as Sister-Churches. While the Second Vatican Council had recognised the Orthodox as Sister Churches, the Ortho-

dox had not previously reciprocated. The Balamand statement however was rejected by the Eastern Catholic Church of Romania and the Church of Greece.

Apart from ecclesiastical political issues, the two chief obstacles to reconciliation and the re-establishment of communion between Catholics and Orthodox remain the claim of the papacy to universal jurisdiction and the official claim of the Orthodox that they are the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of the creed. The latter naturally remains a major obstacle in the way of progress in all dialogues in which the Orthodox are involved. It is unlikely that there will be any change of attitude at the forthcoming Great and Holy Council.

A document on *Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World* was adopted as a draft text last October by the 5th Pan-Orthodox Pre-Council Conference meeting at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy in Switzerland. It has been criticised by some Orthodox traditionalists, not least for its use of the word 'church' for non-Orthodox Christian communities. For the critics, this undermines the claim of the Orthodox to be the one true Church. Such criticism has come particularly from traditionalist groups in Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece and Russia, and reflects the anti-Western and anti-ecumenical strand that has emerged in all the Orthodox churches in recent years. Such groups are explicitly condemned in the document as ecumenical obstructionists:

> 'The Orthodox Church believes that any attempts to shatter Church unity, undertaken by individuals or groups under the pretence of preserving or defending true Orthodoxy, must be condemned. As evidenced by the whole life of the Orthodox Church, the preservation of the true Orthodox faith is only possible thanks to the conciliar structure which since ancient times has been for the Church the strong and final criterion in matters of faith.'

The healing of the so-called 'Great Schism' depends not only on the attitude of Rome, but on that of all the Orthodox Churches. Even if Kirill were seriously interested in healing the schism with Rome, no single Orthodox primate, not even the Ecumenical Patriarch, can make a move in that direction by himself. All the Orthodox Churches would have to take the necessary decision together. It is not altogether clear whether or not 'Relations' will remain on the agenda of the Pan-Orthodox Council, from which other controversial documents have already been withdrawn. Were it to be discussed and accepted, it would certainly be a significant step forward towards closer relations between Rome and the Orthodox, to which the friendly meeting of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill in Havana will also have made a contribution.

Canon Hugh Wybrew *is a priest in the Church of England, living in active retirement in Oxford. He has had many contacts with the Orthodox Church in England and abroad since he learnt Russian during National Service, and was for over 30 years a member of the international Anglican–Orthodox theological dialogue.*

Home News

Michael Bourdeaux writes:

My thoughts have continued to focus on Ukraine. Both because the situation in the eastern regions and Crimea, under the thumb of Russia, has moved off the agenda as far as the media are concerned, but also because of my wife Lorna's recent visit (seen pp.33-36) I thought I would try to revive some interest by writing a letter to *The Times*. The Letters Editor initially commissioned this, but, after several exchanges, my text appeared online only. This is what I would have liked to see in the print version. Soviet persecution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has been almost entirely forgotten, though its current bishops have written a long and dignified document following their visit to the Vatican in early March. Here are a few extracts from their letter:

> '[…] the people of Ukraine are claiming their God-given human dignity. They are determined to break with a Soviet past – genocidal, colonial and imperialistic, ferociously atheistic and profoundly corrupt.
>
> […] God spoke to the conscience of the citizens of Ukraine and the Holy Spirit guided hundreds of thousands of men and women, the young and the elderly, to stand together on the Maidan in prayer for the nation. "Enough! Let us end the corruption and systemic injustice!" While affirming human dignity the nation experienced authentic ecumenism in action: a desire for full and visible Christian unity. […]
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> Not all, however, were thrilled. The new sense of freedom, dignity, and civic responsibility and prospects of association with European peoples and nations needed to be stopped: it could spread to Ukraine's neighbours. Thus, for the last two years, the entire Ukrainian nation is being punished by its northern neighbour nostalgic for the Soviet legacy of imperial grandeur. Such hegemony can be maintained only through fear, intimidation, and control of the media. It requires a disregard for human rights and freedom of conscience. The punishment meted out to Ukrainians for their audacity to be free is brutal, cynical, and manipulative. The agenda of abuse seeks international legitimisation and cultivates enmity towards and rejection of the will of the people of Ukraine. It seeks to stop the development of civil society and the establishment of true rule of law. […]
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> The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church ceaselessly prays for and promotes peace, and in Rome its leadership appealed to the Holy Father and to the world to help stop the war and stem the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. […]'

This year 10 March marks the 70th anniversary of one of the most brutal acts of religious persecution in history. Lviv had recently fallen into Soviet hands and was the seat of the Ukrainian Greek

Catholic Church, which owed its allegiance to the Vatican, but followed the Eastern Rite (with liturgy in Slavonic, not Latin, and married clergy). Disputes between this and the Russian Orthodox Church go back to the late 16th century, but in the 20th century the Greek Catholics carried the banner of Ukrainian nationalism – and now they found themselves under Soviet jurisdiction.

Stalin's answer was to have the mostly married priesthood, fearful for their families, assemble in St George's Cathedral on 10 March 1946 for the so-called Synod of Lviv. The proceedings took place at the point of a gun, with all the bishops already imprisoned. The terrified assembly 'voted' to abolish their own church and hand over all property to the Moscow Patriarchate. The latter thus illegitimately acquired a huge new swathe of churches.

Following years of growing underground protest and continuing persecution, Mikhail Gorbachev eventually lifted the ban on the legal existence of the world's largest underground church. Buildings were returned, but to this day the Moscow Patriarchate has not apologised for its complicity in this act of public shame.

Our house was a hive of unusual activity over the weekend of 26-28 February, hosting a small but extended conference on Romania. Back in Communist days, perhaps second in importance to our Soviet archive, was the one on Romania. Alan Scarfe studied in Bucharest at the Orthodox Seminary, went on to work at Keston and, after leaving, eventually became Episcopal Bishop of Iowa. He collected and found a way of sending back to us an astonishing amount of primary material, which, as mentioned in earlier issues of the *Newsletter*, was eventually reassessed and re-catalogued by Alina Urs on two visits to Baylor University. The government institute for which she works is collecting information on abuses of human rights during the Communist period and Alina discovered that our collection contains much that is new to them.

Alina and Alan had never met face to face. Their conversation went on for many hours over two days and focused on Alan's personal experiences, how he coped under pressure from the Romanian Securitate and how he managed to secrete the documents out of Romania. Alina plans to write up these conversations and they will form the basis for a fascinating article which we hope to publish in the *Newsletter*.

I had the pleasure on 1-2 March of once again being the guest of the Templeton Foundation for their announcement in London of the winner of this year's Prize. On the Tuesday evening I walked into the reception at the St James's Court Hotel and the first person I saw was the former Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, standing alone. I went up to him and we introduced each other (I hadn't previously met him). After about five minutes I asked him if he knew yet who had won the Prize this year. In the most modest way possible, he said, 'Well, actually it's me!' Never has there been a more worthy winner.

Next day was the press conference at the British Academy, an event streamed worldwide on the Internet. Before Edward Stourton, the chairman, announced

the new winner, he paid tribute to Keston and mentioned my name as the winner of the Prize in 1984. I was sitting adjacent to Michael Gove: I'm not sure whether that has re-introduced our work to the seat of government! It is good, though, that Keston still has a presence in the public eye, however intermittent this might be.

Xenia Dennen writes:

I have much enjoyed taking part in three Encyclopaedia field trips since the last *Newsletter* was published: in November to the Mari-El Republic, in January this year to Saransk, capital of the Mordovian Republic, and in March to Kurgan in southern Siberia. During my visit to Russia in March I was also able to attend the launch of the Encyclopaedia's second volume (new edition) at the Institute of Europe in Moscow.

Mari El is a fascinating area where the local ancient paganism has been given official status on a par with Russian Orthodoxy. The area had originally formed part of the Kazan Khanate before Ivan the Terrible conquered it in 1551 and incorporated it into the Russian Empire. The Mari people belong to the Finno-Ugrian ethnic group and their language is related to Finnish and Estonian. They divide into two groups – the hill Mari and the Mari of the plain: the latter, the majority, were influenced by Islam under the Kazan Khanate and continued to observe the rites of their ancient pagan religion. The hill Mari, in contrast, supported the incorporation of their territory into Russia in the 16th century, and converted to Orthodoxy. Russification among the majority was unsuccessful and indeed in the 18th century led many Mari to support the Pugachev uprising against the Russian throne. During the Soviet period Mari national culture was encouraged, but the Russian Orthodox Church was undermined – between 1961 -1991 there was no Orthodox church in Ioshkar-Ola, the capital. One of the highlights of this field trip was visiting an Old Believer priest, Fr Sergi Makhnyov, in the small town of Kozmodemyansk located in the area inhabited by the hill Mari. This expedition involved crossing the Volga on a rusty old ferry: although the vessel had a raised gangway both fore and aft, only one could be lowered to let off the cars, so as we moved away from the shore the ferry first turned round so that the end with the functioning gangway was facing Kozmodemyansk.

Fr Sergi met us outside his church and settled us down inside with a cup of tea. Before his ordination, he said, he had served in air transport and had been posted to Afghanistan during the war. When I asked him how he had become an Old Believer, he spoke about his intellectual growth: 'I read a lot of foreign books as a child which developed a sense of patriotism in me.' In the military he had met other Christians, and then, an icon found him, he explained, and 'a seed was sown'. He had bought a Soviet book with definitions of religious terminology which fascinated him and 'I began to think about God'. His regiment was moved and later disbanded: 'I resigned and decided to get ordained as a Russian Orthodox priest.' Later he decided to join the Old Believers: 'I saw much that was incorrect in the Moscow Patriarchate, and I understood that either I had to change my moral principles or leave.' Unlike some Old Believers he

had no belief in the approaching Antichrist and the end of world – in fact he laughed at this question: 'Normal, peaceful life is wonderful. I don't encourage fear about the future: I live from day to day, I don't try to guess the future, I only look as far as tomorrow.'

The Mordovian Republic has two indigenous ethnic groups, the Erzya and the Moksha whose languages, like Mari, also belong to the Finno-Ugrian group. The area was Christianised in the early 16th century and incorporated into Russia by the middle of the century. Despite efforts to convert the Erzya and Moksha many retained their pagan beliefs which are still alive today.

Raisa Kemaikina, an Erzya pagan priestess, and the local artist Andrei Alyoshkin, who converted to Lutheranism and helped found the Church of Ingria in Mordovia, are two important national leaders. Raisa complained to us that her people were oppressed: 'We are a few healthy cells in a sick body. There is no venue where we can meet and speak the Erzya language.' She showed us her tiny office, called the Centre for the Preservation of the Erzya People, where she produced an Erzya national newspaper. A picture on the wall depicted a pagan ceremony: a long line of women circled round a central structure which represented a candle, whereupon Raisa commented that her people believed in one God, the 'great creator' and ruler over protective spirits who were all feminine and helped human beings to be good. The Erzya also venerated, she said, a spirit of the water, of the woods, of the harvest, of the soil, of the wind… I noticed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the wall too. When we visited the Lutheran church we met the Lutheran pastor Alexei Alyoshkin, the brother of Andrei the artist whose large picture of the resurrected Christ adorned the wall above the altar. Pastor Alexei offered us tea plus pastries made by a newly-founded bakery owned by his church, and Mordovian honey made by bees which had the benefit of some wonderful flowers; it was full of vitamins, said Pastor Alexei, with no added sugar. He had 25 regulars in his congregation and 50-60 members who attended on feast days; many of the younger members had moved away. His church struggled with financial problems but it now had close relations with a Swedish Lutheran church in Stockholm, attended by 2000 – a Charismatic congregation – and he hoped to start something similar. 'God helps us each day as we face our difficulties. I do the cleaning, clear away the snow, do the job of treasurer and pastor. We live in the situation of the early church; we feel God is close, answering our problems. When all is easy, you lose this sense.'

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