Keston Newsletter

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Painting by Horia Bernea: Garden & Church, 1985

A Christian Artist in Communist Romania

by Alexandru Popescu

Horia Bernea was one of the most significant Romanian artists of the 20th century. After 1989, he also became famous for setting up the internationally renowned *Muzeul Național al Ţăranului Român* (Romanian Peasant Museum) in Bucharest. He was born in 1938 into a family of intellectuals and shepherds. His father, Ernest Bernea (1905-1990) had studied philosophy with Martin Heidegger and sociology with Dimitrie Gusti (1880-1955), founder of the Romanian School of Sociology and former President of the Romanian Academy. Gusti instilled in his collaborators, and inspired in both Berneas, an interest in sociological research. Combining a multi

Also in this issue:

From the Editor

This year's Keston AGM (see p.21) will be held on **Saturday 28th October** at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine in Limehouse at 12 noon. The AGM in the year 2019 will be a special one as this will be Keston's 50th anniversary: I am delighted to be able to announce that our patron, Bishop Rowan Williams, will be the speaker.

In this issue of the *Keston Newsletter* I have included one of the diaries of Sir John Lawrence, Keston's first Chairman and Michael Bourdeaux's 'mentor', as he writes in his introduction (see pp.32-44). I have also included Professor Kathy Hillman's report about the Keston Center at Baylor where the work is developing in an exciting way. It was a pleasure to welcome Kathy to our June Council of Management meeting.

The leader of Keston's Encyclopaedia team, Sergei Filatov, is the author of an article which examines some of the political and social trends in Russia today, and assesses the important role being played by the Russian Orthodox Church. The Encyclopaedia field trips this year have included one to Novgorod Veliky, to Magadan in the Far East of Russia and one to Kursk. Our final field trip for the year will be to Lipetsk in November. The team's experiences in Magadan in June were coloured by this area's grim past during the Stalinist era: our visit to the Mask of Sorrow, the gigantic memorial to those who died in the Gulag, was unforgettable. To give you a small glimpse of this field trip, I have written a brief account (p.30) of our visit to the Catholic church of the Nativity and its Chapel of the Martyrs.

-disciplinary approach, social pragmatism and pedagogy, Gusti formed teams of specialists from social, medical, agricultural, educational, and economic sciences to write monographs on villages in all the provinces of Romania. Horia was fascinated by this inter-disciplinary way of looking at and representing people and communities.

Shortly before the Soviet army entered Romania in 1944, Ernest Bernea wrote a book on the traditional *civilizația română sătească* ('the civilization of the Romanian village').[1] As a result of this he was seen by the Soviet authorities as a Romanian ultra-nationalist activist and 'enemy of the people', and was forced into exile at Poiana Mărului, the place which was to become so important to his son in his own self-imposed retreat under Communism. In 1984, Ernest Bernea was arrested on political grounds, not for the first time, and savagely beaten by the Securitate for refusing to become an informer.

Initially, Horia was unable to apply to the Academy of Fine Arts in Bucharest due to his 'unhealthy origin' (i.e. his parents were not 'pure proletarians').[2] Consequently, he studied mathematics

and physics at the University of Bucharest (1957-1959), and then architecture (1959-1965). In 1962 he also began studying drawing at the 'Pedagogical Institute', and took part in his first exhibition, put on by the youth branch of the *Uniunea Artiştilor Plastici* (Union of Fine Artists) soon after his graduation in 1965. The 'mystical religious' nature of his work meant that Bernea was subject to sustained surveillance from the Securitate. His long-time friend, the poet and art critic Petru Romoşan, turned out to have been an informer.[3] Of the various groups Bernea founded and joined throughout his adult life, he remained especially active in *Prolog*, a group founded in 1985 by its spiritual mentor Paul Gherasim.[4] Bernea joined the group in 1986 and exhibited with them almost every year until his death in 2000.

Poiana Mărului and the Intelligence of Place

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Bernea himself brought together a group of artists at Poiana Mărului (Braşov County), an idyllic commune in the heart of the Carpathians, not far from the vestiges of a hesychast cave monastery. This group later became *Şcoala de la Poiana Mărului* (a term coined by Radu Popica),[5] but had to remain under the radar of officialdom until the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989. It was an informal, heterogeneous and fluctuating group of artists who shared certain ideals and preoccupations. Among the members the school was also referred to as a 'movement' (Şerban Epure), a 'spiritual gathering' (Teodor Rusu), 'a friendship group of painters' (Mircea Milcovici), and even an 'artistic colony' (Coriolan Babeți).

> 'In the suffocating atmosphere of Romanian art in the 50s-60s, the impulse to form the group came out of a common desire to find a refuge in which everyone would be free to seek their own artistic way. For the then young artists, Poiana Mărului was that "refuge", the place where their passion could express itself fully without any censorship […] Horia Bernea was the central personality of the group, the coagulating factor. The choice of Poiana Mărului was not accidental. Bernea, who spent his childhood in the neighbouring Tohanu Vechi, […] was the one who suggested it.'[6]

In the 1970s, Horia Bernea gradually detached himself as its informal leader from the group, although Poiana Mărului, both as rural commune and artistic community, continued to have a great influence on him.

In the 18th century, the meadows and monastery at another Poiana Mărului (Buzău County) had been the heart of hesychasm, which flowered throughout the Carpathians. Monks such as Basil of Poiana Mărului had settled there in small hermitages, aspiring to the hesychast way of life.[7] In 1958, Decree 410/1959 closed hundreds of monasteries and banned people from taking monastic vows. Nevertheless, the silence and beauty of Poiana Mărului retained the spirit of those hermits on both sides of the Carpathian arc.

Bernea's paintings, with their mythical landscapes which are at the same time both changing and unchanging, reflect that same joy the hesychasts found through silent prayer. His thematic cycles reflect a deep concentration on a single chosen 'object', denoting both familiarity with and uncertainty about such themes, which become, and invite us to engage with, archetypal objects of meditation and contemplation. His different ways of painting the same object seem to create a contemplative distance from it, but also allow Bernea to re-experience 'objects' subjectively as multi-faceted, 'windowed' wholes. This cyclical process of painting follows the old monastic rule of *ora et labora*, in which contemplation and action are inextricably intertwined on the road to spiritual 'perfection' (Matthew 5:48).

Bernea's repetitive representations are not the impulse of perfectionism; rather, they express a sense of wonder at creation in its smallest details. They reflect a process of personal discernment, an exploration in ways of seeing and celebrating objects. To be able to present an identified object in different forms was an expression of creative freedom, and thus of dissent from socialist-materialist ideological dogmas and programmatic methods of influencing public consciousness. Bernea is fascinated with spiritual light: unlike the Impressionist Monet, whose declared interest was in the effects of various forms of lighting and atmospheric conditions on his subjects, Bernea is interested in the transfiguring power of inner light and what that reveals in his objects. He resembles the Orthodox iconographer on his 'apophatic' way to the truth, emphasising the incomprehensibility of God and the limitations of human language, while striving to give coherent and material expression to theological convictions.[8] This apophatic approach is compared by Theodor Enescu, in his introductory notes to Bernea's 1985 exhibition, to Keats' concept of *negative capability*; that is, the Shakespearean ability to contemplate the world without systematically reconciling its contradictory aspects, and to accommodate uncertainties and intuitions without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.[9]

For Bernea, this non-discursive, predominantly visual spiritual way was always rooted in his experiences in Poiana Mărului. It was there that he lost himself in contemplation, both as a child and as a mature artist and where he found himself as an artist, whose vocation was 'not to create but to materialise'.[10] His topography of the conceptual and spiritual structure of a hill, or apples, does not end at the surface of its visual representation but in the 'place of the heart',[11] that place where prayer descends into contemplation and speech is replaced by listening. Unlike a horizontal, expository map which seeks to clarify and order the 'intelligence of place', Bernea's spiritual mapping establishes a vertical journey of ascending and descending within a quiet inner space.

Transparency: Mark of the Sacred

By painting domestic 'objects' in cycles, Bernea invests them with special significance, inviting viewers to find their own way through his spiritual topology. The

artist's inner journey of initiation into this realm of significance can be approached in terms of Mircea Eliade's hermeneutics of religious phenomenology. Bernea's writings and interviews convey a familiarity with Eliade's distinction between 'the sacred' and 'the profane'. According to Eliade this distinction can be overcome in manifestations of sacred reality, in the experience of 'hierophany'. Bernea is aware that such manifestations of the sacred cannot be provoked on demand. He must explore and uncover the 'camouflaged' sacred[12] by a repetitive process of cycles and seasons. In the daily ritual of painting and praying, hierophany can emerge and awaken the iconographer to a certainty of knowledge which extends beyond a discursive understanding of transcendental signs and symbols; Bernea calls this an 'iconography of post-knowledge'.[13] Eliade suggests that hierophany can somehow be initiated from 'below',[14] but Bernea, with his contemplative humility, seems to assume that aesthetic revelation is only attainable as participation in grace 'from above' (which does not exclude anticipatory preparation). Bernea regards revelatory painting as mediating (mark-ing) a decisive encounter between the painter and the viewer. It is as if beneath the layers of paint there is not canvas but a transparency. As Andrei Pleşu writes in his introduction to Bernea's 1985 exhibition catalogue:

> 'Bernea's real is a transparency of the real: not a presence in itself, but the place of a presence. One cannot reach such a real through the direct sensuality of gaze but through study, and the studied self is not practised as intellectual dissection, but as active waiting for an unveiling. The discipline with which Horia Bernea works and his unusual diligence are not therefore expressions of a constitutive "activism", but of a nature in permanent energetic explosion. Bernea's diligence is his form of passivity: a mode of waiting awake for the moment when veils fall. When he shows his own work he often says, this form "has appeared" as an autonomous objective being which is free from the artist's intentionality; but it is not free of his disponibility: it "has appeared" as something expected as it should, in place of its optimal appearance.'

'Dead Nature' and 'Still Life'

Natură moartă, literally 'dead nature' in Romanian, is the translation of 'still life'. The art critic Andrei Pleşu employs this term to describe Bernea's visual universe of life-symbolising 'nourishments', but (for once) the English translation enriches Pleşu's description:

> 'In Horia Bernea's vision, still life, as a genre, undergoes a radical transfiguration. Having become, in modern painting, a simple exercise of the language of Fine Art, it now returns to the sphere of significance [i.e. meaning], undoubtedly benefitting from the technical acquisitions of modernity. […] Whilst in all the great periods of art they [images of food] can be related to a far-off ritual, the still life [as a genre] alone

> seems to derive from the profane circumstances of a feast. The still life was born in the ambience of Alexandrine parties as a representation of food leftovers negligently abandoned at the end of a banquet. […] Horia Bernea lends his still lives an unexpected ritual solemnity: from the tables of Alexandrine banquets or of Jesuit cells, he transfers the "nourishment" to the Byzantine tables of forgiving alms. And if one can say that a still life [depicts] the leftovers from a banquet, we should immediately add that it is not the leftovers of any banquet, but the memorable leftovers from the wedding at Cana.'

Bernea's still lives recall 'guest-gifts' (*xenia*), a phrase coined by ancient Greek artists for the gifts of food and rustic products given to guests, and depicted in wall-paintings. But he seems not so much interested in the abundance of orgiastic feasts, so much as in the small gifts of nourishment given to keep guests going. His *Hranele* ('nourishments') are not only leftovers, signs of a meal enjoyed and gone, but also symbols of the Eucharistic banquet.

1981: *Secolul 20*

By 1981 Horia Bernea was already a well-established international artist. He had been awarded the François Stahly Bursary at the 1971 Paris Biennale and a Romanian Academy prize in 1978; in 1976 his work had been the subject of a film presented at a UNESCO conference in Baghdad. His recent exhibitions had included the 1978 and 1980 Venice Biennales, and in 1980 he also exhibited at the Pompidou Centre in Paris and received positive reviews for his solo exhibitions in London, Liverpool and Newcastle.

In 1981 Bernea was asked to provide, for the first time, the cover for *Secolul 20*, a multi-lingual, monthly journal (though in fact its publication was sporadic) which was circulated internationally and aimed at demonstrating the freedom artists and writers enjoyed in Communist Romania. At this point it had a subtitle *Revista de Sinteză* ('Synthesis Magazine'), and though edited by the Writers' Union, it was concerned with 'world literature, art and cultural dialogue'. In *Secolul 20* No. 11-12 (251-252), edited by Andrei Brezianu and with graphics by Geta Brătescu, there are contributions from Serbian, Swedish and English writers (including Ted Hughes), homages to the Romanian poet Nichita Stanescu, a section devoted to Wittgenstein, and translations of Graham Greene, Joyce Carey, Geoffrey Hill and other English poets into Romanian.

The painting Bernea provided for the cover, entitled *Natură moartă*, is a striking image: a jar full of red jam, sealed with a cloth and pressed down further with a piece of wood weighted with a stone, standing in front of a heavy, granite-like cube; both jar and cube stand on a bed of fruit against a black background, framed by a pale wooden square frame. The composition could be interpreted symbolically as representing the artist himself, as the muted *poeta vates*, voice of the people, the jam representing the mass of fruit squeezed under the weight of formal, sombre and unforgiv-

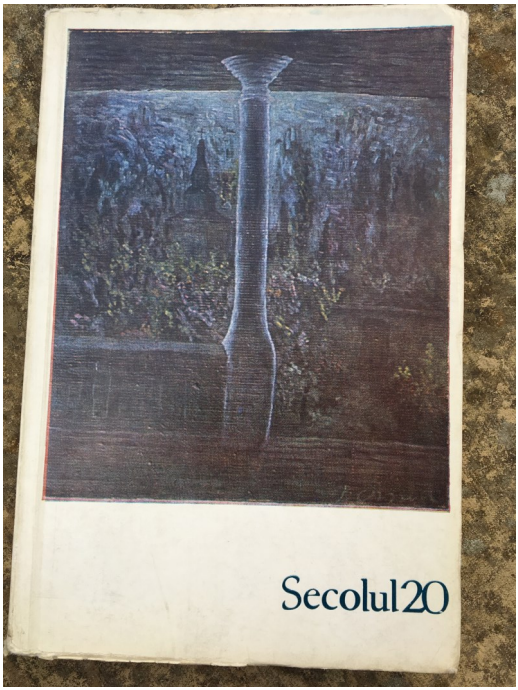
ing structure. This 'dead nature' can also be regarded simply as 'still life'. A section on Bernea, though listed in the contents page, appears to be missing. In fact, Bernea's substantial and illustrated 36-page section does appear but without page numbers, after page 144 and before page 145. These pages contain high-quality reproductions of Bernea's work, and even a photograph of the artist standing by some of his paintings. It ends with a collage of newspaper cuttings from the British press, following his exhibitions in 1980, and a quotation taken from another artist, Paul Neagu, who writes: 'Bernea's magic prayers are all transparencies of a sad heart singing with joy; or perhaps he, like Van Gogh or Rublev, celebrates the Eucharist in colour.'

Bernea's funeral 'banners'

At first sight this editorial anomaly in *Secolul 20* might be considered to have been a mistake, but taking into account the tight control over every aspect of editing, publishing and distribution, it seems inconceivable that something like this could slip through. As will be shown below, there was a continuous struggle behind the closed doors of publishing houses against fierce and absurd censorship; this 'error' may have been the result of another unknown drama.

1985 Exhibition

Bernea's March-April 1985 exhibition in Bucharest was perhaps the most significant exhibition of his work. It included three sketchbooks, 125 studies and 121 paintings, of which 84 were funeral 'banners', and, remarkably, three were self-portraits (one from 1966, two from 1978).[15] Bernea wrote and gave interviews about his views on art and the masters, as well as about his own work. There were discussions about him and his work, especially his series of funeral 'banners' with their pronounced metaphysical and religious character, on Radio Free Europe and Voice of America. His fame was unusual for an artist in Communist Romania, especially during the period of the Ceausescus' paranoid personality cult, which reached its peak after the failed coup d'état attempt in 1984.



Bernea's cover for Secolul 20

1985-1987: *Secolul 20*

For a second time, Bernea was invited to provide the cover and illustrations for the spring issue of *Secolul 20* [No. 4-5-6 (292-293-294)] in 1985. This time he produced a painting called *In Pridvor* ('On the Veranda'): it is a typical spring view from a veranda outside a country house; in the foreground is the veranda itself, with a great central white column, while in the background is a small Transylvanian church with an even smaller cross on its spire. Compositionally, the vertical column splits the painting in two and opens the image up like a book; the eye is drawn to focus on that small cross, a moment of clarity among blurred trees.

This cover provoked great opposition and led to almost two years of negotiation between the editor-in-chief, Dan Hăulică, and senior Communist censors. The issue was finally published in 1987 with no major changes other than the removal of Andrei Brezianu's name from the title page following his defection to the West, and with no official explanation for the delay. This controversy only came to light after 1989, when it became possible to publish diaries from the period. Even so, we still have only fragments of the story.

Alexandru Baciu (b.1916), an editor and translator for the publishing house 'Univers', wrote in his diary entry for 10 November 1986:

'… intense pressure was put on Dan Hăulică [editor-in-chief], especially since some issues [i.e. the first run of promotion copies] had already been distributed…'

Ten days later he recorded:

'We received orders "from above" not to deliver copies of the last issue of the journal although it had been ready for more than two weeks and we have re-printed the title page omitting the name of Andrei Brezianu from the editorial board […] In the same spirit of chicanery those at the Writers' Union and the Council of Socialist Culture and Education now also want to reprint the cover of said issue [without Bernea's paint-

ing] because in the reproduction of Horia Bernea's painting one can decipher the cross of a small wooden church.'[16]

Monica Lovinescu (1923-2008), a former radio producer at Radio Free Europe and a prominent opponent of the Romanian Communist regime, wrote in her diary entry for 2 December 1986:

'They want to remove from that journal one of Horia Bernea's pictures [Bernea's cover] because of a little cross, and also its subtitle "Revista de Sinteză".[17] Hăulică is standing ground. The whole editorial board received only one month's salary when they were due two.'[18]

Then on 25 December 1986 Baciu describes the stalemate:

'the general situation is the same as two months ago. Comrades Dulea and D.R. Popescu insist on hindering the publication of issue no.4-5-6/1985. The reasons are those mentioned before: apart from the omission of [Andrei Brezianu from the] journal title page – which would very much change its profile – they request the removal of the cover with Horia Bernea's painting and some of his coloured illustrations, and also of some black and white photos accompanying an article by Răzvan Theodorescu.[19] Their ridiculous pretext is the religious character of all this [i.e. Bernea's cross]. In reality, the reason is their blatant enmity against Dan Hăulică, with his independence in establishing the journal's profile and the fact that he does not consult his superiors...'[20]

Constantin Mateescu, former scientific advisor to the Romanian Academy and editor at the Romanian Institute for Cultural Relations Abroad, on Sunday 8 February 1987 writes:

'Hăulică is waiting for "the last judgement" from the [Political] Bureau for the cover of *Secolul 20*'s last issue, created by H. Bernea which figures a spire with an almost invisible cross. Horrible times!!'[21]

A few months later in Paris, Monica Lovinescu received new information and wrote the following diary entry on 16 July 1987:

'My article[22] [on the seizing of copies of *Secolul 20*] was immediately followed by Hăulică's summons to Enache [censor] who still tries to delay. On Wednesday Hăulică was summoned to DRP [Dumitru Radu Popescu], who said that he would immediately release the journal if […] he removes Bernea's picture with the little cross from the cover. […] Hăulică laughed in their face.'[23]

Eventually the issue was published in August 1987, almost two years late. This might have been triggered by UNESCO awarding *Secolul 20* their prize for the 'best art journal' in June 1987, but publication was undoubtedly helped by the voice of Monica Lovinescu and Radio Free Europe.

The Little Cross

While censors and publishers argued over the cover image of an élite journal, people in Romania were starving in the street, queuing for chicken claws (at a time when food was being exported to get rid of international debt), motherhood became a state duty and women without children had to pay a 'celibacy tax', electricity and heat were intermittent, and television was limited to two hours a day with alienating black and white footage of 'our Beloved Leader' visiting the world.[24] Bernea's response to this ideologically induced autistic state of literalistic 'political correctness' was to paint a small cross, which communicated, without words and without compromise, a commitment to his Christian way of life as an artist and discreet confessor of faith.

Bernea's Christian commitment became more explicit after 1989, when he became director of the Peasant Museum in Bucharest: the first exhibition organised by him, which he conceived as a work of art in itself, was called *Crucea* ('The Cross'). It was intended as a 'permanent' ethnographic exhibition and a space in which people were encouraged to experience Romanian peasant life as temporary 'inhabitants' of the museum. However, in 2010 a suggestion to replace *Crucea* with a virtual exhibition provoked a public outcry and this controversy continues.

For Bernea the historical reality of life under tyranny was sublimated and transformed in icon-like art, revealing his sense of what a contemporary dissident thinker called 'sacred history', 'suprahistory', or everything in history that relates to salvation: 'the suprahistorical is the sacred punctuating space and time', it is the incarnation of Christ.[25] The cross is central and symbolic for Bernea, as revelation of the Passion of Christ for the transformation of the world. It is the sign marking the path of personal transformation, and the freedom of transformation for the Romanian people after the collapse of atheist Communism. In Bernea's vision, *Crucea* has no resentful reference to Communism; this is in striking contrast to the Communist utopia and its claim to create a self-centred, state-dependent *om nou* ('new man'), as opposed to the religious man. Self-glorifying man-made logos, such as the hammer and sickle or the swastika, are foreign to Bernea. A cross pulsates behind each of his paintings – a sign of joyful renewal and love.

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1. Ernest Bernea, *Civilizația română sătească* (Bucharest: Editura Vremea, 2007).
2. From 'An Unpublished Interview with Horia Bernea' by Claudiu Ionescu, Formula AS, no.752 (2007), http://www.formula-as.ro/2007/752/acasa-1/un-interviu-inedit-horia-bernea-7660 (retrieved 17 August 2016).
3. See notes 52-53 in Gabriel Andreescu, *Existența prin cultură: Represiune, colaboraționism și rezistența intelectuală sub regimul communist* (Iasi: Polirom, 2015), p. 345.
4. Paul Gherasim (1925-2016) was a discreet spiritual father for many Christian painters of that time. The group 'Prolog' aimed to express the divine order in their hieratic art. See also Mihai Sârbulescu, *Dosar Prolog* (Bucharest: Editura Ileana, 2011).

5. See Radu Popica, '"Școala de la Poiana Mărului" – o experiență fundamentală a picturii românești postbelice', http://www.muzeulartabv.ro/docs/TEXT%20POIANA%20MARULUI.pdf.
6. R. Popica, op. cit., p. 2.
7. Basil, who himself had collected a significant patristic library in his hermitage of Poiana Mărului, was the spiritual father of St Paisy Velichkovsky (1722-1794), who collected early hesychast writings and translated them from Greek into Slavonic. Known as the Philokalia, this collection of texts had a decisive influence on 19th century writers such as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. See Alexandru Popescu, *Petre Țuțea: Between Sacrifice and Suicide* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p.281.
8. A. Popescu, op cit., p.136.
9. Li Ou, *Keats and Negative Capability* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009), pp. ix-x.
10. Horia Bernea, 'Lui Andreescu – Omagiul pictorilor', in *Arta*, December 1975 - quoted in Theodor Enescu's essay, 'Transparența supremă a operei' ['The Supreme Transparency' (of Bernea's work)], *Secolul 20*, 11-12 (251-252), 1981, no page number.
11. See Elizabeth Behr-Sigel, *The Place of the Heart: An Introduction to Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012).
12. Eliade's underlying assumptions are that: 'the sacred camouflages itself within the profane and is therefore largely unrecognisable'; and that, 'in order to reach a higher form of existence, one must be able to recognise its revelations, which are sometimes expressed by signs.' See Wendy Doniger, 'Introduction II: Life and Art, or Politics and Religion, in the Writings of Mircea Eliade', in *Hermeneutics, Politics, and the History of Religions: The Contested Legacies of Joachim Wach & Mircea Eliade*, ed. by Christian K. Wedemeyer, Wendy Doniger (Oxford: OUP, 2010), p. xxix.
13. *Secolul 20*, No. 11-12 (251-252), 1981. No page number; mentioned in Enescu's essay above, footnote no.3, quoting the artist's own text published in English for the catalogue of his Edinburgh exhibition in 1971.
14. This 'progressional view of hierophanies' is described in David Cave, *Mircea Eliade's Vision for a New Humanism* (Oxford: OUP, 1993), p.39. Apud A. Popescu, *op. cit*., p.176.
15. Self-portraits were in effect prohibited by censorship at that time, when every journal and almanac was published with a photo of the President on the front page: it was rare to see close-up photos of anyone other than Ceausescu and his wife.
16. Alexandru Baciu, *Din amintirile unui secretar de redacție: pagini de jurnal*, vol. 2 [1979-1989] (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1997-1999), p. 214.
17. The censors wanted to replace *Revista de Sinteză* with *Revista de Literatură*, meaning *Secolul 20* would only publish literature and literary criticism.
18. Monica Lovinescu, *Jurnal 1985-1988*, vol. 2 (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2003), pp. 175-6.
19. Răzvan Theodorescu (b.1939), an art historian and senator, and former Director of Romanian television after 1989.
20. Baciu, op. cit., p.218.
21. Constantin Mateescu, *Jurnal, Vol. V (1984-1989)* (Râmnicu Vâlcea: Editura Silviu Popescu, 2001), p. 216.
22. Published in France – the story was still not publicly known in Romania.
23. Lovinescu, op.cit., p.228.
24. For a good description of the situation, see 'Ceausescu's Children' by Wendell Steavenson in *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2014/dec/10/-sp-ceausescus-children.
25. Petre Țuțea (1902-1991) borrowed the neo-Kantian term *übergeschichtlich* ('superhistorical') from Heinrich Rickert, but developed it in a distinctive soteriological way. See A Popescu, op. cit., pp.142; 150-1.

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The Ideal Past and the Russian Orthodox Church

by Sergei Filatov

How one thinks about the past is an important part of a person's outlook and sense of identity. The attitude of people from post-Communist countries to their pre-Communist past has become particularly important, while the discarding of Communist ideology has engendered an unhealthy nostalgia for the motherland 'which we have lost'. The Communist interpretation of history presented the past as dark and dirty, claiming that only Communist Parties spared unfortunate nations from exploitation, religious obscurantism and the inhuman relations of man red in tooth and claw. The focus on returning to a pre-Communist past helped to establish democracy in those nations which experienced a period of democracy, even if brief and not fully developed. How much more complicated was the establishment of democracy for those nations, like Russia, which had never experienced such a period. To restore a link in time broken by a Communist regime requires strong and unremitting effort, as demonstrated by the past 30 years. For Russia the establishing of democracy will be achieved not through rejecting historical tradition, but rather through searching for a way to reconcile tradition with democratic values. Today in Russia an intellectual process of this kind is beginning.

The absence in contemporary post-soviet Russia of an intelligible system of intellectual principles and values has resulted in exaggerated significance being awarded to views of Russia in the past, to historical figures and particular historical periods. These views, to a certain degree, have taken the place of political doctrines and programmes. Debates about the past have become debates about the future.

The democratic changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the effort to build a society on western lines, were not underpinned by any serious or solid principles. If you had asked a Moscow run-of-the-mill 'democrat' or intellectual in 1990 why he was a 'democrat' you would not have heard anything that made any sense. Russian democracy appeared to be suspended in an ideological vacuum. It was based on an indeterminate, amorphous and eclectic set of ideas. This vacuum was filled with simplistic ideas such as 'become like all civilised countries', achieve 'a respectable' standard of living as seen in films, advertisements and on foreign tourist trips. These ideas were simple, evoked primitive emotions and lacked any theoretical basis. They have been readily supplemented by what survived from Marxism: having lost faith in a Communist paradise, many Russians remained faithful to a number of Marxist principles which took on primitive and vulgar forms – e.g. 'if we get richer, build capitalism, we

will become more honest, cultured, humane' became a new belief. Morality, and even 'salvation' in a religious sense, were seen as products of economic growth.[1]

The majority of those who supported market reforms were not Orthodox believers or atheists, but people with a vague religiosity. The sociological study 'Religion and Politics in Contemporary Mass Consciousness'[2] demonstrated the unexpected correlation of political and religious views. Non-dogmatic believers in 'supernatural forces', reincarnation, astrology and the like, more often agreed with democratic market reforms than did Christians or atheists. An eclectic non-dogmatic religiosity developed in parallel with the growth of interest in market reform: I will call this religiosity 'religious entropy' since very few of these people joined either traditional or non-traditional religions; they believed in anything while in fact believing in nothing. Spiritual relativism encouraged the growth of moral relativism too. *Perestroika* softened the ideological rigour of systems, and led to imprecision in the worldview of a society which easily slipped into 'the game without rules' of the post-soviet marketplace.

Those who experienced the market euphoria of the late 1980s and early 1990s were not interested in Russia's past or in her good or bad leaders; their indifference reflected their attitude to historical myths for which they had no use. In reality, their position presupposed starting from a blank sheet. But such views did not last long. The small group of activists who preserved their faith in the market intact during that period, now sharply and mockingly criticise government and society for praising St Vladimir, Stolypin and the heroes of 1812. However, their criticisms have been sidelined by new social processes.

From 1991-1993 social attitudes took a radical new direction. In the place of western 'market' euphoria and the expectation that the new 'bright future' would be quickly and painlessly achieved, came disillusion and apathy. The numerous sociological surveys of those years show that while by mid-1991 no less than two thirds of the population considered that Russia must imitate the West, by 1992 the same majority considered that Russia had its own special path, was a basically different civilisation and should not measure itself against the West. Liberalism, thanks to the disastrous policies of Yeltsin's team, was defeated for the time being, and since then has had little support. Recent surveys show that the majority prefer authoritarianism, state power, militarism and isolationism. Stability has become the dominating political value. Ideologies and political programmes remain weak.

The search for guidance from the historical past can theoretically either focus on a) the pre-soviet past which is seen as the ideal, b) on the soviet past, or c) on both periods – both pre-soviet and soviet. And those who long to restore the past have one extraordinary characteristic in common: they rarely focus on any particular person or aspect of the past. Nostalgia for the soviet past is blossoming (for the Lenin, Stalin and Brezhnev periods), as well as love for the White Movement,

and for Nicholas II and other tsars. Only Yeltsin and Chubais, *perestroika*, Gorbachev, Rodzianko and Kerensky are not popular. A few people select a Communist Party leader or a tsar, but the choice of an idol varies and many Party leaders and tsars have become guiding stars. Support for the restoration of everything ('total restoration', as I will call it) dominates the public mind. And what of the government? It thinks like the people: it supports 'total restoration' – this has become today's political ideology.

Moves to stop the distortion of history began so as to prevent any criticism of Soviet leaders during World War II and criticism of the ensuing occupation of Eastern Europe. Bit by bit, any negative evaluation of the Russian government at any point in history was deemed to be a distortion, and the mainstream of political life – Duma deputies, state officials, journalists in state media, various 'experts' – all supported 'total restoration'. Russia's current Minister of Culture (since 2012) Vladimir Medinsky has produced what amounts to a catechism for 'total restoration': between 2008-2011 he published a series under the general title of *Myths about Russia* (e.g. *Russian Drunkenness, Laziness and Cruelty*; *Russian Democracy, Filth and 'the Prison of Nations'*; *Russian Robbery and a Particular Path to Patience*) in which he rejected negative stereotypes about Russia and its history. In 2011 Medinsky returned to the subject of historical myth, this time with a focus on World War II, when he published *War. Myths about the USSR. 1939-1945.* In all his writing he argues that Russia has always been a civilised, progressive state which engaged in just wars and was continually slandered by western writers.

'Total restoration' involves promoting national unity, through 'ending the Civil War' and reconciling Reds and Whites. For example, the Russian authorities and President Putin energetically encouraged the reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with the Moscow Patriarchate in 2007. Nostalgia for the tsarist past assumes support for the ideal of a Christian state which advocates justice and mercy. Nostalgia for the Soviet past assumes support for a socialist state, for the equality of all and the principle of collectivism. But what does a mixture of these two views, a nostalgia for both, assume? David Hesse in his article 'Russia, a living cemetery of the past' defines this sort of nostalgia thus:

> 'Putin and his circle are not interested in any particular period but in the symbols of power. This involves a mixed collage: in one place a Red Army hero beckons, in another the remains of the last tsar are reburied, and over all this reigns the medieval spirit of the Orthodox Church. It is all about power and the pathos of victory.'[3]

With varying degrees of success, the supporters of tsarist Russia and those of the Soviet system, each in their own way, want to improve their society and state, but none of them consider the moral aspect: a powerful kingdom under an unconquerable ruler may be a lovely romantic concept, but were this to be expressed in the dry formulae of histori-

cal analyses or political programmes, it would most likely not fill the heart with joy but rather with disgust. An unspoken dream about a strong state with an almighty leader at the helm can be beguiling but it will not last.

The Soviet 'restoration' myth constitutes the main threat for democracy in Russia. Many sociological surveys demonstrate that there is mass support for Stalin, Brezhnev and Lenin, in that order. Most of the politicians and publicists who want to curtail civil liberties and strengthen authoritarian power, refer back to the authority of Soviet leaders; they may respect the traditions of tsarist Russia but they rarely refer to tsarism and consider it a dispensable addition.

Statue of Ivan the Terrible

In October 2016 in Oryol a statue of Ivan the Terrible was erected for the first time in Russia. The reign of this autocrat has been portrayed by almost all professional historians as the triumph of senseless and cruel repression against the people, as defeat in war, and the degradation of the economy and social institutions. On a wave of praise for great rulers, even this blood-thirsty tyrant, despised by all, became a hero for a particular coterie. Journalists, activists, some politicians and propagandists, with a minimal school knowledge of history, brazenly rejected the research of all respected historians and declared the greatness of Ivan the Terrible.

The statue was erected by the Oryol Governor, Vadim Potomsky who is a Communist. Gennadi Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party, proceeded to condemn all who criticised the action of Potomsky describing them as 'liberals and people who hate Soviet power', and commented:

'Without St Vladimir, Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Joseph Stalin and Vladimir Lenin, I do not think our great motherland would have existed.'

He claimed that vilification of Ivan the Terrible had come from the West, and that many western monarchs had been much more cruel.

During media debates, the journalist Andrei Melnikov pointed out that Ivan the Terrible treated the clergy with particular brutality,[4] so it was interesting to note the reaction of Orthodox believers. Most, while tending to whitewash and praise everything that preceded the Soviet regime, nevertheless supported the view of historians and church tradition which saw Ivan the Terrible as Russia's King Herod. But there was also disagreement among Orthodox believers. The statue was blessed by Skhi-archimandrite Ilii (Nozdrin), none other than Patriarch Kirill's confessor. During the unveiling Nozdrin praised Ivan the Terrible for uniting Russia and defend-

ing it from its enemies. Patriarch Kirill, however, avoided making any public statement; all he did, according to Governor Potomsky, was say in a private conversation that Ivan the Terrible had been 'a powerful statesman'. Debates on Orthodox internet sites were particularly heated, but most comments did not express admiration for this King Herod.

The social activists and journalists who produce propaganda supporting Stalinism (Zakhar Prilepin and Alexandr Prokhanov are the most prominent) show respect for tsarist Russia, but the achievements of the 1917 Revolution are more important to them. However there is no logical and principled institutionalisation of Stalinism today, and all the most influential pro-soviet anti-democratic spokesmen have undermined their ideology with their admiration for 'our ancient spiritual and cultural traditions'. The movement supporting 'restoration' which is focused on pre-soviet Russia, is less aggressive and has vaguer criteria. And support for pre-soviet Russia does not necessarily include revival of tsarist political institutions: of the 15-25% who support the pre-soviet period, only about 8% want the monarchy restored.

The anti-soviet 'restoration' movement may be much weaker than the Stalinist movement, but there exists in contemporary Russia an influential anti-Stalinist and anti-soviet institution which advocates the revival of pre-soviet traditions, and that is the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). It is a complex institution with its many thousands of clergy and laity. From time to time some priests and lay members make Stalinist and pro-soviet pronouncements, while the liberal anti-clerical media are always keen to give as much publicity as possible to such excesses. But such pronouncements are rare: there are very few Orthodox Stalinists and most of them are marginalised low-level clergy and church activists. Positive statements from the Patriarch or other church leaders about the achievements of the Soviet regime are rare and most often critical. Rather, their statements affirm that the Russian people, despite the atheist regime, preserved in their soul Christian values and a Christian mind-set, and only thereby were the victories during the war and other achievements made possible. Nothing good, in their view, could come from godless Communism.

From the early 1990s the Communist Party tried to win the support of the ROC and took its side on occasion, seeing it as an ally in the fight against the West and liberalism. Under Yeltsin the Communists helped shore up the ROC's opposition to some of the Kremlin's excessively democratic initiatives. But the ideology and political interests of the two institutions diverged too widely and there was no 'Orthodox-Communist rapprochement'.[5] By 2000 the ROC felt secure and did not need the support of the now weakened Communist Party, referring to it with less and less respect. As each year passed, the attitude of the ROC to the Soviet regime became clearer: it had been a period of the most brutal persecution against the church, a period of martyrdom and Christian witness. Two sacred locations for the commemoration of the Soviet regime's victims

Icon of the Sovereign Mother of God showing Stalin surrounded by his generals

were identified – the Solovetsky Monastery, and the Butov killing fields near Moscow where between 1938-1952 many thousands were shot, and which became a symbol for the church of soviet barbarity. An impressive open-air liturgy and requiem were celebrated there on 27 May 2000 in memory of those who had died, with Patriarch Alexi II officiating. Since then such services have taken place every year.

The efforts of the Communists (the Reds) to make peace with the Whites (the ROC) have been consistently rejected by the church. The most vocal parliamentarian to have supported these initiatives has been the Stalinist writer, Alexandr Prokhanov, who invited Metropolitan Illarion (Alfeev), head of the church's Foreign Relations Department, to take part in a discussion about Stalin in May 2015. At the end of the discussion Metropolitan Illarion stated:

> 'Take King Herod for example: you could say that he achieved certain goals – he rebuilt churches and completed other successful projects. But he loved power, he murdered his relations, he killed the babes of Bethlehem. Maybe he feared for his position during difficult times; this could be interpreted as a struggle to maintain political stability. However, I think that the crimes he committed must not be justified…'[6]

That same month, during a meeting of the Union or Russian Writers in Belgorod, Prokhanov publicised what he called 'The Icon of the Sovereign Mother of God' in which Stalin was portrayed surrounded by his generals. This image was blessed by a monk from Mount Athos, but in an official press release the Belgorod Metropolia stated that this was not an icon but a picture painted in the style of an icon, and that none of those por-

trayed had been canonised by the ROC, while some of those included had in fact persecuted the church. The statement also described the painting as the manifesto of what it termed a 'secular religion' which opposed Russian Orthodoxy which was a faith founded on divine revelation.

In the summer of 2016 I spoke to Bishop Mitrofan of the Severomorsk Diocese (Murmansk Metropolia) and asked him about the attitude of the clergy to the Soviet regime and to Stalin in particular. The bishop convinced me that the Patriarch and the vast majority of the clergy were personally deeply opposed to both. He pointed to the pronouncements of Skhi-archimandrite Ilii (Nozdrin), the Patriarch's confessor, who stated in an interview with the journalist Anatoli Mishchenko:

> 'What is Communism? It killed faith. The picture is clear: Communists are followers of Satan, of the devil, who wanted to kill Orthodoxy.'

When asked about Stalinism, Skhi-archimandrite Ilii added:

> 'It was a regime of criminals. They had no mercy. Whom did they send to Solovki and the Kolyma mines? Ordinary Russian people, workers. Solzhenitsyn has described it all. How many perished! This was all part of Stalin's inhuman administration. He was a criminal and governed like a criminal. Statues of Lenin must be torn down. Both Lenin and Stalin were terrorists, motivated by hatred.'[7]

Skhi-archimandrite Ilii

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. The government, political parties and the church are planning to mark this event. The Minister of Culture, Vladimir Medinsky, announced the government's official position on national reconciliation in a speech at a round table discussion – entitled 'A Hundred Years after the Great Russian Revolution: An Interpretation in the Name of Consolidation' – which was held on 22 May 2015 at the Museum of Russian Contemporary History. Medinsky called for Reds and Whites to be reconciled and gave a positive evaluation of Soviet history:

> 'The great Russian Revolution of 1917 will always remain one of the most important events of the 20th century. Despite the many diverging

views on these events which took place nearly a century ago, one cannot deny that the attempt to build on earth a new just society changed decisively the path of Russia's historical development and had a great influence on the peoples of this planet. […] Today we can acknowledge the tragic consequences of society's schism into opposing sides. But we must not perpetuate the division among our forebears between those who were right and those who were wrong, as each side understood in its own way how to enable Russia to flourish. Both "Reds" and "Whites" were motivated by patriotism […] Today's generations should see expressed in them the strength of the human spirit and the heroism of our forebears. The Soviet period which followed the 1917 Revolution made gigantic advances. '[8]

The leadership of the ROC made two decisions about the approaching anniversary. At a meeting of the Holy Synod on 16 April 2016 it was decided to form a working group to prepare the church's programme on celebrating the 100th anniversary 'of the murder of the Russian church's first martyrs'. At its meeting on 13 June 2016, instructions were given on the prayers to be said for the martyrs. And one of the professors at the Moscow Theological Academy, Fr Maxim Kozlov, observed that in 2017 'the church will remember the anniversary as the start of persecution' and would commemorate the martyrs, including those of the 1920s and 1930s,

Fr Maxim Kozlov

'because, in the eyes of the church, the new martyrs are Russia's most important 20th century heroes.'

Those who hanker after pre-soviet Russia have no clear political aims. Consider the evolution of views on Nicholas II: in the 1990s when the monarchists within the ROC won their fight to get the royal family canonised, this struggle appeared to be part of the monarchists' campaign for the restoration of the Russian Empire. Now the image of Nicholas and his wife, in the mind of ordinary Orthodox believers, is one of an ideal Orthodox family, strong and moral. When the film 'Matylda' about Nicholas's romance with the ballerina Matylda Krzesińska was released in 2017, it led to much consternation among many believers. They were not in the slightest bit interested in the many negative assessments of Nicholas as a political leader. What they could not bear was the thought that this saint had betrayed his wife.

Nicholas II & his family

The distinctive nature of the ROC's position is clear. But it involves a paradox: the ROC, publicly opposed to democracy, is gradually becoming one of the main opponents of a revival of Stalinism and Soviet practices, and it is Stalinism and Leninism which represent the greatest danger in the way of democracy in Russia. Today when the liberal media have in many respects lost their audience, the parish priest in a village or provincial town will talk about the immorality and inhumanity of the Soviet regime. And in this way, regardless of his own views, he will be on many occasions the only person who will be working in support of democracy.

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1. See D. Furman: 'Historical Materialism Turned Upside Down', *Svobodnaya mysl'* 1995, No.3, pp.65-73.
2. L. Vorontsova & S. Filatov *Religiosity, Democracy and Authoritarianism*, Politicheskie issledovaniya, 1993, No.3, pp.141-49.
3. *Tages anzeiger*, 22 September 2016, http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/ausland/standard/russland-ein-lebendiger-friedhof/story/26230132.
4. Andrei Melnikov, 'A Russian Kind of Herod or a Christian on the Throne', *Nezavisimaya gazeta* 2 November 2016.
5. Phrase from A. Verkhovsky, 'Russian Political Orthodoxy: Understanding and Divergence' in *Putyami nesvobody,* Moscow, Sova Centre, 2005, pp.54-57.
6. *Zavtra,* 11 June 2015.
7. *Grazhdansky forum*, 3 June, 2015.
8. See: http://www.pravmir.ru/vladimir-medinskiy-raznitsa-vo-mneniyah-o-revolyutsii-1917-goda-povod-dlya-dialoga-a-ne-konflikta-video-1/#ixzz3bGHq5s00. See also: http://www.pravmir.ru/vladimir-medinskiy-raznitsa-vo-mneniyah-o-revolyutsii-1917-goda-povod-dlya-dialoga-a-ne-konflikta-video-1/#ixzz3bGHNm1LX .

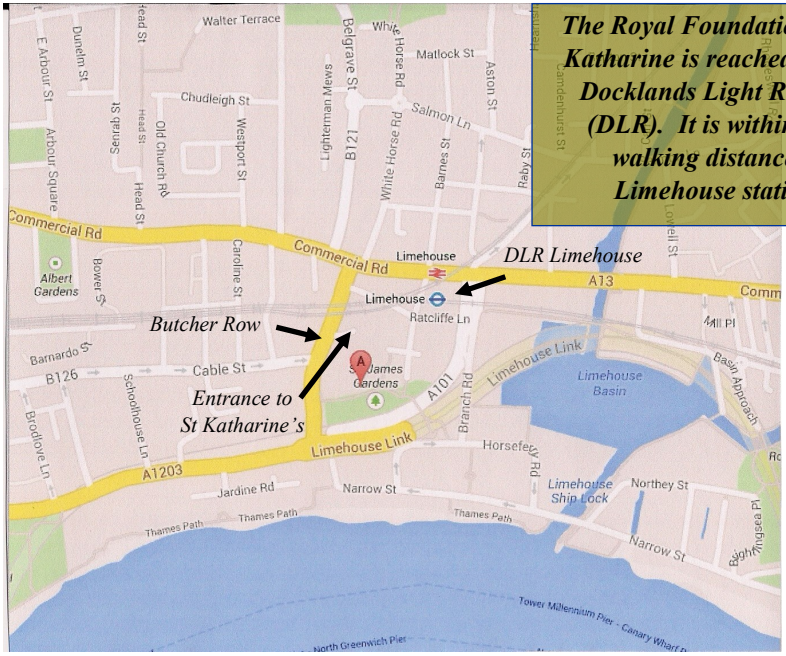
Sergei Filatov *is a sociologist on the staff of Moscow's Oriental Institute and a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He heads Keston Institute's Encyclopaedia team.*

Keston AGM

Saturday 28th October 2017
at 12 noon

The Royal Foundation of St Katharine
Butcher Row
London E14 8DS

12 noon	AGM
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Talk by Alyona Kojevnikov: 'My Experience as Director of Keston's Information Department'
2.45pm	Talk by Giles Udy: 'Revolutionary Enthusiasm - Soviet Communism and the British Labour Party, 1917-1939'
3.30pm	Alyona Kojevnikov and Giles Udy in conversation
4.00pm	Tea



The Royal Foundation of St Katharine is reached via the Docklands Light Railway (DLR). It is within easy walking distance of Limehouse station.

Report from Baylor

The Keston Center for Religion, Politics and Society

2016-2017 Highlights

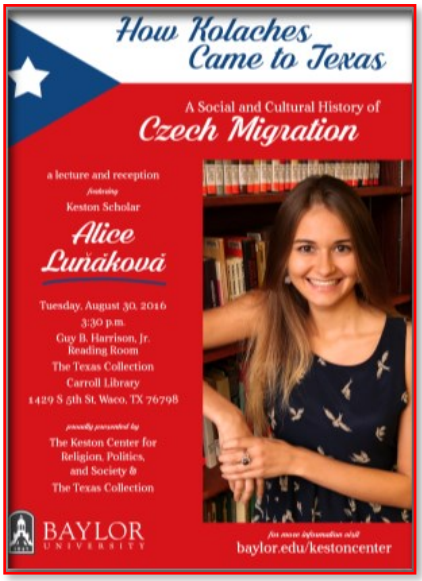
by Kathy Hillman

Professor Kathy Hillman

The Keston Center for Religion, Politics, and Society joins with the Keston Institute (UK) to achieve its mission and is committed to the preservation and utilisation of the library and archive held in the Michael Bourdeaux Research Center. The Keston Center at Baylor University seeks to promote research, teaching, and understanding of religion and politics in Communist, post-Communist, and other totalitarian societies.

The Keston Center sponsored two public lectures during the academic year and was featured at the annual Library Fellows donor appreciation Christmas reception. The spring lecturer also made presentations at two additional campus events.

On 30 August 2016 Alice Luňáková, a graduate of Masaryk University, Prague, and a former Keston researcher and McLennan Community College exchange student, spoke on the subject of her thesis. Her talk, entitled 'How Kolaches Came to Texas: A Social and Cultural History of Czech Migration,' attracted a crowd of more than 250 and examined causes and effects for the move of many Czech citizens to Texas because of the availability of affordable land and the assistance of individuals and such groups as the SPJST (Slavonic Benevolent Order of the State of Texas). A reception followed, complete with cookies and kolaches donated by Mimi Montgomery Irwin and the Village Bakery in West that claims to be the 'oldest Czech Bakery in Texas'.



On 24 February 2017, Roman Lunkin, a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and member of Keston's Encyclopaedia team, spoke on 'Today's Russia: Religion, Politics, and Society.' Roman is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Europe within the Russian Academy of Sciences and writes on the relationship of society, culture and religion in Russia and Eurasia. With Russia constantly in the international spotlight, this timely presentation provided an opportunity to broaden understanding of contemporary issues. He showed how deeply entwined church and state are in Russia. His research found that religious life in Russia could be an example of both the most democratic and authoritarian ways of organising society. He also argued that in evangelical communities there was increasing interest in democracy. A panel consisting of Xenia Dennen, Keston's Chairman, former US Congressman Chet Edwards, and the Ukrainian

Roman Lunkin

The panel & the audience

Professor Sergiy Kudelia from Baylor's Political Science Department, responded to Roman's presentation, discussed the topic and answered questions from the audience. Wallace Daniel, Distinguished University Professor of History at Mercer University, chaired the

discussion. A reception for the speaker and panel members preceded the lecture which was held in the Kayser Auditorium. About 150 people, including students, faculty, staff and community members, were in the audience. Roman held additional informal sessions with Baylor undergraduate and graduate students during his stay.

Tastes and Traditions of Christmas

The Libraries chose 'Tastes and Traditions of Christmas' as the theme for the 2016 Library Fellows Christmas Reception prior to the Baylor Christmas concert. The event highlighted Christmas memories and traditions connected with food and family. Library Fellows, including members of the Board of Advisors and library staff, shared personal anecdotes or read stories from the University Libraries' collections. Guests enjoyed an exhibition of the material and received sets of recipe cards reflecting the narratives. The Keston Center selected: Janina's Piernik (Polish) from *Treasured Polish Christmas Customs and Traditions: Carols, Decorations and a Christmas Play* (Minneapolis: Polanie Publishing, 1972).

Baylor Library Fellows Christmas event

The Keston Advisory Board and the Council of Management (Keston UK)

The Keston Advisory Board, including newly selected members for three-year terms, met on 24 February 2017 in coordination with the visit of Xenia Dennen, Keston's Chairman who delivered a report on the work of Keston UK. Kathy Hillman, Director of the Keston Center, provided updates and reported that Keston had received more than 250 information requests during the year. In addition to about 590 individuals who attended presentations or visited the Center, some eight independent researchers extensively utilised the collection. About 200 students and faculty physically entered the archives. The Board also received reports from the summer teaching fellows Julie deGraffenried and Ivy Hamerly, who spoke about their teaching experience using Keston Center material. Special invited guests included lecturer Roman Lunkin and his wife Elena Sitnikova, and Eva Hruska, a lecturer from Baylor's Modern Languages and Cultures department (funded by the

Left to right: *members of the Advisory Board, Dr Michael Long, Professor Steve Gardner (chairman) & Professor Wallace Daniel*

The Council of Management, June 2017

Council of Management to help process Polish archives) all of whom joined the Advisory Board for lunch. As a member of the Council of Management (Keston UK), Kathy Hillman attended the June 2017 meeting which was held at Michael Bourdeaux's home. During the year, she read materials provided and participated in the Council's work through e-mail.

Summer Teaching Fellows and Presentations

During the summer 2016, the Keston Center hosted two Libraries Teaching Fellows, Associate Professor of History Julie deGraffenried and Senior Lecturer and Director of the International Studies Program Ivy Hamerly. Dr deGraffenried prepared a two-class sequence for History 3342: Russia Since 1861 on 'Soviet Anti-Religion Policy and Dissidents in the Soviet Union.' Dr Hamerly focused on Political Science 3304: Comparative Politics, planning the third in a series of four lessons on Communism that explored the question of why the Communist ideology and nation-building efforts took root in some of the countries under Soviet control but not in others. Dr Hamerly's class met in the Keston Center four times while Dr deGraffenried's held three sessions in the Michael Bourdeaux Research Center. Both shared experiences with other teaching staff and graduate students by presenting how they used the Keston collection in their classes in a seminar setting.

Dr Hamerly with her class

Dr deGraffenried with her class

Scholars and Research

Subjects studied by scholars visiting the Keston Center included:

- Soviet Pentecostals (Keston Scholar Emily Baran)
- Tatiana Goricheva (Elizabeth Skomp, Associate Professor of Russian, Associate Dean of the College, Sewanee, the University of the South)
- Czech Materials (Alice Luňáková)

Elizabeth Skomp

- Fr Aleksandr Men' for Oxford University Press (Wallace Daniel)
- Individual cases of religious believers in the former Soviet Union (Roman Lunkin)
- Russian Old Believers and British Baptists (Baylor Church History Doctoral Student)
- Comparative Politics: Poland and Czechoslovakia (Teaching Fellow Ivy Hamerly)

Emily Baran

- Soviet Anti-Religious Policy and Dissidents in the Soviet Union (Teaching Fellow Julie deGraffenried along with ten of her students who researched their topics outside of class)

Keston Virtual Scholars

Virtual scholars apply for short-term access to the Keston Digital Collection by submitting an application, *curriculum vitae*, and brief research proposal. Keston issued credentials for two new virtual scholars and renewed access for three others. Currently ten scholars access the collection from Russia, the United Kingdom and Germany as well as the United States.

Visitors and Presentations

The Keston Center hosted scholars, individual students, classes, library colleagues, and other researchers. Kathy Hillman's University 1000 cohort and two Baylor classes met in the Michael Bourdeaux Research Center. One of the Teaching Fellows Seminars met in the Center's facility, offering additional

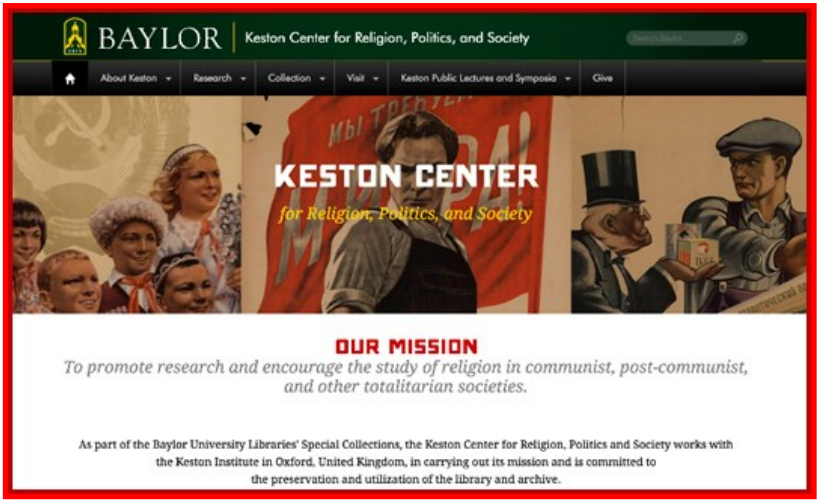
opportunities for faculty and students to tour the collection, and Keston participated in the Baylor Retirees' Luncheon presentation. Kathy Hillman spoke in Atlanta at the Association of Librarians and Archivists at Baptist Institutions (ALABI). Her remarks entitled 'Navigating the Rabbit Hole: When Your Work World Turns Upside Down' included the Keston Center.

Kathy Hillman with the new flat screen television

Day-to-Day Operations

Keston staff have worked with the Libraries Marketing and Communications Department and the University's Electronic Communications Department to develop a sitemap and create a new Keston Center website. The website went live last year. In order to accommodate classes and lectures in the Keston Center more efficiently, the Texas Collection and Keston jointly purchased a large flat screen television suitable for presentations. The equipment can easily be moved throughout the Carroll Library building.

Processing of archival material continued in the Keston Center with ongoing projects and the goal of reducing the number of unprocessed boxes. During the year, the amount reduced from 79 to 70 with the possibility that all materials remaining in Baylor storage facilities



Keston Center's new website

could be moved into library space during 2017-2018. A record for the Keston photograph collection was added to Baylor's online catalogue BearCat at http://bearcat.baylor.edu/record=b4309234~S10. During the year, nine Keston periodical titles and 624 books or 714 volumes were added to BearCat. Three titles, encompassing 13 volumes were withdrawn. Some 1,923 items were digitised and 50 items photocopied for dissemination. Some generous gifts from supporters funded the purchase of additional archival boxes. Approximately half of the Polish materials were processed, including the denominational subject files consisting of 22 archival boxes. Nine boxes of general Polish materials and one additional box of samizdat remain. Finding aids and archives officially opened in the Baylor Archival Repositories Database (BARD) during 2016-2017 include Angola, Cambodia, Cuba, German Democratic Republic, North Korea, and Romania.

Left to right: *Eva Hruska, Larisa Seago, Kathy Hillman & Tanya Clark*

In March, Kathy Hillman and Darryl Stuhr (Director of the Riley Digitization Center) held a meeting with Ian Goodale (Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies and Digital Scholarship Librarian) at the University of Texas at Austin, and his graduate assistant Nicole Marino, to discuss participation in the Prague Spring Archive project, a collaboration between the UT Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (CREEES) and the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library. Baylor's participation seems particularly attractive because the Keston Center contains an enormous amount of material collected in those countries and of course focuses on religion, while the other libraries hold mostly domestic political material. Baylor agreed to prioritise digitisation of Czech material as a prelude to inclusion.

Staffing

Keston retained staff members Kathy Hillman (Director); Larisa Seago (Library Information Specialist serving as administrative and processing archivist); and Janice Losak (Library Information Specialist). In addition to normal training activities and seminars, Texas Collection processing archivist Paul Fisher continued consulting on BARD, Baylor's archival repository. Tanya Clark, who is Russian, continued part-time. Freshman Julia Pantleo joined the staff as an undergraduate work-study student. For the third year, the Keston Center and Museum Studies partnered to employ a graduate assistant: Courtney

Berge spent her second assistantship with Keston, and Hannah Person worked for a period last autumn. Last summer and this summer, Eva Hruska, lecturer in the Modern Languages and Cultures Department, worked on Polish archival material thanks to a grant from Keston UK.

The Future: 2017-2018 and Beyond

Future goals focus on increasing the visibility of the Keston Center, on strengthening partnerships, continually processing and preserving materials, hosting researchers, holding lectures and other events in coordination with Advisory Board meetings as appropriate, exploring additional funding sources, and furthering the reputation and outreach of Keston. In particular the Keston Center aims to:

- Prioritise Keston materials for processing and digitisation.
- Make significant progress on digitising Czech materials related to the Prague Spring.
- Work with Baylor digitisation and processing staff in providing metadata for digitised materials.
- Plan at least one lecture or programme by a visiting Keston Scholar or other researcher. In 2017-2018 these will include participation in the University's observance of the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution with a lecture and book signing by Dominic Erdozain. The event promises to be a lecture and panel with Alyona Kojevnikov, a member of Keston UK's Council.
- Create both on-site and online exhibitions related to the 1917 Russian Revolution.
- Conduct at least one meeting of the Keston Advisory Board.
- Participate in one meeting of the Keston Institute's Council of Management in the UK.
- Partner with the Keston Council to increase the number of Keston Scholars.
- Add at least three inventories in BARD (Baylor Archival Repositories Database).
- Complete the processing of Polish subject files.
- Make significant progress on processing Keston College/ Keston Council archives by utilising Keston Council member Alyona Kojevnikov for six weeks in residence.
- Reduce the number of Keston backlog boxes from 70 to 60.
- Extend collection outreach on campus through Summer Teaching Fellows and similar programmes, class presentations, other strategies, and partnerships.
- Expand the contributions of Museum Studies graduate assistants and work-study students.
- Explore options for additional Keston staffing.

Remembering the Martyrs of Magadan

by Xenia Dennen

'I sacrificed my freedom for the sake of those who lost theirs.' These were the words of Fr Michael Shields, a Roman Catholic priest from Alaska, who had dedicated his life to the victims of Stalin's murderous Kolyma mines (Magadan oblast) and to their descendants. A prisoner would probably only survive a few months in a gold mine, so it was ironic to read on a large poster as I emerged from Magadan's airport, 'Welcome to Kolyma—the golden heart of Russia!' Fr Mike, as his parishioners called him, belonged to the contemplative and charismatic Charles de Foucauld Brotherhood and planned to spend the rest of his days praying for the martyrs of Magadan.

I had arrived in Magadan (nearly 8000 miles from England, a distance which Google maps claimed would take me 2,494 hours to walk), a grim city on the Sea of Okhotsk, in early June. Sergei Filatov and Roman Lunkin, my colleagues on the Encyclopaedia team, and I had flown for seven and a half hours from Moscow. There was no other way of getting there: no railway line had been built, and no one was permitted by the Russian authorities to arrive or leave by sea. When we visited the memorial to the 'unjustly repressed', the Mask of Sorrow, atop a hill outside Magadan, it felt like a pilgrimage. This was a gigantic structure designed by the Russian sculptor Ernst Neizvestnyi, with tear-like masks falling down one side of the

mourning head, and with a replica Soviet prison cell inside it. At the back of the head was a crucifix and a woman kneeling, hands to face, grieving. Below the Mask of Sorrow were the names of Kolyma labour camps carved on large hunks of rock which, like tombstones, had been erected on the hillside.

On a chilly cloudy day we visited the Catholic Church of the Nativity which, Fr Mike said, had taken over three years to build with money from Germany, America and Poland. 'In the design I wanted to harmonise East and West, bring icons and statues together,' and when he showed us the church, I saw an Orthodox icon of the nativity above the high altar and the cross of St Francis above that. His church in Alaska and the Rotary Club had chartered a plane in January 1990. 'I found some of the "repressed" and believed I should gather

them together – 80 were part of my group in 1994.' He made contact with 250 former prisoners: 'The city saw them as enemies, but then it changed its attitude and called them heroes.' He had published two books containing his interviews with them: *Martyrs of Magadan.* Believers in the camps, he said, 'forgave and therefore they were able to live. They fasted and prayed.'

Regulars at church services numbered 50 -80 on Sundays and 400-500 at Christmas. His Sunday school had 25-30 children and staged a Christmas play which was attended by 400 children. A third of his parishioners were former 'repressed', Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Germans; another third were from other denominations; and a third had been atheists. 'The Catholic Church will always be small in Russia. Spiritual life here must grow through Orthodoxy. I want unity with the Orthodox Church.' A past Orthodox bishop who had been friendly towards other denominations, used to keep in close touch with him, but now the situation was different: 'There are very few official meetings with the bishop.'

Fr Mike ran English clubs: 46 adults and 25 children were learning English (there were large posters for these on the church railings). To get anywhere a young person must know English, he observed, and needed to be computer literate. Fr Mike supported what he called 'evangelism through friendship': the English lessons moved on to discussions about faith and the meaning of life…

He wanted to help people acquire self-respect: 'I noticed a problem: people here live with fear; fear and faith can't coexist; I aimed to fight this.'

As well as the church, there was a large room in the basement for meetings, a children's room, a gym, a separate area for the homeless to shower and get clean clothes, and rooms where visitors could stay. The most striking room was his Chapel of the Martyrs, consecrated on 3 July 2004 as a place of prayer for those who suffered and died in the Gulag: two large icons depicting Kolyma's Catholic and Orthodox martyrs, with their bishops bowing to one another, hung behind a wooden altar, on either side of a crucifix. Below this was a prisoner's battered prayer book, a piece of barbed wire from a labour camp which had been bent to form a crown of thorns, a rosary with beads made from bread, someone's prison number, an embroidered Virgin Mary sewn with a fish bone using threads taken from a prison mattress, and stones of black Kolyma granite which formed a low memorial wall – on each stone a small crucifix was attached representing a prisoner who had disappeared with no record. Here, I thought, was the real 'golden heart' of Kolyma.

A Diary by John Lawrence

Introduction

by Michael Bourdeaux

Sir John Lawrence was my mentor and his diaries, written painstakingly during and immediately after each of his foreign trips, were always a delight to savour. If ever you could hear an author's tone of voice resounding through his prose, it belonged to Sir John. As the French used to say, 'Le style, c'est l'homme', and what I have before me illustrates this in a special way.

John Lawrence, Keston's first Chairman, with the current Chairman (early 1970s)

Sir John was already 78 when he wrote *A Slightly Sentimental Journey*, the short diary of one of his last visits to the USSR in December 1985. Mikhail Gorbachev had been in power for less than a year at this time and it was far from clear what his domestic policy would be – it would take another two months before he would release Anatoli Shcharansky, the most prominent human rights activist in prison, and another two months beyond that, with the Chernobyl disaster, before Gorbachev came out openly and powerfully in favour of a more humanitarian policy towards Soviet citizens. Did Sir John see any signs of what was to come?

All in all, there are surprisingly few – if any – signs of the torrent of change which was about to break. It was not, after all, as if John was oblivious to the possibility of change: indeed, he had been one of the few who had unambiguously, and against the intellectual trend of his times, predicted the collapse of Communism. Here he is again, talking to an eminent interlocutor, whom, characteristically for the time, he does not name. His friend says, 'Nobody really believes in Marxism, but it will be the official religion for at least another 50 years.' John adds the comment, 'For myself I do not see how anything so empty as Marxism is here can go on so long.' How little either of them knew of what was imminent, though John, of course, was very much closer in his prediction than his friend.

The whole report, with minor variations, could have been written at any time over the previous 25 years. You did not dare name your important contacts, not even friends in Moscow's sole Baptist church, who extended the same warm welcome to a long-time friend as they had always

done. The eminent unnamed acquaintance, quoted above, whom John describes as 'one of the cleverest men in the world', was spectacularly wrong: 'It is too soon to expect even preliminary signs of Gorbachev's ultimate intention… [Khrushchev's] mistake was to start ideological changes which put the old on the defensive. Gorbachev will not do that.' Well, he was about to do just that! Within a year everyone would be talking of *glasnost* and *perestroika.*

In talking to a Baptist senior presbyter John was at pains to beg him not to pay any credence to the slander about Keston College to which he had clearly been subjected (in the West, where he had recently been, as well as in Moscow?), but 'believe nothing but your own eyes and ears'. I was glad to note that the senior presbyter said of Michael Rowe and myself that 'he had heard nothing wrong from them'! Such was the atmosphere of the time.

Only two and a half years before the forthcoming anniversary of 1000 years since the Baptism of the Eastern Slavs, which was to become one of the high points of Gorbachev's fewer than six years in power, nothing at all had been decided, but John was one of the first to visit the Danilovsky Monastery, which had recently been returned to the Russian Orthodox Church as its new headquarters. This had already been done before Gorbachev's accession, but John movingly reports on the indescribable mess which was there to be cleaned up before it became properly inhabitable, following decades of use (abuse!) as an internment centre for young male criminals. On his way home on the plane – one did not dare to record such things while there, for fear that the KGB would read them – John wrote, 'Members of the Communist Party are increasingly joining the church in secret'. In less than a decade not only would they all be trooping to the churches for the Christmas or Easter liturgy, but they would have abandoned Communism as well.

I have no record of how many times more John would visit Russia as an old man, but I have the happiest memories of his last visit in July 1994. By this time the Soviet Union had collapsed and the old travel restrictions had lapsed. I was leader of a Keston group on a cruise along the northern rivers and lakes from St Petersburg to Moscow, and it was my privilege to have John and his wife Audrey in the group. John was now in his late 80s, but his mental vigour was undiminished. The beautiful countryside and villages which glided past our vessel delighted his eye, and he could hardly believe the sense of regeneration and purpose visible in every city we visited.

John's 60-year experience of Russia, since his secondment to Moscow as press attaché during the war, had come to the happiest possible conclusion and there were few non-Soviets who had acquired anything like his wealth of experience – or wisdom. His collected diaries deserve editing (which would be minimal) and publication. One wonders whether there is any publisher who would undertake printing this kaleidoscope of impressions, which would amount to a goldmine of insight into a nefarious political system, whose end John predicted. And John lived to see his words come true.

A Slightly Sentimental Journey

by John Lawrence

Wednesday 4th December 1985

I sit in a newly decorated, comfortless room at the Metropole hotel in Moscow, where I lived for more than a year in the last war. It was built by an English architect before the Revolution in the Edwardian style and must have been nice. The taxi driver who drove me from the airport says that it was called the Angleterre before the Revolution. Taxi drivers always know.

I am here for the inside of a week. A pilgrimage that I wanted to go on was cancelled and I got homesick for this terrible country with all its dear people. I am 78, I can't hope to come here again very often. I can't rough it any more. And indeed I had quite a severe illness in consequence of my last visit. And I have just written a book largely about Russia for the BBC which went to the printer on Friday, and I want to see for myself whether anything has changed before I correct the galleys. Altogether I am feeling rather sentimental as well as a little frightened of going by myself.

It is ten degrees of frost centigrade. And there was heavy snow all day in Moscow, so much so that our flight was delayed for about four hours. It is extraordinary how jaded one feels after these delays. But the snow is down and even in the dark one can see that this is the familiar scene, which is very lovely in its way. Before the snow falls, the winter is awful. It is so dark.

This hotel has been completely refurbished. Everything is very clean, everything works, none of the tiles in the bathroom have come loose, the staff are friendly, some of them to the point of oiliness, and I ought not to complain. But it is so bleak. The bath looks lost in the vast cheerless bathroom. There is no furniture in those endless corridors, no ornaments, and no directions, so that one wanders endlessly before finding where one wants to get to. Swept and garnished, indeed, but in one case the last state of that house was worse than the first, in spite of being swept and garnished. The fubsy, dilapidated old Metropole did have a certain cosiness and familiarity. I am glad to say that the statue of Cupid and Psyche kissing is still on the stairs where it has been for at least 50 years.

Has anything changed under Gorbachev? The KGB young man who let us in to this country through those awful cages smiled at the pretty young lady in front of me, and then had a long argument about whether the photograph on her visa was really her. She had to produce all the photographs of herself she had on various documents for comparison. He did not look like a weasel and that is changed.

I thought I had arranged my luggage rather cunningly for the customs with a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the publication of the Great Britain-USSR Association on top. I think it had some effect but I felt that the regulations had been tightened up. 'Why are you reading the Bible in Russian?' 'Because I know Russian, as you see'. I ought to have added that, when I am in Greece, I read the Bible in Greek. 'Are you going to give the Bible to the Patriarch?' What a thought! I have never been asked such questions before. They wanted me to say I had all my books for my own reading and wasn't going to give them to anyone. But considering most of them were Soviet editions which are hard to get here and also the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Child's Garden of Verse* in English, I do not see why I should not give them to any Soviet person. The only exception was four volumes of Marina Tsvetaeva. I spent the journey reading those enchanting poems, and making pencil notes on them so that I could say I was going to write something about them, but they took them away from me.

Thursday 5th December

By daylight I see that my room is up against the old city walls of the Kitai Gorod. It is too cold to sit in comfortably but I have to be here to telephone and make arrangements, rather a slow and irritating business. If I was a saint or, failing that, a good practitioner of the Stoic Philosophy, I would not mind. Most of the day has gone on details but I have seen one friend and I did prowl round the centre a bit. The clothes are ever so much better since I was last here in the winter. Some people are downright smart and some of the furs remind me of the pretty girls in pictures by Serov painted at the beginning of this century. So the road is not downhill quite all the way.

The other thing I notice at first sight is that the people in the streets no longer have that fixed expression that was well nigh universal a few years ago. They smile and talk and laugh, as they must have in the days of the great Russian writers. If more observation confirms this, it is an important change for the better. The way some of the waiters cadge for tips is a change for the worse. I have a feeling that big social changes are in the air. I do not see anything directly political in this, but these things have political repercussions. I would not record an impression formed on such slight evidence, if it were not that in the past I have nearly always found that those impressions turn out to be right.

Two stout ladies with a bucket of paste and strips of paper have just come in to my room to glue up the windows for the winter. That will make it warmer and, since the room is 12 or 15 feet high, there should be enough air. But there is not even a *fortochka*, a little window within a window, such as is well nigh universal in Russia. The stout ladies spilt water mixed with paste all over the carpet, which made one corner very cold. It took four days to dry and has left a dreadful stain.

In the evening I found there was a service in the Baptist church, and as I had a letter from Michael Bourdeaux to give to

one of the presbyters, I went there. I went by public transport, much to their surprise, and arrived a bit late. I don't mind being late for a shapeless service that lasts two hours, but I thought I had better say who I was. They put me in the seats that are generally reserved for visitors, but Bychkov picked me out and fetched me onto the tribune. He was astonished to see me and covered me with love, as did everyone. It was very touching, and very joyful. I was introduced at some length and in the warmest terms as an old and dear friend of Russians in general but a very special friend of the Baptists. I was asked to speak to them and that meant preaching a short sermon. I was tired and had a frog in my throat and at the best of times to preach impromptu, in Russian is an ordeal; but they were with me before I started. I spoke of suffering as I always do with Russian Christians, speaking specifically of the suffering of the war so as to avoid any unsuitable implications about persecution. 1 Peter 4: 12-3 (we mustn't be surprised when we suffer) says all that is needed, if one joins it with the transfiguration, (suffering is transformed). I could not always find the right words, but nothing seemed to matter. I told them that I loved them and had prayed for them daily for 30 years: they took it simply and naturally. You couldn't speak like that to the English or the French. Bychkov then developed the same thoughts further in the later part of the service. I saw some wonderful faces, as I always do among the Russian Baptists. They are not quite so gnarled and I think there is more human variety than there was 30 years ago, but perhaps that's just because Russian faces are a little more relaxed and there is much more variety in their clothes. After the service I was introduced to a wonderful old grandfather with his daughter and two granddaughters. They were pretty girls and well turned out. How Bunyan would have loved these people! And how they would have loved him and understood him!

An elderly lady asked me to pray for the repentance of her husband, and two children and one grandchild. I gathered from the look on Bychkov's face that there were two sides to that story, but I must pray for them, whatever the real story is. Afterwards Bychkov said that conditions are getting better for the church and that the present regime has made improvements, but he would not be drawn into saying anything specific, except that there are now 12 registered Baptist churches in Moscow oblast. I don't pay much attention to these general statements; they have to make them. Michael Bourdeaux is trying to get the Baptists to give us more facts so that we can paint a more positive picture but I don't believe we shall get anything. It is worth a try but, if they show us that they have had some particular success, that puts the authorities on their guard. In introducing me to the congregation Bychkov spoke of what I did at our embassy during the war. I knew that my colleagues and I in the press department had made a remarkable impression on the Soviet public, through the *Britansky Soyuznik* but I thought that my part in it had been anonymous. Now, however, I am beginning to realise that in wartime Moscow I was better known about as a person than I had realised.

At supper in the hotel my table was next to some noisy Czech Party bosses. If you specially bred together the nastiest Germans and the nastiest Russians, you might get something like that.

I thought that my room was remarkably warmer after they had glued up the windows. I went out and found that it was thawing hard. This is unpleasant. There is slush everywhere, much of it ankle deep, and the sky is overcast.

After another fruitless telephone call, I went into the Mostorg, a department store which is still sometimes called Muir i Mirrlees. There was some real choice, and for the first time in all these years, I saw people enjoying shopping. I think that many of them were people up from the provinces, where there is still almost nothing to buy. The changes in this country may be mostly cosmetic but there is nowhere where cosmetic changes are more needed or will make more difference.

Clothes are greatly improved but the food supply is perhaps worse than before. Nobody starves, but .... It is confirmed that the new houses, which are being built for the peasants are excellent, but that will not attract people back to the land; still less will it make them do an honest day's work on a collective farm. The only way out is to give the peasants their own land. When they had land 'they worked from dawn to dusk'.

A not unsympathetic witness said 'I don't believe in these young people who go to church. Of course it is interesting to them but that is all'. No doubt some go in a spirit of mere curiosity but I don't see that they would stick to it once their curiosity is satisfied. Anthony Pospieszalski had an interesting article in *The Tablet* about a similar situation in Poland. His broad conclusion was that those who came to church for extraneous reasons very often stayed to pray. Poland is not Russia, but there is a good deal of evidence to support that conclusion here, too.

I spent seven hours in a Russian conversation and over two hours getting to that conversation and back again. By ten o'clock, I am exhausted and could sleep the clock round.

My first impressions of what they have done to the Metropole hotel were a bit unfair. The corner where I am is awful, and curiously it is very near to where I lived during the war, but other corners have been made quite nice. And my room has become warm, now that the gluing up of the windows has begun to work, and they have done something to disconnect the passage from the Arctic regions.

Saturday 7th December

I slept till eleven and feel much better. It is still thawing but some of the awful slush has gone. I lunched with one of the cleverest men in the world, and he left me feeling a little more hopeful. He has been to America twice this year, which means that he has at last arrived in the Soviet Establishment, after nearly 40 years of waiting. He says it is too soon to expect even preliminary signs of Gorbachev's ultimate intentions. He has to

replace many more of the colleagues he inherited, before he can show his hand. But Gorbachev is an educated man who has refused to be made into a cult figure. He has not allowed his photograph to be put up in offices, and when some ritual portraits were submitted for his approval, he was furious; and made the man who had ordered them pay the cost out of his own pocket. It is not true that Gorbachev drinks too much, as I have been told. He is a diabetic and has to be very careful about his diet. After Khrushchev had fallen from power Adzhubei took my friend to see his father-in-law. My friend found himself alone with the old man who said 'You want to ask me something'. 'Yes but I'm afraid.' 'Go straight ahead.' 'What ought you to have done?' 'I ought to have got rid of all the old Stalinists from the top to the smallest district and then retired.' His mistake was to start with ideological changes which put the old on the defensive. Gorbachev will not do that. He does not want to change the system, but to make it work. He has put younger and more energetic men in charge, whenever he can, but this will not be enough. The land must be given back to the peasants. This is already being openly demanded. Lenin's works are being combed for anything which could justify private agriculture. Fortunately he wrote a great deal and his works during the NEP period are useful in this context. The concept of the *artel*, a simple traditional Russian form of cooperative, could be the Key. In Georgia they say 'give us the land and that is all we ask'. This will not be done yet, but in a year or two it will. There is no thought yet of allowing small businesses to exist outside agriculture, but economic changes will lead to ideological changes. Gorbachev knows that economic progress depends on computers but he does not yet realise that computers demand changes in organisation and provide opportunities for spreading unofficial information. Already scientific journals from abroad circulate without censorship. It is only the humanities which are censored. 'But scientific progress depends also on travel and going to international meetings.' 'Yes. And that is the hole in the system.'

My friend thinks that the difficulties of the Jews are going to be less. This year there was no limit on the number of Jews admitted for medical training. When Gorbachev was told about the Jewish problem after he came into power, he recognised that there is an emigration problem which has to be tackled, but he also decided to make changes so that fewer Jews want to emigrate. My friend says it is a mistake to push the Soviet Union too hard on ideology. That only makes them draw back. I said nothing, but I don't buy that. Human Rights?

Nobody really believes in Marxism, but it will be the official religion for at least another 50 years. For myself I do not see how anything so empty as Marxism is here can go on so long.

They gave me a lift back to the Metropole but had to pick up a friend on the way, Professor Mitrokhin. This was the famous Mitrokhin who has made a scientific study of religion from the Soviet point of view. He is a friendly clever old gentleman who has had his trou-

bles, after his wife and children defected in America, but he is now climbing back into favour. He started by saying how different the British are from the Americans. It is a mistake to think that the Russians and the Americans are like each other. The Russians and the English are the people who are like each other. And he added with enthusiasm 'England was the Empress of the world. She has a very great civilisation.' His brother is 'a very inquisitive man' who lived in India for 20 years as a correspondent and has a profound knowledge of Indian religions and has penetrated to places where other whites cannot go. It struck me that the family interest in religion must be more than academic.

After a short rest there was a knock at my door, and in came the Baptist senior presbyter (i.e. bishop) of an area larger than England. He had met Michael Bourdeaux and Mike Rowe recently in England and Michael had given me a letter for him asking him for help in a study we are making at Keston. I told him not to believe any slander he heard against Keston. He said that when he met Michael and Mike he had heard nothing wrong from them. I said 'believe nothing but your own eyes and ears.' We had a snack in the café and then he came up to my room and sat for a long time talking most interestingly about his diocese. I will make a separate note of what he told me. It was very like talking to a bishop of the Church of England. A Russian Baptist presbyter has a parson's freehold, like an Anglican incumbent before there were retiring ages, and it can be very difficult to get rid of a senile or unsuitable pastor, unless he commits a 'canonical offence' (they use that phrase). He says that in the last five years things have become much easier for the church, and that in consequence people are not quite so keen on going to church, more of them have Bibles but not all of those read the Bibles every day. The difficulties believers used to have at work are now gone. Which, being interpreted, means that they are less than they were.

Sunday 8th December

Went to church in the morning and heard English voices as I went out. They were a mother and son. The lady did not understand a word of Slavonic but, when it was time for communion, she joined the queue and when it came to her, she said 'Anglican'. The priest hesitated and then gave her communion.

I lunched with a friend and supped with another friend. I must have spent about four hours travelling, as it were to Hendon and Palmer's Green and back to Kensington. It snowed hard and then froze. I feel better at once with that tingling in my nose and that clean feeling in my chest. But it was very slippery. I fell once but came to no harm, though I felt rather shaken for about 20 minutes.

I had supper with another very clever man, this time an academic. His children are learning Latin. The little girl aged ten is being taught by her godmother, a young lady who has written a thesis on St Augustine's conception of time. Audrey, I must send them the books you are using for Rachel to help with the study of Latin. The little boy is not quite

seven but he said the whole complicated Orthodox grace for us before our meal with complete clarity; and he meant every word of it. It was wonderful to see such spiritual concentration in such a tiny child. His godmother, who was there, is working on a dictionary of the Orthodox Church which is being prepared under the auspices of Metropolitan Anthony of Leningrad. It seems likely that it will never come out, not from any political reason, but because Metropolitan Pitirim, who is head of the church's publishing department, is jealous of it. My friend is working on an article about St Gregory Palamas for this dictionary, and he had on his desk my brother George's translation of Fr Meyendorff's book on that saint.

My friend has finished his work on translating Ephraim Syrus from Syriac and gave me a learned journal with his article on the interaction of the Roman Byzantine world and the Middle East, with his translations from Syriac. I shall read it, not only because it is inscribed '*Domino clarissimo Johanni Lawrence maxima cum devotione*', but also because I like reading about obscure subjects which are more important than they look. Besides, I have given all my books away, including my Bible, and have nothing else to read in bed.

I gave my friends a nice copy of the *Pilgrim's Progress* to read to their children. They are so clever that they will be able to translate it to them as they go along.

Dr Cross's *Dictionary of the Christian Church* has been translated into Russian. There was only one copy of the translation and it got burnt. Perhaps by accident and perhaps not. Another translation has been made and there is only one copy of that.

The authorities are already exercised about how they are to handle the thousandth anniversary of the Baptism of Russia in 1988. They even asked my friend what they could publish without making fools of themselves by publishing another anti-religious book, which everyone will laugh at. My friend did not know that the GDR had failed to deal satisfactorily from their point of view with the 500th anniversary of Luther, and the Czechs with the eleven hundredth anniversary of the death of St Methodius.

Monday 9th December

For the first time on this visit I see the sun. It is cold and crisp and bright and I feel well. In the morning I went to the Beryozka opposite the Novodevichy Monastery with a friend and bought presents for England, and an umbrella for her. Soviet umbrellas are apt to break the first time you use them and other umbrellas are hard to get. But at the Beryozka you can get anything. Then we went for a walk in the grounds of that most beautiful monastery. My friend got very short of breath and says that it comes on her sometimes. I am asthmatic and carry a Ventolin spray. She had never seen one or heard of them but I gave her a puff and she was better at once. Fortunately I had a spare spray with me and am leaving it behind. She has horrid gout or rheumatism in her fingers and has nothing to take for it. I

did not like to give her some Indocid tablets, not knowing what side effects they might have, but told her to go to a doctor because if her trouble is gout, there are now good remedies. The Russians seem very backward in the supply of modern drugs, except I suppose in the Kremlin hospital. Ordinary people rely greatly on herbal remedies, and I suspect that they have got some good ones, which we might use with profit, but for all that some modern drugs do help. The Russians do not seem to know about hip-replacement operations.

At three I went to see a friend who is a priest. His wife and youngest daughter and his father were all there and I had a feeling that someone else was listening. So the conversation avoided delicate topics, but I got the atmosphere. They gave me such a large meal that I wanted nothing else to eat till the next morning. The grandfather, a layman, is 84 and has known all the great figures of the Russian Church since the '20s, having studied under Berdyaev. There is a marvelous gallery of photographs of them on the end wall from Patriarch Tikhon in his coffin down to our Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. Both Florovsky and Florensky are there. I said 'I suppose you never met Blok.' 'Florensky thought Blok's ambiguity was due to his following an antichrist.' 'But the Bishop of Litchfield following Avril Pyman, is convinced that Blok was struggling towards the light, saw it before he died and is now in Heaven.' Then we were told that Fr Somebody else is also convinced that Blok is in Heaven and we had a fascinating conversation about Blok.

The grandfather said there were signs of the second coming of Christ. We all agreed that it is not for us to know the signs, but we must be ready and that the form of the second coming will probably be just as surprising as the first coming in the form of a baby born in a manger. These are things that we cannot foresee. The father then said that we cannot certainly relate these events to time as we know it. They may be outside time, as the other world is outside time. Yes, but the other world is somehow connected with us. So those who are there must experience time in some sense, if not in the way we experience time. Metropolitan Alexei of Tallinn came into the conversation, and I was told I was wrong not to like him. It is true that I have always been suspicious of him, but I may be wrong, not for the first time. When I first met Patriarch Justinian of Romania in 1958 I was suspicious of him, but I was wrong, as events showed.

After all this and more, I just had time to get to the embassy for a short and enjoyable talk with our new ambassador, Sir Bryan Cartledge and his wife, before a most enjoyable party at which Lord Snowden and Peter Brightwell were the guests of honour, with some other people from the Royal Opera House. Their talks with the Bolshoi seem to have gone very well. I had quite a long talk with Lord Snowden and liked him much more than I expected. In fact I liked him very much. We started from his friendship with Mervyn Stockwood and my stepson Hugh Hudson. He talked directly and genuinely about art and work and personal relations.

A friend has just rung to tell me it is the anniversary of Fr Vsevolod Shpiller's death and that there will be a service at his church in the morning. I could not get there but I rang his housekeeper, dear Agrippina Nikolaevna, who is now very old but still lives in the Shpillers' old flat, by herself; but someone always comes in for the night. She said there was a very large crowd at the service, and then gave me news of the family, omitting herself until I asked.

Tuesday 10th December

Tuesday, I have not yet been able to deliver my letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury to Metropolitan Philaret. Either I can't get through on the telephone or they say Philaret is not there and ring later or it is the weekend and no one is at his office. Yesterday I was told that he would see me today and I was to ring up at nine and fix a time. It took half an hour to get through and they said ring in half an hour. I did this and was told that it was all a mistake, when I was told to ring in half an hour. I must ring at twelve. At this I lost my temper and said it was insulting to the Archbishop of Canterbury to put me off like this. Today was my last day and I had other things to do. 'Wait just one minute.' I waited and was told that Philaret could receive me at three o'clock. His office is now in the Danilovsky Monastery, which is to be the new headquarters of the Patriarchate. I was given wrong instructions about how to get there and was half an hour late, but after all that had happened, I did not let that worry me.

Philaret received me affectionately and apologised for his delay in receiving me. He had wanted to see me last week but the message did not get through. Voskresensky came in to translate the Archbishop's letter. Philaret said he would answer properly in a few days. In the meantime the answer seemed to be that they are so busy with the arrangements for the Millennium in 1988 that they cannot attend to anything else. So plans for the exchange of students will have to wait till after that. They seem very pleased with the final choice of the Danilovsky Monastery for the headquarters of the Patriarchate. It is the oldest monastery in Moscow. They will have ample room, about five hectares, and there will be four churches, all of which will be open for worship. They are building a guest house with accommodation for 200 guests. The property was received in very bad condition, just bare walls with a roof. Since 1937 this monastery has been a home for children who lost both their parents in the purges and I gather for those who had been expelled from other schools. By degrees we shall hear all that grisly story. Part of the monastery walls had fallen down and must be rebuilt. The main gate was a ruin and has, I gather, had to be redesigned, and at first sight it has been well redesigned, with a chapel over the gate, as at Zagorsk. The state is making no contribution to the immense cost of this work, about six million roubles a year for several years. Everything comes from the faithful, but Philaret asked me to let the Archbishop of Canterbury know that a special fund was open for contributions from other countries. I

said I would tell His Grace and also make enquiries whether any other funds might be interested. I had it in mind particularly that Christian Aid ought to make a donation on the occasion of the visit of the delegation from the British Council of Churches in May 1986. And I would hope that there would be other contributions from Britain. I gave him a record of the choir of my Alma Mater, New College, Oxford, singing church music and he gave me two copies of a new record of Russian church music, specially made for the Millennium in 1988. One copy is for the Archbishop and one copy is for me.

After the formal interview was over, Voskresensky took me round the grounds. One church is divided into an upper and a lower church. The lower church is already in use and has mainly modern icons. They are all right but not inspired. The upper church is in a much earlier stage of restoration. We opened the door to the icon restorers and they invited us in and showed us most of the bits of a fine 17th century iconostasis, which turns out to be in a very good state of preservation under the over painting. In this church the porch with classical columns and the outside staircase had been completely destroyed but there are good records of what was there before and it is all being faithfully restored. A frightening amount of work remains to be done but in the end the Danilovsky Monastery will not only make a dignified centre for the Moscow Patriarchate and an important addition to the churches open in Moscow, but will also be a charming place to visit and walk in the park.

The campaign against drunkenness is having better results so far than I should have expected. There are far fewer drunks in the street and I am told that drinking parties in working hours are now a thing of the past. Tea and mineral water are the order of the day in celebrations during work. I wonder if it will slip back in a few months.

Wednesday 11th December

Before my afternoon flight I went to the Beryozka shop on Kropotkin Street which specialises in the sale of Soviet books which are not available to the general public. By giving these to Soviet friends one can give them enormous pleasure. The first volume of a two volume edition of Pasternak is specially in demand.

The plane was late but now I am in the air, and the chief thing I have to add is that members of the Communist Party are increasingly joining the church in secret. For instance the well known author, Victor Shklovsky, died recently in the Kremlin hospital. Before dying he cried out 'Lord have mercy on me' so that the whole ward could hear. Normally he would have had a good obituary but his death was not mentioned in the papers.

The person who told me about Gorbachev's possible plans has always refused to become a Party member, which is one reason why his career has had such a slow start in spite of his ability. Another reason is that he is a Jew. But he has always known people who are at or near the centre of affairs. I think this must

date back to his time at Akademgorodok in its great days, 20 years ago or more. He speaks with surprising freedom and even started to tell me interesting things in English while we were on the tram on the way to his house. Sometimes, of course, he says what he has to say but I have never heard it suggested that he is connected with 'the organs'. He has always said that in the Soviet Union you can in fact do more than most people think you can. I remember him illustrating this from what used to happen in Akademgorodok. His wife is one of the funniest women I know, but she speaks so fast that I cannot always follow. She is not Jewish. I gave a copy of a *Child's Garden of Verses* to his naughty little daughter. You should have seen her happy little face as she looked at the pictures.

It has become much more interesting than it used to be just to watch people's faces. That set look really has gone and each person's story seems to be written on his or her face. Newcomers still think the clothes are awful, but the improvement is great. And there is now some choice. It was dreadful to see a million women wearing the same awful hat. It is much less dreadful to see them wearing a choice of five awful hats. You can at least choose the hat that looks least awful on you. And some of the Soviet clothes are not now too bad, but of course most of the best clothes are foreign, or special, such as handmade shoes from Armenia which command foreign prices.

It has been well worth coming and, being by myself, I have done more than I could have done if I had not been alone. But there has been a price. I am too exhausted and if I had slipped badly on the ice or fell ill, I should have been in trouble. I shall not come by myself again and I shall try to avoid the winter, beautiful as Russia can be under snow. One day when it was snowing hard and I was feeling miserable, I said to a taxi driver 'what horrible weather'. He answered, 'How can you say it is horrible? Look at this lovely snow! And look at the Kremlin across the river!'

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