Keston Newsletter

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Bishop Rowan Williams (left) & Canon Michael Bourdeaux

Keston's 50th Anniversary

'*Why Religious Liberty Matters*'

by the Rt Revd Rowan Williams

I am delighted to have this invitation to celebrate with you half a century of witness and work from Keston. Perhaps I may be excused on an occasion like this for a little bit of autobiography to begin with.

Thinking back to my teenage years, when I came across a book by a promising young chap called Michael Bourdeaux, introducing a Western readership to religion in the Soviet Union, it was part of that wide variety and spread of influences which led in my teenage years and as an undergraduate slowly to focus on the Russian religious world as the centre of my own researches, and a lifetime of work and engagement with that, off and

Also in this issue:

From the Editor

At the 2019 AGM, Keston Institute continued to celebrate its 50th anniversary and invited Bishop Rowan Williams to be the main speaker on that day. His address about the importance of religious liberty is printed in full on pp.1-12. For the benefit of those members who were unable to attend the AGM I have also included in this issue my report and that of the Vice-Chairman, Roland Smith, covering the year since the 2018 AGM.

It was particularly appropriate at this AGM to be able to announce the publication of Michael Bourdeaux's memoirs *One Word of Truth* which is reviewed on pp.22-27. If you wish to order a copy, please fill in the form which is included with this Newsletter.

Another significant book was also presented, a collection of essays on material in the Keston Archive at Baylor, entitled *Voices of the Voiceless,* which has been edited by Keston Council member Dr Zoe Knox and Baylor historian Professor Julie deGraffenried. On p.13 you will find Dr Knox's speech given at the AGM explaining the nature of this publication and how it vividly demonstrates the extraordinary variety and richness of material contained in the Keston Archive. Philip Jenkins, a Distinguished Professor of History at Baylor University, kindly allowed me to reprint his review of this book (p.14) and with permission from the publisher the first essay in the collection is also reprinted (p.16).

The witness of Romanian Christians is the focus of an article on the Romanian Gulag (p.28) which introduces an article arguing – on the basis of the experience of Christians in the Gulag and in particular on the basis of the thought of the Romanian dissident Petre Țuțea – that the spiritual be explicitly integrated into our definition of health (pp.30-41).

This issue of the Newsletter ends with a sermon given by the Very Revd John Arnold at St James' Piccadilly in June 2019: he recalls the terrible years after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 when the USSR invaded the Baltic States and deported many thousands of Baltic citizens.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic I was sadly not able to travel to Baylor University for the yearly meeting of the Keston Center's Advisory Board. The Center's director Kathy Hillman will also not be able to attend the summer meeting of the Keston Council. However, since the lockdown Keston's trustees have been meeting virtually which will make it possible for Kathy to join us in July.

I had also been due to join the Encyclopaedia team at the end of March for a final field trip to St Petersburg before the text for the volume on St Petersburg was written. Unfortunately we had to cancel our plans. We now have a new schedule of field trips covering 2020-21, but of course all these plans will depend on how the situation develops and on when international travel and indeed travel within Russia becomes possible once more. In the meantime I keep in touch with the team by email.

Xenia Dennen

'a promising young chap called Michael Bourdeaux'

on, in varying degrees of professionalism. So the association with Keston and its vision goes a long way back and I'm deeply grateful for it.

I want to mention one other thing which, around the same time in my late teenage years, made a profound impression on me. As a student I was very much impressed by and engaged by the writing of that little, eccentric group of Cambridge academics called the Epiphany Philosophers, central to whom was the formidable personality of Margaret Masterman. A computer scientist, a pioneering theorist of artificial intelligence and artificial language, and a metaphysician of rather unusual capacity. One of Margaret's favourite categories in explaining how faith might come alive in the contemporary world was to speak of what she called 'the death-cell philosopher'. A characteristic, she said, of the 20th century's experience was the witness of death-cell philosophers – people who had written about God and humanity, either literally in the death cell, or in the face of that threat; people, in other words, whose moral and spiritual seriousness was shaped by that extremity, an extremity generated by resistance to various kinds of tyranny.

Death cell philosophies and philosophers come in different shapes and sizes. But as we look back over the last century or so, we can think of a good many who might merit the title: Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Edith Stein; Petre Țuțea; and many others in Eastern Europe, too numerous to name.

The death cell is the context where things become serious, where priorities are established. And the witness of those who face that ultimate extremity in faith is something which continues to nourish, to challenge, to enlarge the perspectives of all of us who try to share the life of faith, in whatever form. I've seen the work of Keston over the years as not simply a matter of the pragmatic defence of liberties, crucial and central though that is; but also as a way of hearing and responding to death-cell philosophies, celebrating, if the word isn't too bizarre in this context, the endurance of those who show us what faith might actually mean when things get serious. The great Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthazar wrote a difficult little book with the untranslatable title, *Cordula oder der Ernstfall*, [When Things Get Serious]. In its own way that book is a reflection on just this subject: death cell philosophy.

Bishop Rowan Williams speaks to Keston members & supporters at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine, Limehouse, London, on 9th November 2019

That's all by way of framing some of what I want to say this afternoon, but it's also a little way of paying a personal tribute to Michael Bourdeaux and all those who have worked so devotedly over the decades to make Keston what it is, and to let its contribution flow into not only the churches but the culture of this country and more widely.

What has always been impressive about the life and work of Keston has been the consistency of its witness in respect of religious liberty. It has done so by resisting two great temptations that come into our minds when we think about religious liberty.

When some of us were younger, it was sometimes quite difficult to be even-handed in challenging tyrannies and injustices. Whether one belonged to the Right or Left, there would always be excuses to be made for the people who were, at the end of the day, 'our tyrants' rather than the others' – whether it was right-wing Christians in the United States directly and indirectly apologising for – or not apologising for – the repressions and tyrannies of dictatorships in Latin America; or whether it was right-minded – or rather left-minded – Westerners slightly embarrassedly saying that the Soviet Union had its flaws, but it was, so to speak, '*our* tyranny'.

Keston has cut a swathe through that sort of nonsense throughout its existence, and has, in a most remarkable way, retained its integrity and credibility in a world where that kind of partisanship, that kind of political polarisation, is all too

common and by no means a thing of the past now. We still hear defences of 'our people'; we still face a lack of honesty about the repressions, the errors, and the sins – I use the word advisedly – of people we'd like to think were on our side. Keston's courage has been exemplary throughout these decades in saying quite simply that fundamental liberties are fundamental liberties, truth is truth, and the consequences are what we have to deal with.

So this temptation of weaponising tyranny and injustice to serve a particular cause is one that has been resisted with great consistency. Equally, Keston has resisted another just as seductive temptation, and that is selectivity about religious liberty as something which is desirable for people who share my views. What has been impressive from the beginning at Keston has been the clear-eyed acknowledgement that the repression of religious faith is the repression of religious faith, and it doesn't particularly matter if the religious faith being repressed is a religious faith that a little bit of me would quite like to see repressed. Once again tyranny is tyranny, and truth is truth, and repression is repression. I don't think we can be selective in the defence of religious liberty on the grounds that what we really want is religious liberty for ourselves so that we decrease the religious liberty of others. That, too, Keston has fought against in an exemplary way.

So I would like to put on record a deep appreciation for that costly and sometimes unwelcome honesty. The word 'prophetic' is thrown around all too freely these days. But, if being prophetic is being quietly and persistently a nuisance in the cause of truth, Keston has indeed a right to that title.

What I've just said implies two things about religious liberty which I want to spend a bit of time exploring in slightly more detail. Religious liberty is not something whose denial can be sidelined as a minor feature of any regime or any state of affairs. It is a necessary aspect of healthy, functioning society. And religious liberty is indivisible. Inconvenient as it is, religious liberty means the possibility in a healthy society of diverse convictions being permitted to flourish and to argue, to disagree, to negotiate, without interference from the State.

So those two dimensions of religious liberty both make us think about the very nature of society and the very nature of faith. The great Catholic historian and political philosopher of the 19th century, Lord Acton, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, stated memorably in one of his many essays on the subject of liberty that religious liberty was the cornerstone of all political liberty. As somebody who had researched and written extensively on the subject of political liberty, he was not in a bad position to make this claim. What does it amount to? Something along these lines, I believe, in the context of what Acton was arguing. The claim of religious liberty is an affirmation that the State's claim on an individual, and indeed on human communities, is strictly limited. The State is not omnipotent. And where the State makes

a claim to homogenise the population, in terms of belief, culture, conviction, or whatever, the State exceeds its legitimacy.

The great tyrannies of the 20th century in Eastern Europe and in Germany were both in their different ways regimes which claimed the absolute right to determine lawfulness. Lawfulness was loyalty to the regime and no more than that. The claim of religious liberty is the affirmation that there is always something other than the State to which human beings are answerable. And you could put that a bit more vividly by saying: there is always something more than sheer, naked power to which human beings are answerable. Because, if the State decides what is lawful, then it is simply power that decides what is lawful. In other words, it is a human society based upon a fundamentally violent principle. Power decides. It was, of course, exactly this question which Plato addressed in *The Republic*, and it's a question which goes on being fundamental to all creative political philosophy. The difference between what is believed to be right and what is commanded, conventional, enforced by sheer fiat.

***'Religion is the opium of the people'**: Soviet anti-religious poster in the Keston Archive*

The defender of religious liberty, you could say, says to the State, in any given situation, 'Show me your credentials, because power will not settle this. You have the capacity to imprison, to torture, and to kill, but you don't have the capacity to make right.' The existence, therefore, of principled religious dissent, in any society, is a marker of that limitation, the State's authority, and therefore the ground of resistance to violent power – a demand that the State justify itself by something other than its strength, its might, its capacity to control and enforce.

Perhaps you can see why, in that light, Acton said what he did. Religious liberty is the foundation of all political liberty. That fundamental challenge to the all-powerfulness of the State unleashes the possibility in so many settings of asking the question, 'Why is this legitimate? Why is this not just compulsory but lawful?'

The foundations of true lawfulness, legitimacy, the moral right to be obeyed in any society constitute a very complex, much-debated issue in political philosophy, and I don't wish to over-simplify.

But I do believe that Acton's insight is crucial. To draw that line which says there are areas where the State has no right to prescribe, that is rightly and properly to put the State on trial – not in a spirit of anarchy: it's not to say there is no such thing as a legitimate State; it is to say there is always a question to be asked about the right of the State to be obeyed. Sometimes the answers to that are morally satisfying; sometimes they're morally slightly inconclusive, but pragmatically sensible; sometimes there isn't an answer forthcoming, and the result is death-cell philosophies of one sort or another.

But I suspect that when we discuss the issue of religious liberty these days, especially as it's frequently talked about in the modern setting of human-rights discourse and legislation, we somewhat lose focus on that fundamental aspect of religious liberty.

This is not just about a certain number of eccentrics being tolerated. This is something about what the State itself accepts as its limits. So when we speak of religious liberty – and the debates surrounding it these days are as vigorous as ever – what we need to bear in mind is that this is an issue about the health of a human society, not just the well-being of minorities.

To put it differently: the well-being of minorities is a key test of the health of a society; and the well-being of *religious* minorities a key test of the well-being of minorities. For precisely the reasons I've just laid out, when we're talking about religious minorities, we are talking about communities who believe they are answerable to something other than the police.

It's, of course, expressed most wonderfully and vividly in the anecdote of Edith Stein's arrest in the Netherlands by the Gestapo, when she'd moved with her sister from the Carmelite convent in Germany where they'd been living to what was supposed to be the safer territory of the Netherlands. When the Dutch bishops issued their statement condemning the Nazi occupation, there were immediate reprisals against the Jewish community at large, but also against those in the Catholic Church who had defended the Jewish community. Edith Stein, a Jew by birth and unashamed of it, was one of those to be arrested and eventually executed. The story goes that when she was summoned to the parlour of the convent in the Netherlands to meet the SS officers who were arresting her, they greeted her, as usual, with *'Heil Hitler'*, and she replied *'Laudetur Jesus Christus'* – 'Jesus Christ be praised.' That's a little parable, if you like, of the contest of legitimacy and the claims of the State meeting their limit.

So, to defend religious liberty is to insist that power alone, the positive power of the State, does not determine the values and convictions and priorities of citizens as of right. When it intrudes in those areas, it begins to set itself up as an ultimate, unchallengeable form of human society and human solidarity.

Bonhoeffer, in his last years, was working on a large and complex book on ethics. One of the areas he explores in

that book is the way in which all forms of human belonging together can be affirmed and celebrated by the believer up to the point when their priorities rule out all others. The family, the working group, the nation and the State, are all good, God-willed forms of human community. The point at which any one of those declares that its imperatives outweigh all others is the point at which they cease to be instruments of grace and become instruments of tyranny. The family, the working group, the nation-state alike all need a broader perspective of that ultimate human togetherness, which is the Body of Christ. Any one of them setting itself up on its own as the ultimate value undermines that position in the Body of Christ. And translating that into the secular terms that will make more sense to more people in our own day, that is simply to say: there will always be forms of human connection and human responsibility to one another that lie beyond what the law and convention of any State or even any family or any working organisation can muster. We are answerable to something more.

So that's something to do with the necessity of religious liberty. You can see, perhaps, how this already mandates an approach to the indivisibility of religious liberty: it's not something which can be defended or promoted selectively. Because, if religious liberty is defended selectively, as the liberty of this group rather than that group, we're already on the way back to the all-powerful State and the ultimacy of force. The religious group which looks to liberty so that it can then impose its own orthodoxy is failing to understand that first point, that intimate connection between social health and religious freedom.

Sadly it's not uncommon for those who have experienced repression of religious liberty, in one form or another, at one stage or another, to become ardent apologists for religious coercion when they are themselves released. We could talk quite a bit about examples of that. And we could talk about the way in which in Eastern Europe, in parts of the Muslim world, and in other contexts, the plea for religious liberty can turn out to be a covert plea for my liberty to coerce others; the complications over laws governing religious communities in the Russian Federation will not be foreign to this audience – just as some (not all) of those Muslim apologists for religious freedom in the sub-continent of India would, given the opportunity, be as repressive towards the Hindu majority as the Hindu majority is towards them. And 'religious liberty' as the freedom to discriminate against or publicly abuse or persecute other minorities because of race, class, sexual orientation or whatever – is exactly the same kind of distortion.

These are uncomfortable things to say, but I believe they are uncomfortable in the spirit of Keston's vision, because, as soon as that pattern emerges, we are back to the notion that coercion belongs with religion, ethics, and value. The essential distinction between religion and coercive power is blurred. The only alternative is to defend the indivisible right of religious liberty, and to remember that what makes the gospel the gospel, for Christians, is not its coercive force, but its moral integrity and wholeness.

There's a fine sermon by Lancelot Andrewes, preached to King James I in the early 17th century, where he speaks of how there seem to be those who are disappointed with the Holy Spirit as a dove and would prefer the Spirit as an eagle, clapping on a beak, says Andrewes, and sharpening its claws for repression and violence. That's precisely the opposite of what I was speaking of here – a vision of religious liberty accepted as, however awkwardly, however laboriously, a matter for all.

So having begun by praising Keston for its consistent witness on these two matters, it may be as well in the time left to me to think out loud for just a few minutes about some of the ways in which these issues come into our consciousness today, about some of those debates on the nature of the limits of religious liberty that confront us in society and more broadly. In addressing these matters I can only do so superficially. It would need a massive historical and sociological survey to do anything like justice to the complexity of these questions. But to look at the questions as they arise today, in fact takes us back to the principle with which I started. Keston has always challenged the idea that you can turn a blind eye to the iniquities of people you think are basically on your side; and the implication of that, of course, is that liberty is uncomfortable. Religious liberty these days may mean acknowledging reservations and convictions on the part of communities which sit very uncomfortably with the orthodoxies in society, and even with the orthodoxies of well-meaning believers.

The law of the United Kingdom allows conscientious exemption in certain instances from the law of the land – notably, of course, in the capacity for particularly Catholic medical professionals to step back from direct involvement in performing abortions. Because the right of access to abortion is taken for granted as part of the liberal settlement of this country, this is a very uncomfortable liberty for many people to defend, particularly the right-thinking or Left-thinking, or should I say, *bien pensants,* as the French would put it, across society. Likewise, issues that have arisen about limitations on the compulsion to fulfil the civic right to a same-sex marriage, exemptions granted to the Established Church in this country on that score, are uncomfortable for a cultural majority.

I would want to argue quite strongly that the move to restrict religious liberties in these areas puts us on something of a slippery slope. This is not about denying anyone the liberties that the law guarantees them, but being realistic about the obligation of certain people to deliver those liberties. I am myself conservative but not absolutist on the ethics of abortion. I'm prepared to think about and negotiate my way around the complexities of theologising same-sex marriage. I'm Anglican! But my point is simply that, uncomfortable as it is for myself as a vaguely liberal Anglican, I believe that to allow the State further coercive power in areas like that is a very risky precedent. And, while the issues on which the battle lines are now drawn up may not be the issues I would personally have chosen to fight on, who knows what issues will come up tomorrow and the

day after? The line needs drawing somewhere; and that's why I think there is a perfectly coherent and properly liberal defence of religious liberty in contexts like that, which needs making, but is quite hard to make in our cultural and political environment.

So, that's one complex area these days where some of what the Keston experience has taught us may be relevant. We are in a situation in any democracy where a majority vote, in or out of parliament, gives a presumption of lawfulness to certain kinds of activity. A presumption of lawfulness doesn't, of course, settle the detail; nor does it settle what happens to those who disagree. The lawfulness that finally matters most is, I would argue, the lawfulness which seeks to find a public settlement that everyone can live with, because minorities don't just disappear when we want them to. If that means legal accommodation and tolerance of views and practices that are uncomfortable to a majority, so be it, because something in this is about the marks of a viable, durable, and lawful society – indeed, as I said earlier, a healthy society.

I want, though, to be clear at this point that I am unhappy about the conscription of the language of 'persecution' here. People who suffer legal disadvantage or social criticism for their views in areas like this are not, I believe, being persecuted. They are some way from the death cell, to put it that way. And we ought to be rather cautious about over-dramatising this as a crisis. I notice that the rhetoric of a 'war against Christian values', the language of persecution of orthodox Christianity (small 'o') becomes more and more popular in certain quarters year by year, at least in the United States.

I don't in the least minimise the cost of conscientious objection in the lives of some people. I simply don't want to assimilate it too quickly to persecution, partly because I, like others in this room, have some sense of what persecution actually looks like, in the context of a systematically ambitious State determined to rule out dissent at whatever human cost.

So it's a complex area, and it's not surprising that we approach it with quite a lot of cultural nervousness. We may find ourselves defending or standing alongside those whose convictions we're not very sure about. But the necessity and indivisibility of religious freedom on the grounds that I've sketched should bring us back to a recognition that we have to be very careful about assuming that what currently prevails as a moral consensus is so automatically and self-evidently right that all other considerations fall in the face of it.

If it is right to change the Church's discipline on this or that question, what makes it right is not that lots of readers of *The Guardian* think so. What makes it right is a new understanding and a new penetration of the tradition we inherit and share. And to have the space and the liberty to undertake that penetration and reflection without threats hanging over us is part of what religious liberty means.

That leads me to a last reflection on this particular subject, which is that we are, in Western society generally, particularly in

Keston members listen to Bishop Rowan

the UK, in an era where there's a sort of downward spiral, a pressure from society in general, leading to a lack of confidence and vigour in religious language and religious exposition. The challenge to religious liberty, in this country, is not, I would argue, that we have an ideologically driven, centrally organised, ruthless State. The problem is cultural rather than legal or political. A culture in which we have largely forgotten the processes by which we learn our moral orientations and our moral convictions, a culture which is largely impatient with discussions of ethical and social subtleties, and a culture which is, if not committedly secular, then certainly sceptical about traditional religious practices of all kinds – this has a depressing effect on people of religious conviction, and sometimes produces a reaction of inflexible suspicion and non-co-operation.

The presence and clarity of the religious perspective in public life is affected by this. I've tried over the years to distinguish what I call two kinds of secularism: a secularism which simply seeks to homogenise society and keep all religious expression and behaviour at the margin or in private; and a secularism which says: 'This is a society in which a variety of convictions are held, and the State as such has no position on that, except to broker and monitor discussion and disagreement between convictions, and to work on that basis,' what I've called a 'procedural secularism'.

I think there's something to be said for that distinction; if we live in a secular society, we'd better live in the right kind of one – that is, one where the State's administration is indeed secular, detached from enforcing any particular religious viewpoint, but one where you would expect to hear confident and sophisticated religious argument as part of the wider argument of society. I think we are getting a bit more nervous than we need be about that, and perhaps, without arrogance or over-ambition or hard-edged dogmatism, we need something of a recovery of the confidence at least to put some of these fundamental points in public about the nature of a durable and healthy society.

To put it, I hope, a little more simply, I would say that we need, as believing communities in this country, to have the courage and the confidence to tell some of the stories that the history of Keston mediates and celebrates, not just as

examples of religious heroism, but examples of constructive civic witness. That's to say, the martyr, the sufferer, the confessor for the faith, is significant not just for the community of faith, but for the health of the society. It matters for our society that there are those who criticise it. It matters that there are those who hold back from assenting to prevailing norms. It matters that there are those who pay a certain price for that conscientious standing-back. It matters, so that the State is reminded of its limits. It matters, so that we are all of us reminded that we are accountable to more than power or force. So that the example of the confessor for the faith is, I think, properly related, properly conveyed as a genuine, constructive critique offered to the wider society, not just the celebration of what you might call an internal heroism.

For this last half-century, Keston has narrated, mediated, and conveyed the stories of confessors of various sorts. It has done it, initially, against the background of one of the most systematic and comprehensive tyrannies of modern civilisation, a genuinely ideologically driven and centralised system, making strong claims for its right to determine the ethical substance of a society. This tyranny has largely faded in that form, but not entirely, as we well know: we still see in the People's Republic of China a rigorous reaffirmation year upon year, despite concessions from time to time, of the basic principle that the State franchises every activity and every opinion.

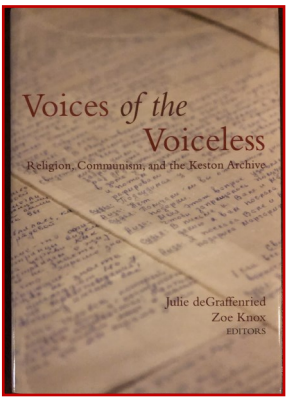
But although, certainly in Eastern Europe, the days of an 'Eastern bloc' and its practices have passed, the attitudes which sustained and supported illiberality about religion have not gone away, even when they are rerouted into the intolerance of one group for another. In our Western setting, as I said, we live in relative ideological chaos: in confused allegiance to democratic politics, often treated simply as a majoritarian tyranny, and a high level of scepticism about religious belief and institutions.

But the continuity that I've sought to draw out this afternoon is that, from the beginning, what Keston has done has been not only about picking out examples of bad practice. It has been something to do with a witness to the nature of religious liberty itself, not in terms of partisan defence of any one group, not in terms of weaponising one group's injustices as against another's. If it has, indeed, worked on the basis of the necessity and indivisibility of religious liberty, it has worked on the basis that is still an absolutely necessary contribution to the society we're in, in West and East.

While it would be nice to think that the time would come when Keston's work is no longer necessary (wouldn't it be wonderful if we were celebrating the end of that necessity) none the less, we can, as a very good second best, celebrate the consistency, the insight, and the professionalism of Keston – Keston College, Keston Institute – over this half-century, in bringing to light something about the very nature of religious liberty, and so bringing to light something about the very nature of functioning, just, and legitimate human society.

Voices of the Voiceless

After the talk given by Bishop Rowan Williams, Dr Zoe Knox, a member of Keston's Council, spoke about a new book Voices of the Voiceless, *(Baylor University Press. UK distributor Gazelle Books, sales@gazellebookservices.co.uk) which she and Professor deGraffenried (Baylor University) had just published. Dr Knox explained that this book vividly demonstrates the extraordinary variety and richness of material contained in the Keston Archive at the Keston Center.*



Keston College was founded 50 years ago, and so began the collection of material shedding light on religious institutions, faith communities, and individual believers under Communist regimes. This material included newspaper clippings, underground literature, trial transcripts, prisoner profiles, and more. The emphasis on verifying every source to ensure that only accurate information was disseminated meant that everything was kept, right down to scraps of paper with hastily written notes taken down during unexpected telephone calls. This unique collection of primary material became the Keston Archive.

I first worked in the archive, then housed in Oxford, in early 2007. Preparations had just begun for the collection's move to Baylor University in Texas. (I had in fact just moved from Texas to the UK, so the archive and I were swapping locations!). In 2010, I visited the Keston Archive in its new home at Baylor, to look at material on the Soviet state's persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was struck again by the wealth of its treasures, and started to consider how they might be showcased to a wide audience. Eventually, I alighted on the idea of a book featuring several dozen items in the collection, chosen by international experts, who would write brief essays explaining their choice and its significance to their work, and to our understanding of the history of religion and Communism and of the Cold War more broadly. I couldn't do this alone, however. I needed someone 'on the ground'. I approached Professor deGraffenried, a historian of the USSR at Baylor, whom I had met briefly at a conference and asked if she might be interested in collaborating. Much to my delight, she was very enthusiastic about the book project.

We approached 18 scholars and Keston personnel (past and present) and invited them to pick an item from the vast collection and write just 600 words on it. We were surprised and delighted by the range of choices, which included photographs of sacred sites, clandestine religious journals, antireligious propaganda posters, petitions by believers, even bedsheets chronicling the show trial of a young

Baptist in Leningrad. The items were drawn from a wide range of countries, from the Soviet Union and Romania to Poland and Britain. We learned so much ourselves.

There are six of the eighteen authors here today – Keston Institute's Chairman Xenia Dennen; Keston's founder Canon Michael Bourdeaux; Professor Wallace Daniel from Mercer University (USA); Dr Mark Hurst from Lancaster University; Alyona Kozhevnikova, a former Keston member of staff and a current trustee; and me. Please take the opportunity to chat to them about their selections for this remarkable collection.

The book is a very attractive volume and contains many thought-provoking images of historical documents and artifacts. It is highly accessible and will interest those even without much knowledge of this area. Professor deGraffenried and I think it does justice to this remarkable collection.

Review

This review of Voices of the Voiceless *is by Philip Jenkins, a Distinguished Professor of History at Baylor University, who serves as Co-Director for the Program on Historical Studies of Religion in the Institute for Studies of Religion.*

I need to declare an interest in what follows. I am writing here about a new book called *Voices of the Voiceless: Religion, Communism and the Keston Archive*, edited by Julie deGraffenried and Zoe Knox, published by Baylor University Press. I teach at Baylor, where Julie is a colleague of mine in the History Department. Having said that, I am describing the book because it addresses such a critical topic in modern Christian history, and it does so through the lens of an archive that is still sadly under-publicised and under-exploited. And as you will see, there is an excellent reason for all the Baylor connections!

The Keston Archive is an unparalleled resource for the history of anti-Christian persecution in the Soviet Union, and the Communist puppet states of Eastern Europe. Today, that history has largely vanished from historical memory. Wandering in Hungary today (to take one example), you will casually see signs with names like Recsk and Kistarcsa, with no warning that in the 1950s these were the sites of lethal concentration camps in which Christian clergy and laity were murdered in their thousands. It was at Kistarcsa that Bishop Zoltán Meszlényi was martyred in 1951. In the Czech Republic, you might see the old uranium mining complexes of Pribram and Jáchymov without realising how many religious enemies of the state died here in the 1950s undergoing forced labour that amounted to torture.

Through the 1960s, American Christians – especially Catholics – remained highly attuned to this situation, as they followed

the career of a heroic resister like Hungarian Cardinal József Mindszenty. Today, though, the persecutions seem to belong to ancient history, as remote as the time of Diocletian. That amnesia reflects the totally changed political situation, and the restoration of religious freedom: who could imagine such horrible deeds happening in such benevolently European and democratic settings? Yet it would be tragic if such a dreadful part of Christian history were lost to collective memory, if only because later generations have so much to learn from the various strategies that oppressed churches adopted in the face of crisis.

The need to keep these memories alive drove a heroic scholarly enterprise. Visiting Moscow in the 1950s, Anglican Canon Michael Bourdeaux encountered the city's surviving Orthodox churches, and made it his life's work to tell the West about those and other religious denominations under Communist rule. By the 1970s, he had founded Keston College in a London suburb, before moving it to Oxford. For 20 years, Keston became a centre for the academic study of religion throughout the Eastern Bloc, and the primary source to which media and political leaders could turn for accurate and up-to-date information. This comment about reliable news might not sound too surprising in the modern world, but Bourdeaux's access to sources on the ground was astonishing in the context of the closed and paranoid Soviet empire of the time. Keston played a critical role in keeping up pressure on the Soviets as they made their stumbling moves towards liberalisation. In 1984, Bourdeaux won the Templeton Prize.

In later years, Keston became the victim of its own success. Although religious liberty issues remain alive in the new Russia, they are nothing like as prominent, or as newsworthy, as they were in the epic days of the Cold War, and the college faded from the headlines. But it still retained its staggering archive, which in 2007 found a new home in the United States, at Baylor University.

Today, Baylor's Keston Center is a wonderful resource, which offers rich pickings for researchers in European history, or in the larger picture of modern Christianity. This material forms the basis of the excellent new *Voices of the Voiceless* book, a gorgeously illustrated collection of no fewer than 25 intriguing essays based on the collection.

Without under-valuing the writings of the individual authors, we can't fail to be overwhelmed by the illustrations they deploy, which includes contemporary propaganda posters presenting venomous attacks on Christians, Jews and Muslims. They also draw on the religious *samizdat*, the underground 'self-published' materials that Soviet believers produced through the darkest years, at risk of imprisonment or worse. Among the thousands of clandestine publications at the Keston Center, we find petitions, news sheets, and memoirs. *Voices of the Voiceless* gives enticing samples of this material, but never let us forget just how enormous is the larger collection from which it is drawn.

The book recalls a terrifying lost world, and one that should never be forgotten.

Construction Fence Prayers in Leningrad

by Sonja Luehrmann

The following text is the first essay in Voices of the Voiceless, *reprinted with kind permission*

'Blessed Ksenia, make Sasha fall in love with me and marry me.' This prayer is one of dozens of handwritten pleas on a sign that barred entry to one of Leningrad's sacred places, the chapel erected over the presumed grave of Ksenia in the Smolensk Cemetery. 'The chapel building is in a state of collapse. Entry strictly forbidden,' reads the printed text. Churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples that were hazardous to enter were a common sight in the Soviet Union – often as a result of deliberate neglect on the part of government agencies that had little interest in making them accessible.

View of the Chapel with construction workers on its roof and a group of old women by the surrounding fence

In the case of Ksenia's chapel, the construction fence separated believers from a much-loved intercessor: Ksenia Petrova (ca. 1730–1803), a resident of St Petersburg who experienced early widowhood after her husband, an army officer and liturgical chanter, died of a sudden illness. She became a fool for Christ's sake, an Orthodox Christian trickster figure who voluntarily renounces sanity and social standing but is often considered to have prophetic gifts. Ksenia lived on the streets, asked people to call her by her late husband's name, and helped build the Smolensk Cemetery church by secretly bringing bricks at night. After her death, she was buried in the cemetery. Although she was not officially canonised until 1988, the chapel erected over her gravesite in 1902 is a testament to her widespread veneration in imperial Russia.

A series of photos from 1984 to 1985 show that this popular devotion was alive and well by the end of the Soviet period. Closed since 1962, the chapel had recently been returned to the Russian Orthodox Church and was being restored in time for the celebrations of the millennium of Christianity in Russia. As an urban lay-

woman, Ksenia was closer to modern city dwellers than many other Russian Orthodox saints and was known to lend an understanding ear to everyday concerns. The prayers written on the sign and etched into the wooden fence read like a catalogue of worries of the average Soviet citizen. 'Blessed Ksenia, help me find a place to live.' 'b.K., give health to my son.'

Warning sign prohibiting access to the Chapel of St Ksenia

In addition to students asking for success in exams, marriage and kinship are major themes in the prayers. Often reported from a female perspective, some tell family dramas in a nutshell. 'Blessed Ksenia, help me in the struggle with the relatives of my husband, let me keep the dacha, don't let them rob me.' 'Blessed Ksenia, help the sick and wayward soldier A., heal him by your prayers from smoking and drunkenness, and give him love.'

Interestingly, the fence that kept believers from reaching a place of worship made their prayers more public and permanent. Instead of praying silently or aloud over a lit candle in the chapel, Ksenia's devotees wrote and etched their requests permanently into the fence. Today the chapel is open to the public during certain hours, but it remains customary to leave letters addressed to Ksenia in crags in the wall when the building is closed. Residents of other cities also send letters, cementing Ksenia's reputation as a saint who cares about intimate worries and responds to written requests as much as to ones voiced in person. It is even possible to submit prayer requests through a website maintained by Ksenia's devotees. In her openness to contemporary concerns and modern forms of communication, Saint Ksenia appeals to a group of believers whose numbers have grown through the Soviet period: an urban, educated person living in cramped spaces and worrying about questions of forming a family, pursuing an education, and regaining or maintaining health. Ksenia's popularity shows that there is demand for such a mundane face of the church.

Keston Archive photograph references:

Restoration work continues at the Chapel of the Blessed Xenia. Smolensk Cathedral, Leningrad, August 1985. Photograph. KPA Box 63/Folder 25.

Warning sign that entrance is forbidden to Chapel of Blessed Xenia because of repairs. Petitions for prayers written on it. Smolensk Cemetery, Leningrad, July 1986. Photograph. KPA Box 63/Folder 25.

Keston AGM

9th November 2019

Chairman's Report

Today is a special day – the 50th anniversary of Keston Institute. I have found the first official news sheet issued following the first meeting of the Council of Management on 24th September 1970. From the founding of what was then called the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism in 1969, it in fact took many months for a charitable structure with the necessary documents to be established. Here is what Michael Bourdeaux wrote the day after that first Council meeting:

> 'The great news is that we now exist officially. It has taken several months to prepare the way for our legal constitution as a charitable body, but yesterday at the first meeting of the Council of Management the final documentation was put in order. Now the really hard and important work is to begin.'

And what hard work it was! I had met Michael for the first time in 1966 and began working for him as his assistant in February 1967, so I was there right from the beginning of Keston's existence. I remember the many highs and lows, the financial crises, the moments of jubilation when someone like the poet Irina Ratushinskaya, whose imprisonment we had been publicising, was at last released. It was often a hard struggle to keep Keston going. But thanks to all our supporters, we managed it and have lived to see this day. It is particularly appropriate that today we can announce the publication of Michael Bourdeaux's memoirs, entitled *One Word of Truth: The Cold War Memoir of Michael Bourdeaux and Keston College*. It is published by Darton Longman & Todd.

The 9th November is a fitting day to mark Keston's 50th anniversary since it was the day 30 years ago when the Berlin Wall fell and marked the end of the Communist era. And what an extraordinary event that was! Anne McElvoy was in Berlin at the time and points out in a recent *Times* article that that terrible wall – to my mind a metaphysical symbol of division and enmity – was breached thanks simply to 'a slip of the tongue'! The head of the East Berlin Communist Party, who announced on 9th November that East Germans could leave 'as far as I am informed immediately and without delay', afterwards told Anne McElvoy that he had simply been tired and didn't realise what he was saying. Anne then goes on to describe what happened:

> 'By 11pm tens of thousands of East Germans were streaming towards the main border crossing point, many in their pyjamas…Looking back, I'm not sure many of them really believed they would be allowed to cross. But the mood grew more excited, with chants of "Let us cross!"

In the absence of any clear chain of command to open the border, and with many fearful that the armed guards might panic and fire shots, it was individual border guards who buckled and made the historic decision to let the crowds cross into West Berlin.'

I'm especially delighted that on this historic day, both for the world at large and for Keston, Bishop Rowan Williams has agreed to be our speaker. After lunch he will speak on 'Why Religious Liberty Matters'.

Those of you who were at last year's AGM will know that I had to step back from Keston for a year when I took up the post of Master of the Mercers' Company, and so in a moment I will ask the Vice-Chairman, Roland Smith, to give you a report on the work of Keston while I've been away.

I would particularly like to thank Roland for all he has done for Keston over this past year. I would also like to thank the other members of the Council of Management for all they have contributed. In order to ensure that Keston is fulfilling its objects, at this particular moment in time, the trustees have decided to spend a day in January looking at the future of this charity and debating in what way it might appropriately adapt and change.

Vice-Chairman's Report

Thank you Xenia, and may I first say what a pleasure it is to see you back in the Chair.

As I am sure everyone here knows, the Institute's major research project, begun 20 years ago, is the production of an Encyclopaedia in the Russian language in seven volumes about all aspects of religion in the Russian Federation, with the title *Religious Life in Russia Today*. The first edition was completed in 2008, but because of the many changes since then, the work is in progress of being updated. So far, three volumes of the second edition have been published. All of them are available on the Institute's website.

In order to gather information for the Encyclopaedia, the Moscow-based researchers undertake field trips to all parts of Russia. Xenia Dennen has herself normally taken part in these field trips, but of course during 2018-19 she was unable to do so. In her absence, the research team concentrated their efforts on St Petersburg, both the city itself and the area covered by the Orthodox Metropolitan of St Petersburg. Reports from the team have made clear that the religious life of St Petersburg is extraordinarily diverse. The Christian churches there include, as well as the Orthodox, Old Believers, Catholics, Protestants, and the Armenian Gregorian Church. Judaism and Islam are represented, and St Petersburg is also the centre of Buddhism in Russia. Because of this diversity, it is expected that there will be particular interest in the St Petersburg volume among Russian readers. Xenia Dennen took part in the latest field trip to St Petersburg in September of this year. Work will now continue on other parts of

Russia, and field trips are in prospect to Ryazan, Pskov, Rostov-on-Don and Vladivostok, in all of which Xenia will be participating. [*This was the plan before the Covid-19 pandemic. Ed*]

Left to right at top table: *Michael Hart (Company Secretary), Michael Bourdeaux (President), Xenia Dennen (Chairman), Roland Smith (Vice-Chairman)*

No doubt many of you regret the fact that all the fascinating and exciting material being collected by the Encyclopaedia team is as yet inaccessible to those who cannot read Russian. Keston's Council did decide some time ago to fund an English edition. This will not be a simple question of translation. We envisage that there will be one large English volume. The information will be in less detail than in the Russian original, but on the other hand, a good deal of additional geographical and religious background will be required by English readers. So there is a big challenge. But funds are available, and we are determined that this project will be carried through, even though it may take some years.

As well as all her work on the Encyclopaedia, our Chair was until she became Master of the Mercers' Company the editor of the *Keston Newsletter*. Because of Xenia's commitments with the Mercers, the editorship was taken over by Dr Elisabeth Robson, a former head of the BBC Russian Service – many of you will remember Dr Robson speaking at our AGM in 2016. We are extremely grateful to her for all the hard work she has put into the Newsletter over the past year. It has continued to be an attractive publication, keeping members informed about our activities, and also carrying articles about present and past religious life in former Communist countries. Xenia Dennen has now resumed the editorship, but Dr Robson has kindly agreed to continue to assist with the Newsletter.

Unfortunately, during 2018-19, there were very few requests for bursaries from the Institute to work at the Keston Center at Baylor University in Texas, or to carry out studies elsewhere in the world on the general subject of religion under Communism. And even though there were few requests, some of those we did receive were unsuitable, either because the proposed topic was not clear or because the Keston Archive did not have relevant material. The Institute did award a bursary to a professor from within the US for work in the archive, and another to a researcher who wanted to work in archives in St Petersburg.

The subject of the disappointing number of applications to Keston UK for bursaries to work in the archive was one of the matters which I discussed when I visited Baylor in March this year for the annual meeting of the Advisory Board of the Keston Center. We noted that a considerable amount of research continues to go on in the archive by scholars funded by their own institutions or by other bodies. Obviously that can only be welcomed. But we did agree that every opportunity should be taken, when researchers approach Baylor about the possibility of working in the archive, to make known to them the possibility of obtaining bursaries from Keston UK.

At the meeting at Baylor in March, it was very pleasing to learn of the extent to which the Keston Center is being integrated into the overall life of Baylor University. A Professor of Russian spoke about how the archive is being used as a teaching resource for students of Russian, with particular use of the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia and of anti-religious posters. Two very impressive students spoke about how they had benefited from working in the archive as interns. The Director of the Center, Professor Kathy Hillman reported on the overall work of the Center, touching on the slow but steady progress with sorting and cataloguing the archive, on the number of researchers and other visitors, and also on the events held in the autumn of last year to commemorate various Czech anniversaries, in particular the centenary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia and the 50th anniversary of the Prague Spring. I should add that Professor Hillman comes to the UK each summer to attend a meeting of our Council. She had hoped she might be able to come today as well. Unfortunately, other commitments have made that impossible.

While at Baylor, I also attended the Global Business Forum organised by a number of university departments including the Keston Center, and participated in a Diplomatic Forum at which I spoke on the ethical challenges facing diplomats.

Finally, I want to report on a very happy event on the 20th of June this year, at which many of you were present. In connection with our 50th anniversary, Michael Bourdeaux, our founder, unveiled a plaque on the building in Keston, Kent, originally a primary school, and then taken over by the Institute, which was Keston's original headquarters and from which our Institute took its name. The initiative to arrange for a plaque to be placed on the building came from one of our members, Michael Elmer, and he also undertook much of the organisation of the event. I should like to pay tribute to Michael Elmer for driving this project forward and for all his hard work. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the embassies of the Baltic States, by many Keston members, and former members of the Institute's staff, and by the Deputy Mayor of Bromley, Councillor Kira Gabbert, who by a happy chance turned out to have been born in Odessa, and who made a fine speech which showed a very good understanding of the importance of the Institute's work. It was a delightful and joyful occasion.

Michael Bourdeaux's Memoirs

One Word of Truth: The Cold War Memoir of Michael Bourdeaux and Keston College

Darton, Longman & Todd, 2019, 300pp + index

Canon Michael Bourdeaux's outstanding volume of memoirs is very much more than an account of the main events of his life, interesting and thought-provoking though that aspect of the book is. It is also the account of his personal encounter with the fall-out from the Cold War, the lives destroyed, the silent acts of heroism, and the sheer horror of much that went on behind the Iron Curtain, hidden for the most part from Western eyes. Ordained in the Anglican Church, and with a warm regard for the authentic – and persecuted – Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), he made it his mission to follow the persecution of all churches and religions in the USSR and the Soviet Bloc, to make their sufferings known in the West and, when possible, to offer a helping hand. This inspirational and challenging book provides evidence of how the war against religion in Communist Europe was waged and how, ultimately, it was lost.

The narrative moves seamlessly from the public, official, to the personal in Michael Bourdeaux's experiences and raises a number of important questions: Western policies towards the atheist policies and repression of religious believers in the USSR; the various national and international religious organisations that worked with or included Soviet representatives; the function of archives and the role of the universities in developing attitudes towards the place of Christian and other religions in the history and modern politics of these countries.

Michael's immediate background, from a small town in Cornwall, had nothing to suggest he would carve out a career in the space between academia and government foreign policy. He himself sees the hand of God in the many chance events which directed him towards his unique role and contribution.

His father was a baker and his mother the daughter of a school master, and he grew up in idyllic, semi-rural surroundings with little contact with the world beyond Cornwall. The Second World War did not impact greatly, but he remembers his mother working to house evacuees, including in their home, and inviting in for tea some of the German prisoners of war employed locally in farm work. Subsequently he has seen this as the first source of his own internationalist convictions. His parents ensured he received the best education they could afford and he has many happy memories of his school years where music and singing in the chapel choir played a large part. He learned German and French at school, but nearly missed the Russian language courses run for

National Service men; the chance intervention of his commanding officer gave him a place. All his teachers taught the best virtues of understanding and tolerance towards other cultures – there was no German-bashing at school despite the Second World War being barely over – and he remembers still the deep love of Russian culture he acquired on the Joint Services course.

National Service came between school and university, where he studied modern languages and then theology. At the end of his theology course Michael was lucky enough to be in the first cohort of British students to study for an academic year in the Soviet Union, a year that would have a life-changing effect. His research area was given as 'Russian Medieval History' but his real aim was to find out as much as he could about the religious situation. As it turned out, his arrival in Moscow coincided with an intensification of Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign. Museums of atheism with their primitive slogans and displays of medieval tortures, had been created in a number of churches, most notably the Kazan Cathedral in Leningrad, and sought to persuade the visitors of the evils of religion. It was one of the satisfactions of Michael's visits to Russia after the collapse of the USSR to see the renovation of the Kazan Cathedral after its return to the ROC.

One of the goals while in Moscow was to check what had happened to as many of Moscow's churches as he could find. His local supervisor was mostly absent and showed little interest in his official research topic, so he had plenty of time. From approximately 600 churches and

Michael presents Baptist pastor Georgi Vins with a copy of Keston's translation of Vins' autobiography 'Three Generations of Suffering'

chapels in 1917 about 35 survived. Remarkably, since the collapse of the USSR they have almost all been rebuilt, including the largest, the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour which Stalin ordered to be blown up in order to build a high rise building with a huge Lenin on top. Happily the ground proved too marshy to support such a monstrous project and Moscow was given a heated swimming pool instead.

Michael's description of his efforts to make contact with the Patriarchate in Moscow, armed with a letter of introduction from Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of York, will be immediately recognisable by anyone who had dealings with Soviet officialdom of any kind; all senior figures in the Patriarchate owed their elevation to the KGB, which approved all appointments, and their primary skill was in remaining silent and obstructing anything that was outside their normal,

narrow boundaries. In Zagorsk, then the main religious centre of the Patriarchate and now renamed Sergiev Posad, where real power lay was immediately apparent: a large photograph of Lenin hung behind the President's chair in the large assembly hall, replacing a picture of the Patriarch. Contact with the students of the theological college was impossible and he was sent away long before the evening service he had hoped to attend.

He was luckier in Leningrad, when, after a similarly unhelpful encounter with officialdom, two students were delegated to take him to the bus stop, and he was able to have a proper conversation about the difficulties of embarking on theological studies and what the students called the 'treachery' of one of their professors. This incident made abundantly clear the ever tighter controls the state was putting on the church and the very real danger they ran when speaking to a foreigner like Michael.

His encounters with Baptists in Moscow were warmer, and the services with familiar hymns and music, as well as sermons, made him much more comfortable. Nevertheless, here too it was clear the comparative freedom of previous years was at an end and he was being shielded from more meaningful contacts. This experience would be the preface to much closer relations with the Baptists in later years as official persecution intensified.

Marriage and ordination into the Anglican Church followed his time in Russia and Michael began work as a curate, maintaining his interest in events in the USSR and writing his first book, *Opium of the People,* based on his experiences. As he completed the work more and more information was becoming available on the tragedy of renewed persecution which had befallen all churches in the USSR. It was also a spur to Michael's belief in ecumenism which he hoped would bring the churches together in faith and shared action. His belief would be severely tested.

A trip to Moscow provided the final piece of the jigsaw which led to Michael's future calling and career. On the first evening, without being followed, he visited the location of a church which had just been blown up. Two women were trying to see through the fence as he was, and when they moved away he followed them discreetly and struck up a conversation. He was immediately invited home and over tea explained he had been sent papers documenting the arrest and dispersal of a monastery, and the tortures to which some of the monks were subjected. He wanted to know if these reports were true and whether such things were happening in other places. The women asked which monastery it was – Pochaev in Ukraine – and they turned white with shock, explaining they were the women who had sent the documents with a French tourist and did not know if they had reached anyone. They had come to Moscow with more documents in the hope of finding a friendly foreigner. Michael asked what he could do for them. The answer was instantaneous: 'Take the documents back, then be our voice and speak for us.'

This seminal event illustrated an important truth about the USSR: if there is publicity of an outrage, it can help the victims. The 'mantra of the time' to use Michael's phrase, was that:

> '...only quiet diplomacy could be effective in defence of religious liberty in the Soviet Union. I never contradicted this and believed it had its role, but this paled in comparison with the urgency of publicly revealing the abuses. The Pochaev experience led me to the certainty of this future policy, which I would practise for all my working life: quiet diplomacy in relations with the Russian Church or government could never replace responsible publicity as an effective tool for highlighting cruelty, deception and oppression, though the two approaches should go forward hand in hand.' (p.88)

Fulfilling this role would not be easy. The official ROC was prepared to fight back and its representatives quickly emerged to denounce the documents detailing repressions and the protests that took place in support of the victims: such campaigns, they said, 'increase international tension… and the participants are not well informed about the life of our Church… and speak in erroneous generalisations.' The battle lines were drawn for the future.

The narrative that follows brings into focus the campaign of disinformation which the Soviet authorities launched about their religious policies – from flat denial of persecution to allegations of interference in Soviet affairs to the promoting of carefully selected and trained individuals to speak with Western religious leaders and persuade them that the reports they were hearing were variously false, misguided and aimed at spoiling relations between states.

Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign was in full swing and there were ever more cases to report. This campaign, incidentally, is overlooked in the current Russian account of Soviet era repressions. Michael himself came under attack in the Soviet media – proof if any were needed that he had touched a raw nerve and they wanted to discredit him if they could. His work was labelled 'anti-Soviet' and unhelpful, and he was described as 'rabidly anti-communist', 'failing to understand' Soviet positions and 'not objective'. One of the problems on the Western side was the legacy of McCarthy-ism in the USA: if an evil was ascribed to the USSR the response was often that it was just as bad in the USA. In addition, campaigners for civil liberties abroad were much more concerned with the case of apartheid South Africa than the USSR.

In his personal life, Michael and his wife and growing family were frequently on the move. There were visits to conferences abroad as well as stays in Switzerland, the USA, and a study centre in Italy. The idea of creating a study centre in Britain to document and research the state of religions in the USSR and Eastern Europe gradually matured. In 1969 work began to establish the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism and in 1970 its full charitable status was granted. Its work was to supply infor-

mation and would not be part of any specific political activity. The practical difficulties of such a venture were huge and the process of finding premises and regular funding clearly showed who were the true supporters of the centre's purposes. The major contributions of such early supporters and Council members as Sir John Lawrence, Revd Janis Sapiets and Professor Leonard Schapiro are acknowledged with affection and warmth. The new centre also received major support from churches overseas, all fully acknowledged in the text. It was in July 1974, after the acquisition of suitable premises meant temporary solutions could be abandoned, that the name Keston College was adopted and by which it became known.

Keston's reputation as a reliable source of information grew, and it developed relationships with like-minded organisations in Europe and the USA. The approach was strictly academic and this did not always suit campaigning organisations. However, it was justified by the confidence its materials inspired. A major development was the appearance of *samizdat* in Lithuanian. This led to a research project on Catholicism in the Russian Republic, Ukraine and Lithuania. Michael's interest in and love for Lithuania dates from this project and was suitably recognised by the Catholic authorities in Lithuania after the collapse of the USSR, when the principal cathedral in Vilnius was returned to the Catholic Church after the Soviet years as a museum and art gallery.

Keston's journal, *Religion in Communist Lands,* edited by Xenia Dennen, began appearing in 1973 and complemented the work of archiving and writing books. It quickly reached a wide audience and Michael, for this and Keston's other achievements, pays generous, and clearly well-deserved credit.

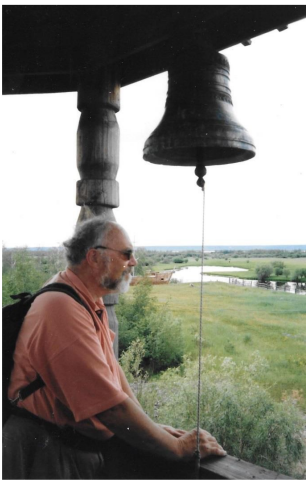
The staff of Keston were busy with different area specialisms and material was pouring in. Relations with governmental and ecclesiastical organisations, however, were by no means straightforward. The labels 'anti-communist' and 'extreme' unjustifiably remained attached to Keston's materials and reputation. There are detailed accounts of many occasions when Keston found itself pushed aside when its presence and store of information would have been of value. At root seems to have been a determination to accept the word of Soviet bureaucrats and religious leaders that Keston's material should be ignored in order to 'sustain friendly relations', recognise that 'there is much that is good in Soviet religious policies', and that much of Keston's material is either wrong or shows a complete lack of understanding of the true situation in the USSR.

This problem leached into the response from a variety of church organisations and charitable foundations to Keston's fund-raising campaigns:

> 'We were non-political and non-denominational. Many potential supporters held back because, either they would have liked to see us join the anti-communist crusade, or to be an evangelical mission, a superior bible-smuggling organisation… I was to discover the hard truth: that in a

very real sense our integrity was our worst enemy.' (p.147)

There are detailed accounts of Keston's problems with a number of church organisations in their international work. Of these, perhaps the most glaring example concerns the World Council of Churches (WCC), where the ROC was represented and exerted the maximum of influence over the activities of the Council. The WCC was keen to promote its Programme to Combat Racism, a worthy cause but which, it soon became clear, applied only to South Africa and the USA. There was no mention of the USSR's policies towards Jews, nor to its repressive control over the many nations within the USSR where any spark of nationalism was stamped upon along with local cultures. Similarly, the WCC was willing to memorialise the Holocaust, but not to accept any discussion of the Christian martyrs or the other repressed believers, inside the Soviet Union.



Michael on a field trip to Yakutsk, July 1999

One of the fascinating features of these memoirs is the sketches of the innumerable interesting and compelling personalities Michael met in the course of his work. They range from persecuted priests and pastors, writers and believers from all parts of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to churchmen of various denominations and rank in the West who one way or another became involved with Keston and its work. Through Michael's writing we get a sense of his very real affection for many of the people he came to know, as well as his respect for their national cultures and beliefs.

There can be no doubt that Michael touched many people's lives and changed them for the better; he deserved every honour that was bestowed on him in later years. The work of Keston College lives on, preserved in its archive, a unique collection of documents which range from transcripts of trials, to minuscule messages on scraps of paper smuggled out of labour camps, to manuscripts of articles and books by forbidden authors and many other *samizdat* items. It is a source of regret to this reviewer that no British institution was prepared or had the resources to house the archive, but it has found a worthy home at Baylor University in the USA. Perhaps it was the enormity of the structure of Communist power which abused its own citizens in so many ways that overshadowed the record of religious suffering in the minds of many scholars of the period. This book is testimony to the importance of such a record and its relevance to today's world. It will surely figure large in future histories.

Elisabeth Robson

The Romanian Gulag

by Alexandru Popescu

The Martyrs Mausoleum

Researchers estimate that under Communism more than two million people were detained in the Romanian Gulag (http://www.miscarea.net/1-holocaustul-rosu.htm). According to special death records 562 political dissidents died at Aiud prison between 1945-1965 (http://www.historica-cluj.ro/anuare/AnuarHistorica2010/09.pdf). However, the real number of victims – whose corpses were usually carried at night by wheelbarrow or horse cart to be secretly buried in 'Slaves' Ravine' (also known by the locals as 'Aiud Calvary') – is difficult to establish given that the official authorities continue to alter and even destroy surviving records. Eye witnesses reported that some of the corpses were 'fitted' into the prison carts by amputation, dismemberment, and even decapitation. The Martyrs Mausoleum – a memorial to those who died at Aiud – was erected over the 'Slaves' Ravine' between 1992-1999, and was funded by the Association of Former Political Dissidents in Romania. This monument contains an altar and ossuary with the relics of many Aiud martyrs unearthed from the 'Slaves' Ravine', and was blessed in 2000 on the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Day.

Today empty new marble graves have been erected over the common graves of the political dissidents who lie underneath. The Romanian Orthodox Church refuses to discuss the canonisation of 'prison saints'.

Petre Ţuţea (1902-1991), an interwar diplomat turned prisoner of conscience during the Soviet occupation of Romania

and a 'death cell philosopher' (see talk by Bishop Rowan Williams p.3) was imprisoned and subjected to re-education in the Aiud prison between 1960-1964. Archimandrite Justin Pârvu (1919-2013), a former army chaplain on the Eastern Front in World War II who was then imprisoned by the Communist authorities in various political prisons between 1948-1960 because he refused to give up his Christian faith, and was subjected to forced labour in the lead mine of Baia Sprie in Northern Transylvania, was also imprisoned in Aiud during the same years as Petre Ţuţea. Archimandrite Justin today is revered as one of Romania's great spiritual fathers. He wrote the following about Ţuţea:

'Petre Ţuţea, who endured so great an ordeal during his political detention at Aiud prison that I wonder how such a man could possibly survive to the age of 90, is an abiding genius of Orthodoxy and of the Romanian people. For during his imprisonment, he was always on strike, engaged in a permanent struggle with the whole administration and staff of that Communist prison. This man was called by God to embody and express all that is most valuable and pure in our spiritual and moral life. Ţuţea is more than a political party. He is more than a saint.'

I came to know Petre Ţuţea almost by accident in my first year as a medical student in Ceauşescu's Bucharest. He was to have a great impact on my life. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, it was while addressing the issue of my own identity (as a Romanian Orthodox Christian studying psychiatry in Oxford) that I began to reflect on faith, mental health, and health, and their significance in the thinking of the man who had become my mentor, and about whom, before qualifying as a psychiatrist, I had written a doctorate at Balliol College, Oxford.

The article which follows (pp.30-41) was inspired by Ţuţea and explores aspects of faith and belief – religious and non-religious – which can be helpful when defining mental health. An Orthodox Christian, like Ţuţea, I focus primarily on Christian faith, but it is not my intention to be an advocate for one or any religious faith. I look at the experience of the Soviet prison camps, where the spiritual connections between faith, mental health, and health were tested and proven in political dissidents such as Ţuţea.

The ossuary with the relics of many Aiud martyrs, unearthed from the 'Slaves' Ravine', within the Martyrs Mausoleum

A Re-evaluation of Health in the Light of the Gulag

by Alexandru Popescu

Today religious beliefs are seen as an optional, largely irrational extra with little benefit to wellbeing. Those who do argue for the importance of faith in well-being often do so by reducing faith to quantifiable variables. In its broadest sense, 'faith' has similar meanings to 'trust' and 'confidence', though its religious connotations remain prominent. However, whereas faith in an omnipotent God expresses commitment to a religion which, if it is up to what it claims, is purportedly reliable but totally demanding, secular faith (e.g. interpersonal trust or self-confidence) is faith in fallible human persons and processes that do not purport to be totally reliable.[1] The New Testament letter to the Hebrews gives a succinct definition of 'faith': 'faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen' (Heb. 11:1, Berean Literal Bible). I believe this can be applied to both religious and secular faith, and goes beyond the kind of rationalised versions of religious ritual included by Western universities in secular courses (e.g. mindfulness meditation and mandala kits rooted in Buddhist tantric traditions).

Religious faith is nearly always centred on communities and performs a role in social cohesion and authority; but it also constitutes an intrinsic part of ourselves. Psychoanalysts and humanists consider faith to be a human trait. As one's overall 'default' attitude on life, faith is a private, often emotionally charged factor which can both help and hinder the therapeutic alliance. Faith as a human trait rarely features in conventional secular discussion of the 'placebo' or 'opiate' effect of religious belief, or indeed any form of belief, in the therapeutic process of particular clinical conditions.

A distinction is commonly made nowadays between religion and spirituality, the former problematic, the latter 'a good thing'.[2] And again, as with faith, there is a difference between secular and religious forms of spirituality – religion involving recognition of a reality beyond anything knowable purely through empirical observation and aesthetic or emotional experience.

Attempts to eradicate religious faith as illusory have proved uniformly dire. Experiments to remove the spiritual dimension from the human person have ranged from the Communist programmes of re-education (through torture, forced labour, starvation, isolation, and indoctrination) in the Soviet Union and Romania, to the re-education camps we see now in contemporary China[3] and North Korea.[4]

Spirit, soul, body

Personal growth is an essential part of health, mental health and wellbeing. The idea of personal growth can be understood in different ways, but here I want to explore it from a Christian perspective as a kind of dynamic of wholeness. In the New Testament, St Paul seems to suggest that each human person possesses spirit, soul and body:

> 'Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit [*pneuma*], soul [*psyche*], and body [*soma*] be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Thessalonians 5:23*)*

This is a simple blessing at the end of St Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, but I would like to read it as an anticipation of a tripartite schema of the human person – as spirit, soul, and body (*pneuma*, *psyche*, *soma*) – later developed by some of the Church Fathers such as St Gregory Palamas.[5] This is not to divide the person into three parts. Although materially palpable and researchable, even the body is difficult to define since, against simplistic mind-body duality, physical processes have been shown by some contemporary philosophers to give rise to consciousness. According to one of them: 'We know that the brain is causally responsible, in some way or another, for consciousness – but we remain utterly baffled by how its fatty, yoghurty matter could be up to the task.'[6] And of course in the light of quantum physics, even the very nature of 'matter' is at present beyond our comprehension.

Scientists and theologians alike have explored consciousness and life, with widely varying answers and hypotheses, but the spirit-soul-body interaction remains the subject of ongoing debate. In Bruno Bettelheim's *Freud & Man's Soul*, for example, the author describes his shock at reading Freud, whom he knew in German, in the Standard English (American) translation: Freud often uses the word *Seele* (soul) as well as *Psyche* (the Greek word for soul); but the English translation of his Complete Works, authoritative throughout the English-speaking world, only uses 'mind' which is nearer to the German *Geist*.[7] Bettelheim argued that this profoundly affects the whole of Anglo-Saxon psychiatry and related sciences – soul and psyche have both been reduced to mind. We seem to have inherited a reductionist methodology for the study of these sciences which is not concerned with what the person as a whole might look like.[8]

In spite of the remarkable development of neuro-imaging and experimental psychology in the last few decades, we would benefit from re-considering the difference between soul and spirit, as we struggle to identify causes for what we define as abnormal behaviours and mental health issues. Despite their problematic definitions, rediscovery of the soul and spirit in our person would extend and enrich the study of human resilience and response to extreme adversity. Thus, another form of experiment designed to re-model the psyche – with a different (materialist) 'pneuma' – took place in the Romanian Gulag, where the spiritual connections between faith and mental health were tested and proven in political dissidents like Petre Ţuţea.

Petre Țuțea (1902-1991)

Born in 1902 in Muscel County into the family of an Orthodox priest, Petre Țuțea[9] took a Master's Degree in Law (1928) and a Doctorate in Administrative Law (1929) at King Ferdinand I University in Cluj-Napoca. An economist and diplomat until World War II, the young Țuțea embraced the atheist ideology of Marxist-Leninism as an agrarian corporatist technocrat. The National Revolution Manifesto which he initiated and co-authored in 1935 reveals his shift toward a right-wing ideology.[10] After his visit as an economic negotiator to the Soviet Union in 1940 -1941, during the five-month period of the National Legionary State, his ideological move from Left to Right was completed as he started to understand the barbarism behind Stalin's propaganda. His thinking was to evolve further and broaden through the experience of prison and house arrest in the Romanian Gulag.

Petre Țuțea in 1929

Following the Soviet takeover of Romania in 1944, he was arrested as 'an Anglo-American spy' (being a former diplomat with anti-Soviet views) and accused of 'conspiring to overthrow the social order'. He then spent 13 years in political prisons and 28 years under house arrest as a prisoner of conscience. His prison experiences, between 1948 and 1964 – when he was the last political inmate to be released from the infamous Aiud prison in central Transylvania – tested not only his physical and psychological stamina but also his beliefs, and his subsequent reflections on the power of Christian faith to sustain a person's mental and moral integrity under torture and re-education, provide insights into the relationship between religious faith, health, and mental health. It was through prison and house arrest that Țuțea rediscovered his Christian origins.

Table of human values

The extreme conditions and torture to which Țuțea was subjected led him to seek a reference point of human normality; and in a world with an imprecise line between normality and abnormality, he found this in the person of Christ and his followers.

Reflecting on the enormity of war and re-education through torture in 'corrective labour camps', he sees a spectrum of human types, which can be structured as a Christian anthropological typology along the tripartite *pneuma-psyche-soma* axis. Țuțea proposes a 'table of human values', or vocational types, with Christ at the summit where the saint is raised toward union with God and received into the divine glory. Tempting as it is to see Țuțea's types schematically (as listed by me in the table on p.33), these types are not to be understood as discrete and permanent categories, but possible stages on the way to what the Orthodox call deification in Christ (*theosis*).

At either end of the ladder are *homo religiosus* and *homo stultus* (stultified humanity), representing the two extremes of the vocational spectrum, *Imitatio Christi* and Communist atheism: the first leading toward humanity's restoration in the image and likeness of God (deification); the other to an increase of what Ţuţea calls 'self-desecrated humanity', dominated by a materialism that can only descend to self-centred sub-humanity.

The ultimate positive type, that of the saint, is thus opposed at the other end of the scale by the destructive type of the sinner, including *homo stultus* and *homo Sovieticus* as its subtypes at the extreme end of the vocational spectrum. In between are the types of the martyr, the priest, the hero, the genius, the maker, the professional person, and ordinary people.[11] This 'table' is not to be understood hierarchically (e.g. the martyr is not 'inferior' to the saint, the genius is not 'less' than the hero in the economy of salvation): on the path of deification in Christ every person starts 'the road to Damascus' from a different point. Ţuţea suggests we should understand typology in terms of calling.

Ţuţea's Existential Ladder

Christ

The saint is for Ţuţea the ultimately normal - in the sense of normative - human being.

The martyr/witness lays down his life for Christ's sake and bears witness to the inner likeness of God, externalised by grace in his life.

The priest 'is consecrator of the Eucharist rather than mystagogue.'

The hero, whether pagan or of no religion, is endowed with a gift of abnegation which leads him to lay down his life for his cause.

The genius is gifted by birth with extraordinary abilities and in Ţuţea's view must be creative within the limits of Christian ethics.

The talented (maker) whose 'professional vocation includes the whole scale of values from the genius to the artisan.'

Ordinary people have no special vocational gifts, but lead their life either well or badly in the role that befalls them.

The sinner / *homo stultus* / *homo Sovieticus* covers the whole spectrum from atheist bigotry to religious fundamentalism.

Ordinary people

Ordinary people have no special vocational gifts, but lead their life either well or badly in the role that befalls them.[12] It is important to remember that the ordinary person, of whatever temperament, can become a saint. The 'type' of the saint may be in conflict with society's views of the normal and the good – even when those views are seemingly good and reasonable ('*le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*'). This is a crucial point to Ţuţea's typology: civilisation is not the same as the kingdom of heaven, although builders of the New Jerusalem, whether Communist or capitalist, tend to claim this for their version of the ideal society.

Ţuţea believes 'a human being cannot be defined entirely in terms of *soma* and *psyche'*.[13] In his view grace and revelation are also essential: as spiritual beings we are related to our Creator whose original and eternal love is the root of all creation. He speaks of a level of 'generic consciousness' uniting different aspects of human experience, in the relationship between oneness and multiplicity.[14] Wholeness is a relational process, in which 'spiritual oneness is not apparent, appearances being active and various, determined by vocation; yet it constitutes the substrate of solidarity and utility of all human enterprise.'[15] He sees hope, some sense of a *telos*, as essential to human vitality. For him that *telos* was Christian hope in the revelation of truth at Judgement Day. Yet he often speaks of religious revelation in generic terms and ascribes value to the inner experience and critical thought and moral living of those who are not practising Christians. For those who do not share his faith but are sensitive to humane values (whether religious, spiritual, or secular), there may still be a shared sense of some end purpose or meaningfulness in life which remains powerful. His friends included agnostics and non-religious people whom he kept in highest regard as exceptionally talented, unassumingly compassionate[16] and deeply spiritual individuals – suggesting that through a mystery common to us all there is hope for everyone at the Last Judgement.

Homo stultus

Homo stultus is in Ţuţea's words the spiritually disordered man, including the wilfully ignorant or stupid and morally corrupt, who is inclined to knowingly harm or even destroy others in order to impose his will and ideology.[17] *Homo stultus* typifies the malignantly criminal stupidity which is responsible for those societies and communities that 'demonise' and destroy the confessors of the faith, 'to eradicate religious beliefs through the "protracted use of violence"'.[18]

Homo stultus is a ubiquitous human type who perennially denies the existence of God and, 'in his spiritual stupidity, applies the logic of facts'[19] to the domain of mystery, remaining captive to this world in which he acts mechanically, like a 'spinning top'.[20] The Communist torturer who believes that he acts rightly is *homo stultus* manifested as *homo Sovieticus*. The Christian victim who under torture abjures his faith, at least for a time, becomes *homo Sovieticus*. Within the spectrum of atheist typology we must distinguish between the 'evil' atheist (an exemplar of *homo stultus*)[21] – who is, so to speak, actively indifferent ('spiritually dead'), has no moral beliefs, and could not care less whether God exists or not – and the 'good' atheist of righteous judgement – who, despite metaphysical denial of God, lives and acts according to the light of conscience.[22]

Although Ţuţea sees the only ultimately redemptive expression of spirituality as that of the Christian Church, his strong opinion is that salvation is a personal mystical reality. While admiring virtue, he insists that goodness goes beyond morality: 'Excessive moral purity is the worst enemy of religion, because religion is founded not so much on morality as on adoration of God.'[23] It is 'mystery', rather than morality, that reveals the essence of

our nature and is the basis of our common humanity:

> '…the *homo stultus* of our time is not irremediably lost because, alongside the achievements of science and technology, he is enveloped in mystery, and mystery is the form in which we are liberated from human limitation. Maybe this mystery awakens him to understand the limits of his capacities.'[24]

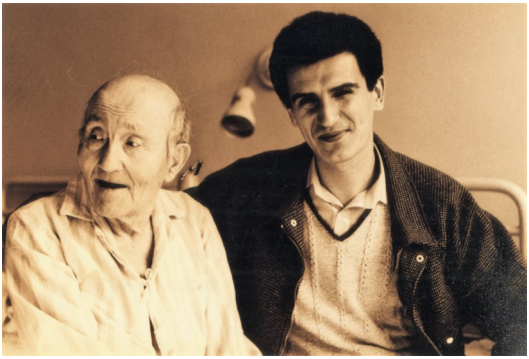
In his writings Ţuţea does not address religious fundamentalism and abuse. However, it is clear from all he writes that brute coercion is contrary to Spirit, and characteristic of *homo stultus*. Torture and forced re-education in the name of Christian 'love' is a work of *homo stultus*. Conversely there are ethical and spiritual systems – Epicureanism for instance – which though atheistic, are not *stultus*.

Homo Sovieticus, mental illness, and 'the divine fool'

Ţuţea's typology must be understood as a scale of typological spectra. As a human type, *homo Sovieticus*[25] for instance covers the whole spectrum from atheist bigotry to religious fundamentalism. The fundamentalist Christian or radical Islamist *homo religiosus* resorts to much the same ideological dogmatism that the *homo Sovieticus* of dialectical materialism used when re-educating misfits in the Soviet Gulag.[26] When Ţuţea uses the phrase *homo religiosus*, he most frequently speaks of Christianity. However, his use of the word '*religiosus*' rather than '*Christianus*' reflects his sense of a universal conflict between religious faith and militant atheism.

Incapable of the sacrificial normality of *homo religiosus*, ruled by 'spiritual stupidity', *homo Sovieticus* is dysfunctional: he chooses 'not to be open to revelation'.[27] Ţuţea sees in this attitude a 'crass stupidity' – i.e. the refusal to keep mind and heart open to divine revelation and inspiration – rather than guilt in the legal sense of a fault condemned by God. He suggests that illnesses of the spirit, such as the condition of *homo Sovieticus,* are different from those of the soul.[28] In Ţuţea's view, the soul can be conceived only as part of an undivided psychosomatic entity, which is 'the whole human being created in the image and likeness of God'[29] and he implies that the soul gives unity to the human person and mediates it within the seamless coherence of the human and the divine in Christ.[30]

What of mental illness? A scholar who is mentally ill and talks nonsense is different from an ordinary person suffering from the same illness, yet the psychiatric significance of his speech is similar, according to Ţuţea. However, if the Aristotelian *nous*[31] in the mentally ill is not clouded through denial of transcendence, they could still be capable of apprehending the divine and thus be spiritually healthy. Ţuţea distinguishes the psychopathology of psychiatrically ill people ('which assumes the existence of a sick soul'[32]) from indifference to or rejection of divine inspiration (as in *homo Sovieticus*), and also from the Pauline 'foolishness of God' which is 'wiser than men' (1 Cor. 1:25). The action of God in 'fools in Christ',[33] for example,



Petre Ţuţea (left) & the author in the surgical ward of the Emergency Hospital Bucharest, 26 April 1990

supersedes human understanding and is not necessarily pathological, though it might be thought to be so by some psychiatrists. For some Christ is 'the divine fool',[34] and more than once Jesus was judged to be mad (Mk. 3:21; Jn. 10:19). Ţuţea in no way suggests, however, that the mentally ill cannot be vehicles of God's grace. Mental illness is *not* a spiritual illness, the mentally impaired may still be open to God's grace – they too are made in the image of God. *Homo Sovieticus*, by contrast, is spiritually sick and creeps into his shell of ideological aloofness – although even he can experience a 'road to Damascus' moment. Religious experiences are afforded irrespective of mental health or intellectual ability.

Faith and doubt

A pervasive aim of any form of re-education is not only to alter or eliminate faith in God, but also to instil rigidity of mind to create puppets for the 'educators'. We tend to think of faith and unbelief as opposites, and such binaries become highly inflexible. But '*les extrêmes se touchent.*' The miracle story of the man who brought his troubled son to the disciples, and then to Jesus, for healing (Mk. 9:24) inspired Ţuţea and his followers to seek spiritual power – against stultifying atheism – through acknowledgement of faith not as a heroic, superhuman correctness, but as something inextricably bound up with the reality of human frailty and fallibility: '*Lord, I believe*;' the anguished father cries. '*Help thou mine unbelief*!'

Ţuţea's writings correspondingly emphasise on the one hand the infinite nuances of being,[35] beyond any dehumanising dialectic/systematisation, and on the other hand the absolute imperative of faith that sustained integrity under torture and persecution. In the wholeness of personal experience, these seemingly incompatible things are unified and life is best understood in a celebratory way as sacrament, rather than in purely practical, philosophical, or conceptual ways. There is a form of undoubting commitment in which 'belief' does not necessarily drive out 'unbelief'.

Spiritual health re-defined in a secular context

Between the two poles of the faith spectrum (atheism and committed belief – whose extremes merge in the common subtype of *homo stultus*), researchers like Linda Woodhead, Professor of the Sociology of Religion at the University of Lancaster, also discuss the variations of religious opinions and beliefs among individuals who identify themselves as

having 'no religion'. Woodhead coins the term *fuzzy fidelity* to refer to 'the religion of no religion',[36] the large numbers of so-called 'nones', i.e. people who do not conform to sociologists' neat-and-tidy categories of what a 'real' religious or atheist person should look like.[37]

But against the idea that there is a growing tide of hard secularism Woodhead's research finds that most 'nones' are not atheists. In fact atheism has been growing less than 'no religion'.

> 'Amongst the "nones", 43% are atheist, 40% are agnostic, and 16% actually believe in God. Most "nones" do not decisively reject God. What they reject is identification with a particular religion, and with the label "religious" – especially when the question is formulated to give a positive alternative (see table below).'[38]

Given such multi-nuanced aspects of the human spirit, attempts have been made to introduce the term 'spiritual' into the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of health, but no consensus on the proposals has been reached. The WHO understands spirituality as:

> 'an integrating component, holding together the physical, psychological and social components [of a person's life]. It is often perceived as being concerned with meaning and purpose and, for those nearing the end of life, this is commonly associated with a need for forgiveness, reconciliation and affirmation of worth.'[39]

The understanding of spirituality 'with regard to the integration of physical and mental health with social and community care' was reaffirmed recently in the House of Lords by the Bishop of Carlisle, James Newcome, the lead bishop for healthcare, in a debate marking the 70th anniversary of the National Health Service:

Table: Linda Woodhead, 2014

Which, if any, of the following best describes you? A spiritual person	Nones 12%	All 15%
A religious person	1%	8%
Both spiritual and religious	1%	10%
I would not describe myself, or my values and beliefs, as spiritual or religious	67%	48%
None of these	17%	13%
Don't know	3%	6%

> 'Our word "health" comes from an Old English word meaning "wholeness", and the Old Norse version of that word meant "holy" or "sacred". From the start, when churches and monasteries founded our first hospitals, healthcare has been understood holistically. There is a real sense in which our NHS should include caring for all aspects of well-being in all our people.'[40]

It is by keeping in mind this comprehensive vision of social welfare on the one hand, and on the other the infinite nuances of human belief, as Ţuţea explores them and researchers like Woodhead schematise them, that I dare suggest that the spiritual be explicitly integrated into our definition of health.

Ţuţea's message

Ţuţea's anthropology affirms the absolute uniqueness of human persons in their psycho-somatic, moral, and spiritual integrity. His typology is extremely personal, and his harsh attitude to atheism, equated with *homo stultus*, reflects his personal experience under the Romanian Communist system. I believe his approach, explicitly Christian as it is, can nevertheless speak to a wider audience. His understanding of what a person is – as more than pure mind or material body, as a being who can only truly be in relation to the other (*unus homo, nullus homo*) – speaks to a world in which too often the person has been stripped of all transcendence to become merely the agent or subject of power and often illegitimate political power.[41] For Ţuţea, the moral and political vacuum exposed by the collapse of Communism in the context of globalisation shows that humanity is incapable of providing its own order. His message is that people need a reorientation toward God, a rediscovery of the sacred at the core of personal and public health.

The way Ţuţea's life developed could not have been more different from the life into which he was born, as the son of an Orthodox village priest. As a cosmopolitan intellectual 'enemy of the people' he survived concentration camps, only to live then under constant surveillance on the eighth floor of a block of flats in a room provided by the Communist state, complete with covert listening devices. Here was a man, in a society affected in every aspect by Marxist-Leninist materialism, who never ceased to affirm that the human race will destroy itself if it continues to live 'by bread alone', rather than 'by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God' (Mt. 4:4). The 'solutions' he pointed to lay in the realm not of economics and politics, but of the spirit.

Petre Ţuţea's head by sculptor Vasile Gorduz on a pedestal erected in 2004 in the churchyard of Popa Soare Church, Bucharest

1. For evolutionary and cultural perspectives on the nature of rational and irrational beliefs, and adaptive coping in the face of stressful life events, see: Daniel David, Steven Jay Lynn & Albert Ellis, *Rational and Irrational Beliefs: Research, Theory, and Clinical Practice*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010.

2. In England, spirituality is recognised as having major importance, e.g. in the schools' National Curriculum. We should also acknowledge the continued funding of NHS hospital chaplaincies, despite strong pressure from certain quarters for this to be axed.

3. 'China region gives legal basis for Muslim internment camps': https://www.businessinsider.com/ap-china-region-gives-legal-basis-for-muslim-internment-camps-2018-10?r=US&IR=T (accessed 20 April 2020); 'Data leak reveals how China "brainwashes" Uighurs in prison camps': https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-50511063 (accessed 20 April 2020)

4. https://www.amnestyusa.org/reports/annual-report-north-korea-2013/

5. M. Edmund Hussey, 'The Palamite Trinitarian Models', *St Vladimir Theological Quarterly*, 16:2 (1972), 83-89.

6. Tim Crane, 'How we can be: Approaching the mind-body problem with more than a "simplistic brain's eye view"', *Times Literary Supplement*, May 26, 2017, No 5956, p. 8.

7. Bruno Bettelheim, *Freud & Man's Soul*, Chatto & Windus, Hogarth Press, London, 1983, pp. 70-77.

8. This reductionist approach does not necessarily reflect an upstart materialism, but two different traditions of similar ages. Both Karl Jaspers and Carl Gustav Jung, for example, use the term 'psychic', the former seeing it as irreducibly human.

9. For abbreviations of works by Ţuţea referred to in this article, see List of Abbreviations at the end (quoted from Alexandru Popescu, *Petre Ţuţea: Between Sacrifice and Suicide*, Ashgate, Aldershot, UK, 2004, p. xxviii).

10. Sorin Pavel, Petre Ţuţea, Ioan Crăciunel, Gheorghe Tite, Nicolae Tatu, Petre Ercuță, *Manifestul Revoluției Naționale*, Tipografia Miron Neagu, Sighișoara, 1935.

11. PROBLEMS, p. 205.

12. Petre Ţuţea, 'Firimituri de la un festin interzis' ['Crumbs from a Forbidden Banquet'], interview by M. Bădițescu, *Altfel: Curier Literar de Târgoviște*, Târgoviște, February 1990, p. 4.

13. SYSTEMS, p. 242.

14. THEATRE, p. 196.

15. idem.

16. For example, Ţuţea would always recall with gratitude that, immediately after his arrest in April 1948, Oscar Lemnaru (1907-1968), his best Jewish friend, had initiated a petition to be signed by prominent intellectuals in support of Ţuţea's release from the political prison. See chapters 'Petre Ţuţea' and 'Oscar Lemnaru', in Mihai Neagu Basarab, *Ultima boemă bucureşteană (1964-1976) urmată de Portrete de boemi*, Compania, Bucharest, 2018, pp. 120-131 & 132-141.

17. In Ţuţea's view, 'the stupid are guilty' insofar as they refuse knowledge, enlightenment, or the opportunity of learning from experience. In this they indulge their sinful state.

18. 'Lenin regarded the elimination of religion as central to the socialist revolution, and put in place measures designed to eradicate religious beliefs through the 'protracted use of violence' (…) those who sought to eliminate religious belief through violence and oppression believed they were justified in doing so. They were accountable to no higher authority than the state', Alister McGrath with Joanna Collicutt McGrath, *The Dawkins Delusion: Atheist fundamentalism and the denial of the divine,* SPCK, London, 2007, p. 48.

19. SYSTEMS, p. 192. For a succinct definition see, PROBLEMS, p. 213: 'The anti-religious man? *Homo stultus*.'

20. SYSTEMS, p. 193

21. There is a fine line between psychopathology and demonology, which is intuited by Ţuţea in his reflections on spiritual stupidity. The spiritual dimension of psychiatry has to develop towards or be completed by the spiritual knowledge of pastoral theology. 'God's decisions are mysterious: in the Christian world they are revealed to the enlightened and communicated to the unenlightened who can either accept or, through idiocy or satanisation, reject them.' PROBLEMS, p. 117.

22. For Ţuţea this ultimately reflects, as the believer would assert, 'the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world' (Jn. 1:9). In this, Christians are required to exercise discernment rather than judgement. Ţuţea did not suffer fools gladly but he knew that at all levels of human society and in all areas (including the Church) we find *homo stultus*. Moreover, all individuals have elements of *homo stultus* within themselves. Only the saint perhaps achieves that liberation from stultified being that is God's desire for us all.

23. Alexandru Prahovara (Popescu), 'Intra-viu pe masa de operaţie' ['Interview on the operating table'], *Viaţa Medicală,* Bucharest, 6th April 1990, p. 3.

24. OLD AGE, p. 138.

25. This term was coined by Soviet dissident Alexander Zinoviev whose novel, *Homo Sovieticus*, suggested that Soviet ideology gave birth to a standardised Communist-minded type of human beings.

26. For an exploration of various forms of atheism, see John Gray, *Seven Types of Atheism*, Penguin, UK, 2018.

27. Radu Preda, *Jurnal cu Petre Ţuţea*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1992, p.79.

28. Ţuţea's friend, the Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica (1909-1987), even calls them 'maladies of the contemporary spirit': Constantin Noica, *Şase Maladii ale Spiritului Contemporan*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1997.

29. SYSTEMS, p. 203. Ţuţea uses inter-changeably the words *suflet* ('soul') and 'psyche', emphasising etymologically the psyche as the object of study in 'psychology' and 'psychoanalysis'.

30. SYSTEMS, p. 195.

31. Manifestly people do have mental illnesses. However, Ţuţea suggests that the higher part of the soul, corresponding to 'the image of God' in which everyone is created (Genesis 1:27), remains beyond the reach of psychopathological distortions, though it can be obscured by sin. This is consistent with Aristotle's use of the term *nous* (or intellective capacity) in *De Anima* II. 2 (413b). See Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, trans. with introd. and notes by Hugh Lawson-Tancred, Penguin, London, 1986, pp. 158-161. Ţuţea insists on, and develops, Aristotle's argument that the human psyche has a capacity for reasoning. The materiality of the human psyche is 'of a different nature' from that accessible to the senses, PROBLEMS, p. 321.

32. 'To accept the idea of psychopathology is to assume the existence of an ill soul: under this appearance or arbitrary symbolism real physical-pathological conditions of the body can be disguised. Psychiatry becomes empty speculation if dysregulations described in its sophisticated language have no real base.' SYSTEMS, pp. 193-194.

33. Ţuţea himself was named 'God's fool' by many of his prison mates, although he does not use the phrase 'fool in Christ'. For this 'paradoxical figure' of the Christian East see Kallistos Ware, chapter 'The Fool in Christ as Prophet and Apostle', in his *The Inner Kingdom*, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 2000, pp. 153-180.

34. Cf. section 'Imitators of the Divine Fool', in Ware, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

35. See Ţuţea's *Filosofia Nuanţelor*. *Eseuri. Profiluri. Corespondenţă* [*Philosophy of Nuances*. *Essays, portraits, letters*], ed. Sergiu Coloşenco, anthology, preface & notes by Mircea Coloşenco, Timpul, Iassy, 1995.

36. Linda Woodhead, *The Religion of No Religion: Are the 'Nones' Religious, Spiritual or Neither*?, 6th annual Vincent Strudwick lecture, Kellogg College, Oxford, 22nd November 2017.

37. According to the UK 2011 Census, a quarter of the population have no religion. In Woodhead's 2013 YouGov survey an even higher proportion (38%) reported having 'no religion'. 'No religion' had – for the first time – become the identity of the majority (55%) of those aged 18 and 19.

38. http://faithdebates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Linda-Woodhead-the-fuzzy-nones_.pdf

39. WHO Technical Report Series (No.804), Geneva, 1990, pp. 50-51. See Brendan McCarthy, 'Why the NHS Needs Chaplains', 14th March 2011, https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Why%20the%20NHS%20needs%20Chaplains.pdf

40. https://churchinparliament.org/2018/07/05/in-debate-on-nhs-at-70-bishop-of-carlisle-highlights-importance-of-public-health-and-spiritual-care/

41. PROBLEMS, p. 247.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

OLD AGE: *Bătrâneţea şi alte texte filosofice* [*Old Age and Other Philosophical Texts*], afterword by Ion Papuc, Viitorul Românesc, Bucharest, 1992.

PROBLEMS: *Omul. Tratat de Antropologie Creştină, vol. 1, Problemele sau Cartea Întrebărilor* [*The Human Being. Treatise of Christian Anthropology, vol. 1, Problems, or the Book of Questions*], afterword & ed. Cassian Maria Spiridon, Timpul, Iassy, 1992.

SYSTEMS: *Omul. Tratat de Antropologie Creştină, vol. 2, Sistemele sau Cartea Întregurilor Logice, Autonom-Matematice, Paralele cu Întregurile Ontice* [*The Human Being. Treatise of Christian Anthropology, vol. 2, Systems, or The Book of Logical Wholes, Mathematically Autonomous, Parallel to Ontic Wholes*], afterword & ed. Cassian Maria Spiridon, obituary by Viorel Ţuţea, Timpul, Iassy, 1993.

THEATRE: *Lumea ca Teatru. Teatrul Seminar* [*The World as Theatre. Theatre as Seminar*], text established, ed., and annotated with a foreword by Mircea Coloşenco, Vestala & Alutus, Bucharest, 1993.

Dr Alexandru Popescu *is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist working in Oxford Deanery and a Pastoral Associate of Balliol Chapel. He was a Research Fellow at UCLA and UTAS and Chair of the 'Theology and Mental Health' Sub-Committee, 'Faith Communities and Mental Health' Reference Group, World Council of Churches.*

Baltic Deportations

On 16th June 2019, Trinity Sunday, the Very Revd John Arnold preached at the Baltic Remembrance Service held in St James' Piccadilly, London. He recalled the terrible years after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 when the USSR invaded the Baltic States and deported many thousands of Baltic citizens.

Nadezhda Mandelshtam, the widow of the Christian-Jewish poet, Osip Mandelshtam, wrote a wonderful memoir of him, with the punning title *Hope against Hope*. Nadezhda means 'hope' in Russian; and she writes, 'Osip used to say that, with the doctrine of the Trinity, Christianity overcame the problem of undivided power. Undivided power was something of which we were very afraid.' Not without reason. Osip was one of millions who died in the camps under Stalin; but his name lives on and his poetry has outlived and out loved tyranny and oppression. It is providential that we should be holding Baltic Remembrance Day on the same day as we celebrate the doctrine of the Trinity for it is that which establishes that God is not a unitary, totalitarian tyrant, the God of pagan Fascists and of atheist Communists, the God that people don't believe in, but a living, dynamic interchange of love in a community of persons, persons who are not less personal than us but more so, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That was and is and always will be the ground of our hope, even if at times it seems to be 'hope against hope'.

The Balts might well echo those words, 'Undivided power was something of which we were very afraid', situated as they were and are like the ancient Israelites in small, fertile, coastal lands between mighty empires like Assyria, Babylon and Egypt on the one hand and Germany and Russia/Soviet Union on the other. Exodus from slavery in Egypt and exile to Assyria and Babylon are the two great themes, the ground bass, of the Hebrew Scriptures, which we call the Old Testament; and even the New Testament begins with a story of exile and return, the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt. The history of the Balts, again, resonates with this, for their deportations contained an astonishingly high proportion, about three quarters, of women and children.

I will not weary you with facts and figures, which you know better than I do, for numerical data can never do justice to the breadth and depth of human tragedy and suffering. I will simply recall that the deportations of the Balts to Siberia, like those of the Israelites to Assyria and Babylon, took place in two waves, first of about 70,000 in 1940-41 with a total loss of life of about twice that. It was a highly selective cull of the leading people in all parts of society and a decapitation of Baltic life and culture. The second deportation and wave of killings, which

lasted from 1944 to 1953, was much larger; it amounted to about a tenth of the entire populations. This was a decimation of the Baltic peoples. The gap between 1940 and 1944 was much shorter than the centuries between the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, but it was no respite, darkened as it was by the deportation of 126,000 men to forced labour in the Third Reich with even more being sent to concentration camps, and by the slaughter of a quarter of a million Jews.

Most of the deportees were settled in central Siberia; about 75,000, mostly men, were sent to the notorious Gulag or work camps and perished there. A curious light is shed on their influence in the writings of Solzhenitsyn, who has one of his characters say, 'I never met a Balt who wasn't a decent human being.' In his masterpiece, *A Day in the life of Ivan Denisovich*, the hero's best friend is the Latvian, Kilgas, who shares his parcels and tobacco and has two Estonians to help him. They are among the few trustworthy, honest characters in the whole book. And his major work, *The First Circle,* begins, 'Now, on the eve of the Western Christmas,' and continues, 'The Christmas tree was a sprig of pine, wedged into a crack in a stool.' The entire action takes place during the three days of Christmas, conducted in secret by the Christian Balts. Solzhenitsyn's own dormant Orthodox faith was reawakened by his contact with Protestantism, largely in its Baptist and Baltic Lutheran forms; and doubtless many other stories could be told of the lasting effects of faithfulness to the Gospel of Christ, 'crucified in weakness, but alive by the power of God' (2 Cor 13, 4), even in the lowest depths.

One lasting effect of the deportations of the Israelites was the creation of a diaspora, or widespread dispersion of the people throughout the Roman Empire. This was to play a key role in the spread of Judaism and Christianity. Something similar happened after the Second World War, when the Balts were scattered throughout the world. Many washed up upon the shores of Britain and they have been a blessing to us, enriching our common life with their own unique contributions. That goes for the life of the churches, too.

Modern Anglican-Lutheran rapprochement began in the Baltic with conversations between the Churches of England and Sweden in 1909, followed by Finland in 1933-34. It took a big step forward with Estonia and Latvia in 1939, on the eve of their illegal absorption into the Soviet Union, by establishing intercommunion, but for 50 years the agreement could not be implemented; and one of my most vivid ecumenical memories is of the first joint service of Holy Communion, celebrated in the Chapel of Lambeth Palace in 1989. One of those present was Dean Ringolds Muziks. He had participated as a young theologian in the 1939 talks; and now as an old man he had lived through the vicissitudes of history to see those pre-war hopes realised. Altogether, the Balts played a part out of all proportion to their size in the conversations which led to the Porvoo agreement of 1999 between the

Scandinavian, Baltic and Nordic Lutheran Churches and the Anglican Churches of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Thank you.

Meanwhile, still during the Communist period, the British Council of Churches had invited the churches of the Soviet Union to visit us. Most members of the delegation were Russian Orthodox, and we took for granted that some would be reporting back to the authorities. We divided them up into four groups and sent them off in different directions. By chance, not design, the Estonian representative went to Wales; and when he came back to London he said, 'It was very interesting for me to experience the life of the churches in a small country next to a big one.' Perfect! I wonder what the KGB made of that.

This was part of a series of ecumenical visits, designed to maintain contacts across 'the Iron Curtain', as we used to say. In 1969, in the course of one such visit, I went to the museum on the site of the notorious concentration camp at Salaspils in Latvia, where the prisoners were worked to death, cutting peat in all weathers. We later learned that the museum's designer and architect was a Christian. There was none of the usual strident propaganda for the peace policies of the Soviet Union – just simple factual labels: this is where the daily roll-calls took place, here stood the gallows, this is where children were shot and so on. A large sign over the exit gate had a few words in Latvian which I am sorry I cannot pronounce, and in Russian, which is a language in which it should be heard: *Это не дольжно повторяться* – 'This mustn't happen again.' That is all that was needed and needs to be said. May it stand as the epitaph of the Baltic Deportations, too. This mustn't happen again.

Keston Institute

PO Box 712, York YO1 0GX
administrator@keston.org.uk www.keston.org.uk
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