

church-state relations. Thus the liberalization and devolution of power to the republics in the 1960s, coinciding with the death of Stepinac and the Second Vatican Council, led to a lasting improvement in relations with the Catholic Church. The Serbian Orthodox, whose reconciliation with the government had been rather easier, found the same devolution embroiling them with a dissident Macedonian Church, supported by the government. The re-assertion of central Party authority since 1971 has not deterred Mrs Alexander from a conclusion of qualified optimism. Of the two tendencies which she detects in the Party—on the one hand, the “humanist and Marxist”, ready for dialogue and participation by believers in the life of a socialist self-managing society, and, on the other, an impatient hard-line opposition to religion in any form—she sees some reason to hope that the former will prevail.

Given a lapse of five years between the dates of the epilogue and of publication, the proof-reading is perhaps a trifle slipshod; but an excellent index helps the reader to find his way about an inherently complex subject.

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*Religion and Modernization in the Soviet Union*

edited by Dennis J. Dunn, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado,  
1977, 414 pp. No price.

According to some western social scientists, religion appears to have little relevance to modern society. This compendium, which contains papers read at an international conference by leading experts on religion in Soviet society and on the major religious groups in the USSR, dramatically disproves such a simplistic view. A brief review can hardly do justice to a collection of essays with such a timely topic and rich content. The thorough research on which these pioneering essays are based can only add to its interest for readers of *RCL*.

Modernization was defined in the conference proposal as the means “by which societies have been and are being transformed under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution” and as a process desired by most people. However, each contributor modified this term in his own specific way. Thus, Professor Treadgold prefers instead the term “Westernization”, while Dr Monas questions whether any meaningful index of modernization exists and follows Vico in seeing modernization as a cyclical regression in history. Nevertheless, all the authors agree that interference in religious matters by the Soviet State and Party apparatus has decisively limited religion’s ability to modernize. All likewise agree that, despite secularization, religion remains strong among the masses and is growing among the

intellectuals. Some, although not all, of the authors discuss also "religious modernization"—i.e., the updating of religious life and thought, which Professor Blane, writing on Protestant sectarianism, sees as "a not insignificant part" of overall modernization. The particularly well-documented contributions by Professor Bociurkiw and Dr Vardys on the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and on Latin-Rite Catholics respectively, have perhaps most to say on the issue of "religious modernization". They elaborate that the UAOC in the 1920s and the Lithuanian Catholic Church in the 1920s and 1930s were adapting well to modernization. Precisely for this reason, the Soviet regime suppressed the former Church and thwarted the development of the latter. "Religious modernization" could well be a topic for a future new compendium.

Dr Sawatsky's lengthy essay on religious administration and modernization covers the entire period from Peter I until the present. His paper was written before the new Soviet Constitution of 7 October 1977, and readers of *RCL* would certainly appreciate a similar scholarly analysis of its impact on the status of religious believers. Dr Sawatsky's essay is particularly thorough for the Soviet period and has in part appeared in earlier issues of *RCL*. He considers the tendency to move away from a confessional State and towards closer relations between believers of diverse faiths to be a positive result of state-directed modernization which has been applied since the Petrine period. Dr Sawatsky decided to play down the ideological aspect of Soviet religious policy in order to emphasize the continuity with the Tsarist regime as "more striking than the innovations". In this reviewer's opinion, one should be extremely cautious not to draw too close an analogy. For all their misguided efforts, Tsarist bureaucrats sought to promote rather than to uproot Christianity. Dr Sawatsky also appears to underestimate the significance of the All-Russian Church Council of 1917, which restored to the Russian Orthodox Church its independence. I would question his use of the term "conservative" to describe those Orthodox spokesmen who favoured restoring the Patriarchate, as well as his view that voluntary disestablishment of the Orthodox Church under a liberal government was "most unlikely" (p.72). After all, several of the bishops as well as V. Kartashev (Minister of Confessions) and Professor S. Bulgakov, who played an active role at the Council, were hardly conservative in their religious views and in their ecumenism.

Dr William Fletcher's essay on the "de-modernization" of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) argues, as do so many other contributors, that the Soviet State shackled the Church's ability to modernize but that "if survival and growth . . . are earmarks of modernization, then the subservient ROC has modernized". This reviewer was disappointed that Fletcher's essay contained hardly any reference to the 1970s, and that it concentrated almost exclusively on the official position of the Moscow Patriarchate and neglected religious *samizdat*. Moreover, some of the

Patriarchate's clergy such as Archbishop Vasili of Brussels and Fr Dudko have spoken of the Church's obligation to promote charity. In 1978, S. Soldatov, an Orthodox Christian political prisoner, made several far-reaching, if rather controversial proposals for the "socialization of the Church" and the "Christianization of society". Also, given the centrality of the ROC in Russian history and culture more research is needed on the links between religion, national character, and the rediscovery of national roots. Several religious/national groups discussed in the compendium such as the Muslims, Lithuanian Catholics and Jews can claim some historical identity of religion and people. However, given Soviet reality, the ROC is in a particularly strong position to develop this identification. The points raised in Fletcher's as well as in Sawatsky's essays on modernization and the ROC can be approached in yet another way. In a 1972 *samizdat* document, "The People of God and the Pastors", M. Meerson-Aksyonov argued that the solution to the current crisis in church-state relations and in Soviet society lies in a return to *sobornost* (conciliarism), in the activity of the laity, especially the Christian intelligentsia "in the creation of a truly ecumenical Christianity freed from national exclusiveness and from the need to bless state policies".

Another interesting question which may deserve further study is the question of religion among the young provincial intelligentsia who are less affected by modernization. The focus of several essays is on Moscow and Leningrad and other large cities, while the provinces draw less attention. Dr Monas notes that religion is the one level on which the intelligentsia and the masses may now find common ground. It is also true that Orthodox Christians and other believers in the camps strongly influence provincial youth. In many ways, the future of Russia and of the USSR depends on the extent to which the non-metropolitan areas will be influenced by the processes of religious revival and democratization.

In his Harvard speech of 8 June 1978, Solzhenitsyn spoke of the crisis of modernization in the West and of the spiritual reawakening in Eastern Europe, especially in Russia and the USSR. "A fact which cannot be disputed is the weakening of human beings in the West while in the East they are becoming firmer and stronger . . . we have been through a spiritual training far in advance of western experience." Has modernization indeed had such a different impact on spiritual values in, as Solzhenitsyn puts it, "a world split apart"? The compendium under review has been a pioneering study on modernization and religion in the Soviet Union. Perhaps some day, spurred on by Solzhenitsyn's controversial analysis of the West's spiritual decline, we shall have a comparative study of modernization's impact on religion in East and West.