

Reviews

Risen Indeed: Lessons in Faith from the USSR

by Michael Bourdeaux. Foreword by Bishop Donald Coggan.

London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983.

Keston Book No. 16. 114 pp., £2.95

This is a hopeful book by a man of hope and indeed by a man of authority, the founder and International Director of Keston College.

There is inadequate information available on Christian faith and life in the Soviet Union, truly the dark side of our planet, and the author's method has had to be to present a series of pictures and examples, a bright litany of modern saints and martyrs.

The depth and intensity of the prayer life of the persecuted Russian believers is amply illustrated. Their forgiveness, their freedom from anger, inspire as they reproach. The most heartening fact in the book is that faith in Christ is stirring among the young, even those without Christian parents or mentors, among young people indoctrinated with atheism all their lives.

It is natural to flinch from the apparently endless suffering these people face and yet the only point of this book, surely, is to bring some practical response in the hearts and lives of those who read it.

The Church of Silence in the East ought to be able to depend with utter certainty on a Listening Church in the West. If the signals are faint and few our attention must be more determined. Sadly, Michael Bourdeaux has to write that, with few exceptions, church leaders world-wide have predictably failed to encourage action and sacrifice from us on, for example, Fr Gleb Yakunin's behalf. But he concludes, speaking with an authority that none may now gainsay, that "for the Soviet Union Christianity will play a role in the shaping of the society of the twenty-first century".

In his foreword the former Archbishop of Canterbury tells us that Michael Bourdeaux's deepest wish will be granted if the reading of his book inspires continuing prayer for those who suffer in exile, prison, or

“remedial” psychiatric hospitals. We must surely take this on, as individuals, as families, in our parishes and in all our church and school communities.

KEVIN GRANT

Households of God on China's Soil

compiled and translated by Raymond Fung.

Geneva: World Council of Churches Mission series No. 2, 1982.

x + 72 pp., 6.90 Sw. Fr.

This is a really exciting and balanced book based on a selection from 42 biographies of individual Christians in mainland China. Fourteen are published in this little booklet. In China the “Teaching of the Heavenly Lord” (Catholics) is regarded as a separate religion from the “Teaching of Jesus” (Protestants) and the former are not dealt with in this book. However, with Protestantism we have an almost bewildering contrast between the different congregations. Some congregations consist of only a few persons, usually grouped around some older person who has retained his or her faith from before the cultural revolution. Other congregations consist of several hundred people occupying a whole courtyard and being “part of a huge fellowship of some 400 Christian communities in three southern provinces”. Some congregations have Bibles for every member of the fellowship plus a smaller pocket Bible for use at home. Others have failed to obtain more than one or two Bibles for the whole congregation and instead of having sermons at their meetings confine themselves to memorising portions of the Bible by heart. Although most of the biographies come from poor rural communities, there is also some information about city churches and middle class persons. Although it is clear that most congregations regard the Three-Self Movement as merely another style of church which happens to have state support, there is one example of some individual cadres who are supporting the local church community as well as other cadres who are opposed.

There are a number of important facts about the church in China which are now becoming clear. Firstly, although of course, as in all Communist states, the government wishes ultimately to stamp out all religions, and there is a special department of the United Front organisation keeping an eye on religion, in China it is decentralised and of relatively low rank. Its power and authority varies very considerably in different parts of China, perhaps in accordance with the provincial strength of religion. Some Chinese provinces have practically no Christian churches of any sort, while some (especially southern) provinces probably have a Christian community in almost every village. Some villages have over sixty per cent Christian membership. Discussion of Christianity in China must always refer to the local level. If a particular community is suffering some form of severe oppression, it is useless to communicate with Peking.

Secondly, there is still a great shortage of Bibles but it is not a direct result of difficulties suffered by Christians. In this book a representative goes into the city to buy Bibles at 15 yuan a copy, a frankly inflated price; others receive a pile of 20 Bibles at cost price freely from the TSM church; others receive a Bible freely by post from a relative in Hong Kong; other groups are so isolated and poor that Bibles are just impossible for them. The TSM aims to publish eight hundred thousand Union version Bibles by the end of this year. Why the evangelical mission Open Doors smuggled a million Bibles on to the beach south of Swatow, in the modified Union version instead of the 1975 Hong Kong Bible Society modern version, escapes me. But it is significant that as far as I can find out not a single person has been arrested or severely punished for allowing these boxes of Bibles to be landed on the beach. We should note that the government objects to the crime of smuggling, which is opposed to the sovereignty of the Chinese people, rather than to the fact that Bibles were smuggled.

Thirdly, Christians are found at all levels of society but the most rapidly growing section is undoubtedly in the countryside, from where most of the stories in this book come. It is noticeable that the leaders of each group have usually had some form of continuity with a previous Christian leader, perhaps a pastor who had to leave, perhaps a member of the Little Flock or the Jesus Church or some other group.

This booklet also shows that there appear to be two main age groups involved in the revival of the church. There are the older persons who have retained their faith from before the Cultural Revolution: they know something of Christianity even though in many cases their Bibles and books were destroyed by rampaging Red Guards. The present elderly leaders of the TSM all fall into this group as well as many of the evangelical leaders in the countryside. Then there is a young group of persons who for various reasons are unable or do not wish to take up government positions which confer upward social mobility. Destined to remain in their local community, they are anxious to live moral, sincere lives and reject corruption, power-seeking and traditional Chinese religion. They are anxious for instruction but remote from Christian sources of information which will improve their faith, especially Bibles and commentaries and theologically trained leaders. They have rejected much of their contemporary society; in fact they have to do so as the government continually insists that it is impossible to be both a member of the Party and a government official while remaining a Christian. Such persons are expelled from the Party if discovered.

Lack of Christian teaching can lead to problems with mediums, healers and other aspects of folk religion. With no instruction for the leader of the community and only one, perhaps incomplete New Testament, very often the mediums become included within the local Christian

community. There are cases known (but not mentioned here) in which the leading shaman in a village collects his own followers and worships both Jesus and Confucius on his own altar, while calling his community Christian.

The official government policy is to oppose all forms of superstition including Christianity but in practice to regard the three world religions of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam as being superior and not necessarily harmful to a socialist society at its present stage. So all religions are not equal. If one happened to belong to a traditional Chinese religion, it would be common sense to upgrade one's own beliefs by becoming Christian. I suppose there is nothing especially harmful in doing this provided that the Christian community has a clear enough understanding of its own faith to be able to assert the integrity of Christianity.

This book is an exciting one for Keston readers because it illustrates the problems that the grassroots Christian communities have to face on mainland China. It also reveals the differences between fighting for the right to believe in communist countries which have a Christian tradition, and supporting the right to believe in communist countries without any tradition of Christianity. The principle may be the same but the approach may have to be different.

WILLIAM H. NEWELL

From the Center of the Earth — the Search for the Truth about China
by Richard Bernstein

Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1982. 260 pp. \$15.95.

The author begins by describing an occasion when, cycling in Peking, he was unexpectedly addressed by a man riding a standard "Flying Pigeon" bicycle. The Chinese cyclist complained of the cowardice of his fellow-countrymen when speaking to foreigners, and — astonishingly — assured Bernstein that he wanted to "tell the foreigners what is the real nature of life in China". What an opportunity for a journalist! Inevitably, perhaps, the truth-laden cyclist took fright a moment later, accelerated briskly, and disappeared with his "Flying Pigeon" into the crowd.

The frustrated Bernstein, therefore, had to try to ferret out the truth about China without the aid of his *deus ex machina*. His quest failed, of course, but he deserves much credit for the quality of his effort. Various themes, such as a university, dance, a typical day in the life of a Peking married couple, a visit to Sichuan, are all competently observed. It seems that Bernstein, though professing Jewish ancestry, had no particular wish to get involved in spiritual affairs. It was only when asked "are you a Christian?" that he was confronted with the realities of religious faith in China. He gives the reader a carefully drawn picture of an elderly man who had been converted in the 1940s by two Protestant missionaries of

the old school, who had survived ten years of forced labour, and who now prayed and read his Bible quietly, fearfully and on his own. Later on, in an unnamed northern city, Bernstein discovered a Catholic Church where — according to official information in Peking — none existed. There is a haunting description of two old priests, “aged ghosts”, who had completed something like thirty years in reform-through-labour camps.

The author has his prejudices, and a good deal of his information is clearly gained from official sources. However, his lack of strong religious conviction commends him in some respects to the reader as a trustworthy observer in matters of faith. His chapter on the subject ends tantalisingly soon; the reader would like more. Nevertheless, Bernstein can be praised for saying more in a short compass than some avowedly religious writers contrive to do in a whole book.

ARVAN GORDON

L'État juif de l'Union soviétique

by Henri Slovēs. Paris: Les presses d'aujourd'hui, 1982.

Paperback, 318 pp.

This book has nothing to do with religion. Neither the word nor the concept appears. Even when the suppression of Hebrew is mentioned, the author refers to that language as a vehicle of Jewish history, not prayer. The absence of any religious reference is not unreasonable, since Birobidzhan is an element in a national story, not a religion, in the USSR. And yet, without the concept of religion somewhere in the background, there is something missing in the treatment of any episode in Jewish national identity. For virtually everybody involved, whether Jewish colonists or Soviet leaders, Birobidzhan was in some sense a secular alternative to the traditional aspiration “next year in Jerusalem”, which gives it, if in a negative way, a religious connotation. The unimportance of the Jewish Autonomous Region of Birobidzhan and the importance of Israel in the world today are not unconnected with the emptiness of the secular solution. Half a century ago, when nearly twenty thousand Jews, including hundreds from abroad, were going each year to Birobidzhan and only a trickle into Israel, the comparison may have appeared very different.

The primary reason for the failure of the Birobidzhan solution was simple bad faith on the part of the Soviet government. M. Slovēs gives circumstantial evidence, without claiming proof, that the idea came from the Ministry of Defence, which urgently needed to populate the Far East against the Japanese. There was, however, enough enthusiasm to make the celebrated plan of half a million by 1936 look no more exaggerated than other Soviet plans which presaged great achievement. But only token resources were made available, and only token scope for Jewish

identity. Such progress as was made was overwhelmed by the general purge of 1936-38. A postwar revival of Jewish colonisation was again stopped by a purge, this time a specifically anti-Jewish one. When Stalin died in 1953 this purge was leading up to a deportation of Jews — whether to Birobidzhan or even less developed areas in Siberia is not known to M. Slověs or to other writers on the subject.

This purge ended, but no more solid good faith was shown by post-Stalin governments. It is difficult to see any prospect of a revival of such willingness as there had been amongst Jews up to 1936, and again after the war as they fled from the new anti-semitism in the European USSR. As the gentile population of Birobidzhan rose with the general development of the Soviet far east, the Jewish population there fell. By the census of 1980 the number of Jews had declined to 10,666, about five per cent of the total population, with a lower proportion stating Yiddish as their first or second language than in many parts of European Russia. Yet the fiction of the Jewish state (at the level of an Autonomous Region, established in 1934 as preliminary to a Republic) was maintained in the new Soviet Constitution of 1977. Unless the Stalinist intention to deport emerges again — which is scarcely conceivable in the present stage of Soviet political evolution — Birobidzhan is irrelevant to Soviet Jews, who are concerned with assimilating or emigrating while those who may want scope for national identity inside the USSR can scarcely find it in the Jewish Autonomous Region.

M. Slověs' book, which is translated from the Yiddish, is the best informed and most realistic treatment of the subject that has yet become available.

JACOB MILLER

Irina: A Love Stronger Than Terror

by Hermann Hartfeld. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982.
(German edition, Wuppertal: Brockhaus Verlag, 1980.)

When Hermann Hartfeld wrote *Faith Despite the KGB* soon after leaving the Soviet Union, where he had been imprisoned for Christian activities for seven years, he decided that western Christians knew little about the Soviet Union — indeed they were not equipped to understand. He therefore wrote in semi-fictional form. He guessed correctly, for the book sold widely. Fiction allowed him to stereotype persons and situations to make a point, while real-life situations were seldom so clear.

Irina is even more of a novel (well written, full of drama, with a good plot, love and interesting characters), but it is also an attempt to make the western reader understand how Christians must live in the Soviet Union.

It is an answer to the many letters from readers asking about dialogue with communism: a true story about an attempt at “dialogue” that failed. “The dialogue between Christians and communists could not happen,” is Hartfeld’s conclusion.

Reading this fascinating story will surely force the reader to ask himself some unsettling questions. Is this what is usually meant by dialogue? What is true in this story? Is this really the way Christians in the Soviet Union think and argue? Are these really their impressions about church leaders in the West? If so, who is the more naïve?

The story concerns some young Christians, mainly Baptists, who sought a discussion with the leaders of the Communist Party. The key figure on their side was an old man of eighty, Ryabushin, who had been a fanatical communist and an administrator of concentration camps for 15 years, was honourably pensioned, and then converted to Christianity. The group was received in Moscow by Morozov, a Central Committee officer. Other participants included Yuri Andropov (then KGB chief) and Marshal Ustinov (now Minister of Defence), although they did not attend a subsequent meeting. Soon after the second meeting Ryabushin died of a heart attack, whereupon the group dispersed, but was quickly picked up by the authorities and sent to psychiatric prisons.

The Christians asked two questions. First they wanted to know why Christians were restricted to cultic practices inside a church building. Andropov replied that this was to protect Soviet citizens from the opiate of religion (p. 180). Secondly, they challenged the unfairness of unrestricted atheistic propaganda, protesting that the Soviet Constitution granted Christians no such freedom.

This story in all likelihood is based on several meetings that some Reform Baptists leaders had with Morozov of the Central Committee in Moscow in 1964. Initially some prisoners were released, but then followed the most extensive attempt to date to arrest Reform Baptist leaders including Georgi Vins and Gennadi Kryuchkov, the key leaders. While the novel throws interesting light on that episode, it is impossible to say, given the pseudonyms and other poetic liberties, whether the details are accurate.

What is clear is that by “dialogue” these Christians meant that they wanted a hearing for their complaints. They also wanted to proclaim the Gospel to Soviet officials. They were not really seeking a protracted philosophical exchange that could lead to better understanding of each other. This approach disappoints westerners involved in dialogue. Soviet church leaders, on the other hand, fully understand and often repeat that they are interested only in a “practical dialogue” that allows them to co-exist with communists whose ideology they have no interest in discussing.

At a broader level, the novel’s claim to truth is more troubling. Many of the explanatory background passages are so simplistic that one is

astounded, either at the degree of ignorance and gullibility which the author attributes to the western reader, or at the simplicity of a Soviet believer. Examples are the description of a so-called party decision to establish a church under party control (pp. 21-22), or the claim that most of the Bibles printed in the Soviet Union do not reach believers (p. 91), which is simple repetition of western Christian propaganda without evidence. The sermon attributed to Ilya Orlov (p. 300) in the Moscow Baptist church is implausible. Orlov's patriotism is more nuanced. Hartfeld's eventual reduction of the whole dialogue story to a communist plot is also unsettling.

The average reader will enjoy *Irina* very much (my own copy got loaned out so often I had to borrow a copy to finish reading it!). It is of a much higher standard than many popular writings on the Soviet Union and gives unforgettable insights into individual lives. All these things have probably happened to someone in the Soviet Union. However, it will leave the reader with a distorted notion of the life of average Soviet Christians. Moreover, it is unfair to Soviet society, where not every party leader is a thug, and where some do believe in communist ideals, even if their number is shrinking and their chief concern is maintaining power.

Hartfeld is a gifted writer. One hopes that his next book will be still better and also that he will avail himself of the invaluable resources at Keston College, one of the most serious omissions in *Irina*.

WALTER SAWATSKY

Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions
by Amnesty International. Second revised edition.
London: Quartermaine House, 1980. 217 pp. £3.25

Just how bad are Soviet prisons and mental hospitals? This revised edition of the original 1975 publication provides an excellent way of finding out. Although the framework of laws and prison conditions are fundamentally the same, so much new illustrative material has been used as to make it a completely different book. For anyone concerned in any way for helping Soviet prisoners this lucid but harrowing book is indispensable. As there is a considerable amount of material relating to religious prisoners and to human rights activists who are Christians, it is of particular value to Christians,

Did you know that grass is not allowed to grow in prison compounds, to stop prisoners eating it? Or that, despite the crisis in agriculture, prisoners are never employed in farm work, in case, as a 1968 book on penal reform explains, they might actually *eat* eggs, vegetables, fruit and milk? Or that criminals in camps adjacent to prison psychiatric hospitals — particularly Sychyovcka, which has the worst reputation — have given

independent evidence that they enjoy working in hospitals, because they can knock patients around and inject drugs just as they like, without a doctor's permission?

Perhaps the worst time for prisoners is when they are in transit between prisons or on the way to exile. The transit cells are appalling and filthy and prisoners of conscience are at the mercy of hardened criminals, exposed to vicious attacks and rape, without redress. These nightmare journeys may last for months. Exile, when chronically sick prisoners are sent to live in primitive, remote villages in areas of climatic extremes, in shacks of hostels, deprived of the mutual solidarity of fellow prisoners, can often be soul-destroying. Even freed prisoners may be under administrative surveillance and have to report so frequently to the police that they can hardly be said to be free at all. Nina Strokata-Karavansky, for instance, was not allowed to visit town to attend church.

Since the publication of the book many more arrests have been made, some new methods — such as re-sentencing uncooperative prisoners before they are released — devised to prolong the agony. It is to be hoped that Amnesty will revise this excellent publication every five years.

JANICE BROWN

Nightingale Fever: Russian Poets in Revolution

by Ronald Hingley. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1982.

270 pp. £12.95.

To those who have the misfortune not to know Russian, Russian poetry is almost a sealed book. But Russia has a poetical literature fully worthy to take its place beside the great prose writers. The Soviet period has been particularly rich in great poetry, often not published, but circulated in typescript, often clandestinely, a poetry miraculously committed to memory and thus preserved through Terror and Gulag. Most of it has now been published in the west and much — but by no means all — has appeared belatedly in small Soviet editions, which are apt to be hard to procure. One of the best presents you can bring to a Soviet friend is a book of poetry by Anna Akhmatova, Osip Mandelstam, Marina Tsvetayeva or Boris Pasternak. These four stand head and shoulders above their contemporaries and in spite of their diversity there were close links between them. They are the subject of this book.

Ronald Hingley is a witty, urbane, discerning and well-informed writer on Russian literature and society and he has chosen a worthy theme. Anyone interested in Russian literature will find his book rewarding and everyone will learn from it much that is of value. For those who know Russian the book's value would be doubled if we could have the quotations in the original, as well as in translation. But then the price would

probably be doubled and Ronald Hingley's careful translations are always good enough to make their point.

The phrase "nightingale fever" is from a poem written by Mandelstam in 1918. This incurable illness is an occupational disease of poets and its main symptom is "an inability to stop singing, regardless of the consequences". Nightingale fever brought Mandelstam and Tsvetayeva to their deaths under Stalin. Akhmatova and Pasternak survived, but only just.

In Russia poets have more influence than anywhere else. This is because, except for a few years before the Revolution of 1917, the free expression of opinion by other means has been drastically curbed. Poetry is harder to control but woe betide a poet who gets caught out of line. So poetry readings have some of the character of a dangerous spectator sport.

These four great poets have been, and are, immensely influential and their influence will be felt for generations to come. All four were deeply religious in an Orthodox, if sometimes unorthodox way. I mean that their work is steeped in deeply-felt religious imagery even if there are times when some of them sit loosely to doctrine. All four were very Russian but also very European. They had absorbed into the marrow of their bones the whole inheritance of Europe, sacred and profane, classical, biblical, liturgical and modern. No one who reads them can escape the influence of that religion which has shaped the European consciousness. It is curious that Ronald Hingley has so little to say about this but it has played a significant part in the Russian intelligentsia's changed attitude to religion and so in the present renaissance of Christianity in Russia.

JOHN LAWRENCE

Khristianstvo i ateizm: lichnaya perepiska. Tom I

(Christianity and Atheism: Personal Correspondence. Vol. I)

Compiled by "A". Zürich: Glaube in der 2. Welt, 1980-81.

Paperback, 216 pp.

Khristianstvo i ateizm

(Christianity and Atheism)

by Fr Sergi Zheludkov and K. Lyubarsky.

Brussels: La Vie avec Dieu, 1982. Paperback, 250 pp.

These two books, both entitled "Christianity and Atheism", are both collections of letters. The authors of the letters in the first book are unknown to the reader, while the basis of the second book is the personal correspondence between Father Sergi Zheludkov and Kronid Lyubarsky, during the latter's imprisonment. Both sets of correspondence attracted the interest of others, and gradually turned into a kind of collective

dialogue between atheists and believers.

The correspondence collected in the first book was begun by a note in the diary of the poet D., who proceeds from the assumption that there can be understanding between atheists and believers. "I have something in common with you," he writes, "language. You can tell me about it all. I cannot feel, but I can understand". The doubts of the poet D., like those of other atheists expressed in this correspondence, may be reduced to the following: "Where are the rational proofs for the existence of God?" "Why does God permit such suffering?" "Why do believers (and the Church itself) behave so badly?" As for the commandments, they do not see any divine origin in them. The poet D. is convinced that he does in fact keep them. D's diary provoked many responses from Christians; and it must be said that the overwhelming majority of believers represented in this book engage in a good deal of polemicising among themselves. Atheism is represented again in the second part of the book by an article by Kh., who, like D., wishes to tear down the wall of misunderstanding and proposes a dialogue.

It is not possible in a short review to cite all the arguments of the believers and their attempts to reply to eternal questions. For the most part, their contributions are not personal testimonies but the reflections of educated people, with references to various religious philosophers and other significant figures. The tone of the correspondence is extremely correct and is marked by a readiness to understand the other point of view.

One cannot say that this tone was always adhered to in the polemic which arose from Father Sergi Zheludkov's letters to Kronid Lyubarsky. Father Sergi's letters speak of his deep and serene rootedness in God; he comes closest of all the participants in the dialogue to witnessing to God, so far as this is possible in a polemic. His love embraces "good atheists", whom he calls "anonymous Christians".

Kronid Lyubarsky, as a scientist, argues his atheist position consistently and honestly, and, in turn, expects consistent and honest arguments from the other side. Christianity, however, cannot be put on the same level with atheism, or perhaps only negatively, to demonstrate the groundlessness of atheistic conclusions; in other respects it is a matter of revelation and personal experience. This attitude offends atheists: it means that some kind of "higher experiences" are available to believers but not to atheists. The inability to provide proofs raises doubts about honesty. A bitter note enters the correspondence. It seems that only Lyubarsky's deep respect and love for Father Sergi restrain him from declaring outright to Christians: "You are all lying. You have dreamed all this up because you are afraid of the truth". This, at any rate, is the meaning of his analogy with a forged banknote. Lyubarsky's friend, the poet Podyapolsky, is not so punctilious. He does not address Christians at all,

but criticises Lyubarsky for unjustified indulgence towards believers, for his assumption of the “spiritual depth and ethical heights of faith in God”; is not this, Podyapolsky asks, the “heights and depth of ignorant omniscience?”

Recalling the poet D’s optimistic assertion: “I cannot feel, but I can understand”, we come to the sad conclusion that one who does not feel cannot understand. But, of course, it is still better to talk to one another.

ELYA PYATIGORSKAYA

Kommunizm kak realnost'

(Communism as a Reality) by Alexander Zinoviev.

Lausanne: Editions l'Age D'Homme, 1981. 230 pp.

This book purports to show in a more or less abstract form that the Soviet type of communism is a concrete historical manifestation of a general communist tendency. Zinoviev regards this tendency as a historically unavoidable phase, an absolutely necessary turning-point in the evolution of human society. There is a small chapter in the book devoted to a concise and very precise exposition of author’s views on religion. (“*Ideology and Religion*”). The main points of this chapter can be presented in a series of quotations:

(1) “The psychological foundation of religion is *Faith*, whereas the psychological foundation of ideology is formal acceptance.”

(2) “The Church in religion is an apparatus analogous to ideology in society.”

(3) “Atheist activity has had its positive side too,” because “The *historically concrete* forms of religion in this country have proved to be totally inadequate for the mentality of modern man. That is why violence and suppression in relation to religion have their basis in the factors that have pre-determined the destiny of religions in communist society”.

(4) “The spiritual heights and intellectual depths of religion are absolutely inaccessible to the broad masses of the population”. On the other hand, the lower, so to speak, “popular” level of religion seems to be much lower than the intellectual, educational and cultural level of an average Soviet citizen. This alone makes any idea of a “religious revival” in the USSR utterly unserious and unreal.

(5) Yet one has to admit that communist ideology too ceases to correspond to the general state and level of intellectual and cultural activity in the country. This is what gives religion a chance from time to time to “reconquer” some of its lost positions. But of course, such “reconquests” can be no more than utterly temporary and fragile. The future will belong to the struggle between “intellect” and ideology, not between the latter

and religion.

Zinoviev's whole attitude to religion is a very clear example of what can be called a "modernistic enlightenment".

ALEXANDER PYATIGORSKY

Bischöfe für den Untergrund. Zur Praxis der Geheimbischöfe in der Katholischen Kirche (Underground Bishops. The activities of secret Bishops in the Catholic Church). By Franz Hummer.

Vienna-Munich: Herold-Verlag, 1981. 224 pp.

The author sets out to report on Catholic bishops who have been consecrated secretly in order to meet the needs of churches in Eastern Europe. These churches have been outwardly destroyed or are severely restricted, and secrecy was necessary to maintain the office of bishop which in the Catholic tradition is essential in the life of the Church. The book begins with the Soviet Union, where as early as the 1920s six bishops were secretly consecrated in accordance with a directive from the Holy See. The author quite rightly introduces Eugen Pacelli, who was then Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin and who later became Pope Pius XII, as the key figure behind this event. He personally consecrated the French Jesuit priest, P. d'Herbigny, as Bishop in Berlin and later, on instructions from Rome, sent him to the Soviet Union, thus ensuring that there would be a succession of bishops there. The book includes short biographical details on the six secretly-consecrated bishops (pp. 46-50).

The path of suffering of the "underground" Eastern-Rite Catholics is movingly portrayed. Today this Church exists in secret, but is nonetheless extremely active and has a complete hierarchy, secret priests and members of religious orders. It also has a tireless champion in the person of Cardinal Josyf Slipyi in Rome. The Church was banned throughout all the areas of Europe controlled by Moscow, but in Czechoslovakia in 1968 it was able to resume its identity and re-establish contact with Rome. The author's account of the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine, which was "donated" by Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union in 1945, and of Bishop Romza and his followers, is relevant because it is often forgotten. It is also not widely known that in Romania not only is the Eastern-Rite Catholic Church prohibited, but also among the twelve secretly consecrated bishops there are some belonging to the Latin Rite.

The problems involved in appointing secret bishops could have been demonstrated if a more precise account had been given of secret bishops in Czechoslovakia. The title of this report, "The late consequences of Josephinism",* is not strictly accurate. The author disregards the

*The reforms of Joseph II of Austria turned the priests into civil servants of the Crown and abolished the contemplative orders — *Ed.*

interplay between atheist ideology and the bid for power on the part of the Bolsheviks. Josephinism wanted to use religion, not destroy it: it was a means of gaining support, not an enemy of the State. Although the book portrays the situation in Bulgaria as being quite different from everywhere else, only a single example is given: one secret bishop who was severely harassed by the government, removed from the "firing line" by Rome and was subsequently given permission by the government to take up office. The information which the author gives on Albania, China and Vietnam is not widely known.

In view of the precarious position of the Catholic Church in the countries of Eastern Europe this book deserves attention. It is not clear, however, to whom the author addresses the warning against "thoughtless repetition". The question "are all secret bishops consecrated on instructions from Rome?" remains an open one. Can one really speak of a failed experiment in so many countries?

J. RABAS

Kreuz, Halbmond und Roter Stern. Zur Situation der katholischen Kirche in Jugoslawien. (The Cross, the Crescent and the Red Star. The Situation of the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia) by Rudolf Grulich. Munich: Arbeitsgemeinschaft für europäische Friedensfragen, 1979. 116 pp.

This book about the Roman Catholic Church in Yugoslavia is very informative. After a general introduction on the country, the population and the religions, about thirty pages are devoted to the Roman Catholic Church. The final fifty pages provide the texts of documents, laws, pastoral letters and commentaries, which give an impression of church-state relations since 1953, and the addresses of the dioceses and some statistical data.

Yugoslavia is a very complex country, as everyone will discover if a little more than general interest is taken in it. It is the merit of this book that it is clearly written and gives a good outline of the Roman Catholic Church in Yugoslavia.

Nevertheless, the author regards the Church almost exclusively as a monolithic organisation led by the hierarchy, and gives little evidence about the men and women in the pews. The section "How religious is the youth?", is a happy exception and one of the most interesting parts of the book. The author's comment on the controversy between the Franciscans and the hierarchy in Bosnia and Hercegovina as to whether Franciscans or diocesan priests should be parish priests, which has lasted over a hundred years, and less explicit comments in other places, make it clear

that he is sympathetic to the conservative, clerical wing of the Roman Catholic Church, which, unfortunately, sometimes impedes his objectivity. His use of geographical names dating from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (e.g. Agram instead of Zagreb, Maria Theresiopel instead of Subotica), is perhaps the logical consequence of his point of view. However, this makes it rather difficult for the majority of his readers, living more than sixty years after the collapse of that Empire, to discover what town he is referring to.

The word *Halbmond* (Crescent) in the title is superfluous, as no emphasis is put on Islam in Yugoslavia, nor is there a section on the Roman Catholic Church under Islamic, Turkish rule.

THEO VAN DER VOORT

Russische Jugend im Aufbruch

(Young People in the Soviet Union Find a Voice) edited by Eugen Voss.
Zollikon: G2W Verlag, 1982. Paperback, 128 pp.

Eugen Voss, in his introduction to this book, asserts that a religious renaissance is taking place among young people in the Soviet Union and that the fundamental reason for this is a dissatisfaction with Marxist ideology which has created a spiritual vacuum. The Christian Seminar on Problems of the Religious Renaissance is an example of this. The book describes the formation of the Christian Seminar and its leading personalities and, quoting from *samizdat*, the principles of the seminar, its aims and activities.* The seminar members' aspiration to overcome political and national barriers is demonstrated by extracts from a document written to "the youth of America" and an appeal to the Italian youth organisation, *Communione e Liberazione*.† Part of the book, of necessity, is an account of how the Christian Seminar has been suppressed and its leaders punished for their activities. Extracts from the journal "37", which discusses cultural and literary as well as religious themes and was produced in Leningrad, include poems by Oleg Okhupkin, Sergei Stratanovsky and Yelena Schwartz and an "evangelical dialogue" between Viktor Krivulin and Tatyana Goricheva. Finally, the book contains a series of remarkable testimonies written by people of different ages and backgrounds about how they came to faith in Christ. The high level of presentation, commentary and analysis which readers of G2W materials have come to expect has been admirably maintained.

LORNA BOURDEAUX

*See articles by Jane Ellis, *RCL* Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 92-112, and Philip Walters, *RCL* Vol. 9, Nos. 3-4, pp. 111-126.

†English translation in *ibid.*, pp. 124-6.

Book Note

Katoličko Svećenstvo u NOB-u 1941-1945
(Catholic Clergy in the National Liberation Struggle 1941-1945)
by Ćiril Petešić. Zagreb: 1982. 276 pp.

This book represents a significant change in the tactics of the Yugoslav authorities towards the Catholic Church, emphasised by the fact that it was launched at a press conference attended by Party leaders. The introduction by a well-known historian states that the participation of clergy and laity in the liberation struggle, in which some gave their lives, has been insufficiently investigated because of various prejudices. The greater part of the text refers to the Catholic clergy, a smaller part to the Orthodox and Muslim clergy. Aside from reports and anecdotes about individual priests the appendices include the texts of a number of appeals by groups of clergy to support the liberation struggle. There is a list of names of 75 parish priests and religious people who took part in the liberation struggle and a further 43 who lost their lives. The book has no index, a serious lack.

Books Received

Listing of a book here neither implies nor precludes review in a subsequent issue of RCL.

Borgman, Lutz, *Notizen du Daten*. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1974. 171 pp.

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Wyszyński, Cardinal Stefan, *"Our Father . . ." Meditations*. Slough: St Paul Publications, 1982. 109 pp.

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Contributors

CAROLYN BURCH is a research assistant at Keston College.

CHRISTOPHER CVIIC is the East European specialist of the *Economist* weekly and a member of Keston College's Council of Management.

JOHN B. DUNLOP is Professor of Russian at Oberlin College, Ohio and the author of *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, to be published in November by Princeton University Press and The Hoover Institution Press.

JOHN V. EIBNER is a M. Phil. student at London University. He formerly lectured at Barrington College, Rhode Island, and has an M.A. in Hapsburg history with a special interest in Hungarian history.

MARK ELLIOTT is Associate Professor of History at Asbury College, Wilmore, Kentucky and the author of *Pawns of Yalta: Soviet Refugees and America's Role in their Repatriation* (University of Illinois Press).

ARVAN GORDON is a member of the research staff of Keston College.

KEVIN GRANT, formerly Deputy Managing Director of *The Universe*, is now Director of Aid to the Church in Need in the UK.

TADEUSZ KADENACY is a member of the Polish research staff of Keston College.

PAUL KEIM has recently spent two years in Poland under the auspices of the Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania. He is currently on secondment to Keston College.

SIR JOHN LAWRENCE is chairman of Keston College. He was editor of *Frontier* for many years and is author of a number of books, including *Russians Observed* and *A History of Russia*.

JACOB MILLER is a former editor of both *Soviet Jewish Affairs* and *Soviet Studies*.

WILLIAM NEWELL is professor in the Department of Anthropology in the University of Sydney, Australia.

ALEXANDER PYATIGORSKY, a specialist in ancient Indian philosophy and religion, teaches at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University.

ELYA PYATIGORSKAYA, the wife of Alexander Pyatigorsky, is a member of the Russian Orthodox Church. She emigrated from the USSR in 1974.

JOSEPH RABAS works at the Catholic Bureau for East and Central European Questions in Rome.

WALTER SAWATSKY is a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) research scholar based in West Germany at the MCC East/West Research Office.

THEO VAN DER VOORT works at the Inter-University Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research in Utrecht.

KENNETH M. WELLS graduated in 1979 from the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. He is presently tutor in Korean in the Asian Faculty and PhD student in the Far Eastern History Department of the Australian National University in Canberra.