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Russian Children at Risk

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The Number of Orphans and Street Children

Approximately 700,000 children reside in Russian orphanages, the largest number for one country worldwide.¹ In addition, estimates for much larger numbers of street children swell the total of at-risk Russian children to some 2.5 million, or 5.8 percent of youth under 19.² Only African nations dealing with HIV/AIDS have higher percentages of children at risk.³

For Russia the problem of abandoned children is not a new one. Heavy Russian losses in World War I (3.8 million deaths) led to soaring numbers of homeless children: two million by 1917 and an estimated seven million by 1922-23 in the wake of two revolutions and a civil war.⁴ Because of forced collectivization of agriculture and widespread famine, Russia still counted between four and seven million orphaned children by 1932.⁵

In the 1930s ongoing collectivization and Stalin's purges and deportations further swelled the ranks of orphans to an estimated seven to nine million.⁶ Making matters much worse, the 27 million Soviet fatalities in World War II left additional legions of homeless children. From 1941 to 1947 the number of orphanages in the Russian Republic alone increased from 1,661 to 3,900, with the number of children cared for more than doubling from 187,780 to 422,600.⁷

Postwar decades saw a gradual reduction in institutionalized orphans such that by 1987 the state was caring for 284,000 children.⁸ More recently, in the 1990s, Russia endured the failure of numerous industrial enterprises, rising unemployment, bouts of soaring inflation, and a collapsing social safety net – all fueling, once again, the ranks of children at risk.

To cope with additional hundreds of thousands of homeless children, the number of Russian orphanages more than doubled from 560 in 1995 to 1,420 in 1999.⁹ By 2007, Russia's 700,000 orphans were being cared for in 1,600 institutions of various types, with even larger numbers of street children still homeless.¹⁰

Trend One: Networking and Collaboration

In the 17-year span from the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 to the present, various trends may be noted in conditions faced by Russian orphans and in efforts to ameliorate their plight. First, networking and collaborative efforts on behalf of Russian children at risk have increased substantially. Especially noteworthy has been the role of Mission Specialties (Atlanta, GA), Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries (Wheaton, IL), and

Viva Network (England) in launching systematic networking and coalition building, illustrated by a series of conferences between 1999 and 2007 that were organized in Russia and the United States to address the needs of Russian children at risk. These gatherings served as the catalyst for the establishment of a Western networking body called the CoMission for Children at Risk (CCR), which developed an impressive database of 427 churches, NGOs, and agencies with concerns for Russian children at risk (<http://comission.org/organizations>.)

After a number of false starts, RiskNetwork, a Russian-based CCR counterpart, came into being in 2004. Its Russian-language database of 150 groups (www.risknetwork.ru) is likewise a helpful means of identifying personnel, information, and resources for the benefit of children at risk.¹¹

Collaborative efforts on behalf of Russian children at risk may be categorized as follows: (1) partnerships between Western church and parachurch agencies (example: Buckner International and Children's HopeChest); (2) partnerships between Western and Russian church and parachurch agencies (example: Russian Ministries and Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches); and (3) partnerships between church and parachurch groups and government agencies and NGOs (example: USAID, Assistance to Russian Orphans, and Children's HopeChest).

Trend Two: A Strengthening Russian Economy

A second trend with a significant impact on Russian children at risk has been a strengthening Russian economy. In recent years rising oil and gas revenues have provided more reliable government funding for orphanages. In addition, some Russian businesses have increased their charitable donations for children at risk. Also, partly because of the improved economy, Western agencies now place less emphasis upon direct humanitarian aid in favor of greater efforts to better prepare orphans psychologically and spiritually for the trauma of graduation, often as early as ages 15 or 16.

Trend Three: More Help for Older Orphans and Orphan Graduates

A third trend has been an increase in Western efforts to assist older orphans and orphan graduates. In the 1990s, it did not take long for Western NGOs and Christian ministries to recognize that as difficult as conditions were for Russian orphans, circumstances faced by orphan graduates were infinitely worse. A Russian Interior Ministry report estimated that of the 15,000 children leaving

(continued on page 2)

Russian Children at Risk (continued from page 1)

A recent study estimated that 40 percent of orphan graduates become addicted to alcohol or drugs, while estimates for prostitution among female orphan graduates run as high as 60 percent.

orphanages annually, 40 percent were soon unemployed and homeless, 30 percent committed crimes, and 10 percent committed suicide.¹² Also, a recent study estimated that 40 percent of orphan graduates become addicted to alcohol or drugs,¹³ while estimates for prostitution among female orphan graduates run as high as 60 percent.¹⁴

Examples of Christian ministry and NGO efforts to address the needs of older orphans and orphan graduates include the following: (1) Children's HopeChest (George Steiner and Tom Davis) established its first group home, known as a "family center," in the Vladimir Region in 1998 and has since added supervised transitional living programs in the Vladimir and Kostroma Regions and ministry centers for orphan graduates in the cities of Vladimir, Kostroma, and Ryazan. The latter offer graduates a safe haven including emergency shelter, life-skill classes, Bible studies, counseling, recreation, and fellowship. CHC reports that 1,000 older orphans and orphan graduates participate in its various transitional living programs, with very low rates of substance abuse, unemployment, or criminal offenses.¹⁵

(2) Miramed (Juliette Engel), a Moscow-based NGO with U.S. headquarters in Seattle, Washington, has published two excellent survivor guides for orphan graduates, one edition for Moscow and one for St. Petersburg. Miramed has also produced a puppet show performed in schools and camps warning orphan graduates that promises of jobs in the West very often prove to be bait set by sexual traffickers.¹⁶

Trend Four: "Deinstitutionalization"

A fourth major trend in efforts to assist Russian children at risk may be categorized as "deinstitutionalization." Examples of this trend include adoption, family-style group homes, independent living homes for older orphans, and increasing support for foster care and guardianship programs.

One alternative to institutions is, of course, adoption. Between 1991 and 2007, Americans adopted 54,730 Russian orphans. From 12 children adopted in 1991, the number peaked at 5,865 in 2004. In 2007, American families adopted 2,207 orphans from Russia.¹⁷

In 1998, in the wake of cases of adoption profiteering, Russia passed legislation to more closely monitor international adoptions and to encourage domestic adoptions. Since then, periodic moratoria on international adoptions and stringent reaccreditation requirements for adoption agencies have significantly reduced placements of orphans abroad.¹⁸ In addition, fewer children find permanent homes abroad because of the skyrocketing costs of international adoption, as much as \$25,000 to \$40,000 per child.¹⁹ These exorbitant charges are largely a function of bribes extracted all along Russia's bureaucratic pipeline. ♦
Editor's note: The conclusion of this article will be published in the next issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

Notes:

¹ 700,000-Zhanna Danilova (RiskNetwork), interview, 2 June 2008; 700,000-Judith L. Twigg, "What Has Happened to Russian Society?" in *Russia After the Fall*, ed. by Andrew C. Kuchins (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 151.

² Estimates of 500,000 to 2.8 million: Kelsey Hoppe, "Bezprizorniki: Street Children in the Former Soviet Union," Children of Crisis Project, 2003, www.radstock.org; Linda Delaine, "Plight of Russia's Orphans," *Russian Life* (15 March 2007), 2; Susan Hillis (Centers for Disease Control), interview, 10 January 2008; Karmen Friesen (CoMission for Children at Risk), interview, 4 January 2008.

³ UNAIDS, UNICEF, and USAID, *Children on the Brink: A Joint Report on Orphan Estimates and Program Strategies* (Washington, DC: The Synergy Project, 2002), 22; Cristi Hillis, "What Do They Need to Survive? Addressing the Needs of Adolescent Russian Orphans," senior thesis, Davidson College, 2006, note 8.

⁴ Judith Harwin, *Children of the Russian State, 1917-95* (Aldershot, England: Avebury, 1996), 11; Hillis, "What Do They Need?" 32; Thomas P. Whitney, "Postscript" in Vyacheslav Shishkov, *Children of the Street* (Royal Oak, MI: Strathcona Publishing Co., 1931), 145; Alan Ball, "State Children: Soviet Russia's *Bezprizornye* and the New Socialist Generation," *Russian Review* 52 (April 1993), 229.

⁵ Hillis, "What Do They Need?," 35; Svetlana Gladyshev, *Deti bol'shoi bedy* (Moscow: Zvonnista, 2004), 28.

⁶ Hoppe, "Bezprizorniki," 6. In 1926 the government ceased publication of orphan statistics. Harwin, *Children*, 10; Hillis, "What Do They Need?," 36.

⁷ Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 246.

⁸ Elizabeth Waters, "'Cuckoo Mothers' and 'Apparatchiks': Glasnost and Children's Homes" in *Perestroika and Soviet Women*, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 124.

⁹ Svetlana Stephenson, "The Abandoned Children of Russia - From Privileged Class to 'Underclass'" in *Education and Civic Culture in Post-Communist Countries*, ed. by Stephen Webber and Ilkka Liikanen (London: Palgrave, 2002), 189. See also Hoppe, "Bezprizorniki," 13.

¹⁰ DeLaine, "Plight," 2.

¹¹ Anita Deyneka (Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries), interview, 14 January 2008. While some organizations hesitate to sign on for such public exposure, many others overcome their initial uncertainties: at present an average of two to three new groups join Risknet weekly. Zhanna Danilova interview, 2 June 2008.

¹² DeLaine, "Plight," 2. See also Kathleen Hunt, *Abandoned to the State: Cruelty and Neglect in Russian Orphanages* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1998, www.org/reports98/russian/).

¹³ Mike Hollow, "A Contextual Analysis of Poverty in the Russian Federation," (Tearfund HIAF, 2007), 46.

¹⁴ Tom Davis, *Red Letters: Living a Faith that Bleeds* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 112.

See also Mark R. Elliott, "Faith-Based Responses to Trafficking in Women from Eastern Europe," *Bogoslovskie razmyshleniya/Theological Reflections* No. 5 (2005), 147-91; Mark R. Elliott, "Christian Responses to Trafficking in Women from Eastern Europe," *East-West Church and Ministry Report* 13 (Spring 2005), 1-4; and 13 (Summer 2005), 5-6.

¹⁵ CHC website: <http://www.hopechest.org>; Korvan Funk (Children's HopeChest), interview, 18 June 2008

¹⁶ Miramed, "Progress Report – 2006," <http://miramed.org/social.htm>; video of puppet show in author's possession.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of State and Holt International

Children's Services: <http://www.holtintl.org/instats.shtiml> (holt-1992-2002 stats). In 1999, in addition to 4,300 Russian orphans adopted by Americans, 1,900 additional Russian orphans were adopted by families from other nations. Delaine, "Plight," 1.

¹⁸ DeLaine, "Plight," 1-2.

¹⁹ Karmen Friesen interview, 4 January 2008.

Edited excerpts reprinted with permission from Mark R. Elliott, "Russian Children at Risk," Religion in Eastern Europe 28 (August 2008), 1-16.

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Mother Serafima and the Restoration of Novodevichy Convent

Wallace L. Daniel

Novodevichy Monastery in Moscow provides an excellent perspective from which to view the renewal of the church in Russia. This perspective is, in large part, bound up with the story of a remarkable woman, Varvara Vasil'evna Chichagova, Mother Serafima. Despite great odds, Mother Serafima managed to live within the Soviet system and accommodate herself to it, while maintaining a dynamic personal and internal religious life. Her personal journey is, in many ways, a microcosm of the story of Novodevichy – the struggle to regain one's roots, to reestablish identity, and to redefine the church's role in Russian society.

Novodevichy's Storied History

Novodevichy was founded in the first quarter of the 16th century by Grand Duke Vasili III, the father of Ivan the Terrible, to commemorate Moscow's conquest of Smolensk in 1522. The monastery served as the main fortress on the southern ring, joining a chain of other fortress-monasteries (Andron'evskii, Danilevskii, Donskoi, Novospasskii, Simonovskii) built to protect Moscow. The monastery has thick, red-brick walls, with towers, loopholes, and battlements. The walls form an irregular pentagon whose length measures more than 3,000 feet. From the beginning, the monastery's main building was the Smolensk Cathedral, a majestic, richly decorated, beautifully proportioned structure that is today one of the country's best preserved monuments of 16th- and 17th-century architecture. The cathedral is home to the icon of the Mother of God of Our Lady of Smolensk, placed there following Smolensk's defeat.

Soon after its founding, Novodevichy became a women's monastery of the court. To it were sent the wives and daughters of the great princes – sometimes willingly, sometimes forcibly. While women's monasteries may have represented places for control, they fulfilled another purpose that, to some women, represented quite the opposite. These women saw monasteries as places from which they might find a voice that enabled them to challenge socially prescribed values, either through social action or reflective writing. Such was the case for many Russian women who entered monasteries later, in the 19th and 20th centuries: these women were seeking alternative communities and ways of providing service to people in need

– the unfortunate, disposed, disabled, elderly, or impoverished members of society who had nowhere else to go. Thus, monasteries could be sources of strength, traditional places, but also, the means by which women could establish communities at the grassroots level, making small inroads toward personal freedom.

In addition to Novodevichy's contribution to the formation of the Russian state, it also provided the setting for key events in Russian history. In the Smolensk Cathedral in 1598, the Patriarch proclaimed Boris Godunov Tsar. During the Time of Troubles (1598-1613), the monastery served as the site of bloody combat with Polish armies. The first Romanov tsar, Mikhail Fedorovich, ordered the monastery's restoration following its damage in battle. In 1689, Peter the Great compelled his half-sister Sophia to take the veil here in the power struggle that developed over Peter's taking the throne. Later, when Peter made his historic first trip to Western Europe in 1697, Sophia's family attempted to seize power in a mutiny led by palace guards (*streltsy*). Following the uprising's failure, Peter had 772 participants executed in October 1698, including 193 dispatched directly beneath the windows of Sophia's cell in Novodevichy's Nadprudnaia Tower. In 1724, more in keeping with Novodevichy's charitable purpose, Peter the Great founded an orphanage in the convent, which by 1750 cared for approximately 250 girls.

In the historical imagination, Novodevichy thus became a place whose relationship with people was many-sided: the monastery played an important part in Russia's early historical development; it was a place of great beauty and serenity; it served as a fortress to which people could go in times of danger; it was a refuge for women in times of misfortune. These multiple elements were part of the national memory, and, while they might be suppressed, they were not obliterated.

Burials of Note

The monastery's two cemeteries contain the graves of some of Russia's most renowned political and cultural figures. They include Napoleonic war hero Denis Davydov; writers Nikolai Gogol, Anton Chekhov, and Mikhail Bulgakov; composer Aleksandr Scriabin; artists Isaac Levitan and Valentin Serov; philosopher Vladimir Soloviev;

Novodevichy Monastery in Moscow provides an excellent perspective from which to view the renewal of the church in Russia.

(continued on page 4)

Mother Serafima (continued from page 3)

theatrical director Konstantin Stanislavskii; and the Tretyakov brothers, Pavel and Sergei, founders of the famous art gallery that bears their name. The Soviet period is also well represented: poet Vladimir Mayakovsky; Joseph Stalin's second wife, Nadezhda; Nikita Khrushchev; and Boris Yeltsin.

Closure and Reopening

While the spiritual influence of monasteries and convents would continue to resonate in the national memory, their physical presence after 1917 was severely curtailed. While the Russian Empire had 1,025 operating convents in 1914, by 1929 the Soviet government had closed them all, including Novodevichy in 1926.

Not until fall 1994 did Russian authorities return the famous convent to the church. On 13 October, Mother Serafima was welcomed into Novodevichy, given holy orders, and charged with restoring its religious life. On 27 November 1994, 72 years after its closure by the government, Novodevichy Convent was officially reopened.

Mother Serafima's Family History

When I met Mother Serafima for the first time in the summer of 1995, she had served as the head of Novodevichy for nearly seven months. She was in her early 80s and stood only about four feet, ten inches. But neither of these characteristics bore witness to the vitality and strength she obviously possessed. She greeted me with a firm handshake and a warm smile, and one would immediately sense in her a quiet dignity and self-assured demeanor that bespeaks a person who is well educated and deeply spiritual.

Mother Serafima pulled from a sideboard a family photograph album that contained pictures of her relatives, including several uncles who had served the Russian and later Soviet state before disappearing into labor camps. One of the first photographs in the album showed her father standing with Tsar Nicholas II and his family; in others, her uncle and male relatives were in military uniforms of the pre-revolutionary Russian army. She was clearly connected, not only to the Soviet period, but also to the old Russian nobility and to some of the key events in Russia's pre-revolutionary history.

Metropolitan Serafim

One ancestor, Admiral Vasilii Yakovlevich Chichagov, explored the Arctic Ocean at the behest of Catherine the Great. Her grandfather, Leonid Mikhailovich Chichagov, wrote a book about the Russian army in which Mother Serafima took particular interest and considerable pride. This work of more than 600 pages focuses on Tsar Aleksander II's personal participation in the campaigns along the Dnieper River during the Russo-Turkish wars. At the age of 40, her grandfather gave up his position in the army to enter the church, preparing to study for the priesthood. That decision was precipitated by the death of his wife, at the age of 36. In 1898, he took monastic vows and was given the name Serafim, in honor of Serafim of Sarov (1759-1833), whose life and teachings he much admired. He was appointed to the rank of

metropolitan in 1917, the ceremony taking place in the Uspenskii Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin. One of Mother Serafima's photographs showed her grandfather standing beside the last Romanov tsar, Nicholas II, and his family.

After his consecration, Leonid Mikhailovich served in a Moscow cathedral located where the Lenin Library now stands. Just behind the library stands the Church of the Blessed Nicholas, part of the original church complex where Leonid Mikhailovich conducted services for more than 20 years. But the most distinctive feature of his church career was his role in advancing the cause of the canonization of the revered monk, Serafim of Sarov. Leonid Mikhailovich wrote a book that made a convincing case for Serafim's activities and contributions. Leonid Mikhailovich's campaign succeeded when Tsar Nicholas II himself, having read this book about Serafim, became a supporter of the idea of canonization and urged the church's compliance. Mother Serafima had a photograph, taken in January 1917, of Tsar Nicholas II and his family bearing the remains of Saint Serafim. As for her grandfather's fate, she knew only that he had been arrested in 1937 at the age of 85 and had disappeared into the labor camps.

Honoring the Memory of Repressed Believers

While Mother Serafima had asked the KGB for files on her grandfather, her requests had repeatedly been met with silence. But in 1994 came an important break. From a friend, she learned of a woman living in Moscow who had collected information on the labor camps and their victims. She went to the address she was given, a small one-room apartment in a Moscow suburb. There she found an old woman, living alone in cramped quarters, her apartment filled with boxes of index cards. For years she had collected the names of 20,000 people who had been shot, and she had transcribed the information, preserving a record and fleshing out the story of those who had disappeared into death camps. It was here that Mother Serafima found her grandfather. He had been executed and buried near Butovo, a small village just south of Moscow that had a special rifle range operated by the NKVD, Stalin's secret police.

With the old woman's permission, but her insistence on anonymity, Mother Serafima took her evidence to Metropolitan Yuvenaly, a leading member of the Holy Synod, told him her story, and asked for his assistance. He complied, and together the two of them went in search of Butovo and her grandfather's grave. "I shall never forget that excursion," Mother Serafima said. "It was in the middle of winter, and the former rifle range was surrounded by some kind of special fence. It had only one entrance gate, which we found and had opened for us. We located the mass grave, the place where in 1937 many priests were executed and buried in the field."

Following their location of the site, Metropolitan Yuvenaly took the lists of executed bishops, priests, and laity who had suffered for their beliefs to

"We located the mass grave, the place where in 1937 many priests were executed and buried in the field."

Mother Serafima

Patriarch Aleksii II. Additionally, the lists included the names of the last monks of the Troitse-Sergieva Monastery at Sergiev Posad. Over several weeks in 1994, the Orthodox newspaper *Pravoslavnaia Moskva* published the entire list of executed people, with accompanying photographs. On Easter 1994, Patriarch Aleksii II consecrated the field where Mother Serafima's grandfather and other leaders of the church were shot. ♦

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Augustine in Russia

Melissa Jones

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Free Will and Original Sin

Unimpeded freedom of will is an essential ingredient in Orthodox theological anthropology, and Orthodox theologians have generally held that salvation is dependent upon a combination of God's grace and human freedom. The fall restricted human freedom because it limited the human condition and brought death into the world, but it did not "darken the will," as Augustine asserted. Most Eastern theologians would agree that humans are able and expected to seek perfection, and that God's grace is an aid to that effort. Augustine's premise that humans are not able to not sin (*non posse non peccare*) is foreign to Eastern Orthodox thought. The strict doctrinal formulation of Augustine's concept of original sin was also foreign to Eastern Orthodox tradition. The accepted Eastern view of original sin was never formulated as systematically as it was in the West. This is not unusual in that Eastern Orthodox theology uses reasoned arguments, but depends instead mainly on tradition and the authority of the Church Fathers in making arguments, while the Latin West uses a more analytical, systematic style that is dependent on logical proofs.

Western and Eastern Understandings of Grace

In order to avoid a paralyzing pessimism, Augustine's views regarding the corrupt nature of humanity went hand-in-hand with an elaborate theory of grace. Eastern Fathers generally had taken a positive view of human nature and grace. Eastern theologians tended to see the incarnation and death of Jesus as an event that freed all of humanity from Adam's sin, granted all of humanity grace, and established freedom to choose either right-action or sin. The West, particularly after the acceptance of Augustine's ideas of original sin, held a more juridical view of sin and atonement that required a careful balance of grace versus sin to attain salvation.

Augustine's teachings on the subject of grace, coupled with the generally accepted doctrine of divine foreknowledge, led him to a doctrine that has been referred to as "double predestination" because it divided humanity into two classes, those who were destined to receive grace and therefore would have the capacity to be saved, and those who would not receive grace and were therefore ultimately damned.¹

Nuanced Russian Critiques of Augustine

Russian scholars such as D. V. Gusev and I. V. Popov did not blindly accept Augustine's ideas of original sin uncritically. Nor did they reject them as heretical products of the West. Rather, they attempted to put Augustine in a context of time and place to help understand how and why his ideas developed. Popov even suggested using Augustine's experience with the Donatists to help discern how best to deal with certain sects of Old Believers.²

Other scholars like L. I. Pisarev, K. Skvortsov, and E. N. Trubetskoi, were able to unabashedly criticize some of Augustine's ideas, while still accepting other aspects of his work that they believed to be useful in the Russian context.³ These secondary works by Russian theologians show that lively discussion was taking place in the theological academies during the last half of the 19th century. The numerous German and French works cited in their articles and monographs show that an exchange of ideas was taking place, and that the Russian Academy could no longer be perceived as an intellectually isolated purveyor of stale theology. In conclusion, it can be seen that a return to patristic studies, and the resulting Kievan translations of Augustine into Russian, made his writings widely available for analysis, thus helping to enliven Russian theological discourse.

The Hostile East-West Background

At first glance, the 19th-century focus on Augustine's work by Russian church leaders seems surprising. The relationship between the Latin church of the West and the Greek Eastern church has always been strained. Even from the early centuries of Christianity, differences in language and culture created misunderstandings and disagreements that eventually erupted into the schism of 1054. The Russian church, as inheritor of Byzantine culture and religion, also inherited many of the resentments and prejudices against the Latin Catholic church that were based on events occurring even before Russia's official acceptance of Christianity in the 10th century. This history of conflict would lead to the expectation of a

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(continued on page 6)

Augustine in Russia (continued from page 5)

very grudging acceptance by Russian churchmen of any Western theologian, let alone Augustine, a quintessential Western thinker who promoted a theological anthropology that stood counter to the Eastern patristic tradition.

Accusations of Heresy

Indeed, even modern-day Orthodox theologians continue to debate the appropriate place of Augustinian theology in Orthodoxy, and spirited disagreements on this topic have continued over the years in academic books and journals.⁴ An entertaining example of a modern Orthodox diatribe against Augustine was written by Michael Azkoul, now a bishop in the Antiochian Orthodox Church. In his book, *The Influence of Augustine of Hippo on the Orthodox Church*, Azkoul portrays Augustine as a Neoplatonic heretic who should be rejected with the likes of Nestorius and Arius.⁵ According to Azkoul, Augustine's Neoplatonic premises taint every aspect of his theology: "Each doctrinal error of Augustine is consistent with all the others, stemming from principles which allowed him to elaborate a peculiar and coherent body of religious opinion."⁶ Azkoul provides a well-researched, if unbalanced, review of literature attacking the use of Augustinian theology in the Orthodox church.

This controversy becomes even more heated in Orthodox popular culture. Arguments about Augustine erupt frequently in Orthodox magazines and in discussions carried over the Internet. The godfather of contemporary anti-Augustinianism in popular Orthodox thinking was the late Fr. John Romanides, an Orthodox priest who was a graduate of Harvard University, former professor at Holy Cross Orthodox Seminary in Massachusetts, and retired professor of Thessaloniki University. Romanides wrote several respected mainstream academic works, including *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine; An Interplay Between Society and Theology*, published by Holy Cross Orthodox Press.⁷ However, his post-retirement activities appear to have been focused on producing voluminous works on an Internet web page called "Romanity" that describe in detail the damage done to Orthodoxy by Western influences. Romanides spent a considerable amount of time attacking Augustine and his influence, and he still has a loyal Internet following among those who would condemn the influence of Augustine and Western theology on Orthodoxy. Romanides' opinions and other works criticizing Augustine were also published in *The Christian Activist: A Journal of Orthodox Opinion*. His contribution to this magazine was "The Fundamental Difference between the East and West," which appeared in the same issue as a work by Orthodox priest John Reeves examining "The Price of Ecumenism Parts 1 & 2: How Ecumenism Has Hurt the Orthodox Church."⁸ A later issue in this same publication carried an article by a "well-known psychologist and opponent of the mental health system," Seth Farber, who argues that Augustine's work inspired Luther, Calvin, and Freud to promote a "theory of human depravity."⁹ While these examples may be the works of Orthodox extremists,

they echo anti-Western, anti-ecumenical opinions that have existed for centuries.

Augustine Serving Russian Purposes

Thus, parochial, anti-ecumenical movements in Russia and in other Orthodox jurisdictions are able to claim that Orthodox tradition and Augustinian theology are completely incompatible. Making this claim does a grievous injustice to the many dedicated, idealistic Russian scholars like K. Skvortsov, E. N. Trubetskoi, and A. I. Bulgakov who sought to enhance the understanding of Orthodoxy by examining the works of great Western theologians such as Augustine.¹⁰ These 19th-century Russian scholars tried to expand the understanding of Orthodoxy by expanding the boundaries of Russian theological scholarship. Such men had faith in the strength of Orthodox theology and did not hesitate to compare and contrast its teachings with those of other confessions.

Professor Afanasii I. Bulgakov of the Kievan Theological Academy, for example, in addition to his translations of Augustine, wrote an objective history of Methodism, which he defended as his master's thesis, and contributed historical essays on Anglicans, Baptists, Old Catholics, and Mormons. His work on the Anglican hierarchy was translated into English by William John Birkbeck in 1889.¹¹ Many of today's Orthodox critics of ecumenism do not understand that the desire to maintain a unique and creative Orthodox theology does not necessitate hostility toward theological dialogue and ideological walls to prevent contact with other religions.

In Summary

Russian interest in Augustine has been rekindled in recent years. The Library of Christian Literature, which was established in St. Petersburg in 1998 as a branch of the Moscow Library, lists several recent editions of Augustine's works in its online catalog.¹² In addition, a well-known Russian medievalist, V. V. Bychkov, has published a book on Christian polemics and apologists that features the work of Augustine.¹³ As the Russian Orthodox Church finds itself in increasing contact with Western confessions, it is likely to be drawn into further examinations of seminal Western theologians such as Augustine of Hippo. ♦

Notes:

¹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, Vol. 1 of *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 298.

² See Appendix III, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Secondary Works on Augustine," in Melissa Ann Jones, "Augustine in Russia," Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2000, 165-70.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ For example, Reinhard Flogaus provides a scholarly, balanced examination in "Palamas and Barlaam Revisited: A Reassessment of East and West in the Hesychast Controversy of 14th-century Byzantium," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 41 (No.1, 1998), 1-32. This same volume also carries a discussion of the venerable Fr. John

Many of today's Orthodox critics of ecumenism do not understand that the desire to maintain a unique and creative Orthodox theology does not necessitate hostility toward theological dialogue.

Augustine in Russia

Myendorff's thoughts regarding Augustine and original sin: Boris Bobrinskoy, "The Adamic Heritage According to Fr. John Meyendorff," 33-44.

⁵ Michael Azkoul, *The Influence of Augustine of Hippo on the Orthodox Church* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 128-79.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁷ John Romanides, *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine: An Interplay between Society and Theology* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1981).

⁸ John S. Romanides, "The Fundamental Difference Between the East and West," *The Christian Activist: A Journal of Orthodox Opinion* 9 (1999); <http://www.philthompson.net/pages/library/eastwest.html> (accessed 5 April 2008). The same issue carried "The Price of Ecumenism, Parts 1 and 2: How Ecumenism Has Hurt the Orthodox Church"

by John Reeves. This article is available at the Orthodox Christian Information Center website: http://www.orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/tca_priceofecumenism.aspx (accessed 5 April 2008).

⁹ Seth Farber, "The Reign of Augustine," *The Christian Activist: A Journal of Orthodox Opinion* 13 (1999), 1-20.

¹⁰ See Jones, "Augustine in Russia," Appendix III, 165-70.

¹¹ See "Bulgakov, Afanasii I" in *Pravoslavnaia bogoslovskaiia entsiklopediia*, ed. by A. N. Lopukhin, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1902, 1183-84. The Bulgakov work translated by Birkbeck was a vindication of the legitimacy of the Anglican hierarchy from an Orthodox point of view. It was published as *The question of Anglican orders in respect to a "vindication" of the papal decision, which was drawn up by the English Roman Catholic bishops at the end of 1897*, trans. by W. J. Birkbeck (London: S.P.C.K., 1899).

¹² The St. Petersburg Library of Christian Literature [Biblioteka Khristianskoi Literatury] lists the following works in its electronic catalog: Avgustin, *Cvety blagodatnoi zhizni*, 1997; Avgustin, *Ispoved' [Confessions]*, 1997; Avgustin, *O grade bozhiem: Kn. 1-13 [City of God]*, 1998; Avgustin, *O grade bozheim: Kn. 14-22*, 1998; Avgustin, *Tvopeniya [Works]*, 1998; Avgustin, *Ispoved'*, 1999; Avgustin, *O predopredelenii svyatyh [On the Predestination of the Saints]*, in electronic format, <http://www.lcl.spb.ru:8084/archiv/>.

¹³ V. V. Bychkov, *Aesthetica Patrum. Estetika Otsovs Terkvi: Apologety. Blazhennyi Avgustin* (Moscow: Ladomir, 1995).

Edited excerpts published with permission from Melissa Ann Jones, "Augustine in Russia," Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2000.

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Selected Russian Translations of Augustine

Bogoslovskiiia razmyshleniia o blagodati bozhei i o vole chelovecheskoi [Theological Reflections on the Grace of God and Human Will]. St. Petersburg: Matvei Ovchinnikov, 1786.

O grade bozheim [The City of God]. Moscow: Moscow Typographical Company, 1786.

Blazhennago Avreliia Avgustina Ipponiiskago episkopa Ispovedaniia [Confessions of Blessed Augustine, Bishop of Hippo]. Moscow: Moscow Typographical Company, 1787.

Ispovedy [Confessions]. Kiev: Kievan Theological Academy, 1866-69.

O grade bozhiem [The City of God]. Kiev: Kiev Theological Academy, 1885-87.

Russia's Islamic Threat

Gordon M. Hahn

High Muslim Unemployment

Russia's poorest regions are most often those heavily populated by Muslims, the eight so-called titular Muslim republics, especially those in the North Caucasus.

Table 1. Unemployment in Russia's Muslim Republics (2005)

Territory	Percentage of Unemployment*
Ingushetiya	51.2
Dagestan	29.9
Kabardins	20.9
Adygeya	16.1
Karachaevo-Balkariya	9.1
Volga Federal District	8.0
Bashkortostan	7.2
Tatarstan	7.1
Southern Federal District	3.2
Chechnya	No data
Russia	8.1

* The unemployment rate was calculated using figures from the working-age population from the October 2002 census (www.perepis2002.ru/ct/html/TOM_07_01.htm). Therefore, the unemployment rates could be slightly higher, especially in the North Caucasus with its decades-long higher reproduction rates.

The high unemployment rates reflected in Table 1 are of particular concern. When one considers that the real level of unemployment is much higher than official statistics show, the situation appears explosive. This is especially true since youth unemployment is even higher than overall unemployment. Such levels of joblessness among youth – especially in the North Caucasus where they reach nearly 50 percent and in some villages reportedly 90 percent – are creating an army of young males with no outlet for their energies.

Russia's poorest regions are most often those heavily populated by Muslims.

(continued on page 8)

High Muslim Birth Rates

Russia's ethnic Muslims are a sizable minority and continue to have higher birth rates (Table 2)

than ethnic Russians. Ethnic Muslims probably number 15 million and comprise more than half of Russia's non-Russian population.

Table 2. Growth in Ethnic Muslim Population Between the 1989 and 2002 Censuses of the Russian Federation

Ethnic Group	2002 Population In thousands (%)	1989 Population In thousands (%)	Change in Population 1989-2002 (%)
Tatars	5,568.3* (3.84)	5,552.1 (3.78)	+0.29
Bashkirs	1,673.4 (1.15)	1,345.7 (0.92)	+24.35
Chechens**	1,360.3 (0.94)	899.0 (0.61)	+51.31
Avars	814.5 (0.56)	544.0 (0.37)	+49.72
Kabardins	520.0 (0.36)	386.1 (0.26)	+34.68
Kazakhs	653.0 (0.45)	635.9 (0.43)	+2.69
Azeris	621.8 (0.43)	335.9 (0.23)	+85.11
Uzbeks	122.9 (0.09)	125.9 (0.09)	-3.25
Turkmens	33.5 (0.02)	39.7 (0.03)	-18.51
Kyrgyz	31.8 (0.02)	41.7 (0.03)	-31.15
Tajiks	28.6 (0.02)	38.2 (0.03)	-33.57
Muslim Totals	13,971.0 (9.62)	11,670.5 (7.94)	+19.71

* Includes Siberian and Crimean Tatars as well as Volga Tatars and excludes so-called "Krysheny" or Baptized Tatars. It should be noted that there is some reason to believe that forces in Moscow and Bashkiriya may have deliberately deflated the 2002 census numbers for Tatars in executing or counting the results.

** There may have been some inflation of the Chechen population figures in the 2002 census by Moscow in order to cover up deaths brought on by two post-Soviet Chechen wars.

The number of ethnic Muslims grew by 20 percent between the 1989 Soviet census and the 2002 Russian census. Meanwhile, the ethnic Russian population fell by 3.45 percent. Nine of the Muslim ethnicities' population growth reached astonishing levels of over 40 percent. Of Russia's 23 Muslim nationalities included in published census data, only four declined in size in the inter-census years, a phenomenon explained by an exodus of these groups' members back to their ethnic homelands in Central Asia after the Soviet collapse. This was also the reason for the small Kazakh growth. The doubling of the ethnic Azeri population in Russia is a product of group members' fear of residing in a potential war zone, given the ongoing Armenian-Azeri tensions over the Armenian enclave and unrecognized state of Nagorno-Karabakh embedded in Azerbaijan. The ethnic Muslim groups' higher population growth rates mean that the ranks of idle young males, especially in the North Caucasus

republics, will be growing.

A key reason for ethnic Muslims' higher population growth rates is their more traditional lifestyle, informed in part by rural custom and Islam. The latter frowned upon birth control and women working outside the home. North Caucasus traditions of machismo put a premium on high numbers of children. Also, customary individual houses in rural areas (versus small apartments more common elsewhere in the former Soviet Union) better accommodate large families. This traditional way of life is being preserved by the lower level of urbanization in the North Caucasian Muslim republics, leaving inhabitants less integrated into secular Russian life.

By late in the 21st century, the decline in the ethnic Russian population and the rapid growth among the country's ethnic Muslims together will threaten the ethnic Russians' majority. One estimate has it that by mid-century the ethnic Russian population will have declined to as little as 60 million, as the mortality rate increases with the passing of the much more numerous older generation.¹ The second half of the century, all else remaining equal, should see a further decline of at least 10-15 million. If the ethnic Muslim groups' population continues to grow at the rate it did between the 1989 and 2002 censuses, their numbers will increase to approximately 45 million by the century's end. By that time, therefore, ethnic Muslims will form a plurality and perhaps a majority of Russia's population, and Islam will likely begin to challenge Russian Orthodox Christianity as the country's most widespread religion.

The number of ethnic Muslims grew by 20 percent between the 1989 Soviet census and the 2002 Russian census. Meanwhile, the ethnic Russian population fell by 3.45 percent.

Russia's Islamic Threat

Muslim Demographics

An important brake on the mobilization of an Islamic revolution would seem to be the divide among Russia's ethnic Muslims between believers and non-believers. It has been estimated that only 3.7 to 4 million (some 20 percent) of Russia's ethnic Muslims are practicing believers.² However, since the ideological liberation begun during *perestroika*, re-Islamization has proceeded apace. By October 2005, according to Ravil Gainutdin, Chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia (SMR), the number of mosques in Russia had grown from a mere 150 as of the Soviet collapse in 1991 to some 6,000.³ Even in urbanized, secularized, and relatively russified Tatarstan, the number of mosques has increased from a handful to over a thousand, perhaps 1,200, growing at a rate of 50-60 per year.⁴

The number of ethnic Muslims who identify themselves as believers has grown precipitously, even among more secular and assimilated populations, such as the Tatars of Tatarstan. For example, in the early 1980s, 59 percent of Tatars expressed indifference, and only 15.7 percent declared themselves believers. By 1994 an astonishing 66.6 percent of urban Tatars and 86 percent of rural Tatars declared themselves believers. However, further survey data show that while identification and general belief have risen immensely, the practice of Islamic rituals remains extremely low. In 1990 only 13.9 percent of Muslim believers prayed at home and 8.3 percent of Muslim believers prayed in a mosque, meaning that 77.8 percent of Muslims never prayed at all.⁵

Against the background of a growing revolutionary Islamic insurgency throughout much of the North Caucasus, already capable of bringing terror to Moscow on land, underground, and in the air, the remaining potential for radical recruitment in society and within the state represents a grave threat to Russia. As Russians are reduced to ever-smaller minorities in Muslim republics dominated by ethnic and, for the most part, believing Muslims, they will feel unwelcome, even fearful. This will only exacerbate the already considerable and rising tensions between indigenous Muslims and the Muslim republics on the one hand, and the Russian state and ethnic group on the other hand.

The Chechen Quagmire and Foreign Islamic Revolutionaries

Many of the immediate causes of Russia's burgeoning Islamic movement come from Putin's policies. First and foremost is the often brutal prosecution of the festering low-intensity war in Chechnya. This has led to the Chechens' radicalization under the influence of foreign, jihadist terrorist ideologies and movements funded, inspired, and perhaps still coordinated by al Qaeda. (*Editor's note: A jihadist is a Muslim who wages a spiritual struggle or holy war against non-Muslims.*) Having lost on the traditional battlefield, Chechen insurgents have turned increasingly to terrorist methods and to a strategy of expanding the war throughout the North Caucasus and as far beyond as possible. Thus, the Chechen-led terrorist network is facilitating

the sustained and growing infiltration of radical Islam into other regions of Russia. This spread is the result of Russia's geographical proximity to parts of the larger Muslim world, that world's present pre-revolutionary crisis, and the post-Soviet restoration of historical ties between Russia's Muslims and the rest of the *umma* (Muslim community).

Russian Authoritarianism at Muslim Expense

Another leading cause of expanding Islamist terrorism in Russia is Putin's re-authoritarianizing counter-revolution. As the Chechen war dragged on and terrorism began to mount, the Putin administration responded by transforming Russia from a hybrid regime that was a limited, illiberal "managed democracy" to something altogether more authoritarian.⁶

Although Russia's Muslim republics, including Kabardino-Balkariya, tend to be its most authoritarian regions⁷ and Putin's counter-revolution has encouraged these regimes to become more firmly authoritarian, they have still not reached a level of authoritarianism firm enough to stamp out terrorist or other forms of opposition. However, by more aggressively and non-surgically cracking down on Muslims across the board and increasingly violating their political, civil, and human rights in many regions, Moscow and the republics' regimes have made many indigenous young Muslims more open to calls for secession.

Russian Intervention in Ingushetiya

Moscow's attempt to control political developments in the regions has sparked not only ethno-confessional backlash, but also secular political instability in the ethnic Muslim republics. In particular, Moscow's recentralization drive has introduced an additional complicating factor into the inter-clan politics of the Muslim republics, especially those in the North Caucasus. For example, Ingushetiya – the first republic that saw Moscow intervene directly in its politics, a republic populated largely by the Chechens' fellow Vainakh Muslim people, the Ingush, and bordering Chechnya – and Bashkortostan were on the brink of democratic "orange revolutions" in 2005. Soon thereafter Ingushetiya saw an increase in the number of what, for the most part, were largely Islamist terrorist acts.

Under Moscow's recentralization drive, a KGB official, Murat Zyazikov, was forced on Ingushetiya as president by the Kremlin in 2003, replacing the popular and independent Ruslan Aushev, who had been a persistent critic of the war in Chechnya. Under Zyazikov kidnappings spread throughout the republic. His opponents and others blamed them on the new president, his brother, and his allies in the security organs. Zyazikov blamed them on Chechen militants. Zyazikov's growing authoritarianism, encouraged by Moscow's soft-authoritarian and recentralizing policies, pushed the opposition to action. Led by Ingushetiya parliamentary deputy Musa Ozdoev, it organized several demonstrations but was prevented from holding one on May Day 2005, which it had explicitly stated would be parlayed into an orange-style revolution. Ozdoev was

(continued on page 10)

Only 3.7 to 4 million (some 20 percent) of Russia's ethnic Muslims are practicing believers. However, since the ideological liberation begun during *perestroika*, re-Islamization has proceeded apace.

Russia's Islamic Threat (continued from page 9)

arrested, and the revolution was aborted. This secular instability emerging in Ingushetiya could provide an opening to radical nationalists or Muslim jihadists.

Although the picture painted here may suggest that an Islamic revolution in Russia is inevitable, contingency is an inherent aspect of all great historical events.⁸ There are also constraints that may shape, dampen, or mitigate the factors driving growing Russian-Muslim tensions. ♦

Editor's note: The concluding portion of this article will be published in the next issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

Notes:

¹ Yu. M. Kobishchanov, "Musulmane Rossii, korennyie rossiiskie musulmane i russkie musulmane," in Kobishchanov, *Musulmane izmenyayushcheysya Rossii* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo ROSSPEN, 2002), 107; and Yu. M. Kobishchanov, "Musulmansaya Moskva XXI v.: Musulmane Rossii nakanune XXI veka," *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi Konferentsii*, Moskva, 6 September 1997 (Moscow, 1998), 23.

² A 2001 estimate places the number of practicing Muslim believers at five percent of the general number of religious believers, who composed 55 percent of Russia's then estimated population of 147 million. This would mean approximately 3.7 million Muslim believers. M. Tulskaa, "Vakhkhability v Rossii pobezhdayut umerennykh musulman," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 19 June 2001. A 1997 estimate made by the Moscow Sociology Institute put the number of Muslim believers at 6.2 percent of the overall number of religious believers, and six percent of Russia's population. This would put the number of Muslim believers at slightly over four million. See Malashenko, "Islam i politika v sovremennoi Rossii," 7, citing A. B. Zubov, "Granitsy razlomov i urovni edinstva v segodnyashnei Rossii: Uroki sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniya," *Dukhovnyie osnovy mirovogo soobshestva i mezhdunarodnykh otshosenii* (Moscow: MGIMO, 2000), 270.

³ Neil Buckley, "Russia's Islamic Rebirth Adds Tension," *Financial Times*, 28 October 2005.

⁴ "V Nabernykh Chelnakh otkrylas 11 mechet," *Islam.ru*, 14 October 2005, www.islam.ru/press/rus/2005-10-24/#9740, and Georgii N. Engelhardt,

"Militant Islam in Russia – Potential for Conflict," Moscow Defense Brief, 4 April 2005, http://mdb.cast.ru/mdb/1-2005/wap/militant_islam/.

⁵ Rosalinda Musina, "Musul'manskaya identichnost' kak forma 'religioznogo natsionalizma' Tatar v kontekste etnosotsial'nykh protsessov i etnopoliticheskoi situatsii v Tatarstane," in M. V. Iordan, R. G. Kuzeev, and S. M. Chervonnaya, eds., *Islam v Yevrazii: sovremennyye etnicheskie i esteticheskie kontseptsii sunnitskogo islama, ikh transformatsiya v massovom soznanii i vyrazhenie v iskusstve musulmanskiikh narodov Rossii* (Moscow: Progress-Traditsiya, 2001) 297-301.

⁶ On limited illiberal democracy under Yeltsin, see Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia's Revolution from Above, 1985-2000: Reform, Transition, and Revolution in the Fall of the Soviet Communist Regime* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), Ch. 11. On aspects of Putin's soft-authoritarian counter-revolution, see Gordon M. Hahn, "Putin's 'Stealth Authoritarianism' and Russia's Second Revolutionary Wave," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Regional Analysis, 21 April 2004, www.regionalanalysis.org/publications/regionalvoices/en/2004/04/616B350A-D9CD-49F59416EC-AD7F5F1EAE.ASP, and Harley Balzer, "Managed Pluralism: Vladimir Putin's Emerging Regime," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 19 (July-September 2003), 189-227.

⁷ See the results of the 2004 Russian presidential elections in Muslim republics as compared to those in other republics in Hahn, "Putin's 'Stealth Authoritarianism'."

⁸ On contingency in regime transformations, see Hahn, *Russia's Revolutionary from Above*, Chs. 1, 8, and 9.

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Editor's Note: The concluding portion of this article will be published in the next issue of the East-West Church & Ministry Report.

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Today's Czech Youth Culture

Mark Krupa

In 2007 the Czech government's Department of Children and Youth sponsored extensive surveys of young people ages 15 to 30. Findings, prepared and published by Peter Sak, Ph.D., and Karolina Sakova in *A Picture of Government Policy for the Department of Children and Youth*, provide a comprehensive portrait of Czech youth today, including their priorities, values, beliefs, and use of time. The present article summarizes these findings and relates them to best practices for Christian outreach to youth.

Table 1 reveals that top priorities for Czech youth are health, friendship, family and children,

love, freedom, life partner, health of the environment, peace, personal development, and education (scores of 4.0 or higher on a 5.0 scale). Lowest priorities (2.9 or below) are political involvement, God, charitable work, success in business, and popularity. It is important to take this information into consideration when developing a ministry philosophy for reaching young people in the Czech Republic. Youth value people and surroundings highly. These two considerations are keys to providing a proper environment for Christian outreach to Czech youth.

Although the picture painted here may suggest that an Islamic revolution in Russia is inevitable, there are also constraints that may shape, dampen, or mitigate the factors driving growing Russian-Muslim tensions.

**Table 1: Life Priorities of Youth Compared with the Entire Population
(with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest score)**

Priorities	General Population	Youth
Health	4.9	4.7
Friendship	4.4	4.5
Family and Children	4.7	4.4
Love	4.5	4.4
Freedom	4.3	4.4
Life Partner	4.5	4.2
Health of the Environment	4.3	4.1
Peace	4.5	4.0
Personal Development	3.8	4.0
Education	3.7	4.0
Truth, Understanding	4.0	3.9
Success in Work	3.7	3.9
Democracy	4.1	3.8
Interesting, Inspiring Job	3.9	3.8
Salary	3.9	3.8
Helping Others	3.8	3.8
Hobbies and Personal Interests	3.5	3.7
Wealth	3.4	3.4
Popularity	2.6	2.9
Success in Business	2.5	2.8
Charitable Work	2.4	2.5
God	2.2	1.9
Political Involvement	1.5	1.8

In 2005, according to Table 2, the highest ranking values of Czech youth (4.0 and above on a scale of 1-5) were health, love, friendship, freedom, peace, the environment, democracy, salary, success at work, and self-improvement. In contrast, values with the least priority (under 3.0) were political involvement, charitable work, God, and business. Czech youth particularly value health (physical health, peace, and a healthy environment), relationships, and freedom. At the same time, they give little regard to areas in

the public sphere such as politics and community involvement, or God, whom they identify with church.

It is also noteworthy that for the most part youth values retained their relative ranking, varying little over 21 years, with the exception of political involvement (down from 2.7 to 1.5), charitable work (down from 3.0 to 2.5), and the environment (down from 4.7 to 4.2). Though not surveyed over as many years, God as a priority declined from 2.2 (1997) and 2.3 (2000) to 1.9 (2005).

Values with the least priority were political involvement, charitable work, God, and business.

Table 2: Value Preferences of Youth (Ages 15-30) from 1984 to 2005

Value	Year								
	1984	1991	1992	1993	1996	1997	2000	2002	2005
Health	-	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.9	4.8
Love	4.3	4.3	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6
Friendship	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5
Freedom	-	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.4
Peace	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.4
Environment	-	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.2
Democracy	-	-	4.5	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.1
Salary	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.1
Self-Improvement	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.0
Success at Work	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.9	4.0
Education	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.9	3.9
Truth, Understanding	-	-	-	-	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	3.9
Hobbies	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.8
Helpfulness to Others	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.7
Wealth	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5
Business	-	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.7
Prestige	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
Charitable Work	3.0	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5
God	-	-	-	-	-	2.2	2.3	2.3	1.9
Political Involvement	2.7	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5

(continued on page 12)

Today's Czech Youth Culture (continued from page 11)

Table 3 reveals a stark disinterest in religious, spiritual, and ideological movements among Czech youth. Even Catholicism, which received the most positive responses (19 percent answering “definitely yes” or “perhaps yes”), also received 75 percent negative evaluations (with answers of “definitely no” or “perhaps no”). While all religions and ideologies fared poorly, the most negatively perceived (91 percent and higher answering “definitely no” or “perhaps no”) were Marxism (97 percent), Islam (97 percent), Protestantism (94

percent), Socialism (93 percent), Hinduism (93 percent), New Age (92 percent), and Judaism (91 percent).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the Czech population showed an increased interest in religion, but this surge tapered off by 1992-1993. The survey work by Sak and Sakova reveals that Czech youth in more recent years have shown a declining interest in Yoga, Catholicism, New Age, Protestantism, and Buddhism. From 1995 to 2005 none of the above scored higher than 2 on a 1-to-5 ascending scale.

Table 3: Adherents of Religious, Ideological, and Social Movements (Ages 15 to 30, in Percentages)

	definitely no	perhaps no	neither	perhaps yes	definitely yes	don't know; no answer
Marxism	94	3				2
Islam	92	5				1
Protestantism	89	5	2	2	1	2
Socialism	89	4	3	1	1	2
Hinduism	88	5	3			3
New Age	85	7	1	2	1	5
Judaism	88	3	2	3	1	3
Buddhism	82	7	5	3	2	2
Conservatism	76	9	7	4	1	3
Yoga	75	8	8	5	3	2
Liberalism	72	7	5	8	4	4
Catholicism	64	11	6	11	8	1

Table 3 reveals a stark disinterest in religious, spiritual, and ideological movements among Czech youth.

In working with youth, it is important to know how they spend their free time. Combining the responses of “regularly” and “often,” the findings in Table 4 indicate that the most popular pastimes for Czech youth are watching TV (95 percent), working on the computer (77 percent), talking with friends (76 percent), relaxing (59 percent), and studying

(52 percent). Pastimes that are least popular among Czech youth (combining “rarely” and “never”) are galleries and museums (82 percent), theater (81 percent), tourism and hiking (62 percent), gardening (58 percent), and viewing sporting events and games (57 percent).

Table 4: Free Time Activities of Czech Youth, Part I (Ages 15 to 30, in Percentage)

	regularly	often	sometimes	rarely	never	don't know; no answer
Watching TV	76	19	2			3
Working on the computer	50	27	11	5	3	4
Talking with friends	51	25	11	4	4	5
Relaxing	29	30	19	13	5	4
Studying	28	24	17	17	9	4
Listening to the radio	31	21	13	16	16	3
Housework	13	32	21	19	10	3
Playing sports	20	23	16	17	19	4
Reading papers & magazines	11	31	25	24	7	3
Going out with boyfriend/girlfriend	21	20	13	14	24	8
Taking care of pets	27	12	14	16	27	6
Walking	12	26	27	19	11	5
Watching videos	9	25	33	18	11	4
Books	11	15	20	24	26	4
Cafes, restaurants	5	20	31	28	13	4
Parties	4	16	24	28	24	3
Sporting events & games	4	13	21	31	26	4
Gardening	3	12	23	30	28	5
Tourism, hiking	1	7	27	41	21	4
Watching movies	1	5	4	40	6	3
Theater	1	0	14	55	26	4
Galleries, museums	1	0	13	55	27	4

Today's Czech Youth Culture

In a second set of activities, Czech youth indicated particular disinterest (“rarely” or “never”) in individual spiritual activity (89 percent), classical

music (91 percent), participating in religious life (88 percent), and slot machine gambling (84 percent).

**Table 5: Free Time Activities of Czech Youth, Part II
(Ages 15 to 30, in Percentages)**

	never	rarely	sometimes	often	regularly	don't know; no answer
Individual spiritual activity	79	10	3	2	1	6
Classical music	71	20	4	-	1	4
Participating in religious life	78	10	3	3	2	5
Slot machine gambling	82	8	4	-	1	5
Collecting	65	18	9	3	1	5
Reading electronic texts	50	27	10	5	2	5
Home improvement	57	19	13	4	1	6
Public community work	-	75	15	3	-	5
Music and drama	53	21	9	8	6	3
Keeping a dairy	50	23	13	5	4	5
Sexual activity	51	10	9	12	7	11

Since 1992 a growing number of Czech youth have tried drugs. But the number of youth who report using drugs “regularly” increased only slightly (no more than one percent). According to the surveys conducted by Sak and Sakova, 60.5 percent of youth have experimented with marijuana and 2.6 percent have tried ecstasy, with all other drugs tried by youth averaging 1.8 percent or less. Clearly, the studies by Sak and Sakova suggest that drug use among youth is not at epidemic proportions. Though many youth report having tried drugs, less than eight percent today say they use

drugs regularly. However, the willingness of youth to answer questions relating to drugs in a completely forthright manner must be questioned. Certainly, my years of working with youth since 1997 would lead me to assume under-reporting in these surveys.

Regarding the latest means of communication and entertainment, survey data indicate that young people (ages 15 to 30) were less frequently using record players and tape players in 2005 in favor of newer technology: mobile phones, CD players, computers, the Internet, and E-mail. (See Table 6).

Czech youth indicated particular disinterest in individual spiritual activity (89 percent), classical music (91 percent), participating in religious life (88 percent), and slot machine gambling (84 percent).

Table 6: Use of the Internet by Czech Youth (Ages 15-30, in Percentages)

	2000	2002	2005
E-mail	44	62	83
Finding needed information	40	58	80
General surfing	34	49	77
Special servers	25	38	73
Chat rooms	24	33	67
Cell phone texting	37	57	64
Printed magazines	24	38	58
Internet magazines	20	33	53
Downloading music	16	27	48
Shopping	10	17	47
Software	20	30	42
Work-related information	22	33	33
Telephoning	4	5	32
Banking	3	10	27
Private advertising	9	18	26

The Internet is a relatively new option for Czech youth that has exploded into their lives. In 2005 the top uses for the Internet (83 to 53 percent) were E-mail, finding needed information, general surfing, special servers, chat rooms, cell phone texting, and reading printed articles and Internet magazines. The Sak and Sakova research also reveals that Czech youth are using the Internet many hours a week, often several hours a day.

Changing Times

Today's Czech youth are growing up in a world very different from the Marxist controls that their parents experienced. Now, for the first time in generations, no children reaching their teen years were born under Communism. Today's teenagers, born under democracy, now must cope with the myriad choices of a free society and constant and

(continued on page 14)

Today's Czech Youth Culture *(continued from page 13)*

rapid change. Government-sponsored surveys document that Czech youth today focus much of their attention on the use of “impersonal” media such as on-line chat rooms. But at the same time, teens also value “hanging out with friends.” Czech youth report little interest in the church or ideology in any form, expressing strong distaste for organized religion and politics.

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Personal Ministry Recommendations

What does all this mean for Christian workers seeking to reach Czech youth? One requirement is to study God's Word and to study Czech culture. Reaching out to Czech youth thus requires both exegeting the Bible and exegeting the culture.

In the process of comprehending the world of Czech youth, I combine observations drawn from the work of Sak and Sakova with my own findings from research, cultural informants, and personal experience. Czech youth value relationships, but they dislike massive, distant, institutionalized hierarchy, be it secular or religious. They appreciate genuine interaction with people who can be trusted, and they are not impressed by show, at least not for long. Many Czechs in their 20s who have traveled to America highly value grassroots home stays, placing less value on visits to tourist sites.

Reaching out to non-believing Czech youth requires winning their trust. This can be a lengthy process, but it is necessary. One wins trust by spending time with Czech youth, participating in activities together, being genuine and selfless, being interested in their lives, being humble, being educated and intelligent, being likeable and funny, and being oneself. Trust is built over years, not weeks.

One way to deepen trust is to allow Czech youth to explain Czech culture and to show newcomers their world. What is required is to appreciate, engage, learn, experience, adapt to, and love things Czech – and above all, love Czech youth.

What Works in Czech Youth Ministry?

- Small discussion groups about God among friends who trust each other work well.
- It is important to have fun together through experiences that are not overly structured.
- Share common interests such as music, language learning, sports, and hobbies.
- Witness and share about Jesus at the proper time during backyard picnics, in cafés or tearooms, while traveling together, hiking, playing sports, and playing music.
- One key is to live where one seeks to minister. Living where one works makes it easier to know the cultural context and to be known by locals.
- Camps continue to be an effective means of outreach. One-week and weekend outings are a recognized part of Czech culture. One example would be a week-long hiking trip to the mountains with structured spiritual programs in the evenings. Then during the day discussion may continue while hiking. Weekend events might include a two-night stay in a cabin near a ski resort. Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday morning might include a 30-to-90-minute presentation on a section

of the Bible, a testimony, and discussion over tea. Camping and hiking allow believers to build trust, share experiences, have fun, hang out, play music and sports, enjoy the countryside, and talk about God in natural, heartfelt, and open ways. Camp experiences, however, do need direction. In addition to time together, Christians should share their faith intentionally and clearly.

- Alfa courses (<http://uk.alpha.org/>) for youth – which include sharing food, fellowship, and non-threatening spiritual discussions in neutral, welcoming settings – are an effective way to share faith. One will likely need to build trust with people before inviting them to Alfa courses.
- Exit 316 is a faith-based television program for youth that airs on CT2, the Czech NBC channel. Each segment focuses on one theme and Christian views of it. Inviting youth to a comfortable, neutral location to watch this show can be followed with small group discussion. Christian youth can lead other youth who trust them after having gone through basic small-group training. Peers reaching peers through shared activities makes much more headway than in-your-face encounters. Exit 316 includes winsome personal testimonies, fast-moving media clips, and music that speaks to the genuine spiritual yearnings of teens. Observing spiritually alive believers can in this way overcome the dislike of religion so common among Czech youth. One study reported “the least favorite activities of Czech youth are political events, spiritual activities, meditation, community assistance, and volunteer activities.” (Frantisek Pelka, “Dissertation on Continual Research on Youth, 2003-2005,” Ph.D. dissertation, Czech Republic National Institute for Children and Youth, 2005.) A healthy Exit 316 study group may be the best way to reach Czech youth with the Gospel of Christ throughout the school year.
- Since formal religion is a turn-off for Czech youth, the focus should be on the person of Jesus and how to experience Him.
- At the same time, it is best for youth workers not to inflict young people with the struggles and internal politics of their ministry or church. Youth workers should dwell, instead, on personal connections between Czech youth and Jesus' words, example, and character.
- Having Czech youth over to one's home is a valuable way to develop deeper relationships, especially if one has a family. They too can be a strong witness, revealing true Christianity in natural, non-threatening ways.
- On-line chat and interactive blogs are valuable tools because initially Czech youth will often be more open to asking questions on-line than face-to-face. Christian workers can witness to Czech youth through on-line forums, chat rooms, blogs, or whatever will be the next, new, on-line invention. (See, for example, www.smysluplnyivot.cz.)
- Some youth may be open to reading the Bible together. Ask them to meet together just to read

Today's Czech Youth Culture

Scripture. (One can go to www.nbk.cz to download the Czech New Testament onto a computer/MP3 player.)

- Encourage Czech youth to study abroad. A 2005 study by the Czech Republic's National Institute for Children and Youth stated that "50-60 percent of youth have a long-term interest in studying abroad" because "speaking a foreign language is important for my career, for getting a good job in the European Union, and also for study and travel." Fifty-three percent of youth surveyed knew English and 28 percent knew German (Frantisek Pelka). If a Czech youth worker is able to arrange for a young Czech to have a quality schooling experience abroad in a Christian home, this opportunity will address several important issues that Czech youth value: relationships, genuine experience, adventure, language, and travel.
- Czech youth who work part-time jobs only in the summertime are often bored. Music clubs, English clubs, and basketball clubs are good ways to spend time and to influence youth, helping them steer clear of drugs and crime.
- Hang out where Czech youth hang out. All the above examples of what works in Czech youth ministry require some initial trust between a Christian youth worker and an individual youth. The best way to earn that trust is simply to hang out where youth gather - the skate ramp, the Internet gaming room, by the water, at the sports center, at the playground, and in pubs and cafes. Hours in formal school settings do not open as many doors

with Czech youth as just hanging out with them on their turf.

In Summary

The language of relationship is written in terms of shared experiences, spending recreational time together in stress-free situations, communicating by cell phone, text messaging, on-line chatting, discovering and visiting Czech youth websites, tuning in to their favorite television shows, and generally being interested in and involved in their world. Balancing time spent with Czech youth with time spent studying Czech youth through research will help Christian youth workers to share the message of the Gospel in meaningful ways.

Those in ministry have many possibilities to "fish for men" in the Czech Republic, but each day only holds 24 hours. One key is to stay current with the always-changing interests of Czech youth in order to interact with them in meaningful ways. But most important of all, youth workers need to be obedient to the voice and leadership of the Holy Spirit to guide their ministry to Czech youth. Research and professionalism are important, but only a healthy tie to the Vine will produce Kingdom fruit (John 15). ♦

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The language of relationship is written in terms of shared experiences.

Natasha and Nastya *(continued from page 16)*

ten, she opened up quite a bit, sharing with us that kids at school sometimes teased her about her thick glasses. In the next two years we exchanged letters and pictures and sent presents as our various church teams returned to Kostroma. Darlene began to pray fervently that Nastya would find a family before she had to leave the orphanage.

In the spring of 2004, her caring and dedicated orphanage director chose not to place her with one foster family that she felt was just not right for Nastya. That summer, at our next mission trip camp, she was very affectionate, holding hands, sitting on Darlene's lap, giving hugs. For several years Nastya had been showering us with doilies and tea cozies she had made in her orphanage. In turn, that summer we were able to buy her a pair of much more attractive glasses, which were quite a hit.

That fall 2004 we received great news that Nastya and Artyom had been placed in a loving foster home, partially supported by a church in Kostroma. Nastya wrote us after just three weeks that her new dad was a pastor and her new mom was also her Bible teacher on Sundays and Wednesdays. She had eight new brothers and sisters, six of whom were also foster children. Nastya was excited about everything in her new family, including its many dogs and cats.

In June 2007 Darlene and I had the privilege of being hosted for a meal in Nastya's and Artyom's foster home. We were a bit embarrassed to be treated almost like royalty. We had a delicious, bountiful

meal, partly prepared by a proud Nastya and Artyom. But best of all, we found ourselves in a loving, godly home headed by a couple with very big hearts. What a joy it was to be able to meet this giving couple whom we know will love, protect, and prepare "our" shy little Nastya for life. That night I was reminded of John 14:18 where Jesus promised, "I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you." Thanks be to God.

What do Natasha's and Nastya's stories tell us? Not the easy, glib math that some in life lose and some win. For Russia's children at risk, the Natashas tragically outnumber the Nastyas perhaps ten or twenty to one. What their stories do tell us, in their raw pathos and poignancy, is that orphans are flesh and blood, not merely digits in numbing, even paralyzing, statistics. Still, the numbers and the history, the orphanages and the alternatives, the failed solutions and the best practices, the economics and the politics of homeless children – we need to comprehend them all if we are to have any chance to mourn fewer Natashas and celebrate more Nastyas. ♦

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What do Natasha's and Nastya's stories tell us? That orphans are flesh and blood, not merely digits in numbing, even paralyzing, statistics.

Natasha and Nastya

Mark R. Elliott

Natasha

Natasha, I will call her, was 13 in 1999 when her mother was murdered. Her father, who had never been a part of her life, refused to raise Natasha or Alex, her six-year-old step-brother. I met Natasha in February 2000 in an orphanage in the Vladimir Region. Natasha's eyes were crossed, and she had the beginnings of a weight problem. Worst of all, she told me, her brother was in a different orphanage. Still, he was to be moved from his pre-school orphanage to hers when he turned seven in July. Also, my home church was willing to pay for eye surgery for Natasha if a Moscow eye exam determined her condition could be corrected. This brightened her spirits.

That summer, in July 2000, I led a mission team to Vladimir to host a summer camp for Russian orphans. Just one day before the end of camp I learned that Natasha was attending another camp less than an hour away. On very short notice a Russian friend drove me to meet Natasha. We arrived after lunch while the children were taking naps. A camp worker entered a large dorm room full of beds to tell Natasha an American was there to see her. She came running to me yelling my name, giving me a big hug – and I had wondered if she would remember me. She told me she had expected my visit that summer, which filled me with some wonder because this reunion, in fact, had barely been arranged.

My Russian companion, Natasha, and I received permission to walk around the camp to catch up on news. I asked Natasha about her eye exam in Moscow. She said it did not hurt and she was not scared. I asked her about the prospect of eye surgery. She immediately said she wanted it, and she was not afraid. She said she would gladly do anything to no longer have crossed eyes. Making our way through a beautiful stand of pines, Natasha next shared ugly news. Instead of her brother coming to live with her in her orphanage, she was told in May that back in February, the month when we had first met, her brother had been adopted by an American couple without her knowledge. And the

Natasha shared with us that her father did not want her; she had lost her mother; she had lost her home; and now she had lost her brother, the only person in the world whom she loved.

authorities would not tell her where he now lived in the United States. I am told placing a child for adoption without the knowledge or consent of an older sibling is a violation of Russian law. Natasha shared with us that her father did not want her; she had lost her mother; she had lost her home; and now she had lost her brother, the only person in the world whom she loved. She said that just the previous night she had a dream about Alex. I promised Natasha I would try to find her brother so they could at least write.

Natasha's surgery was scheduled for May 2001 and Western church funds were paid to the hospital, only to learn in Moscow that her operation was being postponed one year in favor of corrective glasses. After traveling from the Vladimir Region, how disheartening this must have been for this painfully self-conscious teen. That same month I had a chance to visit Natasha and her orphanage director. The conversation was tense because Natasha and the director were often at odds. I was told I would not be able to speak with Natasha privately, but when the director was momentarily called out of our meeting on business, Natasha quickly showed me pictures of Alex that she had received from the U.S. Her brother's adoptive parents had also sent her a birthday present and a letter that said they really loved Alex, but that he missed his sister a lot. I again promised to try to find Alex's address, but was never able to do so.

Natasha hoped to become a nurse, but her grades were not high enough for that course of study. In September 2001 she entered cooking school in Vladimir. In October Natasha received another letter from Alex in which she learned he might be living in Ohio. He also shared his new parents' names, but that still was not enough for me to track them down.

In 2002 Natasha again traveled to Moscow for surgery. But, sadly, it was again postponed. I can only imagine Natasha's deep disappointment. As of April 2002 I was trying to arrange an independent medical opinion at the American Clinic in Moscow. Then I received the saddest news. Natasha had dropped out of cooking school, had moved out of her dorm, and had left no forwarding address. None of my contacts in Russia have been able to locate her since. Already having been sold to men by her own mother as a pre-teen, my haunting fear ever since has been that she may have been reduced again to this extreme, the fate of a high percentage of female orphan graduates. Lord, have mercy.

Nastya

Nastya, I will call her, was eight in 2000 when my wife and I became her sponsors. When I first met her in an orphanage in the Kostroma Region in February 2001, she was so painfully shy she could hardly look my way. The same was true on my second trip to her orphanage in October 2001. But through letters we learned that she loved math and animals, and in person I discovered that at the orphanage she had a kindly and protective older brother, Artyom.

In June 2002 I recruited a mission team to host another summer camp near Kostroma where my wife, Darlene, finally was able to meet Nastya. Now almost

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