

New terrain, old maps: formerly persecuted churches encountering religious freedom and Western mission

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to examine what kind of challenges religious freedom present for churches that emerge from a situation where believers have been marginalized and/or actively persecuted for long periods of time. Shift from oppression to freedom and possibility to exercise one's faith openly and without fear can be experienced as shocking, but at the same time exciting change, often linked to great hopes and expectations.

What the local faith communities often fail to realize is the fact that religious freedom usually also leads to arrival of a number of new religious groups – including different Christian churches and mission organizations arriving from the West – that seek to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the new situation. Their presence and relationship to the local churches pose a number of challenging questions about how religious freedom is understood and interpreted by the different parties.

The following discussion will focus on issues related to mission and relationship between local churches and Western mis-

sion organizations, and will be primarily based on experiences of churches from the former Communist bloc¹. Due to the limited scope of the article questions related to other aspects of religious freedom, such as relationship between Christians and other religious groups in society, will be left unexamined.

The following discussion about persecutions, religious freedom and mission is in many ways affected by author's personal interest and experience. Belonging to a formerly persecuted church² provides me with an opportunity to address the topic from the perspective of the "recipient" of Western missions. The fall of Soviet Union caused great excitement among Western mission organizations which interpreted these events as "a kairos opportunity" for mission³. But this euphoria was short lived – as was the interest and involvement of Western missionaries in the region. The fate of Western mission endeavours in the former Communist countries thus raises a number of interesting questions, such as: With what kind of expectations did Western missionaries enter the region and what caused them to withdraw? What were the main factors that undermined development of successful and long term cooperation between the local churches and Western missionaries? What lessons have been learned from this experience?

For a number of reasons finding answers to these questions presents a difficult task. One of the biggest challenges is the limited number of sources dealing with this particular aspect of Western mission history. Sources⁴ describing churches and missions in the former Communist bloc can be divided in two main groups. The first group includes writings that are primarily devoted to describing the situation of churches from a socio-political point of view, and attempt to address such issues as general religious situation in the different countries of the region, freedom of religion laws, relationship between churches and state authorities, etc. Writings of Miklós Tomka and Sabrina P. Ramet among others are excellent examples of this approach. Their work, however, rarely deals with issues related to motives, expectations or theological presuppositions of Western missionaries operating in the former Communist bloc. The second group of sources consists of writings of Western researchers and mission workers who succeeded at developing

close relationship with the churches behind the Iron Curtain and as a result have sought to assess the impact of Western mission from the perspective of the local churches. Accordingly, their main interest lies in describing and critically evaluating motives, attitudes, and missionary methods employed by the Western missionaries arriving in the region after the fall of Soviet Union. This approach to study of church and mission can be found in writings of Michael Bourdeaux, Peter F. Penner, Walter Sawatsky and Johannes Reimer, just to mention a few. Although their work presents an important contribution to study of mission in the former Communist bloc, they provide only a limited insight into the topic – partly due to the fact that most of these sources date back to mid- nineties, and partly because they mainly deal with the situation in Russia leaving the other non-Orthodox countries largely unexamined. As pointed out by Peter Penner “We look back at a little more than a decade of experiential mission activities from national and international initiatives and realize that only fragments of the whole story are yet known.”²⁵ Despite the fact that large parts of the story of mission in the former Communist bloc have remained untold comparably little has been written on this topic since the Western mission enterprise in the region came to an (abrupt) end. This fact in itself raises another interesting question, namely, what are the reasons behind the seeming lack of interest in providing a more thorough analysis of the motives, methods and, most importantly, outcomes of Western mission in the former Communist bloc?

In light of these questions and observations the following article will try to approach the topic of persecutions, sudden religious freedom and mission by briefly address three main issues. First, it will provide an insight into the way how formerly persecuted churches perceived an interpreted the sudden religious freedom. Second, it will offer a short description of the way how they reacted to the arrival of the large number of Western missionaries in the region in the early 1990s, and finally it will attempt to identify some of the problems and shortcomings of Western mission in the former Communist bloc. It should be noted that although there certainly exist a lot of positive examples of mission and cooperation between Western

missionaries and local churches, the main focus of this article will be on the negative experiences. Such approach was chosen due to the fact that “the difficult stories of the past continue to overshadow the present work” and therefore “should be known and told to the present generation of missionaries, evangelicals, church planters and theological educators.”⁶

Churches shaped by persecutions

Persecutions have been part of church's existence since its very beginnings, but the impact that suffering has on the life of the church has been understood and interpreted differently. For some churches suffering has been a source of strength and purification. Pentecostal churches in Soviet Union represent one such case. Peter Kuzmič describes their experience in a following way: “The faith and suffering of the Christians have taught them that external pressures, legal restrictions, social discrimination and even physical persecutions serve the noble purpose of purifying and strengthening the church. Relying totally on the Lord, they have not only survived but also grown under difficult circumstances.”⁷ This view is often linked to Tertullian's famous statement that “the blood of Martyrs is the seed of church” and represents the widespread belief that persecutions are generally beneficial for churches.

The experience of most of the mainline churches in the former Communist bloc, however, seems to contradict this conviction. As pointed out by Archbishop of Prague Miloslav Vlk “it would be a delusion to think that the churches of Eastern Europe have emerged strengthened from the oppressions under the Communist regime.”⁸ There are a number of reasons why the persecuted churches reported such different experiences. One of the main factors that influenced their fate was, in my opinion, their legal status under the Communist rule and the relationship with the state authorities that followed from this status.

Communist governments hoped to achieve a full control over religious life of their citizens, and one of the most efficient ways of doing it was by determining which organizations would be allowed to function. In general, communist authorities distinguished among three categories of religious associations: (1) legally recognized, co-opted associations, (2) legally

recognized associations treated with distrust, kept at distance, but “tolerated”, and (3) proscribed associations.⁹ The status of legally recognized, “co-opted associations” was on one hand desirable because it gave the churches some possibilities to keep their buildings, to gather the congregation for worship, and to continue theological education of the clergy. On the other hand the churches that wanted to obtain this status were expected to make adjustments. These adjustments could, for example, include reshaping the ideologies of the Churches - as in the case of Hungary, where both the Reformed and Lutheran churches subscribed to the so-called Theology of Diakonia, or Service to the State. Furthermore, the status of the legally recognized “co-opted association” also meant that the State could (and frequently did) exercise a close control over all aspects of church life. This control was carried out in a number of different ways: by reserving the rights to approve or reject candidates for ecclesiastical office, seminary entrants, seminary curricula, the content of Church newspapers, church construction, and even in some countries content of parish bulletins.¹⁰ The status of proscribed association according to the Communist authorities was the least desirable. None of the “privileges” of the co-opted associations applied to this group, and churches belonging into this category often had to face more intense and brutal persecutions.

Looking at the different experiences of the churches we may, however, ask which of these “options” turned out to be more damaging for the churches? The above mentioned Pentecostal churches, for example, belonged to the category of proscribed associations. As such they were subjected to heavy persecutions, but at the same time could avoid the necessity to cooperate with the state and escape the close control over church life (and theology) that followed from this cooperation. Such option, however, was rarely available for the mainline churches. As pointed out by Miklós Tomka, “any position of leadership whose essential elements included the representation of the Church in the secular world inherently carried in itself a certain pressure to collaborate with the State.”¹¹ This collaboration turned out to have a number of devastating consequences for the churches.

First, Communist governments attempted to remove the churches from the public sphere by help of legal sanctions and aggressive anti-religious propaganda. As a result, many churches chose to withdraw into the private sphere. Although this strategy helped them to endure in the situation of oppression, it also made them inward looking and focused on survival. Fear of scorn and contempt of the fellow citizens as well as the heightened sense of being threatened led to developing a ghetto mentality that prevented them from having a positive “salt and light” influence on their society.¹² Furthermore, during the years of Communist rule believers had become so used to defending their faith that the fall of the Soviet Union they were suspicious of anyone who spoke critically of church practice.¹³

Second, the repressive policies of the communist government succeeded in encouraging the churches to retain an authoritarian structure.¹⁴ Such concepts as cooperation, dialogue, democratic decision making, or shared responsibility were often foreign to church leadership. Moreover, during the long years of oppression church leaders had learned that unanimity was crucial for surviving the persecutions because internal schism could be exploited by State officials. Consequently those with different theological views were seen as dangerous for the survival of the church. All of these factors played an important role in churches’ ability to do mission and cooperation with the Western partners.

We could conclude this short overview with the following two observations: first, the fact that some churches emerged from persecutions weakened and considerably corrupt by the Communist regimes speaks against the widespread conviction that persecutions necessarily have a positive effect on the life of the church. Second, the experience of the persecutions did not prepare the churches for the challenges that they had to face in the “new, brave world” of democracy and religious freedom.

The challenge of religious freedom: arrival of Western missionaries

One of the biggest challenges that the churches had to face after the end of Communism was the pluralism of opinions,

values and religious expressions. As pointed out by Miklós Tomka, Communism in its own brutal way ultimately protected the religions of which it approved, crushing rival religious associations that failed to obtain its sanction.¹⁵ This policy had a double effect on the religious situation in the region. First, in most cases Christianity – although oppressed and closely controlled by the State authorities – was allowed to function as the “majority” religion during the Communist times. Religious diversity resulting from the sudden religious freedom thus presented a new and completely unknown challenge for the churches. Second, Communism made a distinction not only between approved and disapproved religions, but also between approved and disapproved churches. As described above, it “protected” some and crushed others, thus considerably limiting the diversity among Christians. In the new situation of religious freedom the local churches found themselves struggling with yet another, previously unknown problem, namely, the presence of different new Christian groups and churches, arriving mainly from the West.

It should be pointed out that Western missionaries have been active in the former Soviet Union also during the years of Communism: even during the most severe periods of religious persecution, foreign Protestants attempted to support their co-believers behind the Iron Curtain, entering the USSR clandestinely with Christian literature and providing other assistance from the outside, such as shortwave Christian broadcasting.¹⁶ But it was Gorbachev’s policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 that swung the doors for mission in the former USSR region open. The researchers’ team from Eastern Europe described the events following the fall of the Soviet Union as “The Rediscovery of Eastern Europe”.¹⁷ Michael Bourdeaux, one of the leading experts in the West on the former USSR described the situation in the following way: “It is astonishing to observe how, after the world had by large ignored or misrepresented the religious needs of the Soviet Union over several decades, suddenly these needs became a fashionable cause.”¹⁸ Christians in Eastern Europe were inundated with requests from both old and new supporters seeking contacts and suggesting ways in which

they could get involved. Thus the Baptist Church in the former Soviet Union, for example, received over 2000 “requests” from the West, *telling* how they could help. Private and organized Christian tourism in the area was also on the increase: alongside trips to the Holy Land were offers of hands-on experience with churches in Eastern Europe – blatantly items of curiosity as never before.¹⁹

Most of the local churches were overwhelmed by the sudden interest and sheer amount of the different Christian churches and agencies. Some perceived their presence as a threat to their “rightful” claim to occupy a majority position in society. Thus a number of the national churches (Orthodox churches in Russia, Belarus, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Catholic churches in Poland, Hungary and Croatia) attempted to reassert their claims of monopoly of religious life and activity in their nations.²⁰ In some cases the national churches tried to appeal to the government with a request to take steps to control the “religious market”. According to them the new Christian churches and missionaries were disturbing the traditional values and thus threatening the (moral) wellbeing of the nation. Fearing that the Western missionaries could also have a hidden political agenda, the governments were quick to respond. Thus Belarusian authorities endeavoured to combat the “aggression” of the new Christian groups through a combination of bureaucratic obstructions and outright prohibition of groups they find distasteful, refusing, for example to register the Salvation Army. In Moldova and Armenia the new post-communist governments took a leaf from the communist cookbook and, as a device to freeze the religious status quo, simply passed laws prohibiting proselytization. In Armenia the law further specified that legal registration may be denied organizations whose doctrines are not based on “historically recognized holy scriptures”.²¹ The new legislation played an important role in restricting the activities of the Western mission organizations in the region. Legal restrictions, to my opinion, present one of the reasons why by the end of the 1990s mission involvement in the former Soviet Union to a large degree had ceased. In my opinion there are at least three more factors that influenced the attitude of local churches towards Western mission and partnership.

Self perception and the image of the other

One of the issues that had a profound effect on the relationship between the local churches and missionaries from the West was the way how they tended to portray each other. Very often the image of the other was constructed in the opposition to what the churches (or the Western organizations) perceived themselves to be. According to Kuzmič, the tendency to depict the world in mutually exclusive terms can be linked to the historical animosity between the West and the East. He points out that “during the times of the “Cold War” when the political antagonism between the Western and Eastern bloc countries came to a very critical and dangerous climax, there was in fashion much over-generalized and simplistic speaking of the “Christian West” and “atheistic East” and mutual denunciation in almost mythological terms.”²²

After the fall of the Soviet Union these ideas came under a serious scrutiny: closer and more regular encounter between the East and the West lead the Christians in the East to a conclusion that “the so-called ‘Christian West’ was deeply permeated by humanistic atheism and that while in the East, Christian truth and values were officially opposed, in the West, they were often only verbally honoured while practically ignored or even totally rejected.”²³ In light of this discovery they judged the Western churches as secularized and overcome by pragmatic liberalism and consumerism and felt that that the experience of persecutions had given them moral authority or even kind of superiority over their Western counterparts. Moreover, churches in the East often linked the decline of the Western churches to their theological convictions, which, according to the former, lacked sound Biblical foundation. Western churches, on the other hand, found this criticism to be overly crass and largely ungrounded. As a result they too changed their perception of the churches in the East and started to label the former “heroes of faith” as “traditionalists”, “anti-modernists” and “moralists”.²⁴

This change of attitude had a profound effect on the relationship between the local churches and Western missionaries. The early stages of Western mission in the former Soviet Union was characterized by excitement and almost uncritical accep-

tance of everything connected to West. As observed by a team of researchers working in the Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, many Bulgarians, for example, were convinced that “since something is written in the West, it carries intrinsic validity in the eyes of Bulgarians”.²⁵ The uncritical fascination with Western ideas was, however, soon replaced by a timid, indiscriminating tendency to reject everything that comes from the West. A group of native mission agencies based in Kiev, Ukraine, for example, even called for a moratorium on Western missions at a meeting held at Alma-Aty (sic), Kazakhstan on 23 March 1993. They asked Western agencies not to send any foreign missionaries before a critical evaluation of their theology and methods has been made by native leaders.²⁶

The attitude of Western churches and missionaries had also changed. After the political changes, it seemed, the same churches the West was praying for were suddenly not useful anymore.²⁷ Local churches were criticized for their cultural isolation from the mainstream of society, their authoritarian leadership style, their lack of financial accountability by Western standards, and their frequent inability to absorb new converts who sometimes found the traditional Christian subculture cold, constraining, and judgemental.²⁸ In light of these shortcomings local churches were judged to be unfit for doing mission. As a result some Western missionaries were tempted to leave behind any attempts to work with the local churches and instead concentrated on planting new churches that would be better equipped to welcome those coming to Christ in the post-Communist context.²⁹ All in all the changed attitudes made the cooperation between the local churches and Western missionaries increasingly difficult.

Lack of contextual knowledge and outdated concepts of mission

Another reason that undermined the Western mission enterprise in the former Communist block was the fact that many of the Western missionaries were responding to inaccurate assumptions about the area. First, many of these individuals (as well as the mission organizations that sent them) often had a very limited knowledge about the context they were entering. In many

cases they were unable to speak Russian, did not know the history of the region and were in general unaware of the particular richness of the Russian Orthodox tradition.³⁰ Second, many of the Western missionaries operated with an assumption that Christianity in the former Soviet Union was completely extinct. Thus most North American Evangelical Missionaries who arrived in the former Soviet Union thought that they were bringing Christ to a world that had been closed to the Gospel.³¹ Local Christians and church leaders were often frustrated and angered by their lack of basic knowledge about the cultural and religious heritage of the region. As aptly put by Father Leonid Kishkovsky, "Mission teams which say 'We are taking Jesus to Russia' show they don't understand the situation at all. Nobody is taking Jesus to Russia. He has been there all the time! His Holy Spirit was moving behind the Iron Curtin before Christians from the West could go there."³²

The lack of contextual knowledge, however, represented only part of the problem. Another, equally problematic aspect of Western mission in the former Soviet Communist lands was the fact that it seemed to operate with concepts of mission that were developed during the colonial era of Western mission and in many ways belonged to the past. According to Penner, those arriving in the region often presumed that the situation in the former Communist bloc was similar if not identical with the situation in the Third World countries. Thus, for example many of the North American missionaries seemed to be unaware of the fact that, unlike in the case of Botswana, Western missionaries did not constitute the first expression of Christianity in this troubled land.³³

Furthermore, mission was often perceived as a one way street: something done by the West *to* and *in* the countries of the former Communist bloc. Cooperation and partnership with local churches was rarely seen as essential part of mission strategy. As pointed out earlier, many Western missionaries expected the local churches to be extinct. Those churches that had managed to survive the persecutions were expected to be poor, desperate and lacking basic theological knowledge. As a result in their encounter with the local churches Western missionaries looked for shortcomings rather than resources. Such questi-

ons as “What kind of resources the local churches have?”, “What is there to be appreciated and learned?” or “What could be their contribution to our partnership?” were almost never asked. In most cases Western mission organizations and churches adopted the “giver” position and looked at the Eastern European Christians as mere “receivers”.

Neo-colonial model of relationship: “Givers” vs. “Receivers”

Humanitarian aid and financial assistance constituted an essential aspect of Western mission in the former Communist bloc. There is no doubt that Russia would fall even deeper into social despair without these millions of tons of food and clothing sent over by thousands of sincere Christians.³⁴ However, in the rush to address the immediate needs of individuals and churches, little space was left for reflecting about the long term effects of this policy. The present day situation of churches in the former Communist lands points towards the fact that the generous humanitarian and financial aid, in spite of the positive intentions of those who provided it, also had a number of negative outcomes. First, it created financial and other kind of dependency on the West. According to Penner, today only very few mission agencies, denominational and theological schools would be able to survive were Western finances to cease.³⁵ Second, the neo-colonial model where Western missionaries provide all the resources and experience and the local churches were expected to act as passive receivers, provided a very unfortunate foundation for developing real partnerships. Third, dependency on the Western resources also had a damaging effect of the self-esteem of the local churches. Although the external financial support often was crucial in restoring basic functions of the churches, they would have benefitted more if the hard questions about how creative local alternatives could be found had not been ignored.³⁶

Conclusion

The experience of the churches in former Communist block provides important insights into the various ways how persecutions shapes churches. Furthermore, it also helps to gain a better understanding of what kind of challenges a sudden reli-

gious freedom present for formerly persecuted churches. The historic events taking place over the last century have demonstrated that oppressive governments – regardless of their ideological stands – tend to utilize almost identical strategies for controlling actions and beliefs of their citizens. In light of this observation, the experience of the churches in the former Communist presents a valuable resource also for those churches and individual Christians who currently suffer under governments that are attempting to restrict and/or suppress the existence of Christian church and mission.

Encounter with the different Western mission organizations constituted an important part of the experience of the local churches. Analysis of their experience provides interesting insights in how the different parties interpreted religious freedom and what kind of expectations were linked to the opportunity to do mission in a formerly closed area. Looking at the long term effect of the Western mission in the former Communist bloc it is hard to deny that “many mistakes were made, issues of contextualization missed or completely neglected and neo-colonial methods applied”.³⁷ One of the conclusions that can be made on the bases of this observation is that Western churches and mission organizations, in spite of their centuries long mission experience, arrived in the former Communist lands ill prepared. Their actions and attitudes, according to the South African missiologists Willem Saayman pointed towards the fact that “Christian Community, especially in the First World, has seemingly learned very little from the total Third World mission experience of more than two centuries.”³⁸ In light of these observations the history of Western mission in the former Communist bloc presents an excellent platform for learning how to develop better models of mission, cooperation and partnership in mission. The latter might be particularly significant for those Western mission organizations that are looking forward to the opportunity to work in areas where churches are currently persecuted and Christian mission is strictly restricted or even forbidden. The success of this learning process, however, depends on the ability of the Western churches and mission organizations to revisit the past with a healthy dose of humility and self-criticism.

Noter

- ¹ The Communist bloc consisted of Eastern European countries belonging to the Soviet Union (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia), so called Satellite states (East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania). All of them adopted communist modes of government.
- ² The author of this article belongs to the Evangelical Lutheran church of Latvia.
- ³ Kraakevik, James H. and Welliver, Dotsey (eds.), *Partners in the Gospel: The Strategic Role of Partnership in World Evangelizations*, Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Illinois, 1991, p. 19
- ⁴ The following description applies only to sources that are available in English. The author unfortunately does not have an overview over publications in the different Eastern and Central European languages.
- ⁵ Penner, Peter, "Critical Evaluation of recent developments in the CIS", in *Mission in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. W. Sawatsky and P. Penner, Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, Germany, 2005, p.150
- ⁶ Penner: 150
- ⁷ Kuzmič, Peter, "The Communist Impact on the Church in Eastern Europe", *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 20, Nr.1, January 1996, p.70
- ⁸ Tóth- Máté András, "A theology of the Second world? Observations and Challenges", *Concilium 2000/3*, SCM Press, London, 2000, p.29
- ⁹ Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nibil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*, Duke University Press, Durham 1998, p. 5
- ¹⁰ Ramet: 5
- ¹¹ Tomka, Miklós, *Expanding Religion: Religious Revival in Post- Communist Central and Eastern Europe*, De Gruyter, Berlin, 2011, p. 45
- ¹² Kuzmič, Peter, "The Communist Impact on the Church in Eastern Europe", *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 20, Nr.1, January 1996, p. 65
- ¹³ Mankusa, Zanda "Contacts between the evangelical churches in the Baltic Sea Region since World War II: importance and development", *The Challenge of Mobility in the Baltic Sea Region*, eds. Gicquel, Makarov, Zolkos, Berliner Wissenschafts Verlag, 2005, p.91
- ¹⁴ Walters, Philip "The Revolutions in Eastern Europe and the Beginnings of the Post-Communist Era," *Cambridge History of Christianity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006, p. 360
- ¹⁵ Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nibil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*, Duke University Press, Durham 1998, p.310
- ¹⁶ Elliot, Mark and Deyneka, Anita, "Protestant Missionaries in the Former Soviet Union" in *Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia*, eds. J. Witte Jr. and M. Bourdeaux, Orbis Books, Maryknoll New York, 1999, p.197
- ¹⁷ A study by Wheaton College's Institute of East-West Christian Studies identified more than seven hundred Western Missionaries who had been sent to Russia and other former Soviet Republics as of 1992 In 1995 the total Western missionary community in the former Soviet Union was calculated to include approximately 4,390 missionaries, most of these were evange-

- lical Christians. Broken down by denomination, the most energetic entrants into the Russian-East European religious market have been Youth with a Mission, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Church of Christ, the Navigators, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Church Resources Ministries. For more information see Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*, Duke University Press, Durham 1998 (p.267) and Elliot, Mark and Deyneka, Anita, "Protestant Missionaries in the Former Soviet Union" in *Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia*, eds. J. Witte Jr. and M. Bourdeaux, Orbis Books, Maryknoll New York, 1999 (p.200)
- ¹⁸ Bourdeaux, Michael, *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, M.E. Sharpe, London, 1995, p.117
- ¹⁹ Jose, Brian, Greg Reader, Judi Oglesby, Marsh Moyle, and Barth Compañen. *Current and Future Trends in Central and Eastern Europe*, unpublished research paper, Stredoeuropska nadacia (SEN), Bratislava, 1990, p.15
- ²⁰ Kuzmič, Peter, "The Communist Impact on the Church in Eastern Europe", *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 20, Nr.1, January 1996, p. 62
- ²¹ Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*, Duke University Press, Durham 1998 p. 270
- ²² Kuzmič, Peter, "The Communist Impact on the Church in Eastern Europe", *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 20, Nr.1, January 1996, p. 66
- ²³ Kuzmič: 67
- ²⁴ Tóth- Máté András, "A theology of the Second world? Observations and Challenges", *Concilium 2000/3*, SCM Press, London, 2000, p.31
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- ²⁶ Reimer, Johannes, "Mission in Post-Perestroika Russia", *Missionalia*, Vol. 24, No.1, April 1996, p.28
- ²⁷ Penner, Peter, "Scripture, community and context in God's mission in the FSU", in *Mission in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. W. Sawatsky and P. Penner, Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, Germany, 2005, p.10
- ²⁹ Elliot, Mark and Deyneka, Anita, "Protestant Missionaries in the Former Soviet Union" in *Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia*, eds. J. Witte Jr. and M. Bourdeaux, Orbis Books, Maryknoll New York, 1999, p.207
- ²⁹ This motivation was particularly widespread among Evangelical missionaries. Moreover, many of them were convinced that there was a need to win the converts *away* from Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy. Their actions were based on a belief that these churches were no longer true to the Gospel, did not take personal faith seriously, and their leaders were hopelessly compromised by the Communist regime. (Sawatsky, Walter, "Return of Mission and Evangelization in the CIS (1980s- Present)" in *Mission in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. W. Sawatsky and P. Penner, Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, Germany, 2005, p. 104)
- ³⁰ Bourdeaux, Michael, *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, M.E. Sharpe, London, 1995, p.117

- ³¹ Sawatsky, Walter, "Orthodox- Evangelical Protestant Dialogue on Mission", *Acta Missiologiae*, Vol. I, 2008, p.18
- ³² Penner, Peter, "Scripture, community and context in God's mission in the FSU", in *Mission in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. W. Sawatsky and P. Penner, Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, Germany, 2005, p.10
- ³³ Penner: 10
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- ³⁵ Penner, Peter, "Critical Evaluation of recent developments in the CIS", in *Mission in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. W. Sawatsky and P. Penner, Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, Germany, 2005, p.132
- ³⁶ Sawatsky, Walter, "Orthodox- Evangelical Protestant Dialogue on Mission", *Acta Missiologiae*, Vol. I, 2008, p.16
- ³⁷ Penner, Peter, "Western Missionaries in Central and Eastern Europe", *Acta Missiologiae*, Vol. I, 2008, p.47
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