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**Open Society Archives
Visegrad Fellowship Report**

Research background

As part of my previous research, including the current project “History declassified” I focus on how the knowledge on religious minorities in the Soviet Union (in particular, Ukraine) have been collected and created by the Soviet secret police. I did my archival research in the SBU (former KGB) archives in Ukraine prior to the war. And I was mainly interested in Soviet political surveillance and secret operations carried out by the KGB (Soviet security agency) against the religious dissent and the religious underground in Soviet Ukraine.

The Soviet secret police played a pivotal role in states’ attempts to control and regulate religious groups, and their archives contain a rich collection of confiscated images, texts and items that were used to incriminate members of religious groups. Alongside these materials, the secret police produced their own representations of the religious groups they were tasked with surveilling and controlling. They invested enormous efforts to collect information on what was called the religious underground.

Similar processes took place on the other side of the Iron curtain. In the context of the proxy Cold war, persecuted minority groups were in the center of attention in the West. Like the Soviet secret police accumulated information on religious groups, created and projected a certain knowledge on religion in the Soviet union, likewise, many western human rights agencies and international media – including the Radio Free Europe – invested enormous efforts to collect information on religion in the Soviet Union. They created and broadcasted knowledge on religion in the Soviet Union. Both these types of knowledge had a certain effect on the life of ordinary believers and how the Soviet state and the West saw it and influence their further policy making.

In this cold-war communication the Radio Free Europe was an essential a node in a global network where the access to information and resources were regulated by many actors. Information exchange routes were coordinated by personal phone calls and correspondence, informal meetings and verbal agreements. Various diaspora groups, Soviet dissidents and underground oppositional organizations, Soviet sailors and sportsmen, international human rights activists, American and Soviet secret services, even Communist party officials were parts of this informal network. In this flow of information and in disseminating ideas and materials.

The Radio Free Europe was Monitoring religious freedom and cases of religious persecution in the Soviet Union. Among its archival collections one can find Samizdat materials, open letters and petitions, Soviet newspaper cuttings, but also copies of KGB secret materials, court records and transcripts. They kept correspondence with multiple agencies and private persons. But trying to follow this communication network, this was one of the biggest challenges in my research at the OSA was to trace the social biographies of archival documents. How a certain document arrived to the Radio Free Europe? What is the provenance of this material? What was the selection criteria? How did open letters were sent abroad from some Siberian village? How did the secret documentations (like reports of the Council for religious affairs, court verdicts, criminal indictments) were copied and smuggles abroad? How did the RFE received samizdat materials? These questions were in the focus of archival research during my stay at the Open Society Archives. Not always I could trace the provenance of certain archival documents but I could identify the main Radio Free Eruope “suppliers” of information

who smuggled information from the other side of the Iron Curtain and disseminated cases of persecution, discrimination and violation of human rights in the Soviet Union.

OSA collections:

During my research stay at the OSA I worked with the following collections:

HU OSA 300/1/1:8 - RFE/RL Research Institute Rome Bureau; Vatican – Ukraine, 1969-1988.

HU OSA 300/1/1:9 - Vatican – Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/1/1:20 - Human Rights in the Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/80/1/1:9 - RFE/RL Vatican – Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/80/1/1:33 - RFE/RL Vatican – Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/80/1/1:821 - RFE/RL Vatican – Soviet Union

Records of Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty Research Institute. Published samizdat

HU OSA 300/85/9:20 - Unregistered Baptists:

Appeal of the participants of the All-Union Conference of ECB Prisoners' relatives in the USSR, 1964

Baptist samizdat brochures

Personal instructions on how to bring up children, signed by Kriuchkov and Vins, 1964

Prokofiev. Article "About the Nature of Consecration"

Bratski Listok, 2-3, 1965

Vestnik Spasenia, 1 (9), 1965

Appeal from Kriuchkov and Vins for change in the Constitution, 14 April 1965

Vestnik Spasenia 2 (10) 1965 + copy of an expert from Faith on Trial

Bratski Listok

Open letter to Brezhnev from A.I. Kovalchuk, Rovno, 31 July, 1966, about the persecutions being suffered by Baptists in the USSR and his own terrible history in particular. He almost died in confinement.

Complaint from P.S. Overchuk about camp legality, 1967

Special communication from the Council of Prisoners' Relatives to Mr. Brezhnev et al. 1967. Signed by Vins, Yakimenkova, Kozorezova.

Letter of Mr. U-Thant, UN general secretary, to the Human Rights Committee, International Committee on Child protection from Council of Prisoners' Relatives, 1967.

Sentence by the Belorussian SSR on Feidak and Vilchinsky, 1966.

Protocol of search of Aida Skripnikova apartment. Leningrad, 1968.

Trial of Skripnikova, transcript. 1968. And translated in German

Statement to various government leaders from relatives of prisoners in Western Siberia, signed by 11 wives, 1968.

Special report to the UN general secretary, Amnesty International, International Red Cross, General Secretary of the Communist Party from relatives of prisoners, signed by L. Vins, Khrapova, Kozlova, 1968.

Special report.... To Kosygin, Podgorny, Brezhnev, General prosecutor Rudenko, International Committee on Child protection, different newspapers editors, ECB and Council of Prisoners' relative from relatives of prisoners.

Sentence of Nadezhda Sloboda, Pyotr Kurash, and Vikentii Sloboda. Belorussia, Letter from Prokofiev in Siberia, 1968.

HU OSA 300/85/9:29 - Baptist samizdat:

Tula ECB Church Appeal to Kosygin to order a halt to the nationwide manhunt for Baptist leader G. Kriuchkov

ECB Believers Kant (Kirgiz rep) Letter to Soviet leaders protesting persecution of fellow Baptists in Barnaul. 1971

Bulleting of Council of Prisoners' Relatives, 1972.

Transcript of Trial of Zhelotnozhko Georgii Dmitrievich. and Troshchenko Nadezhda Tikhomirovna in Nikolaev, 1972. Titled: Характерный судебный процесс над верующими Е-баптистского вероисповедания

Fergan believers to Brezhnev, 1972

Fergan believers to Kosygin, 1972

Dushanbe ECB believers to Brezhnev, 1972

Barnaul believers to Kurt Waldheim, UN general secretary and WADJ, 1972

Barnaul believers Appeal to all Christians of the world and in the USSR, 1972

Barnaul believers to Waldheim about hunger strike and trial of Yu. I.

Mikhalkov, 1972. Includes text of letter by his parents to court officials

HU OSA 300/85/9:53 – Ukrainian movement

R 2071 (AS 2071) Lidia Vins. 1975, from Gateway fellowship/ Open doors

R 2073 Ogorodnik family, Baptists.

R 2074 Mashnitski family, Baptists

Smoloskyp information service – latest information. Press release.

Ukrainian Herald. Smoloskyp. Baltimore/

HU OSA 300/85/9:69 – Baptist samizdat:

Interview with Lidia Vins, 1976

Lisa Vins, 15-year old daughter of imprisoned Georgy Vins, her voiced statement about her arrest and interrogation on Easter Sunday 1976, Kiev Natalya Korovina, Baptist believer in Znamenka (Ukraine), complaint to Valentina Tereshkova, chairman of USSR Committee for Protection of Women and Children, to Brezhnev, Rudenko etc. about decision removing from her custody Oleg Korovin, son of her deceased brother, “merely because I believe in God”. June 1976.

Oleg Korovin, statement to CPR saying he does not wish to live with anyone except his aunt.

HU OSA 300/85/12:239 - Samizdat Archives; Religious Denominations; Monitoring МОПС

HU OSA 300/85/12:236 - Samizdat/ Religion.

Jehovah's Witnesses, 1973-1911

Information they received including from:

- the Soviet Human rights monitor

- Soviet Media Daily digest/ Radio liberty monitoring

- Ukrainian Media Daily Digest

- Western news agencies

- Keston News Service

Soviet newspaper articles

Baptist publisher *Khristianin*

Missionswerk Friedensstimme
Keston College, Newsdesk KNS.
Report by Oxana Antic. New blow to unofficial religious publishing house.
International representation for the Council of Evangelical Baptist Church of
the Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/85/13:328 – RFE/RL Samizdat materials. Baptist movement in USSR

Samizdat. BIO. M. Khorev
Newsdesk (Keston, 1987)
Baptist Samizdat
“People unmasked: Who does Christian serve?” About Publisher
Khristianin
The Slavic mission and Ecumenical Group reported on the conditions of
Christians in the Soviet Union. The Slavic church said the Baptist church
members had 100,000 members in the Soviet Union. And 186 of its
leaders were in prison.
Article from The Ukrainiaj Weekly

RFE/RL Unpublished samizdat on Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Russian Orthodox Church:

HU OSA 300/85/39:1 – Katyn’

HU OSA 300/85/39:9 – Religion

Documents from the Council for religious affairs, Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/85/39:10 – Religion: Seventh Day Adventists, Baptists, Soviet Union

HU OSA 300/85/39:11 - Religion

Keston College

Bulletins of the Council for Prisoners’ Relatives, Baptist samizdat

HU OSA 300/85/39:12 – Religion:

Pentecostals

Russian Orthodox Church

Islam

HU OSA 300/85/39:13 – Religion: Pentecostals

HU OSA 300/85/39:14 – Religion: Khare Krishna

HU OSA 300/85/39:140 – Ukrainian nationalist Pavlo Kampov letter from the labour camp.

HU OSA 300/85/44:28 – Bapstists: Open letters and petitions

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights

318-0-5/132 - Country Files: Russia. Religious persecutions

Repression of Christian Study groups in the USSR (Ogorodnikov)

Brochure “Religious Minorities in the Soviet Union” Monority rights group.

A report prepared by Michael Bourdeaux.

Keston Institute

17 issues of Prisoner Bulletin. Voice of the Persecuted Church in the Soviet Union.

1989. Original samizdat publication by unregistered Baptists, in Eng.

Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. 1986, 87

RFE/RL Research Institute. Soviet Red Archives. Old Code Subject Files:

300/80/1/9 - Agitprop.

300/80/1/10 - Agitprop

300/80/1/821 – Religion: Churches, monasteries, 1953-1990

Bourdeaux. Monasticism in the Soviet Union. 1975

Bociurkiw. The Shaping of Soviet Religious policy. 1973

Institute for the Study of the USSR. Soviet Affairs Analysis Service.

The Russian Orthodox Church and Soviet Foreign Policy

Brochure. Religion in the USSR (Publisher unknown)

300/80/1/33 – Antireligious propaganda, 1968-1971

Antireligious pressures in the USSR in the Aftermath of the Helsinki Conference

Советская печать о западных религиозных радиопередачах. 1976

Два взгляда школьников на необходимость антирелигиозной пропаганды.

Отчет Радио свободы. 1976

300/80/1/35 - Antireligious propaganda, 1988-1992

USSR Today/ Soviet Media news and information digest

300/80/1/822 – Religion: Church and the state

300/80/1/818 – Religion, Pentecostals, 1961-1984

300/80/1/805 – Religion, 1976-1986

Religious samizdat report, 1976.

Catacomb Pentecostals and their samizdat. Pentecostals in Ukraine.

Meeting of East European Missions and West German Evangelical Press. 1976

Movement grows in Congress for Soviet Christian support.

Helsinki has not helped Russian Christians

Religiousness among future teachers. 1976

The Soviet press on religious broadcast from the West. 1976

Religious activity in the USSR in 1976

Antireligious pressure in the USSR in the aftermath of the Helsinki conference. 1977.

World conference of Churchmen

Religious chain letters in the USSR

Radio listeners in the USSR protest atheist propaganda broadcast

Background Brief. Foreign and Commonwealth Office. London. Religion in the Soviet Union. 1979

Monitoring – МОПС, No, 418. 1979

US Department of State. Washington DC. Foreign Affairs Note. "Religion in the USSR:

Laws, Policy and propaganda". 1982.

Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research. Trends in Soviet religious life: Findings of an unofficial study.

A portrayal of "religious extremists" in the Soviet Press. Antic. 1984

300/80/1/804 – Religion

Soviet views on religion and atheism. USSR. Department of Commerce. United States of America. Joint publications research service.

Current developments in the Eastern European Churches. World Council of Churches. Geneva. 1962.

Visual materials (photo archive):

301-0-6; 301-0-6/1:

Eduard Bulakh. Pentecostal trying to emigrate from Viliuns, was forcibly interned in Novovilnya OPH for 2-3 weeks.

Liubov Fokanova and Grachikov, Adventists, 3 year term for religious activity

Mitry Minyakov, Baptist preacher, 4 times imprisoned, 5 years last time

Audio materials:

R 2673 (AS 2673) Four Baptist women (Rytikova, Kakurina, Yudinzeva, Kozorezova) voice description of their individual interrogations by the KGB about the work of the CPR. 1976.

R 2674 (AS 2674) Omsk Baptist Service to welcome return from prison of ECB leader Aleksei Kozorezov, recording of service with voice of local militia officials attempting to break up the gathering because it was unauthorised. 1976