



Dear Reader,

**A**LONG with our parent journal, *Gosudarstvo, religiia, tserkov' v Rossii i za rubezhom* (GRTs), we at *State, Religion and Church* (SRC) pride ourselves on publishing some of the best work in religious studies produced in Russia and the post-Soviet space generally. Our work in this area reflects two broad tendencies marking post-Soviet scholarship. The first is the productive exploration of new paradigms and theoretical approaches; GRTs has been on the cutting edge of this tendency, breaking new ground while ensuring that scholarly rigor is maintained in the process. The second is the creation of spaces for direct, open exchanges and collaborative efforts between scholars from the West, on the one hand, and scholars from Russia and other post-Soviet republics on the other. Here, too, the editorial staff of both journals have helped to lead the way.

We launched the English-language journal early this year with the goal of providing precisely such an institutional space, and in this second issue we continue to pursue our mission by publishing translations from our parent journal and articles revised from Russian originals; translations of book reviews and review articles that provide those who do not read Russian with a window into discussions taking place within religious studies in Russia; and original material. In this time of heightened geopolitical tension, we believe that fostering scholarly exchange and collaboration between Russians and non-Russians is all the more important.

The translated articles published in this issue can be divided roughly into two categories: 1) esotericism in Russian-speaking contexts, and 2) the lived experience of religious communities in the Soviet Union. The first category provides a case in point regarding Russian scholarship's exploration of new paradigms and methods. In

his article on the worldview of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian freemasons, Yury Khalturin relies on techniques of discourse analysis to make the case that this worldview fits into Antoine Faivre's conception of Western esotericism. In a similar manner, drawing on both anthropological techniques and historicist textual analysis, Kateryna Zorya argues that post-Soviet magic is also a variation of Western esotericism. Both scholars devote considerable space to demonstrating their conclusions through many examples, while both also point toward specificities of the Russian variations of the phenomena under consideration that deserve further study.

Meanwhile, the study of the lived experience of religious communities in the Soviet Union is exploding, both within and outside Russia, in conjunction with the broad religious turn in the humanities and social sciences and a natural scholarly interest in assessing the Soviet legacy. Since the Soviet Union represents the most radically secularist regime in history to date, many scholars are currently drawn to examine the impact of anti-religious policies on religious communities; the actually existing relationships between religious believers and state institutions; and the ways these policies, relations and experiences shifted over time within the broader Soviet context. The archives offer plenty of tantalizing stories to those who go looking for them, and in this issue of SRC we bring you two of them. Both are ambitious in scope, but, being thoroughly grounded in their authors' previous research and the relevant historiographies, they rise to the occasion as mature scholarly achievements that deserve wide attention. The first is Alexey Glushaev's study of both ethnic German and ethnic Russian Protestant "barracks congregations" in the Perm-Kama Region from the 1940s through the 1960s, a story intimately connected with deportations, "special settlers," and the Soviet Union's particular post-war situation. The second is Galina Zelenina's investigation of the generational transformations of Jewish life through the entire span of Soviet history, which, drawing on large repositories of oral histories, she examines through the lens of Soviet and post-Soviet Jews' evolving relationships to books and reading practices.

While the research mentioned above is appearing here for the first time in English, this issue of SRC also contains one entirely original contribution: a lecture by leading British sociologist of religion Bernice Martin that lays out an intriguing, provocative, and theoretically nuanced interpretation of the rise of Pentecostalism in Brazil in the context of that country's power relations and post-

colonial history. The lecture was delivered at the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA) in Moscow on September 13, 2013, as one event in a larger project called “Religion, Science and Society” put together by the Saints Cyril and Methodius Institute of Postgraduate Studies, with funding from the John Templeton Foundation.

Another such international collaborative effort has set SRC’s agenda for 2015. RANEPA hosted an international conference from May 14 through 16, 2014, under the auspices of the Center for Russian Studies, and organized by SRC’s editorial staff: “The Varieties of Russian Modernity II: Religion, State, and Approaches to Pluralism in Russian Contexts.” Revised versions of papers given at this conference will provide the basis for two special issues of SRC, projected for March 2015 and September 2015.

Meanwhile, we hope you find the current issue stimulating. If something in it strikes you, feel free to blog or tweet about it or to let us know your thoughts directly via our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/state.religion.and.church>) or through e-mail — [religion@rane.ru](mailto:religion@rane.ru) or [cstroop@gmail.com](mailto:cstroop@gmail.com). As a new electronic open-access journal, we appreciate any help in spreading the word about our efforts. Finally, although our 2015 issues are for the most part planned already, we continue to be open to original manuscripts, which you can send to the e-mail addresses listed above.

*Happy reading!*  
*The Editors*