

Paper Title: Atheistic Trends in Modern Education in Russia
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This paper was prepared for "Science and Religion: Global Perspectives", June 4-8, 2005, in PA,USA, a program of the Metanexus Institute (www.metanexus.net)

Abstract

Nowadays believers in Russia feel much more freedom than during seven decades of communist's oppression: hundreds of churches and dozens of spiritual schools have re-opened, many religious magazines have appeared as well as newspapers, radio stations, TV programs and websites. Nevertheless the situation in "educational and mass media space" remains mostly under dominion of a materialistic ideology. The reason for this is obvious: all heads of institutions which control today's ideological climate in Russia (or their fathers) were previously active and high ranking functionaries in the communist party or "KGB".

On the other hand, many leading scientists by virtue of their anti-religious experience's in childhood (imprinting phenomenon) and their relative ignorance of any religion have really become convinced non-believers (God's rejectors). These very people last year took the total power in the Russian Ministry of Education and Science. Quite recently all those who expressed any sympathy whatsoever to religion, particularly to a system of moral principles, have been dismissed from this Ministry (anti-ethical cleansing). In order to demonstrate tolerance to religious views, the Ministry suggests the introduction in all schools and universities the new subject "History of world religions" in which all kinds of religion will be treated as different forms of delusion in comparison with "neutral and objective" materialism. There exist a lot of potential teachers for this new subject: they are numerous former Soviet teachers of Marxism and "scientific atheism".

A little hope is given by the fact that many governmental and regional leaders as well as a large portion of Russia's intellectuals have realized the paramount significance of traditional religious values for successful social, cultural and economical development of the country.

Biography:

Gennady A. Kalyabin is a lecturer of Natural Apologetics at Samara Academy of Humanities, and Samara Orthodox Seminary. For 30 years, he taught Mathematics at Samara State Aerospace University. Dr. Kalyabin serves as chair of the Samara Scientific - Christian Society "Through Faith We Understand".

Paper Text:

Despite the education was recently declared "independent" what may be understood as open comparative setting forth of different viewpoints in subjects taught at schools and universities, the situation in Russia remains totally the same as was created in the period of militant atheism (1917-82) by the powerful and ramified system to reproduce in human minds of the materialistic ideology, and counter-position of sciences and religion playing a special role. For many this "disclosure of the clergy deceit" had a strong effect which has determined their worldview. It is spoken much about the enormous achievements of science and technology, and the conclusions are made of the type "once planes fly, there's no God". The ideas by K.Marx, F.Engels and V.Lenin (the latter man is not yet buried and his mummified body for more than 80 years is exhibited in the mausoleum - a magnified copy of the Satan's throne in Pergamum

mentioned in Revelation 2, 13 - in the center of Red Square in Moscow) are set forth by the **contemporary** Russian text-books (1998) as pedagogically useful! The very fact that following the doctrines of "dialectic and historic materialism" has brought innumerable disasters to all sections of the Russian people in the 20th century, should clearly demonstrate the complete falsity and destructive character of atheism. However the ceasing of the direct persecutions upon the believers the ideological battle via educational and media systems for the hearts (not only brains) of human beings is continued with intensity not relaxing. The religious convictions of the founders of the new European science (Galileo, Pascal, Newton, Leibnitz), of the outstanding researchers of the 18th - 20th centuries (Lomonosov, Faraday, Cauchy, Pasteur, Pavlov, Bohr, Heisenberg, Korolev, Hoyle), of the Templeton Prize winners (George Ellis, Holmes Rolston III, John Polkinghorne, Ian Barbour) are totally hushed up or perverted. The religious and clergy people are treated as non-intellectual obscurants who disturb and hinder the scientific progress.

What are the reasons for such a sad current spiritual situation in Russia? One of them is obvious: all heads of institutions (or their fathers) which control the ideological climate in Russia were recently the active and high ranking communist party functionaries (or KGB agents, like President Putin of Russia). On the other hand, many leading scientists by virtue of their own early childhood anti-religious experience (imprinting phenomenon) and knowing nothing positive about any religion have really become convinced non-believers (God's rejectors). These very people last year took the total power in the Russian Ministry of Education and Science. Quite recently all those who expressed any sympathy whatsoever to religion (though only as to the system of moral) principles) have been dismissed from this Ministry (anti-ethical cleansing). In order to demonstrate the tolerance to religious views the Ministry suggests to introduce in all schools and universities the new subject "History of world religions" in which all kinds of religion will be treated as different forms of delusion in comparison with "neutral and objective" materialism. There exist a lot of potential teachers for this new subject: they are numerous former Soviet teachers of marxism-leninism and "scientific atheism". Some people have rejected the idea of God after extraordinary events in their life. So Professor Sergey Kapitsa (the son of Nobel prize winner in physics Peter Kapitsa) in 1987 killed accidentally a mentally diseased person who suddenly attacked him near the lecture room door at Moscow Physico-Technical Institute in sight of scores of astonished and shocked students. This poor man had strong hatred towards Professor Kapitsa because Professor had given negative reviews about this man's idea fix concerning some physical theories (relativity, quantum mechanics etc). Since this unexpected murder (committed by the sharp ice-axe snatched from the victim's hands) the behavior of Professor Sergey Kapitsa has drastically changed and his views have become radically anti-religious. Of course, there are much more examples of opposite kind, i.e. when threatening dangers and heavy circumstances have wonderfully convert men back to God.

Every teacher who wants to explain students what the essence of dialogue between science and religion is should always keep in mind and emphasize that most part of the natural subjects (physics, astronomy, chemistry, geology, biology) are in fact merely a historically formed and adapted to the level of the students' understanding complexes of models, conjectures and theories, describing systematically the large variety of observational data, the degree of accordance with the experiments being the main criterion for accepting or rejecting any specific theory. When new experimental facts arise the old theories fail to give explanation for them. So in history several revolutions in natural sciences are well known (in the 17th-18th and in the beginning of the 20th centuries) when the whole explanation system (paradigm) completely changed. Hence it follows that current paradigm will be shortly replaced by new ones. The signs of the upcoming scientific crisis are already well seen. Many contemporary cosmologists, geologists, biologists say with confidence that they know and are able to explain less than 5% of what they would like to know. Such a situation is of course unstable and it is

maintained mostly because of the huge progress in new technologies which are in fact based upon rather old scientific discoveries. One more reason is that theories alternative to the dominating paradigms are not yet awarded by Nobel prizes which became in the last century a very important non-scientific label (™) for distinguishing the most suitable scientific results. There are many rare natural events (like the ball lightning) for which there's no explanation at all. The miraculous phenomena and objects, related to different religions, though unique (e.g. the Shroud of Turin) must also be incorporated in science field. These complexities and discrepancies in the true sciences are totally masked or distorted in teaching so to suggest the thought of self-sufficiency of materialistic doctrines, which are declared to be the only admissible "strictly scientific approach" and thus yielding no place for whatsoever religious belief.

Therefore in our opinion the most important task for Science-Religion Societies in Russia is to propagate the true and detailed information among various categories of people via lecturing (to pupils, students, teachers, in children summer camps, in hospitals and prisons), debates, radio and TV programs, publications, websites etc. The possibilities for such an activity in Russia (unthinkable 20 years ago) are becoming broader but they depend essentially on good will of regional authorities - governors and parliaments (Dumas).

Recently the joint clerical and civil forum of Samara region has approved the vast plan of serious cooperation in education, children, youth and families support, health care, help to drag abusers, dipsomaniacs, homeless and convicted persons. Similar meetings are held throughout the country and it is very positive that many intellectuals, teachers, medical workers began to realize that basing on spiritual values is the key point for the recovery of social and economic life in Russia and stopping the quick depopulation of the country (1 mn per year).