The God of the gulag raises a number of questions that demand serious scholarly attention. For example, what was the nature and frequency of interfaith assistance? What can be said about the rhetoric of resistance and collaboration used by believers? What was the role and nature of official and unofficial institutions, such as seminaries, house churches or study circles during this period? How exactly did anti-Communist and anti-clerical sentiment affect the post-Communist restoration of religious life? Most fundamentally, what do we know about Luxmoore's martyrs? Only a handful of scholarly biographies of important figures related to Soviet anti-religious persecution, such as Wallace Daniel's study of Aleksandr Men', exist. And, as Luxmoore rightly insists, they deserve to be remembered.

Baylor University Julie deGraffenried

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. A life. By Avril Pyman. Pp. xiv + 281 incl. frontispiece and 31 ills. Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2016. £17.50 (paper). 978 0 7188 9449 8

JEH (69) 2018; doi:10.1017/S0022046917002470

Eleven years after the appearance of a substantial biography of Metropolitan Anthony Bloom by his diocesan secretary (Gillian Crow, *This holy man*), another work has appeared, which covers much the same ground, but incorporates valuable new research in the Soviet archives. Avril Pyman's bilingual fluency has given her access to much new material in Russian and her work presents a convincing portrait of a man of deep spirituality who was, arguably, the most influential Christian in British public life in the 1970s and '80s. It is therefore a shame that the book also contains inaccuracies and omissions.

No one who met Andrei Bloom (as he was born in Switzerland in 1914) came away unaffected by his presence and personality. He led thousands, perhaps millions, if you include the multitudes who knew him in Russia either through his visits or his radio broadcasts, to a knowledge of the spirituality of the Orthodox Church. New converts queued up for his guidance in his London residence and he wore himself out giving his time to them. His spiritual inspiration motivated his converts and changed their lives. He was, by some, considered to be anti-ecumenical, but Pyman's book strongly suggests the opposite: he presented the basic truths of the Gospel in a form which revealed the heart of the Christian message, clothed in the form of his loyalty to the Orthodox faith. He treated every denomination with respect. He was a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and, at a meeting in Berlin, in August 1974 he preached to them in German. He set out an agenda which cut through their concerns of the time: racism, sexual equality and even reconciliation with Communism. In Pyman's translation, he said, 'Since we cannot at this time take communion together, let us do what we can: live and, if needs be, die for one another in the greater community of Christ's disciples.' His plea went unheeded.

At their first meeting in Zürich just after his exile, Solzhenitsyn harangued Anthony 'for not having taken every opportunity to speak out against the suppression of Christianity in the USSR at the top of his voice' (p. 145). However, he later came to see that Anthony's restrained approach – keeping the door to Russia open, while not compromising himself – was his personal mission and calling,

which only he could fulfill. Though the KGB monitored his every step in Russia, they could do nothing to tarnish his reputation.

Pyman shows that Metropolitan Anthony was not a hard-line conservative. Like his fellow hierarch in the Greek Church under Constantinople, Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware), he did not condemn those who sought to open up the topic of the ordination of women for debate. Conservatives expected him to criticise anyone with such modernist ideas, but he repeatedly stated that the time was ripe to debate the issue (it was ducked at the Pan-Orthodox Council, boycotted by the Moscow Patriarchate, when it finally met in 2016).

Anthony believed, when Communism finally collapsed, that something approximating to the South African 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission' should occur in the Russian Church, but the Moscow Patriarchate ignored his suggestion and thus declined the opportunity for reform. At this time, too, he was in favour of an independent patriarchate for Ukraine (p. 168), also sidelined. In many ways Metropolitan Anthony Bloom was the best Patriarch the Russian Church never had. Chapter ix of this book contains page after page of new research in the Russian archives, illustrating from previously unpublished material the nationwide influence which he exercised in Russia and beyond.

This makes it all the more curious that Avril Pyman's presentation contains *lacunae*. There are minor irritations: more mistakes of orthography than one would expect in work which mainly exhibits exemplary scholarship. 'Vasilii' Borovoi (p. 92) should read Vitalii (as he is in the glossary of proper names); Anthony's editor at Mowbrays was Richard Mulkern (not Mulhern, pp. 114, 132). The seminal Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, for which Anthony worked as chaplain when he first came to London, receives no fewer than three different variants.

This leads to consideration of something omitted. Anthony came to England in 1949 to be chaplain to the Fellowship. Why then does Pyman not tell the reader what this is? In the light of its recent decline, not all readers will be familiar with it. The Fellowship was founded in 1928 as a vehicle for the reconciliation – and eventual unity – between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches and publishes the ecumenical journal, *Sobornost*. Many at the time – including myself – believed that it could lead to formal union within a few decades.

More seriously, Pyman fails to help the reader by clearly outlining the progress (or, in the 1960s, regress) in Soviet religious tolerance. In the second half of 1959 the Kremlin began – at first theoretically, later with brutal force – a renewed attack on all religion, not only the Orthodox Church. This is an important landmark, because Anthony first set foot in Russia in October 1960, when the persecution was well underway. Conversely, it would have been helpful to devote a page to setting out clearly the dramatic advance in religious liberty under Gorbachev from 1986, leading to the new law of 1990 promising freedom (to be contradicted all too soon by the restrictive legislation begun under Yeltsin's watch).

Pyman mentions accurately the way in which Anthony's heritage – moving towards the creation of a genuine British Orthodox Church – was called in question and indeed fractured by Bishop (now Metropolitan) Ilarion at the end of Anthony's life, but subsequent information about the disaster in the London parish would have been welcome.

There are two serious errors which affect this reviewer. Misspelling my surname, Pyman writes that I took up 'a scathingly anti-Orthodox stance simply because the Patriarchal Church was officially permitted to exist' and that I 'organized a service of intercession [on behalf of Solzhenitsyn] on 7 February 1974 at St Martin's in the Fields [*sic*]' in which 'Anthony, somewhat reluctantly, felt obliged to take part'.

The first statement reproduces a calumny where the lingering voice of the KGB's 'disinformation' service is clearly audible: that motivation for my life's work was anti-Orthodox. In fact, my calling came directly from loyal but persecuted Orthodox believers and I have always thought that this, in its own way, represented another side of the same coin – support for the defenceless – which Anthony demonstrated in his own ministry. Far from being 'scathingly anti-Orthodox', I consistently advised Keston staff members to refrain from adopting judgemental attitudes to the Moscow Patriarchate, under severe pressure as it was. My book *Risen indeed* (1983) is a hymn of praise to the reviving spirituality of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Equally serious is the statement about St Martin-in-the-Fields. Though my advice was often sought, it was never in my gift to organise such a meeting, let alone to persuade Anthony to participate in it. However, Pyman justifies her claim by a footnote referring to my obituary of Anthony in *The Guardian*, which in fact contains no reference to this service. To 'prove' her point by quoting such a footnote, which most readers would accept at face value, is misleading, to put it mildly. The author could easily have checked with me the veracity of her claim. In fact, Anthony himself wrote a letter to *The Times* and preached in defence of Solzhenitsyn in his own church. These were the cause of the freeze in relations not only between Anthony and Soviet officialdom, but also with the Moscow Patriarchate. This led to his resignation as Exarch of the diocese of Western Europe, but also temporarily reduced opportunities for genuine contact with people in Russia when his visa was eventually restored.

The editors of Lutterworth Press have readily agreed to remove these two erroneous statements from all new printings of the book.

My personal relations with Metropolitan Anthony were good. In 2000, aged eighty-six, he addressed a dinner in his honour at the Athenaeum in London and it was my privilege to welcome him formally. I told him of my recent visit to Smolensk, where I had received every co-operation from the archbishop (Kirill, the present Patriarch), resulting in the BBC's inaugural 'Sunday Worship' of the new millennium for Radio 4.

Three years later there was a broadcast of Orthodox Vespers (Radio 3) from St Petersburg which I presented on 6 August. It is a shame this is not mentioned in what is in so many ways an admirable book.

KESTON INSTITUTE, MICHAEL BOURDEAUX
OXFORD