forces of assimilation into the mainstream of society. Subsequent waves of migrants after the Second World War and the 1956 revolution tended to revive Hungarian churches in some areas. In this final context we see a variant on the main themes of Dreisziger's book, relating how Hungarian churches have been bolstered but also restricted by their relationship with the state and by their commitment to national culture. As the conclusion makes clear, the resulting challenges now facing the current generation of leaders of traditional Churches in Hungary and in Hungarian-speaking communities are formidable.

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*The God of the gulag*, I: *Martyrs in an age of revolution*; II: *Martyrs in an age of secularism*. By Jonathan Luxmoore. Pp. xxiii + 511; xiii + 468. Leominster: Gracewing, 2016. £40 (paper). 978 0 85244 639 3; 978 0 85244 584 6

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More than anything else, Jonathan Luxmoore's *God of the gulag* is a work of remembrance. In this two-volume journalistic account of the twentieth-century persecution of Catholics in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the author aims to 'retrace and bring to life the very real men and women who … stood up for the faith under communist rule' (p. xxii). His goal is not so much to advance an argument as it is to chronicle the suffering that Communist regimes inflicted upon people of faith. In this, he succeeds admirably.

Focusing on Catholics, 'since only the Catholic Church was present as a single supra-national entity throughout Communist-ruled Europe' (p. xvi), and drawing upon themes from his previously-published works, Luxmoore surveys Communist persecution of Christians from the advent of Bolshevik rule in Russia to the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, pointing out parallels to earlier oppression in the Roman Empire and during the French Revolution. The first two chapters in volume i describe selected historical precedents for state attacks upon the Church. The remaining seven chapters, covering the early 1900s to the early 1960s, present the effects of the Bolshevik revolution on the Catholic Church in the Soviet Union and, later, in Eastern European states when Soviet anti-religious policies were extended to the Baltics, Poland and, in the aftermath of World War II, the remainder of Eastern Europe. The seven chapters of volume ii move the narrative forward in this consolidated Soviet sphere of influence. Beginning in the 1960s, they consider the effects of the Vatican's efforts to address Communism, the emergence of dissidents and dialogue on human rights, underground faith communities, the significance of John Paul II, the ultimate collapse of Communism and the complicated efforts to restore the Church in recent decades. A discussion of efforts within faith communities to confront or stifle the issue of Soviet-era collaboration within the post-Communist Church is especially strong. Interspersed with discussions of policy, politics and religion are the stories and struggles of dozens – perhaps hundreds – of Christians, from the well-known (for example, Archbishop József Mindszenty) to the lesser-known (for example, the nuns Nijolė Sadūnaitė or

Zdenka Schelingová). An epilogue suggests lessons to be gleaned from the Church's experiences and a call to preserve the memory of those who lost their lives because of anti-religious persecution. In the latter half of volume i and the entirety of volume ii, Luxmoore foregrounds the persistent dilemma faced by lay-people, clergy and the Catholic hierarchy in Communist regimes: resist and suffer or collaborate and survive. As befits the subtitle, both volumes highlight the harassment, persecution and physical punishment endured by countless people of faith, in nearly encyclopaedic fashion.

The contributions of Luxmoore's *God of the gulag* are many. First, it is the only comprehensive survey of Catholic persecution in Communist Europe available in English. For that reason alone, this work of synthesis is invaluable. Second, thanks to the author's background as a journalist covering religious affairs in Eastern Europe, he has been able to marshal a significant number of personal interviews for use in writing these books. Luxmoore's intimacy with the people and events described in the latter chapters of volume ii is obvious, particularly regarding affairs in Poland. Third, as the author points out, accounts of human misery attributed to other Communist-engineered tragedies, such as collectivisation or the terror, often eclipse the suffering of people of faith in Communist Europe. These books raise their hardship from obscurity, while placing it in the context of others. Even more important, the inclusion of so many varying examples emphasises the extraordinary ordinariness of such abuse for those who chose to stand for faith rather than atheism, conformity or indifference. The sheer volume of names and cases in *The God of the gulag* is overwhelming.

Given the ambitious task that the author undertook in investigating a Church spanning all of the republics of the former Soviet Union plus Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Albania and East Germany, some limitations might be expected. The two-volume study focuses heavily upon Eastern Europe (particularly Poland), the Baltics and Ukraine, with only occasional forays into the rest of the former Soviet Union. Granted, the majority of the Catholic population resided in precisely those areas, but previous studies from Dennis Dunn and Christopher Zugger remind us that Catholic communities were to be found across the Soviet empire. Luxmoore's non-English sources tend to be Polish, which explains the emphasis, and appear to exclude available state, regional and local archives in Russia entirely. Moreover, scholars will find frequent uncited references to 'Soviet documents' (p. 283), 'church records' (p. 95), or 'research data' (p. 166) frustrating. Similarly, a number of historical inaccuracies mostly unrelated to the central narrative mar the book: for example, Shostakovich was not a Soviet *émigré* as noted, the peak years of the League of Militant Godless are misstated as the mid-1930s, the number of Poles executed by the Soviets at Katyn is underreported as 4,421, and the number of fatalities in the 1956 uprising in Hungary is far too high. A tendency to rely on Courtois's problematic *Black book of Communism* for figures related to Soviet oppression may explain the latter, but is also indicative of research *lacunae*. Reading Dunn's work on the Catholic Church in the USSR alongside Luxmoore may resolve some of these issues. Finally, the publisher unfortunately chose to publish the two volumes without a bibliography or a comprehensive index, although there is an index of names and an index of places.

*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.

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*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

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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,