

Between the West and the East

Notes on the origin of the evangelical movement in Russia

Constantine PROKHOROV, *Omsk, Russia*

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As far back as the ancient *Russian Primary Chronicle* (“The Tale of Bygone Years”) something is communicated which, it would seem, is excessively humiliating for Russian national feelings: the Slavs called on foreigners (“Varangians”) to reign over them. The motivation for this is the statement that, “our land is great and rich, but there is no order in it.”^[1] In this way, according to the legend, the foundation of Russian statehood was laid. Later the chronicler speaks about a kind of *choice of faith* made by the Slavs: the Grand Duke Vladimir (of Kiev), having heard foreign ambassadors praising their own beliefs, according to the advice of the boyars, sent envoys to several countries to become better acquainted with the Muslim, the “German” (Catholic) and the Greek (Orthodox) rites of divine worship.^[2] And the Russian heart responded only to the “Greek faith”; the prince’s servants in their report on the Byzantine divine service said: “We cannot forget that beauty. Every man, after tasting something sweet, is afterward unwilling to accept that which is bitter...”^[3]

In our opinion, it would be unfair to reject completely these records of the authoritative Old Russian source by bringing the *legendary nature* of the chronicle’s stories into the foreground (while simultaneously keeping their annoying *lack of patriotism* in mind).^[4] But even if the chronicler’s “apocryphal”



Constantine Prokhorov is a graduate of North Kazakhstan University and Odessa Theological Seminary (Ukraine) and holds M.Th and Ph.D degrees from IBTS, Prague, Czech Republic / University of Wales. He has published articles in the periodicals *Grani, Kontinent, Bogomyслиe*, and others. He is the author of several books published in Russia, Germany, Great Britain and the USA. He is married and has three children.

^[1] L. Dmitriev and D. Likhachev, eds., *Pamyatniki Literaturny Drevney Rusi, XI – Nachalo XII Veka* [Literary Monuments of the Early Rus, the 11th – the Beginning of the 12th Centuries], (M.: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1978), p. 36.

^[2] In the case of Judaism, Vladimir confined himself only to a conversation with Khazar envoys. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

^[3] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

^[4] For example, the famous Orthodox historian E. E. Golubinsky considered the chronicler’s story about the “choice of faith” to be not simply a fabrication, but a *Greek fabrication*. See E. Golubinsky, *Istoriya Russkoy*

details are discounted in the light of known events in Russian history, it seems clear that there was active participation by foreigners in a number of the important developments in the Slavic people's life.^[5]

If it did not reflect the actual state of affairs at all, it would be difficult to explain the reason for the long years of preserving and copying chronicle texts that are so contrary to the Russian soul and "dishonoring" to Russian power. If the stories about the "calling of the Varangians" and the choice of a "non-Russian faith" were simply the unfortunate inventions of ancient authors, the great likelihood is that they would subsequently have been "corrected" (already during the Middle Ages) by the true patriots of the native land, who could easily have composed alternative narratives that did not wound the national pride of the Great Russians. Such an approach was clearly displayed at one time, for example, in the touching *Povest' o belom klobuke* [The legend of the white cowl],^[6] and then by the Pskov monastic elder Philotheus in his solemn declaration reinforcing the status of Moscow as the Third (and, of course, the final) Rome.^[7]

At the same time, it is important to keep a balance in the analysis of the ancient events just mentioned. It would be quite untrue to say, for example, that the Varangians imposed their reign on Russia; nor did the Greeks bring Orthodoxy to Kiev on the edge of their spears and swords. Rather, the Slavs themselves, for some mainly *internal* reason, decided to accept some forms of spiritual life that were "non-Russian," but which they found attractive. And they accepted them from among a number of other alternatives of the time. The determination of the Russians not to be seen as religiously subservient was evident in the way in which Grand Duke Vladimir, even when he had already made the decision to be baptized according to the Eastern Christian rite, attacked the strong Greek town Korsun' (Chersonese) in the Crimea, and conquered it. He did not want to be viewed as a weak Greek proselyte. Such behavior (hardly a faultless decision from the point of view of Christian piety), however, might be justified from the point of view of State interests. As the great Russian historian N. M. Karamzin noted: "He (Vladimir) took it into his head, so to speak, to *win* the Christian faith and receive its holiness with a victor's hand."^[8]

Now, gradually approaching the theme of the "Eurasian" distinguishing features of Russian Evangelicalism, and, most of all, of the Russian Baptists (in comparison

Tserkvi [The History of the Russian Church], 2 vols. (Moscow: Universitetskaya Tipografiya, 1901-1911), v. I, part 1, pp. 105, 135.

^[5] For the role of foreigners in the early history of Russia, see, for example, V. Klyuchevsky, *Kurs Russkoy Istorii* [A Course in Russian History], in V. Klyuchevsky, *Sochineniya* [Works], 9 vols. (Moscow: Mysl, 1989), v. I, pp. 144-156.

^[6] See *Povest' o Novgorodskom Belom Klobuke* [The Legend of the Novgorodian White Cowl], in *Pamyatniki Literatury Drevney Rusi, Seredina XVI Veka* (M.: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1985), pp. 198-233.

^[7] See Philotheus, *Poslanie o Neblagopriyatnykh Dnyakh I Chasakh* [The Letter about the Adverse Days and Hours], in E. Vasiliev, ed., *Russkaya Ideya* [The Russian Idea] (Moscow: Ayris Press, 2004), pp. 25-31. The Russian historian A.V. Kartashev expressed it in following way: "The dream of the Third Rome, of the final Orthodoxy on earth, is the first and last love of the Russian soul"; A. Kartashev, "The Spirit of the Old Believers' Schism," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, vol. 2-3 (1974): 144.

^[8] N. Karamzin, *Istoriya Gosudarstva Rossiyskogo* [History of the Russian Empire], (Moscow: Eksmo, 2009), p. 77.

with the Western, European and American leading Baptist trends), we should immediately insert the proviso that the kind of holistic originality, in favor of which, somehow, a considerable number of confessional Evangelical historians in the territory of the former USSR are campaigning today, is, in principle, something unattainable. For the earliest Christianity, strictly speaking, penetrated to other countries from Judea and, consequently, can be considered to some extent unique perhaps only within the limits of the Jewish Christian tradition.^[9]

From this point of view, Russian Orthodoxy is certainly not quite original either, since—however much Orthodox authors try to separate themselves from the Greeks today—nevertheless it passed to Russia from Byzantium, and in the strictly established, stable ritual form at that. In this connection, it is natural that the majority of early Christian clerics in Kievan Rus' were Greeks, the decoration of churches were copied in detail from Byzantine standards, doctrinal points were interpreted according to the Greek Christian tradition, and the huge Russian metropolitanate itself became only one of sixty (rather small) Byzantine metropolitan districts.^[10] The given historical fact by no means belittles the subsequent development of the Russian Church to its independence from Constantinople and the gradual formation of the characteristic national features of Russian Orthodoxy, but merely reminds us of the initial state of affairs.

Against such a historical background, the tendency toward excessively accentuating the theme of the originality of Russian Protestant views (in particular at the early stage of their development) by some secular and confession-oriented authors also looks unconvincing.^[11] From the academic point of view it would be difficult to approve, for example, the intentional underestimation of the role of the most significant German colonies in Little Russia (where Lutheran Pietism,^[12]

^[9] See, for instance, I. Podberezhsky, *Protestanty i Drugie* [The Protestants and Others], (St. Petersburg: Mirt, 2000), p. 325; A. Wardin, "How Indigenous was the Baptist Movement in the Russian Empire?" *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, vol. IX, 2 (2009), p. 30.

^[10] See, for instance, P. Smirnov, *Istoriya Khristianskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi* [The History of the Christian Orthodox Church] (Moscow: Krutitskoe Patriarshee Podvorie, 1998), pp. 139-140; A. Klibanov, ed., *Russkoe Pravoslavie: Vekhi Istarii* [The Russian Orthodoxy: Milestones of the History], (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989), pp. 55-56.

^[11] See, for instance, G. Emel'yanov, "Ratsionalizm na Yuge Rossii" [Rationalism in South Russia], *Otechestvennye Zapiski* [Notes of the Fatherland], nos 3, 5 (1878); I. Yuzov, *Russkie Dissidenty: Starovery i Dukhovnye Khristiane* [Russian Dissidents: the Old Believers and Spiritual Christians], (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya A.M. Kotomina, 1881); A. Bobrishchev-Pushkin, *Sud i Raskol'niki-Sektanty* [The Court and Dissenters-Sectarians], (St. Petersburg: Senatskaya Tipografiya, 1902), etc. See also modern works:

M. Karetnikova, "Russkoe Bogoskatel'stvo" [Russian God-seeking], in M. Karetnikova, ed., *Al'manakh po Istorii Russkogo Baptizma* [Almanac of the History of Russian Baptists] (St. Petersburg: Bibliya Dlya Vsekh, 1999); S. Savinsky, *Istoriya evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov Ukraini, Rossii, Belorussii* [History of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists of the Ukraine, Russia, and Belorussia] (1867–1917) (St. Petersburg: Bibliya dlya Vsekh, 1999); V. Bachinin, *Vizantizm i Evangelizm: Genealogiya Russkogo Protestantizma* [Byzantianism and Evangelism: The Genealogy of Russian Protestantism] (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo S.-Peterburgskogo Universiteta, 2003); S. Sannikov, *Dvaatsat' Vekov Khristianstva* [Twenty Centuries of Christianity], 2 vols. (Odessa: Bogomyslie, 2001), vol. II; etc.

^[12] See, for instance, J. Pritzkau, *Geschichte der Baptisten in Sudrussland* [History of the Baptists in South Russia], (Lage: Logos Verlag, 1999), pp. 18-25; P. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789–1910)* (Fresno, Cal.: General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1978), pp. 205-227.

Mennonite teaching,^[13] Baptists from Germany,^[14] and others, were mixed) in the formation of Ukrainian Stundism and Baptism, in the context of post-reform Russia, which entered the process of rapid European (capitalistic) development in the last third of the nineteenth century. To ignore the considerable influence of the following outstanding persons of non-Slavic origin on the Slavic pioneers of the Evangelical movement in Russia, would be also unjust: Johann Oncken,^[15] Johann Wieler,^[16] Granville Radstock,^[17] Friedrich Baedeker,^[18] Abraham Unger,^[19] John Melville,^[20] Kascha Jagub (Jacob Delyakov),^[21] etc.

Thus, one of the best known Ukrainian Stundist leaders, M. T. Ratushny, recollecting his youth, for example, wrote to *Mennonite Brethren* G. I. Fast in St. Petersburg in 1893:

On Sunday mornings, I prayed using the church calendar, *akafisty* [doxological prayers], blessed candles, burnt incense; I was a lover of worship, not knowing to whom. After my prayer I always visited a tavern where there were drunkards and debauchery, and I liked that too... I had started to ask the Germans (because I knew that the Russian people do not know about God and His law)... how I might be saved... I met an old man, a German who had repented, and he said to me: "Buy a Bible and read it; whoever says [the same as] what is written in the

^[13] See, for instance, Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia*, pp. 230-232; W. Kahle, *Evangelische Christen in Russland und der Sowjetunion* [Evangelical Christians in Russia and the Soviet Union], (Wuppertal und Kassel: Onken Verlag, 1978), pp. 51-64.

^[14] See, for instance, W. Gutsche, *Westliche Quellen des Russischen Stundismus* [Western Sources of Russian Stundism], (Kassel: J. G. Oncken, 1957), pp. 31-42; Kahle, *Evangelische Christen in Russland und der Sowjetunion*, pp. 65-77.

^[15] The "Father of the German Baptists," who visited Russia in the 1860s and later, in Hamburg in 1876, ordained one of the leaders of the Russian Baptists, V.G. Pavlov. See, for instance, H. L. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1987), pp. 492-3.

^[16] A Mennonite Brethren minister and the first president of the Russian Baptist Union from 1884-1886 (although actually he was not head of the Union all that time). See, for instance, L. Klippenstein, "Johann Wieler (1839-1889) Among Russian Evangelicals: A New Source of Mennonites and Evangelicalism in Imperial Russia," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, no. 5 (1987): 44-60.

^[17] An English preacher, associated with the Plymouth Brethren, who gave impetus to the evangelical awakening in St. Petersburg in the 1870s. See, for instance, J. A. Hebly, *Protestants in Russia* (Belfast: Christian Journals Ltd, 1976), pp. 63-66. A. Puzynin states that Lord Radstock actually remained an Anglican throughout his life. See A. Puzynin, *Traditsiya Evangel'skikh Khristian*

[The Tradition of the Gospel Christians], (Moscow: BBI, 2010), pp. 77-80.

^[18] An Evangelical preacher from England. At the end of the nineteenth century, he made two long trips through Russia, from Petersburg to Sakhalin, preaching and distributing the Gospels to prisoners. See, for instance, R. Latimer, *Dr. Baedeker and His Apostolic Work in Russia*, (London: Morgan & Scott, 1908); J. Pollock, *The Faith of the Russian Evangelicals* (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), pp. 71-72.

^[19] A Mennonite Brethren minister, who, in 1869, baptized E. Tsymbal, one of the founders of the evangelical movement in the Ukraine. See, for instance, A. Brubacher, "Abraham Unger," in *Mennonite Encyclopaedia*, 4 vols. (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1959), v. IV, p. 773.

^[20] A Scotsman and British and Foreign Bible Society representative who distributed Bibles in Russia during the years 1837 to 1875. See, for instance, W. Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1961), pp. 284-285; J. Urry, "John Melville and the Mennonites: A British Evangelist in South Russia, 1837 - ca. 1875," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, vol. 54 (1980): 305-322.

^[21] A Nestorian minister from Persia, who began his missionary work in Russia after being influenced by American Presbyterian missionaries in Urmia (Persia). See, for instance, H. Brandenburg, *The Meek and the Mighty. The Emergence of the Evangelical Movement in Russia* (London: Mowbrays, 1976), pp. 61-63.

Bible—welcome those.” At that time I had a hope: I would buy a Bible and would be saved. In 1857 I bought a Bible and began to read it, but I understood nothing of what I read. I applied to the old man who had advised me to buy the Bible, and he instructed me.^[22]

In my opinion, this artless testimony, quite typical for Ukrainian Stundists, like the old *Russian Primary Chronicle*, contains its own peasant version of the “calling of the Varangians,” including the bitter confession that “there is no order” in the Russian land in church matters either (“after my prayer I always visited a tavern,” “the Russian people do not know about God and His law”), and there is the result – the voluntary acceptance of the Protestant, “German faith” at the end of 1850s/beginning of 1860s.^[23] By the way, in Ratushny’s case (as in the case of many others) the famous principle of the Protestant Reformation, *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), turned out to be ineffective, and he soon needed interpretation of the Bible (“I understood nothing of what I read,” “and he instructed me”).^[24] In other words: it is hardly possible to doubt seriously that the Ukrainian Stundists initially accepted “from the Germans” at least some important paradigms of a *Protestant* perception of the Holy Scriptures. Simultaneously it is necessary to emphasize that such was the personal choice of the Little Russian (Ukrainian) sectarians, not in the least imposed on them, since the initiative proceeded, as a rule, from the Slavs themselves.^[25]

Although the expressly nationalistic (*pochvennichesky*) approach of a considerable number of Russian Baptist writers to these historical developments has been too narrow, it is an understandable reaction to the imbalance in the writings of the “Russian Orthodox missionary” school at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These Orthodox writers promoted biased views of Protestantism as absolutely “alien” to Russia, and saw only foreign (“German,” “Anglo-Saxon”) influence as responsible for the formation of Russian Protestantism.^[26]

^[22] V. Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantiskikh Sekt v Rossii i v Osobennosti na Kavkaze* [A Report on the Propaganda of Protestant Sects in Russia and in Particular in the Caucasus], (Tiflis: Tipografiya Kants. Glavnonachal’stvueshchego Grazhd. ch. na Kavkaze, 1900), Supplement 5, pp. 133-134.

^[23] Concerning this, the earliest stage of the evangelical movement in Russia, see Hieromonk Alexis (Dorodnitsyn), *Yuzhno-russky Neobaptizm, Izvestny pod Imenem Shtundy* [South Russian New Baptists, Known as Stundists], (Stavropol: Tipo-litografiya T.M. Timofeeva, 1903), pp. 117-133. (During that period “baptism by faith” was not yet practiced).

^[24] I plan to examine the theme of Scripture and Tradition in the Russian Evangelical-Baptist history in more detail in a separate article.

^[25] Sometimes even well-known writers are surprisingly insensitive to such subtleties (who were the initiators of the events) and, rather simplistically interpret the influence of European Prot-

estantism on the Russians. See, for instance, M. Bourdeaux, *Opium of the People: The Christian Religion in the USSR* (Indianapolis, Ind.: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1966), pp. 151-152; McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, pp. 810-811; E. Hulse, *An Introduction to the Baptists* (Hawards Heath, UK: Carey Publications Ltd., 1973), pp. 72-73; etc.

^[26] See the reviews of the theme and the voluminous collections of primary sources: V. Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantiskikh Sekt v Rossii i v Osobennosti na Kavkaze* (Tiflis, 1900); Bishop Alexis, *Materialy Dlya Istorii Religiozno-Ratsionalisticheskogo Dvizheniya na Yuge Rossii vo Vtoroy Polovine XIX Stoletiya* (Kazan: Tsentral’naya Tipografiya, 1908); O. Beznosova, ed., *Evangel’skoe Dvizhenie v Rossiyskoy Imperii, 1850–1917: Ekaterinoslavskaya Guberniya, Sbornik Dokumentov i Materialov* [The Evangelical Movement in the Russian Empire, 1850–1917: The Ekaterinoslav Province, Collection of Documents and Materials],

At the same time, while recognizing the external, i.e. foreign influence on the origin and formation of the Russian Evangelical movement, it is necessary to note also its deep preconditions in national history, the many internal “counter” sectarian currents that reflected the diverse and age-old spiritual search of ordinary Russian people, without which Russian Protestantism undoubtedly would be groundless. Here are the origins and the solid base of the Russian Evangelical-Baptist distinctive originality (in this context it appears that this word is appropriate), the key to understanding the extraordinarily large-scale participation in the “spiritual awakening” at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. According to historian J. Dyck, “Stundism owed its spreading, first of all, to unknown ordinary participants of the movement.”^[27]

The unwillingness of numerous sectarians to belong to official Orthodoxy in Russia was historically connected, as a rule, not with any insidious anti-Christian purpose, but on the contrary, with a sincere seeking after “God’s truth” on the part of Russian peasants and their zeal in the *muzhitskaya vera* (Russian peasant beliefs). Thus, the Ukrainian Efim Tsymbal, asked the German Abraham Unger, a Mennonite Brethren minister, for baptism “by faith” in 1869, but the latter, under pain of penalty of Russian law, tried to avoid it. Only after the persistent (and possibly legendary) words of Tsymbal that Unger “will answer before God for the refusal to baptize” was the ordinance performed.^[28] This is simultaneously a real and symbolical picture of the tumultuous events of those days. It is significant that Tsymbal did not finally become a member of any German church, but, in spite of pressure from the authorities, founded a number of independent Ukrainian Stundo-Baptist congregations.^[29]

The persecution of these people, seemingly, only aggravated the situation. The position of the State Church, unable to avoid the temptation to wield the punishing temporal sword in matters of faith,^[30] did much to undermine Orthodoxy’s authority. It was a doubtful “symphony” when the State punished citizens for their religious lapses, while the Church anathematized its parishioners for state crimes.^[31] The moral make-up of the persecutors left much to be desired at that.

(Dnepropetrovsk: Samencorn, 2006). For the most detailed thematic bibliography, see A.W. Wardin, Jr. *Evangelical Sectarianism in the Russian Empire and the USSR*. ATLA Bibliography Series, 36 (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 1995).

^[27] J. Dyck, “Sut’ Glavnykh Religioznykh Konfliktov v Rossii vo Vtoroy Polovine XIX Veka: Vzglyad Iznutri” [The Essence of the Main Religious Conflicts in Russia in the Second Half of the 19th C.: An Internal Assessment], in S. Bobyleva, ed., *Nemtsy Ukrainy i Rossii v Konfliktakh i Kompromissakh XIX – XX Stoletiy* [The Germans of the Ukraine and Russia in the Conflicts and Compromises in the 19th-20th Centuries] (Dnepropetrovsk: RVV DNU, 2007), p. 113.

^[28] See, for instance: Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867–1917)*, pp. 111-112.

^[29] See: *Istoriya Evangel’skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR* [History of the Evangelicals Christians – Baptists in the USSR] (M.: AUCECB, 1989), pp. 63, 552.

^[30] For example, according to St. Joseph of Volotsk’s teaching, since criminals are executed for the murder of the body, it is all the more necessary to execute heretics, who are “kill the soul”, the authorities of the medieval Russia burnt the Judaizers at the stakes and later severely persecuted Old Believers and sectarians. See: D. Pospelovsky, *Totalitarizm i Veroispovedanie* [Totalitarianism and Confession] (M.: BBI, 2003), pp. 377, 646-7.

^[31] *Ibid.*, p. 634.

According to church historian E. E. Golubinsky, the theme of morality and spiritual education in Orthodoxy was, for many centuries, “the subject not so much of laudatory odes as of mournful elegies.”^[32] The many shortcomings in the life of parish churches in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, with the painfully low moral standards and educational level of the local, particularly, rural priests (illuminated by the many “anticlerical” Russian popular proverbs and sayings on this theme),^[33] with their excessive drunkenness, self-interest, and hours-long church services that were hard to understand for the majority of parishioners, being in the Church Slavonic language,^[34] etc., to a certain degree deepened the general Russian spiritual crisis. Its most terrible consequences were the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the fratricidal Civil War. In fact, many Orthodox writers and clerics themselves wrote and reflected about this.^[35]

Russian sectarians, in their own way, – unfortunately, rarely with restraint and correctly, but surely fearlessly – in pointing out the destructive tendencies in State Orthodoxy, it seems, have made a modest contribution to the process of the subsequent renewal of the Russian Church. Beginning with the mass movement of the Strigolniki (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries), which, in the freedom-loving Pskov and Novgorod lands (not overrun by the Tatars), once rejected their negligent shepherds who were appointed *na mzde* (for a bribe) and failed to give an example of Christian conduct^[36] long before the Reformation in Europe, a native “Protestant spirit” arose in Russia.^[37] Of course, the Strigolniki, strictly speaking, could be charged with being “self-righteous,” “schismatics,” “stubborn and hardhearted,” “imprudent,” etc.^[38] However, inherently it was a purifying move-

^[32] Golubinsky, *Istoriya Russkoy Tserkvi*, v. I, part 2, p. 830.

^[33] See, for instance: Z. Zosimovsky, *Est' li u Russkikh Religiya?* [Do the Russians Have a Religion?] (SPb.: “Stroitel”, 1911), pp. 9-22. The well-known writer P.I. Melnikov (Pechersky) complained: “In popular proverbs and sayings... if only there the clergy are mentioned, it is with derision... Is it possible for people to respect priests who spend their time in the gin mills, write defamatory petitions, fight with the cross in their hands, and abuse each other in bad language at the altar?... (one might fill several pages with examples of this kind)”. – P. Melnikov, “Zapiska o Russkom Raskole” [A Report on the Russian Schism], in V. Kelsiev, ed., *Sbornik Pravitel'stvennykh Svedeny o Raskol'nikakh* [Collection of Government Data on Schismatics], Part 1 (London: Trubner & Co., Paternoster Row, 1860), pp. 188-189.

^[34] For example, N.S. Leskov said: “Our ladies do not understand at all many church prayers and canons... Even the men... who studied the Church Slavonic language and maybe even wrote about its special beauty, do not understand them”. – N. Leskov, *Velikosvetsky Raskol* [Schism in *High Society*] [1876-1877], in N. Leskov, *Zerkalo Zhizni*

[The Mirror of Life] (SPb.: Biblia dlya Vsekh, 1999), p. 57.

^[35] See, for instance, Pospelovsky, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya Tserkov' v 20 veke*, pp. 17-18. V.F. Martsinkovsky cites the distressing words of an Orthodox bishop, told in 1917: “We actually do not have any Church; there is only a crowd, where people are much pushing one another during the great feasts. There is less pushing during the smaller feasts, and there is nobody on weekdays”. – V. Martsinkovsky, “Kreshchenie Vzroslykh i Pravoslavie” [Adult Baptism and Orthodoxy] [1920], in V. Martsinkovsky, *Smysl Zhizni: Sbornik Statey* [Meaning of Life: Collected Articles] (Novosibirsk: Posokh, 1996), p. 244.

^[36] See, for instance, B. Rybakov, *Strigol'niki* [The Strigolniks] (M.: Nauka, 1993), pp. 14-15.

^[37] To include the Strigolniki movement in the annals of the Russian “antiquities of the Baptists” is already the generally accepted practice in the ECB brotherhood.

^[38] See, for instance, Makary (Bulgakov), *Istoriya Russkoy Tserkvi* [History of the Russian Church], (Moscow.: Izd-vo Spaso-Preobrazhenskogo Valaamskogo Monastyrya, 1995), v. III, pp. 93-100.

ment, which providentially played a considerable role in the difficult process of the revival of living Russian Christianity, which, in the broad sense of the word, includes the best representatives of both Russian Orthodoxy and those very same “sectarians” (because blaming others, the latter strove themselves to live worthily, “in accordance with the Scriptures”). At the same time, the “State Christians,” who in response to the inconsistent (but nonviolent) actions of the Strigolniki subjected them as “heretics” to severe executions, actually remained outside the realm of gospel teaching.^[39]

Even the Old Believers’ schism gravitated to “ancient and true” Orthodoxy; among a number of the persuasions of *bespopovtsy* (“priestless” groups) there were also some characteristic “Protestant” features. For example, the principle of “teaching equality” meant that community decisions were made not only by spiritual leaders, but also by rank-and-file members; the right of free interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; teaching about the “impoverishment of grace and sacraments” in the last days (“since Patriarch Nikon, there is no true Eucharist”); the advocacy of the superiority of faith over the ceremonial side of Christian life; the simplicity of worship and the preference given to individual prayer; the moderate iconoclastic views of some of the *Bezpopovtsy*; their rejection of monasticism (in its traditional form), etc.^[40]

Such beliefs, stressing the idea that “the Church of God is not walls and a roof, but faith and life,” were enthusiastically welcomed by common people and bridged the gap between the Old Believers’ priestless movement and “classical” Russian sectarianism (Doukhobors, Molokans, etc.).^[41] “The Russian Evangelical Christians-Baptists... are rooted in the [Orthodox] schism,” writes M. S. Karetnikova, the prominent historian of the ECB brotherhood, “The Doukhobors themselves^[42] relate their origin exactly to the schism.”^[43] One encounters this, not indisputable, thought about a certain continuity between the Doukhobors and the Old Believers, in one form or another, in many works by Russian evangelical authors.^[44]

Similar ideas, stressing the remote times of the beginnings of the main currents of Russian sectarianism, as well as their close connection with some Old Believers’ priestless trends, were developed by a number of researchers as far back as the pre-revolutionary period. For example, O. Novitsky noted that the Doukho-

^[39] The Strigolniki movement was actually defeated not so much by a good Christian example or an exhortation, as by the “executions and imprisonments.” See: *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 98-99.

^[40] See, for instance, S. Zenkovsky, *Russkoe Starobryadchestvo* [The Russian Old Believers], (Minsk: Belorussky Ekzarkhat, 2007), pp. 464-468, 492-493, 501-505.

^[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 359, 492-493.

^[42] There is already a clearly discernible succession from the Doukhobors through the Molokans to the modern Baptists of Russia.

^[43] Karetnikova, *Russkoe Bogoiskatel'stvo*, pp. 45-46.

^[44] See, for instance M. Ivanov and A. Sinichkin, eds., *Evangel'skie Khristiane-Baptisty: 140 Let v Rossii* [The Evangelical Christians-Baptists: 140 Years in Russia], (Moscow: RS ECB, 2007), p. 6; Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867-1917)*, p. 44; V. Trubchik, *Vera i Traditsiya* [Faith and Tradition], (Kobrin: Soyuz ECB v Resp. Belarus, 2007), p. 271; V. Franchuk, *Prosila Rossiya Dozhdyu u Gospoda* [Russia has asked the Lord for Rain], [Windows CD-ROM] *Istoriya evangel'skogo dvizheniya v Evrazii* [History of the Evangelical Movement in Eurasia] 2.0 (Odessa, Ukraine: EAAA, 2002).

bors were for the first time officially mentioned (under this name) in a government decree of 1799, where it says that they “corrupt minds and hearts in Russia *izdavna*” (from time immemorial); hence, the origin of this movement should be moved to much earlier times.^[45] The brilliant representative of the liberal-populist trend in Russian social and political life in the second half of the nineteenth century, I. Yuzov, to some extent categorized the sects of the “Spiritual Christians” with one of the branches of Russian schism and, in particular, wrote:

“Spiritual Christians” are divided into the Doukhobors, the Molokans, the “general,” and the evangelicals (Stundists). The extreme Old Believer priestless trends, the Wanderers and especially the Nemolyaks, are closely connected with the “Spiritual Christians” and are even called by their name.^[46]

We find such thoughts also among some other well-known researchers on the history of the Old Belief and sectarianism, for example, in A. S. Prugavin’s works:

It is possible to indicate quite a number of common principles and common viewpoints that are believed equally by both a Filippovets^[47] and a Stundist,^[48] both a Molokan^[49] and a Nemolyak^[50]...

It is said that the sects, or the “heresies,” that arose under the influence of the German Protestant colonies allegedly have nothing to do with our Russian schism... It is said that our so-called Old Belief allegedly has nothing to do with the rationalistic sects... However it is possible to list a whole variety of the sects that arose directly on the ground of the Old Believers’ priestless movement, and at the same time are saturated with rationalism not one bit less than Molokan beliefs or Stundism. Such are the sects of the Nemolyaks, the Vozdykhantsy, and some others. All of these sects... in their main principles could not be closer to the teachings of the rationalistic sects like the Stunda.^[51]

The influential Orthodox historian, A. V. Kartashev, saw one more characteristic feature on this subject, once again bringing the Doukhobors into line with the Old Believers and placing them in the same historical and national context:

The Orthodox Russian soul thirsts not merely for salvation... but also for the ordering, even here on earth, of all life “in God’s way”... The Old Believers and the

^[45] O. Novitsky, *Dukhobortsy: Ikh Istoriya i Verouchenie* [The Doukhobors: Their History and Beliefs], (Kiev: Universitetskaya Tipografiya, 1882), pp. 2-3.

^[46] I. Yuzov, *Russkie Dissidenty: Starovery i Dukhovnye Khristiane* [The Russian Dissidents: The Old Believers and the Spiritual Christians], (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya A.M. Kotomina, 1881), pp. 6-7.

^[47] The Filippovtsy are representatives of one of the Old Believers’ groups (a priestless movement).

^[48] The Stundists are “proto-Protestants,” the forerunners of Baptists in Russia.

^[49] The Molokans are representatives of one of the Russian sectarian trends; many Molokans

became the first Russian Baptists.

^[50] The Nemolyaks are representatives of one of the Old Believers’ trends (a priestless movement).

^[51] A. Prugavin, *Raskol i Sektantstvo v Russkoy Narodnoy Zhizni* [Schism and Sectarianism in Russian National Life], (Moscow: T-vo I.D. Sytina, 1905), pp. 77-80. See also T. Mamsik, “Sibirskie Raskol’niki-Nemolyaki: Radikal’ny Protestantizm na Vostoke Rossii” [Siberian Dissenters, the Nemolyaks: The Radical Protestantism in the East of Russia], in L. Dmitrieva, *et al.*, eds., *Protestantizm v Sibiri: Istoriya i Sovremennost’* [Protestantism in Siberia: The History and the Present], (Omsk: TOO “Poligraf”, 1998), pp. 76-81.

Dukhobors, having demonstrated both in their fatherland and in emigration the union of faith and a prosperous and productive way of life, manifest precisely these potentials and the practical metaphysics, so to speak, of Russian Orthodoxy.^[52]

Analyzing the given approach to Russian sectarianism, from our point of view, there are some grounds to agree not so much with the literal succession of the Russian Evangelical-Baptist communities from the Old Believers' priestless groups (through the Doukhobors, the Molokans and/or the Stundists) – that, by all appearances, could not be proved^[53] – but with the undoubted presence of a common national, in its own way “Protestant spirit,” or the freedom-loving religious atmosphere of a considerable part of Russian society, morally opposed to any violence from State Orthodoxy (but not alien to “true Orthodoxy” in its essence). It is precisely this protest and inherent freedom that gave rise to a whole range of Old Believer and sectarian currents in Russia, quite often surprisingly consonant with each other in their teachings and traditions.

Among the preconditions for the appearance of national “Protestant” religious movements, it is necessary to note also the quite widespread “ordinary priestless life” in Russian Orthodoxy. The severe climate, the long distances between settlements, the bad condition of roads, and so forth, inevitably led to “non-canonical worship” conducted by non-ordained churchmen or even simple laymen, and any bans against them were not effective for many centuries.^[54] There was a permanent lack of priests in the provinces; they were not in a hurry to settle in remote places.^[55] That is why traditionally the millions of believing Russian people were not afraid of their Christian life without priests and the “simplified” divine services. In such soil, both the Old Believers and sectarian anticlerical views had certainly more easily taken root.

A.P. Shchapov, in his work *Zemstvo i raskol* [*Zemstvo and the schism*] (1862), was probably one of the first scholars who found in the Russian Old Belief, along with its fanatical and superstitious (“dark”) sides, a certain creative and constructive national principle and just those characteristic features which then

[52] A. Kartashev, “Spirit of the Old Believers’ Schism,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, nos. 2-3 (1974), pp. 144-145.

[53] However there are many reports from the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries about conversions of Old Believers professing priestless worship into communities of the “Spiritual Christians” and Baptists. See, for example, “O Perekhode iz Staroobryadchestva v Sektantstvo (1910–1914)” [On the Conversion of Old Believers to Sectarianism (1910-1914)]. – Russian State Historical Archive, F. 821, Op. 133, d. 87, ll. 1-10; G. Mazaev, *Vospominaniya: Zapiski iz Lichnogo Dnevnik* [Memories: Notes from a Personal Diary] (manuscript), 1974. pp. 75-76 (Archive of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists); Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantskikh Sekt v Rossii*, Sup-

plement 3, p. 25; *Missionerskoe Obozrenie* [Missionary Review], no. 5 (1899), p. 619; *Omskie Eparkhial’nye Vedomosti* [Omsk Diocesan Bulletin], no. 13 (1917), p. 22; *Pervy Svobodny S’ezd Sibirskogo Otdela Soyuza Russkikh Baptistov v Omske* [The First Free Congress of the Siberian Section of the Russian Baptist Union in Omsk], Omsk: Tip. “Zemlya i Volya,” 1918, pp. 24-25; etc.

[54] See: Zenkovsky, *Russkoe Staroobryadchestvo*, p. 525.

[55] See, for instance, the works by S.I. Gusev-Orenburgsky, realistically describing Christian life in pre-revolutionary Russian rural districts: S. Gusev-Orenburgsky, *Glukhoy Prikhod, i Drugie Rasskazy* [A Remote Parish and Other Stories] (N.Y.: Izd-vo im. Chekhova, 1952).

had been especially developed by both the late Russian sectarianism and the Russian Evangelicalism that arose from its depths. These positive features included the so-called *narodnoe uchitel'stvo* ("popular education"), carried out by many wandering preachers; the gradual spread of religious literacy among the common people; the ubiquitous interpretation of sacred books, which, for all of the "simplicity" of its approach, nonetheless strengthened society's moral principles; and the respect for personal liberty, including the rights of women. All this was to be found at a time when Russia still had legal serf slavery, with peasants reduced to the level of dumb brutes, and the landowners dividing peasant families on a whim, etc.^[56]

The pre-revolutionary researcher of schism and religious sectarianism, V.I. Yasevich-Borodaevskaya, cited the words of an Orthodox priest:

What kind of miracle-workers are these sectarian preachers? What are they? And what is the source of their unusual preaching power?.. Some sort of a tailor or a shoemaker goes from door to door with the customary bag on his shoulder and the New Testament in his pocket... He is able to direct any talk to a religious theme, he talks with reluctance on other subjects, but as soon as he finds a matter concerned with religion, here he is always inexhaustible. He is ready to talk with you day and night, forgetting about sleep and food. He is all afire with the desire to preach, and he himself is inspired by what he is preaching. His sincerity and goodwill to you are unquestionable. You feel this and involuntarily come under his influence, the more so because firm knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and deep religious inspiration turn his words into smooth and orderly speech, full of substance. And the most important thing is that the words of the preacher are entirely in character with his actions.^[57]

In spite of a certain idealization of the image of a wandering sectarian preacher, which sounds odd coming from a priest,^[58] here very well stated are the "subtle" feelings so difficult to express, which for centuries inspired the innumerable God-seekers among the simple people (who were not satisfied with the official church life only) to join Russian sectarian communities. This is confirmed, for example, by the existing biographical data on such well-known people of the Stundo-Baptist movement, as E. Tsymbal, F. Onishchenko, M. Ratushny, G. Balaban, I. Ryaboshapka, and others.^[59]

In the Russian Empire in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, the close interweaving of the "internal" (national) and "external" (foreign) factors that formed the broad Evangelical-Baptist movement, involving some hundreds

^[56] See: A. Shchapov, *Sochineniya* [Works], 3 vols. (St. Petersburg: Izdanie M.V. Pirozhkova, 1906), v. 1, pp. 451-579.

^[57] V. Yasevich-Borodaevskaya, *Bor'ba za Veru: Istoriko-Bytovye Ocherki i Obzor Zakonodatel'stva po Starobryadchestvu i Sektantstvu* [Struggle for the Faith: Historical and Every-Day Essays and a Legislative Review of Old Belief and Sectarianism], (St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaya Ti-

pografiya, 1912), p. 348.

^[58] Yasevich-Borodaevskaya refers to an Orthodox source which is now inaccessible, unfortunately.

^[59] See, for instance, L. Kovalenko, *Oblako Svideteley Khristovykh* [Cloud of Witnesses for Christ], (Kiev: Tsentri Khristianskogo Sotrudnichestva, 1997), pp. 57-61, 65-68; Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867-1917)*, pp. 95-104; etc.

of thousands of people,^[60] would be well illustrated, from our point of view, by the following original reasoning from the very first issue of the periodical *Baptist* (1907):

Many of our brothers are confused by this non-Russian name... Our present name – “the Baptists” – as well as the name of the first disciples of the Lord – “the Christians” are equally non-Russian, and even more so – equally Greek... What do we, the Russians, have to do with, or in general may have to do with those people who once, somewhere abroad, accepted this name?.. If we nowadays, as our Russian Prince Vladimir once did, sent our observers to seek the “true faith” we are sure that our observers would decide in favor of neither the Catholics, nor the Lutherans, nor any other evangelical community, but they would decide in favor of the Baptists alone, and only because Baptists, as well as the Apostles, have the same single Lord, the same single faith and the same single baptism – which you will not find anywhere, in any other Christian community...^[61]

Behind the amazing artlessness and categorical tone so typical of Russian people in any century,^[62] we find here a very important thought, which, from our point of view, should not be disregarded by researchers: just as in the old days, at the time of Vladimir the Great, a part of the Slavs as represented by the princes and boyars, according to the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, had *voluntarily* chosen Greek Christianity (then the majority of the people had joined them, in a “compulsory-but-made-to-appear-voluntary” way, however), so a part of the Russian pre-revolutionary society (both the poor and the rich) by *their own free accord* favored the “Baptist faith.” Once more, as the Greeks in the tenth century did not impose their belief on the Russians, so too, the Germans in the nineteenth century did not impose their doctrines on the Russians. Looking at the whole picture of the Baptism of Rus’, one may conclude that it was the Slavs themselves who forced the Slavs (one need only mention Vladimir’s famous “sermon” with the appeal to the residents of Kiev to be baptized: “if any inhabitant, rich or poor, does not betake himself to the river, he will risk the Prince’s displeasure”^[63]). Just so, but not in the least by force, it was mainly Russians and Ukrainians who dis-

^[60] See, for instance, S. Savinsky, *Istoriya evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov Ukraini, Rossii, Belorussii* [History of the Evangelical Christians–Baptists of the Ukraine, Russia, and Belorussia] (1917-1967), (St. Petersburg: Biblia dlya Vsekh, 2001), p. 12.

^[61] [Anonymous], “Nazvanie ‘Baptisty’” [The Name ‘the Baptists’], *Baptist*, no. 1 (June 1907), pp. 2-3. It is highly probable that D. I. Mazaev, the editor and the publisher of this periodical as well as the chairman of the Union of Russian Baptists (who simultaneously was a distinguished sheep-breeder and belonged to one of the most successful and wealthy families in the South of Russia), was the author of this article.

^[62] The Evangelical Christians (followers of I.S. Prokhanov), whose doctrines were very close

to the Russian Baptists, sometimes defended the name of their communities even more passionately: “The Baptist movement in Russia is in the same relation to the movement of the Evangelical Christians as John the Baptist is related to Christ... The Baptists must decrease, but the movement of the Evangelical Christians must increase (Jn. 3:30).” – *Pis'ma k Brat'yam Evangel'skim Khristianam – Baptistam* [Letters to the Brothers, the Evangelical Christians – Baptists] (Tiflis: ‘Trud’ F. E. Machkovskoy, 1916), p. 36. See also Val'kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantiskikh Sekt v Rossii*, Supplement 3, pp. 41-42.

^[63] *Pamyatniki Literatury Drevney Rusi, XI – Nachalo XII Veka*, p. 133.

seminated Evangelical-Baptist views in the Russian Empire.^[64] (L. E. Kovalenko in his collection of 52 biographies of the best known and most influential pioneers of the Evangelical-Baptist brotherhood in Russia, among other things, gives attention to their national identity: Russians – 23 people; Ukrainians – 12; Germans – 7; Byelorussians – 3; Jews – 2; Latvians – 1; Moldavians – 1; Armenians – 1; English – 1; Persians – 1).^[65]

Without disputing the great historical significance of the Baptism of Rus' – for this event was the beginning of overcoming a truly terrible paganism (which sometimes allowed human sacrifices^[66]) – nevertheless let us observe that the Christian sacrament administered to the residents of Kiev, who were not previously properly enlightened by the preaching of the gospel, first of all, marked the dawn of State Orthodoxy spread by the prince's masterful hand. In contrast, Russian Protestantism was not only never supported by the State, but exactly the reverse: it received the full brunt of its punitive justice. Any artificial "planting from without," if the Russian soil had not been well prepared, would not take root and endure severe persecutions.^[67] It is interesting to note also that while the decisive factor for the choice of Prince Vladimir's representatives, according to the Chronicle, was the aesthetic value ("beauty") of the Byzantine divine service, the Russian sectarians emphasized the conformity of the Western Baptists' beliefs with the gospel ("the true doctrine"), or to be more modest, with their (the Russian sectarians') own understanding of the Holy Scriptures: "the same Lord, the same faith, and the same baptism."

Thus, the success of the Russian Evangelicals' missionary work, as well as the specificity of the ECB brotherhood that eventually formed, was not due to some kind of amazingly effective "contextualization" practiced by Western Evangelical preachers in Russia (as if they successfully fit the Slavic mentality), since the gradually established *Russian Baptist phenomenon* actually would never even occur to them in a "bad dream," but because in most cases the Russian Christians themselves wished to adopt something that was, from their point of view, useful from the experience of the Western Baptists and Mennonites (for example, the

^[64] Many Germans, even though living in the Russian Empire, knew the Russian language poorly and, in addition, they were for the most part more law-abiding citizens in comparison with the Russians. The Russian Empire's laws provided strict punishments for the "seduction" of Orthodox people into other beliefs; the Mennonites, for example, might lose some of their historical privileges in Russia, etc. See *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, pp. 62-66; Reshetnikov, Sannikov, *Obzor Istorii Evangel'sko-Baptistskogo Btatstva na Ukraine*, pp. 71-74. Concerning the very problematic character of the foreign missionaries' work in Russia at that time, see, for example: *World Christianity: Eastern Europe*, ed. by Ph. Walters (Monrovia, Ca.: Missions Advanced Research & Communi-

cation Center, 1988), pp. 66-67; Wardin, *How Indigenous was the Baptist Movement in the Russian Empire*, 29-37; etc.

^[65] Kovalenko, *Oblako Svideteley Khristovyykh*, p. 35.

^[66] See, for instance S. Soloviev, *Sochineniya [Works]*, 18 vols., part I: *Istoriya Rossii s Drevneyshikh Vremen [The History of Russia since Earliest Times]*, vv. 1-2, (Moscow: Mysl', 1988), p. 170.

^[67] See, for instance, M. Kalnev, "Pochemu Pravoslavnye Otpadayut v Sektantstvo?" [Why do Orthodox People Go Over to Sectarianism?], *Missionerskoe Obozrenie*, nos. 7-8 (1906): 62-73; V. Bonch-Bruevich, *Presledovanie Baptistov [The Persecution of Baptists]* (Izdanie "Svobodnogo Slova", 1902).

successful and practical organizational structure of their communities^[68] and even formally – the written doctrinal statements of the German Baptists,^[69] for the Russian sectarians were always lacking in members well-educated in the area of theology). Of course, such adoptions should not be ignored or considered a matter of little importance, but for truth's sake the other side of the coin must not be forgotten: the Russian Evangelicals very quickly filled the above-mentioned foreign *form* with their own “very Russian” *content*, i.e. with views that often were quite distant from the European or American Baptist mainstream. Figuratively speaking, they filled a dry and rationalistic “German vessel” with their own “elixir of life,” i.e. the age-old semi-Orthodox, semi-Molokan enigmatic opinions, strange (from the point of view of the Western Baptists) theological predilections,^[70] and endless distinctive traditions. This, by the way, explains the sincere misunderstanding and strong disagreement of many Russian Evangelicals with those critics, who, looking only at external things, called their views “the German faith.” From that point of view, Emperor Peter the Great could not be called quite Russian either (because of his “European” reforms), and Tsar Alexis (Mikhaylovich) could be charged in the same way, and many of the famous people in Russian history could be depicted as foreigners in their own country.

One of the early Russian Baptist leaders, P. V. Pavlov, who, as the majority of the leaders of the Russian Evangelical movement came from the Molokans (and openly called himself “a seventh generation sectarian”^[71]), in his report to the Baptist World Congress in Stockholm in 1923, in particular, said:

The Baptist movement in Russia came from the depths of Russian sectarianism, whose roots are in the distant past of Russian history... The Molokans, who were the ground from whence the Russian Baptists appeared, accepted from foreign Baptists their organizational forms, which give strength and stability that were not sufficiently present among the former Molokans.^[72]

To better realize the justice of these words, let us at least briefly mention some essential differences between the Russian Molokans (in a certain measure passed

^[68] See, for instance, J. Dyck, “Fresh Skins for New Wine”, *Theological Reflections*, vol. 6 (2006): 104-106; G. Ellis, L. Jones, *Russian Evangelical Awakenings* (Abilene, Tex.: ACU Press, 1996), pp. 72-73.

^[69] See *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, pp. 438-439; S. Sannikov, ed., *Istoriya Baptizma* [History of the Baptists] (Odessa: OBS, 1996), p. 421.

^[70] For example, although they translated the German Baptist Confession of Faith into Russian and distributed it among their communities, the Russian Baptists at the same time disagreed with some statements of the same creed (first of all, those having Calvinistic orientation), which was apparently caused by their Orthodox and Molokan roots. See, for instance, A. Sinichkin,

“Osobennosti Voznikoveniya i Formirovaniya Rossiyskogo Baptizma” [The Peculiarities of the Origin and Forming of the Russian Baptist Movement], in E. Mel'nikova and M. Odintsov, eds., *Svoboda Sovesti v Rossii: Istorichesky i Sovremenny Aspekty* [Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Historical and Modern Aspects], (Moscow: Rossiyskoe Ob'edinenie Issledovateley Religii, 2007), pp. 11-12; A. Klibanov, *Istoriya Religioznogo Sektantstva v Rossii* [History of Religious Sectarianism in Russia (1860s – 1917)] (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), p. 182.

^[71] *Baptist*, no. 3 (1925): 6.

^[72] *Ibid.* Such self-identification was typical for former Molokans who, as a rule, did not associate themselves with the “Germans” or “German faith.”

along to the Russian ECB brotherhood^[73]) and the main trends among the European Baptists: firm pacifism; the belief in uninjured free will; prayers for the dead (referring to the apocryphal books: 2 Maccabees 12:42 and Baruch 3:4, which reminds us of the historical connection between the Molokans and the Orthodox)^[74]; a respectful attitude to the Apocrypha as a whole^[75]; strictness (“semi-monastic”) in matters of dress; absolute prohibition of alcohol and tobacco use^[76]; unconditional obedience to the elders; strict fasts (“[they] tasted neither bread nor water”)^[77]; the conviction that their movement is rooted in antiquity,^[78] etc. At the same time, the majority of the Molokans interpreted the main church ordinances – baptism and communion – in a “spiritual” way (not literally), which the Russian Baptists rejected from the beginning.^[79]

Among the causes of the rapid spread of evangelical views throughout the Russian Empire in last third of the nineteenth century, the sharpest contemporary Orthodox authors marked out not so much “the German factor” as the following objectively important political events, as well as the particular features of Russian sectarian communities: the resolute reformation of Russian society by Tsar Alexander II, starting with the abolition of serfdom in 1861, caused the inevitable growth of free self-consciousness among the peasants and their increased demands of the priests;^[80] the gradual spread of literacy and mass publication of the Holy Scriptures in understandable Russian; the material mutual aid of sectarians and their desire to free themselves from the excessive burden of “paid services” in the Orthodox church (frequently impossible for the poor); the pos-

^[73] For example, the academician L. N. Mitrokhin remarks that “the Baptists of the Mazaev pattern in many respects maintained the succession from the Molokan ‘eldership.’”; see L. Mitrokhin, *Baptizm: Istoriya i Sovremennost’* [The Baptists: The History and the Present], (St. Petersburg: Russky Khristiansky Gumanitarny Institut, 1997), p. 378.

^[74] “*Iz Veroucheniya Molokan Tambovskogo 1-go i 2-go Sobraniya i Vladimirskego (1896)*” [From the Creed of the Molokans of the 1st and 2nd Tambov’s Gatherings and of Vladimir’s (1896)], in S. Golovashchenko, ed., *Istoriya Evangel’sko-Baptistskogo Dvizheniya v Ukraine: Materialy i Dokumenty* [History of the Evangelical-Baptist Movement in the Ukraine: Materials and Documents] (Odessa: Bogomyslie, 1998), pp. 230-231. There is also some information about the closeness of the Don Molokans to Orthodoxy (recognition of sacraments, etc.). See *Istoriya Evangel’skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, p. 32; Mitrokhin, *Baptizm: Istoriya i Sovremennost’*, pp. 202-203.

^[75] For example, in the early issues of the periodical *Baptist*, the following books were repeatedly mentioned in the most positive context: Judith, Tobit, The Wisdom of Jesus (Son of Sirach), the books of Maccabees, and others. See *Baptist*,

no. 27 (1910): 4; nos. 21-24 (1914): 20, etc.

^[76] See, for instance Sinichkin, *Osobennosti Vozniknoveniya i Formirovaniya Rossiyskogo Baptizma*, pp. 9-12.

^[77] See, for instance, a homily on the good of fasting in the spirit of the Molokan tradition among the early Russian Baptists: V. Ivanov, “O Postakh” [On Fasts], *Baptist*, no. 14 (1910): 5-6.

^[78] It is interesting that some Molokan authoritative sources were also inclined to see the origins of their communities in the medieval movement of the Strigolniki. See, for instance, *Otchet o Vserossiyskom S’ezde Dukhovnykh Khristian (Molokan) po Povodu Stoletnego Yubileya, 1805-1905* [Report of the All-Russian Congress of the Spiritual Christians (Molokans) on the Occasion of the One-hundredth Anniversary, 1805-1905], (Tiflis: Izd. A. Loskutov at al., 1907), p. 33.

^[79] See, for instance, Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867 – 1917)*, pp. 49, 67-68.

^[80] For instance, N. S. Leskov wrote in 1871: “In former times our people, being serfs, suffered in their constant poverty and sorrows, and so resorted to the Lord; but... if you wish to see what happens now, a peasant goes to church only when he wants to”; N. Leskov, *Sobranie Sochineniy* [Collected Works], 12 vols. (Moscow: Pravda, 1989), v. V, p. 84.

itive and sober way of sectarian life; the “ease” of salvation by faith alone in Protestantism as a whole (in comparison with the highly demanding way of salvation in Orthodoxy), etc.^[81]

Simultaneously Orthodox observers usually noted that peasants “fell away into sectarianism” above all in those areas where local priests did not display even the slightest love for their flock, took no care of it, and thought mainly about their own (“worldly”) problems and substantially worried about the ceremonial part of religious life.^[82] In August 1886, *Ekaterinoslavskie Eparkhial'nye Vedomosti* [Ekaterinoslav Eparchial Bulletin], for example, fairly pointed out the tendentiousness of correlating the peasants' secession from Orthodoxy with material assistance “on the part of Germans” stating:

“But the German Baptists do not shower the peasants of Sofievka with gold! Don't the Orthodox people act the same? ...Let us wish that any small help and small deed would be done with loving care...”^[83]

At exactly this point we may see the root of the problem and a certain moral justification for those who had “fallen away” from Orthodoxy, simple Russian people who, as a rule, did not receive any Christian love in pre-revolutionary Russian Orthodoxy but experienced all kinds of threats, beatings, imprisonments and exile (which, one would think, should not exist in the Church at all).^[84]

A certain part of the traditional criticism on the part of Orthodox authors concerning the intensely religious Stundo-Baptist movement in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, from our point of view, reveals their own inadequate *Orthodoxy* and actually borders on materialism. Asserting that the material factor – money or other “tangible” help from the sectarians – was the crucial point for the poor Russian-Ukrainian population who joined the Baptists, such authors vulgarly oversimplify the problem.^[85] That is exactly how some Marxist historians at one time explained the basis of the Reformation in Europe: chiefly that the

^[81] See, for instance, A. Rozhdestvensky, *Yuzh-norusskiy Shtundizm* [South-Russian Stundism] (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya Departamenta Udelov, 1889), pp. 19-21; Bishop Alexis, *Materialy Dlya Istorii*, pp. 228-229, 430-431; A. Ushinsky, *O Prichinakh Poyavleniya Ratsionalisticheskikh Ucheniy Shtundy i Nekotorykh Drugikh Podobnykh Sekt v Sel'skom Pravoslavnom Naselenii* [On the Causes of the Appearance of the Rationalistic Teachings of the Stunda and Some Other Similar Sects in the Rural Orthodox Population] (Kiev, 1884), pp. 42-62.

^[82] For a large collection of the characteristic documents and testimonies of that epoch see, O. Beznosova, ed., *Evangel'skoe Dvizhenie v Rossiyskoy Imperii, 1850–1917: Ekaterinoslavskaya Guberniya, Sbornik Dokumentov i Materialov* [The Evangelical Movement in the Russian Empire, 1850–1917: The Ekaterinoslav Province, Collection of Documents and Materials] (Dnepropetrovsk: Samencorn, 2006).

^[83] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

^[84] To sense the severity of that time it is sufficient to read the well-known Russian writer S. M. Stepnyak-Kravchinsky's book *Stundist Pavel Rudenko* (1894). See also V. Bonch-Bruевич, ed., *Materialy k Istorii i Izucheniyu Russkogo Sektantstva i Raskola* [Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism and Old Believers], Part 1 (SPb.: Tip. B.M. Vol'fa, 1908); and V. Pavlov, “Vospominaniya Ssyl'nogo” [Memoirs of an Exile] [1899], *Al'manakh po Istorii Russkogo Baptizma*, vol. I (1999), pp. 194-219, etc.

^[85] See the survey of the theme, for instance, in *Evangel'skoe Dvizhenie v Rossiyskoy Imperii, 1850–1917: Ekaterinoslavskaya Guberniya*, pp. 104-105, 207-208, 217-218, 262; G. Emel'yanov, “Ratsionalizm na Yuge Rossii” [The Rationalism in South Russia], *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, no. 5 (1878), pp. 206-207; Bishop Alexis, *Materialy Dlya Istorii*, pp. 282, 293.

closefisted Germans did not want to share their income with the Pope.^[86] Without denying the impact of material incentives on human behavior, nevertheless it is necessary to emphasize the following: the historical record suggests that matters of faith do not keep within the narrow bounds of economic determinism (“man shall not live by bread alone”). The founders and martyrs of all the world’s great religions were first of all idealists.

Concerning negative examples on the subject, from my point of view they fail to prove anything integrally. The well-known writer N. S. Leskov in one of his documentary stories tells of a successful Orthodox missionary who in a remarkably short time baptized a great number of non-Russians in Siberia, but the secret of his success was the free vodka that he distributed among the baptismal candidates.^[87] There is information about official offers addressed to some pagan communities in the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century of exemption from taxes for three years, if they will convert to the Orthodox faith, etc.^[88] At the same time, it would be unfair to assert that the missionary work of the Russian Orthodox Church was wholly based on such principles. The same holds true regarding possible material assistance from the Stundists and Baptists to some of the newly converted poor: serious opponents should admit that that was not actually the point here. A person who has accepted faith insincerely will at a certain point fall away from it, whether from Orthodoxy, Baptist belief, or something else, and no church “donations” will keep him/her there for long. After all, faith itself is inherently a non-material phenomenon.

Studying documents of the epoch, it becomes clear that many Russian sectarians in the nineteenth century, by falling away from Orthodoxy, were guided by deep religious and moral motives and did it “being zealous for the faith” – just as monks in ancient times left the world (although there were truly believing people in the world too). Of course, according to Holy Scripture, any division among Christians is a sad event, to which undoubtedly there are many and various sides. And it may be, as a theoretical question from a certain ideal Christian point of view, that it would be more correct to always forgive all people, to blame mainly oneself, to endure all things, including being lenient towards the priests whose behavior is unworthy of them (as Russian Orthodoxy had undoubtedly many achievements in the nineteenth century too: highly respected translations of the Bible, selfless missionary work in the outlying districts of the Empire, the development of the tradition of *starchestvo* [monastic elder-

^[86] See the survey of the theme, for instance, in E. Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), pp. 271-277.

^[87] N. Leskov, *Na Krayu Sveta* [At the Edge of the World] (1876), in N. Leskov, *Sobranie Sochineniy*, 12 vols., v. I, pp. 392-393.

^[88] See A. Znamenski, “Shamanism and Christianity on the Russian Siberian Borderland: Altaian Responses to Russian Orthodox Missionaries (1830–1917),” *Itinerario*, no. 1

(1998): 113-116. Also some Baptist ministers at the end of the nineteenth century spoke about attempts at bribery: “When their words do not work, Orthodox missionaries often promise their opponents (besides the Baptists, there were Old Believers’ teachers, etc. – C.P.) a vacant post as a priest with a good salary; and such arguments sometimes influence better than reasoning from the Scripture or the holy fathers.” – Pavlov, *Vospominaniya Ssyl’nogo*, p. 217.

ship], etc.^[89]). However the Church on earth, alas, consists of people who are not ideal, and the divisions among Christians are a sad reality, which we cannot ignore. But it would be hardly correct to place the blame exclusively on any single party.

The dissociation of the Eastern Church itself from the Western (Roman) Church in the eleventh century (and actually even earlier), with many mutual excommunications and offences, which is not yet fully overcome to this day, demonstrates that even the greatest of arch-pastors did not always have sufficient Christian humility and brotherly love. What, then, shall we say about the simple sheep that for the most part the Russian sectarians were? If the latter had nothing good in them, no constructive beginning, but only a “great arrogance” and “hatred,”^[90] the sectarian communities and groups in Russia, according to the known inherent laws or regularities, should have split up still further until they totally degenerated (as, for example, was predicted by the far-seeing – in his other prophecies – F. M. Dostoevsky^[91]). Nonetheless, we actually see the exact opposite picture: despite many disagreements, the Russian sectarians of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries massively united and founded the first large Russian Protestant denominations (“brotherhoods”) – the Russian Baptist Union and the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians.^[92]

Under threat of imprisonment or Siberian exile, obviously, only people who were deeply confident that they defended the “true faith” could be successful in their preaching in imperial Russia. Before the revolutionary events of 1905, the legislation of the Russian empire concerning the Old Believer and sectarian communities had strongly repressive features.^[93] At the same time, the weightiest arguments of the Russian sectarians in their discussions with the defenders of Orthodoxy had less to do with fine points of theology (for the first Evangelicals in Russia were mainly poorly educated), than it did with the most practical points concerning daily Christian life. “Formerly I was a drunkard and debauchee but I was still considered Orthodox. Now, however, when I have believed in Christ, my life has completely changed...” the sectarians repeated over and over and, above all, not infrequently really confirmed their words by a kind of new life, so

^[89] See, for instance, the theme review in N. Tal'berg, *Istoriya Russkoy Tserkvi* [The History of the Russian Church] (Moscow: Izd-vo Sretenskogo Monastyrya, 2004), pp. 724-924. See also N. Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome* (N.Y.: AMS Press, 1971), pp. 77-94.

^[90] Orthodox anti-sectarian pamphlets often expressed the thought that Orthodoxy, as the true Church, shows Christian love to her children, but the Russian Protestant communities are based on hatred (for the priesthood and the Church). See, for instance, *Razgovor Pravoslavnogo i Pashkovtsa o Svyashchennom Pisanii i Predaniyakh Tserkovnykh* [The Conversation of an Orthodox and a Pashkovite about the Scripture and Church Tradition]. – The copies of V.A. Pashkov Papers, 1/9, The Library of International Baptist Theological

Seminary, Prague, Czech Republic.

^[91] See F. Dostoevsky, *Mirazhi: Shtunda i Redstokisty (Dnevnik Pisatelya, 1877)* [Mirages: Stundism and Radstockists (A Writer's Diary, 1877)], in F. Dostoevsky, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniy* [The Complete Works], 30 vols. (Lenin-grad: Nauka, 1983), v. XXV, pp. 10-12.

^[92] See, for instance, *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, pp. 98-159; L. Shenderovskiy, *Evangel'skie Khristiane* [The Evangelical Christians] (Toronto: Izdanie Kanadskogo Soyuza Evangel'skikh Khristian, 1980), pp. 81-115.

^[93] See, for instance, *Zakony o Raskol'nikakh i Sektantakh* [The Laws on the Old Believers and Sectarians] (Moscow: Izdanie A. Skorova, 1903), pp. 92-193.

that people had difficulty in objecting to them.^[94] “The Stundists are always ready for debates,” wrote one Orthodox researcher of sectarianism, “and not only the laity, but also the priests have difficulties in arguing against them... Even such a skillful warrior for the Orthodox faith as the most eminent Leontius, in his archiepiscopate days in Odessa *felt exhaustion* during the struggle with the Stundists ...”^[95]

It should be added that in the last third of the nineteenth century, not only the ordinary Little Russians (whose opinion might be neglected as a certain rural “darkness of ignorance”) started to realize their dissatisfaction with the dominant “ceremonial” form of Russian Orthodoxy prevalent at the time, but also a large part of the Petersburg aristocracy and intelligentsia.^[96] In the 1870s, a serious incentive to the Evangelical movement in the capital was given by a British citizen, Lord Radstock (1833–1913), whose sermons, simple and sincere, in the spirit of the interdenominational Keswick Holiness movement,^[97] inflamed hearts and aroused zeal for the faith among a number of well-known people in Russia. There were in their midst, for example, retired Guards Colonel V. A. Pashkov, Count M. M. Korf, Count A. P. Bobrinsky, Princess N. F. Lieven, Princess V. F. Gagarina, and others.^[98]

At the same time, for the sake of historical justice, it is necessary to note that just as the Russian-Ukrainian sectarians, peasants by birth, *chose* the “Baptist faith,” something similar also happened to the Russian Radstockists. Radstock did not come to preach in St. Petersburg at his own initiative, as, for example, Protestant missionaries of the same period went to the heathen in remote corners of the world, but he came to minister, at any rate, in “already Christian” Russia. In addition, he had an *invitation* from a person who belonged (according to Princess

^[94] See, for instance, A. Karev, “*Russkoe Evangel'sko-Baptistskoe Dvizhenie*” [The Russian Evangelical-Baptist Movement], *Bratsky Vestnik*, no. 3 (1957): 24-26; A. Vvedensky, *Bor'ba s Sektantstvom* [Struggle against Sectarianism] (Odessa: Tipografiya Eparkhial'nogo Doma, 1914), pp. 198-199; G. Emel'yanov, “*Ratsionalizm na Yuge Rossii*”, *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, no. 5 (1878), pp. 210-211; H. Coleman, “Becoming a Russian Baptist: Conversion Narratives and Social Experience,” *Russian Review*, vol. 61, no. 1 (2002): 94-112. The life change of the newly converted – refusal of drunkenness, fighting marital infidelity, etc. – popularized Stundism especially in the eyes of the female peasant population, see Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation*, pp. 221-222, 304.

^[95] G. Emel'yanov, “*Ratsionalizm na Yuge Rossii*”, *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, no. 3 (1878): 207. This statement probably refers to Archbishop Leontius Lebedinsky (1822–1893). For modern writers continuing the tradition of putting questions to the Orthodox hierarchy in the Stundist spirit, see, for example, M. Gorokhov,

Kniga Nasushchmykh Voprosov o Pravoslavnoy Vere [The Book of Vital Issues concerning the Orthodox Faith], (Moscow: Arbor, 1998).

^[96] See, for instance, E. Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy, 1860–1900. Radstockism and Pashkovism* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), pp. 30-56.

^[97] Concerning the involvement of Lord Radstock in regular Evangelical meetings in Keswick (the north of England) see, for example G. Nichols, “Ivan Kargel and the Pietistic Community of Late Imperial Russia,” in S. Corrado and T. Pilli, eds., *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007), pp. 78-79; M. Kuznetsova, “Early Russian Evangelicals (1874–1929): Historical Background and Hermeneutical Tendencies Based on I.V. Kargel's Written Heritage” (PhD thesis, University of Pretoria, 2009), pp. 101-104.

^[98] See, for instance, Shenderovsky, *Evangel'skie Khristiane*, pp. 89-91; M. Rowe, *Russian Resurrection: Strength in Suffering. A History of Russia's Evangelical Church* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1994), pp. 22-25, etc.

S. P. Lieven) “to one of the branches of the Russian Imperial House” – Countess E. I. Chertkova, who had made the acquaintance of the English preacher in Europe.^[99] The Russian Orthodox writer N. S. Leskov, obviously not going with the tide of the “missionary” school,^[100] remarked about it – not too delicately, but definitely: “She found Radstock in England and set him going in Petersburg...”;^[101] “she ordered (*vypisala*) him into Russia”;^[102] “it all went, of course, under her guidance... she was so mother-like, so pleased with his success,”^[103] etc.

Incidentally, in passing, Leskov asserts that a religious movement in the high circles of St. Petersburg in a certain independent form (“*velikosvetskaya bespopovshchina*” – high society priestless sect) took place as far back as the beginning of the 1860s, since the time of the first reforms of Alexander II, and one of the stages of development of this spiritual process was the invitation of Radstock to Russia.^[104] Also, the AUCECB official edition of the history of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists enigmatically reports that E. I. Chertkova and N. F. Lieven “were born again before Lord Radstock’s arrival to Petersburg from England.”^[105] If such a view on the well-known events in the capital in the 1870s is recognized as more or less accurate (not belittling or exaggerating Radstock’s role in them), it helps to explain why the British preacher was so well accepted by his Russian audiences (large aristocratic homes were opened to him to hold meetings, etc.), when many of the features of his theological views and his worship practices were not accepted by Russians. Thus, the biographers of Radstock, besides the well-received (by a certain category of the audience in St. Petersburg) statements on justification and salvation by faith, as well as his general Christian pious (“pietistic”) exhortations, write about things that could not help but cause tension among the representatives of Russian educated circles: the foreign visitor’s neglect of any sacraments or church organization, his ignoring of the Church Fathers’ authority, his aversion – for religious reasons – to music, literature, medicine, etc.^[106]

^[99] S. Lieven, *Dukhovnoe Probuzhdenie v Rossii* [The Spiritual Awakening in Russia] (Kornal, Germany: Svet na Vostoke, 1990), pp. 10-11.

^[100] The simplistic point of view that Protestantism is totally alien to Russia and has an exclusively “Western lineage” has already been mentioned above.

^[101] Leskov, *Velikosvetsky Raskol*, p. 113.

^[102] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

^[103] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

^[104] *Ibid.*, pp. 113-118. Concerning even earlier origins of the Evangelical movement in Russia, see, for instance, “Zapiski Kvakera o Prebyvanii v Rossii” [Quaker Notes about His Staying in Russia], *Russkaya Starina*, vol. IX (1874), pp. 2-36; W. Sawatsky, “Prince Alexander N. Golitsyn (1773-1844): Tsarist Minister of Piety” (PhD thesis, University of Minnesota, 1976).

^[105] *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, p. 14. This idea was strengthened by S.N. Savinsky, who directly named E. I. Chertk-

ova and N. F. Lieven as the true source of the Petersburg revival. See Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867 – 1917)*, p. 92. At the same time, this author does not deny the influence of European conservative Evangelicalism on the Russian high-society ladies, but sees there, first of all, their own “spiritual seeking”. – *Ibid.*, p. 142.

^[106] See, for instance, E. Trotter, *Lord Radstock: An Interpretation and a Record* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), pp. 134-135; Leskov, *Velikosvetsky Raskol*, pp. 42-87. See also, Puzynin, *Traditsiya Evangel'skikh Khristian*, pp. 106-120. Even V. A. Pashkov, who was to a considerable degree influenced by Radstock, did not support, for example, the attitude of the latter concerning the sacraments, etc. See S. Corrado, *Filosofiya Sluzheniya Polkovnika Pashkova* [The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasily Pashkov], (St. Petersburg: Bibliya Dlya Vsekh, 2005), pp. 66-69.

Let us note finally that also in the third (after Little Russia and St. Petersburg) center of the Russian Baptists' origins, in Tiflis, the initiator of the first "baptism by faith" among the Russians in the summer of 1867 was most probably Nikita Isaevich Voronin, who had truly established himself as a prosperous believing person, a Molokan leader, who independently chose his future spiritual way.^[107] He made a request for baptism to the German Baptist Martin Kalweit,^[108] who shortly before had moved to Tiflis from Lithuania and worked as a tinsmith^[109] (according to other sources – a tailor^[110]). In any case, the fact that Kalweit was a person of lower social position demonstrates that N. I. Voronin could not have any interest other than spiritual in their relations.^[111]

Kalweit at that time, by his own accounts, led German meetings in his own narrow family circle and by no means proselytized his beliefs.^[112] Some researchers point to the influence exerted on Voronin by *Jacob Delyakov*, but it is necessary to take into consideration that at that time Delyakov was, strictly speaking, a deacon of the Nestorian Church^[113] (though many historians call him a Presbyterian^[114]), i.e. from the Baptist point of view, "a follower of *infant baptism*," and so he was hardly able to assist with the matter of "baptism by faith."^[115] It is interesting also that Delyakov, who himself was at that time a missionary in Russia

^[107] According to P. V. Ivanov-Klyshnikov (one of the key leaders of the Russian Baptist Union in 1920s): "Voronin... got to know that Kalweit professed exactly such convictions, which he had reached after his own difficult inward struggle and careful examination of the Word of God... Immediately Voronin desired to be baptized." – P. Ivanov-Klyshnikov, "Shestidesyatiletie: 1867-1927" [The Sixty Years: 1867-1927], *Baptist*, no. 5 (1927), p. 14.

^[108] M. Kalweit in his reminiscences characterizes N.I. Voronin as "the first of the Molokans who carefully studied the Scripture and wished to be baptized." *Avtobiografiya M.K. Kalweita* [The Autobiography of M.K. Kalweit] (1913), AR-SECB, F. 1, op. 5-8, d. 20, l. 2.

^[109] See "The Autobiography of Jacob Delakoff, Independent Missionary in Russia," *The European Harvest Field*, September 1935, p. 11.

^[110] See A. Karev, "Yubileyny Doklad v Svyazi so 100-letney Godovshchinoy Bratstva ECB v SSSR" [The Jubilee Report on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Brotherhood of ECB in the USSR], *Bratsky Vestnik*, no. 4 (1967): 13. V. V. Ivanov, closely associated with the early Tiflis congregation, called M. Kalweit a "simple artisan." See V. Ivanov, "Kniga Episkopa Alekseya" [The Book by Bishop Alexis], *Baptist*, no. 9 (1908): 24.

^[111] On the poverty of M. Kalweit, see also: A. Wardin, "Penetration of the Baptists into the Russian Empire in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, no. 3 (2007):

45-46. We note again this point for those, who like to link the sympathies of the Russian people to the Baptists with material assistance "from the Germans." (Moreover, one cannot seriously look for financial interests among the Petersburg aristocracy who joined the ranks of the Radstockists).

^[112] *Avtobiografiya M.K. Kalweita*, ll. 1-2. Some extracts from the reminiscences of M. Kalweit see also: *Bratsky Vestnik*, no. 5 (1947): 36-37; Savinsky, *Istoriya (1867–1917)*, pp. 132-133.

^[113] In his memoirs Delyakov mentions several times that before he joined the Baptist church in Russia (1886) he was a Nestorian, ordained a deacon according to the Nestorian rites in Urmia (Persia) in 1862. See "The Autobiography of Jacob Delakoff," *The European Harvest Field*, March 1935: 5; April 1935: 6; May 1935: 15. Then, in 1868, already after N. Voronin's baptism was performed by M. Kalweit, Jacob Delyakov was ordained a presbyter by the Nestorian bishop in Urmia. See: *Ibid.*, September 1935: 12.

^[114] This is probably because Delyakov graduated in 1858 from the seminary founded by American Presbyterians in Persia. See: *Ibid.*, April 1935: 5. Even if Delyakov was a "Reformed" Nestorian, it would be better, from my point of view, to specify it.

^[115] See: Karev, "Yubileyny Doklad v Svyazi so 100-letney Godovshchinoy Bratstva ECB v SSSR", pp. 12-13; Kovalenko, *Oblako Svideteley Khristovyykh*, pp. 43-44.

(on his own initiative and mainly at his own expense),^[116] when he understood more fully Voronin's convictions, advised him to accept baptism from Kalweit instead of converting him to "Delyakov's belief" at that time (which missionaries are usually interested in doing).^[117] It once again testifies to a certain independence in Voronin's religious beliefs at that time.^[118] And Voronin at first even rejected the advice to be baptized "by faith" by the German Baptist Kalweit, affected by the hostility of the Molokans towards the Germans and, in particular, by the fact that the Germans (unlike the Molokans) ate pork.^[119] And only after Delyakov's vigorous emphasis on the international character of the Christian faith, did Voronin finally agree to be baptized by Kalweit.^[120]

It is significant also that the majority of members of the Tiflis Baptist church, which was established at that time (in 1869–1871), were former Molokans, and it was N. Voronin who became the pastor there, while M. Kalweit became a deacon. In addition, it is known that the latter was elected to that particular ministry no earlier than 1879.^[121] (For comparison, let us remember again that the first Orthodox priests in Russia were mostly Greeks). "Our... German meetings," wrote Kalweit in his memoirs, "were disordered at that time, because many had departed. Then I said to my wife: 'Let us go and have a look at what our Russian brothers are doing!' We went and immediately joined them completely."^[122] Among the fragments of the reminiscences of Kalweit, published in the post-war periodical *Bratsky Vestnik*, there are also the following words: "Those who had left [people who had left the Molokans. – C.P.] have formed a separate meeting. My wife and I also joined them. And we served them... by singing... Then we worked all together; I served as a deacon and Voronin was the presbyter."^[123]

It is perfectly clear also that the Tiflis Baptist congregation, which became the "mother church" for many communities in the Caucasus, experienced some friction between *pro-Molokan* and *pro-German* ways of conducting church life and ministry. N. I. Voronin himself was possibly, in some measure, a representa-

^[116] See "The Autobiography of Jacob Delakoff", *The European Harvest Field*, (May 1935): 15.

^[117] Later Delyakov justified himself, explaining why he did not baptize Voronin, by the following enigmatic phrase: "in order to not be disdained by the Molokans" – Delyakov's Letter to V. A. Pashkov, November 2, 1884 (Copies of Pashkov Papers, 2/8/39). Voronin himself wished to be baptized secretly. See: "The Autobiography of Jacob Delakoff", *The European Harvest Field*, (September 1935): 11.

^[118] Of course, nobody can be absolutely independent. In the preserved text of the N. I. Voronin's letter to A. M. Mazaev (1889) the former states that he for the first time started to reflect on the necessity of baptism in 1863 after his conversation with the "water" Molokans N. I. Severov and Ya. I. Tanasov. See Val'kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantskikh Sekt v Rossii*, Supplement 5, p. 27. See also *Istoriya*

Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR, pp. 42-43. V.V. Ivanov also writes about this; see: *Baptist*, no. 9 (1908): 24. In these sources, however, the point is all the same rather about the internal Molokans, than about an "external" influence on Voronin.

^[119] See: "The Autobiography of Jacob Delakoff", *The European Harvest Field*, September 1935, p. 11. Thus, because of the "pig's meat", N.I. Voronin could not become "the first Russian Baptist", and then the official date of the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian brotherhood of ECB (August 20, 1867, the day of the Voronin's baptism) would be different...

^[120] Ibid.

^[121] See *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, p. 78; Kovalenko, *Oblako Svideteley Khristovyykh*, p. 37.

^[122] Avtobiografiya M.K. Kalweita, l. 2.

^[123] *Bratsky Vestnik*, no. 5 (1947), p. 37.

tive of the first tradition.^[124] The second, “pro-German” line, with certain conditions, was represented by Vasily Gur’evich Pavlov, who was theologically educated in Hamburg, translated the German Baptist statement of faith into Russian, and, according to some reports, oriented Russian sectarian communities, in the organizational and “liturgical” sense, towards the German Baptist model.^[125] In spite of the fact that Pavlov’s group turned out to be stronger and tended to pressure those who continued the Molokan traditions,^[126] another very authoritative figure of the early Russian Baptists, the well-known evangelist and presbyter Vasily Vasilevich Ivanov (father of P.V. Ivanov-Klyshnikov), rose to their defense in 1880-1882.^[127] Being a consistent and conservative person, he then resolutely opposed foreign influences on the Russian Baptists throughout his life, obviously preferring the Russian “sectarian” spiritual experience.

Thus, in 1895, V.V. Ivanov in the illegal periodical *Beseda* [Conversation] expressed his sharp criticism of the “foreign” and “Russian-German” Baptists and even to some extent doubted the purity of their motives for their spiritual work in Russia.^[128] In 1899, he wrote to D. I. Mazaev that he had reached this “ultimate conclusion”: it would be wrong for the Russians to follow “the ways of the Hamburg Confession of Faith” and in any way to imitate Western Christianity, because it is in large measure based on material values, and there is “nothing to learn” in spiritual life from its representatives.^[129] In 1908, in the periodical *Baptist*, Ivanov published his now-famous article entitled, “The Book by Bishop Alexis,” in which he tried to give proof of the idea of the absolute originality and independence of the Russian Baptists “from the Germans.”^[130]

Baptist beliefs in Russia... are much more original and national than Byzantine Orthodoxy, and even more so: they are *absolutely unique*, i.e. they arose without the slightest influence from the German Baptists... While the secular scholars, the researchers of Russian sectarianism, almost unanimously affirm its originality and proudly point to the sectarians as the proof of the creativity of the Russian nation,

^[124] See Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantsskikh Sekt v Rossii*, pp. 108-109. In one of his letters to A.M. Mazaev in 1889, Voronin incidentally mentioned some charges (against him personally) of the aversion for the customs of the German brethren. *Ibid.*, Supplement 5, pp. 25-26.

^[125] See, for instance: V. Pavlov, “Pravda o Baptistakh” [The Truth about the Baptists] (1911), in *Al'manakh po Istorii Russkogo Baptizma*, pp. 244-245; H. Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905–1929* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), pp. 96-97.

^[126] With a formal reason, N.I. Voronin was even excommunicated for a time and lost his presbyter’s position. See, for instance: Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantsskikh Sekt v Rossii*, Supplement 1, pp. 40-41.

^[127] Concerning V. V. Ivanov’s encouragement, contrary to his financial interests, of the N. I. Voronin group, see Bishop Alexis, *Materialy dlya Istorii*, pp. 631, 636; Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Pro-*

pagande Protestantsskikh Sekt v Rossii, pp. 81, 113.

^[128] See the text of this letter in Val’kevich, *Zapiska o Propagande Protestantsskikh Sekt v Rossii*, Supplement 3, pp. 26-28.

^[129] See the letters of V. V. Ivanov to D. I. Mazaev (12 and 29 March 1899). – The State Museum of the History of Religion (St. Petersburg), Koll. 1, op. 8, d. 69, ll. 17, 21-23. See an analysis of one of the letters in Heather Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution*, pp. 97-98. See also: H. Coleman, “The Most Dangerous Sect: Baptists in Tsarist and Soviet Russia, 1905-1929” (PhD thesis, University of Illinois, 1998), p. 52.

^[130] V. Ivanov, “Kniga Episkopa Alekseya” [The Book by Bishop Alexis], *Baptist*, no. 9 (1908): 23-27. See some criticism on this position, for instance, in A. Wardin, “Baptist Immersions in the Russian Empire: Difficult Beginnings,” *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, no. 3 (2010): 37-44.

the spiritual “writers” [i.e. Orthodox authors. – *C. P.*] are excessively desirous to prove that... our Baptist doctrines are a “German” faith. The Baptists in Russia... arose without any participation of the Germans.^[131]

It is also interesting that this polemic article by presbyter V.V. Ivanov in the periodical *Baptist* was accompanied by a comment, explaining that the author “at the request of the editorial board” wrote his response to a new book, which was published that year by the Orthodox bishop Alexis (who, among other things, emphasized the “German faith” of the Russian Baptists^[132]). In this way we know that such “apologetic” ideas were not only Ivanov’s private opinion, but no doubt to some extent corresponded with the official line, since the periodical was the main press organ of the Union of Russian Baptists.^[133]

In 1913–1914, shortly before his death, Ivanov became the editor-in-chief of *Baptist* – which undoubtedly testified to respect for him and the support of the Russian brotherhood – and in the articles of that period he again wrote critically about Western spiritual culture (“foreign articles, short reports, and unsubstantial stories,” the translation of which, according to him, the Russian Baptists were getting carried away with),^[134] disapprovingly reacted to the spread of the practice of choral singing among the churches, at the same time nostalgically recalling the “common” (probably Molokan) singing with all the community joining in together, and querulously comparing the two as joyful sunbeams as over against lifeless electric light, etc.^[135]

Thus, not in the least denying the significance of the “foreign factor” in the formation of the early Russian Evangelical-Baptist communities, it is important to see their heterogeneity, including both westward-looking and national tendencies, and to balance examples of the direct or mediated adoptions of European Protestant ideas with a certain self-reliance on the part of the “counter streams” of numerous Slavic God-seekers, the selective attitude of the Russian sectarians towards classical Protestant doctrines and worship practices and, of course, not to forget *their own*, Russian “choice of faith” (to which “the Germans,” however, as well as people of all nationalities in Russia, as M. Kalweit expressed, had the opportunity to “join”^[136]).

^[131] V. Ivanov, “Kniga Episkopa Alekseya” [The Book by Bishop Alexis], *Baptist*, no. 9 (1908): 24.

^[132] See Bishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn), *Vnutrennyaya Organizatsiya Obshchin Yuzno-Russkikh Neobaptistov* [Internal Structure of Communities of the South-Russian neo-Baptists] (Kazan: Tsentral'naya Tipografiya, 1908), pp. 7-8.

^[133] See Ivanov, *Kniga Episkopa Alekseya*, p. 23. A bit before, in the second half of 1880s, a skeptical attitude to German Baptists was also expressed by the head of the “Petersburg awakening”, V.A. Pashkov, who wrote about this not so much in a nationalistic vein (as radical former Molokans did), but in the spirit of the European “open-mindedness”. See an analysis of some “anti-German” letters of Pashkov in: Puzynin, *Traditsiya Evangel'skikh Khristian*, pp. 195-197.

^[134] V. Ivanov, “Obshchiny i Presvityery” [Communities and Presbyters], *Baptist*, nos. 21-24 (1914), p. 8.

^[135] *Baptist*, nos. 21-24 (1914), pp. 21-22.

^[136] Here the state of affairs was apparently similar that as some pious Western Christians played certain role in the making of the Russian Orthodoxy. Some of them were even canonized in Russia, for instance: St. Anthony the Roman (born in Rome, worked in Novgorod), St. Procopius of Ustyug (a German), St. Isidore of Rostov (born in Germany), etc. See: V. Toporov, *Svyatost' i Svyaty v Russkoy Dukhovnoy Kul'ture* [The Holiness and the Saints in the Russian Spiritual Culture], 2 vols. (M.: Yazyki Russkoy Kul'tury, 1998), v. II, pp. 17-45; G. Fedotov, *Svyaty Drevney Rusi* [The Saints of the Old Russia] (M.: Moskovsky Rabochy, 1990), pp. 202-205.

Just such a state of affairs in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries in the empire, by all appearances, provided the wide scope and unprecedented success of the multiethnic evangelical movement in Russia.

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