

Three Periods of Awakening in Eastern Slavic Lands

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Introduction

Evangelical awakening is something hoped for by Christians and examined by scholars. Both the causes and the results of awakenings have been studied in different ways around the world. However, there is very little literature studying evangelical awakenings in the Eastern Slavic world (i.e. the CIS today). It is the purpose of this article to compare three periods of evangelical church growth in Eastern Slavic lands that are generally considered to be periods of “awakening,” and to attempt to determine some of the causes behind them, examining their commonalities and differences.

J. Edwin Orr is renowned for his studies of revivals and awakenings over the last century. Orr argues that most church historians do not adequately take into account the part the Holy Spirit plays in awakenings, focusing only on human causes. Or, some Christians like Charles Finney have claimed that awakenings will happen if churches just use the appropriate strategy.^[1] Orr is correct in emphasizing the need to focus on God’s power. Yet, God clearly works through people, cultures, and history. For example, God used Joseph, his brothers, the Egyptian people, and circumstances of both feast and famine to save Joseph’s family and many others (see Genesis 37-50). It was still a miracle, though.

This article will use a modification of the model presented by Mark Shaw to evaluate evangelical awakenings. Shaw’s list of five factors will be simplified to

^[1] Orr J.E. *The Re-study of Revival and Revivalism*. 1981:i,iv.

three: spiritual, historical, and cultural.^[2] This will attempt to both take into account Orr's priority in looking for spiritual causes (which are often more difficult to verify) and causes that are more commonly observed by historians, anthropologists, and sociologists.

In order to study spiritual factors, we will need to examine the spiritual preparation that has taken place historically before the time of awakening and the spirituality of the people involved, including such factors as repentance of sin, prayer life, Bible study, and active evangelism and mission work. Historically, we will consider opportunities for church growth that come out of new religious freedom and new openness to ideas from within society or from other societies. An increased level of globalization is one example.^[3]

Culturally, we will study a number of factors, drawing from the ideas of several modern sociologists, historians, and experts on change. Shaw defines three main cultural factors: people, faith, and justice.^[4] Regarding people, we will look to Malcolm Gladwell, who defines the kinds of people that help produce change as connectors (people who bring the world together), mavens (collectors and distributors of knowledge), and salesmen (persuaders).^[5] Since Gladwell focuses on the people that are most important at "The Tipping Point," he does not consider what types of people are important to keep change going. Therefore, we will add a fourth kind of person, an organizer, who is someone that can build the structure needed to keep change going. This follows the idea of James Collins and Jerry Porras, who maintain that charismatic leaders are not as important as organizational visionaries for the long-term success of organizations,^[6] and was shown through the organizational ministry of John Wesley among the Methodists during the Great Awakening.^[7]

Regarding faith, or a change in worldview, we will look at Gladwell's notion of the "stickiness" of an idea which is further elaborated by Chip and Dan Heath in terms of simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, credibility, emotions, and stories.^[8] The Heath brothers further explain change as a process by which the rational is aligned with the emotional and sent along a clear path.^[9] In addition, we will consider the use of the Bible in these awakenings, since it can make a big difference in changing people's faith and worldview.

Then, we will look at two authors who consider the importance of justice (i.e. transforming society) in bringing about cultural change: James Davison Hunter and Andy Crouch. Hunter considers how best people can be in places of influence in order to bring about change. He believes that politics is not a good place for Christians to be influential, and instead advocates the model of "faithful presence" in which Christians incarnate their faith and gifts

^[2] Shaw M. *Global Awakening*. 2010:16.

^[3] Shaw 2010:16.

^[4] *Ibid.*, 20-24.

^[5] Gladwell M. *The Tipping Point*. 2002:38, 62, 70.

^[6] Collins J.C., Porras J.I. *Built to Last: Suc-*

cessful Habits of Visionary Companies. 2002:22-42.

^[7] Shaw 2010:87.

^[8] Gladwell 2002:24-25, Heath C., Heath D. *Made to Stick*. 2008.

^[9] Heath C., Heath D. *Switch*. 2010.

through their relationships in all parts of society. Hunter uses a “Culture Matrix” to evaluate the effectiveness of culture change.^[10] Finally, we will examine Andy Crouch’s idea of creating and cultivating culture, which claims that culture is more than just a worldview, and that “the only way to change culture is to create more of it.”^[11] This paradigm will be used to evaluate how much culture is created and the effectiveness of culture creation on change toward Christianity.

One Person (with God’s Help) Can Make a Difference

Historically, the Evangelical Church in the Eastern Slavic world faced two types of opposition: the government and the Russian Orthodox Church. Yet, in the 1860’s, numerous “Great Reforms” were made, including the end of serfdom. More laws were passed in 1874 and 1883 regarding non-Orthodox sects (such as Evangelicals) that allowed most “to hold services in private or in special prayer houses, to carry internal passports, and to occupy public positions. Public manifestation of non-Orthodox religious practice remained prohibited.”^[12] Also, this was a time of increased contact with the West, as Russians travelled abroad and foreigners came to Russia. Thus, several historical factors gave new opportunities for awakening.

Spiritual preparation had also taken place for awakening. In the beginning of the 19th century, a renewal movement had spread through Russian society under the influence of Prince Alexander Nikolayevich Golitsyn, Johannes Evangelista Gossner, and the founding of the Russian Bible Society.^[13] In the 1870’s, a series of moral, social, political, and religious problems reached a crisis point in which much of Russia’s upper class were desperate to find righteousness, truth, and salvation. The nihilism and liberalism of the time did not satisfy.^[14]

Granville Augustus William Waldgrave, or, as he was commonly known, Lord Radstock, had been saved in the 1859 Awakening in Great Britain^[15] and had been praying for ten years for the opportunity to share the Gospel in Russia after having served in the British military in the Crimean War. Elizaveta Ivanovna Chertkova, meanwhile, had been travelling abroad in search of comfort after the death of two of her sons. Chertkova heard Radstock preach and “found the path to life with Christ.”^[16] Then, Chertkova opened the door for Radstock to the Russian elite in St. Petersburg in 1874.^[17]

Radstock preached a very simple message of salvation, using phrases like, “Do you know Christ?” and “How are you spiritually?” He spoke primarily in French (the language of the elite) and did not use any of the theatrics that

[10] Hunter J.D. *To Change the World*. 2010:243-247, 91.

[11] Crouch A. *Culture Making*. 2008:67.

[12] Coleman H. J. *Russian Baptists & Spiritual Revolution 1905-1929*. 2005:20.

[13] Brandenburg H. *The Meek and the Mighty*. 1977:26-39, 102.

[14] Heier E. *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy 1860-1900: Radstockism and Pashkovism*. 1970:25.

[15] Orr 1981:39.

[16] Brandenburg 1977:107, Rowe M. *Russian Resurrection*. 1994:22.

[17] Coleman 2005:16.

some other Protestant preachers of the time used.^[18] Radstock could even be considered a mystic, as he was constantly seeking God’s guidance.^[19] His simplicity and directness turned some away from him, but his strength of conviction attracted many to put their faith in a personal relationship with Christ. Clearly God was at work.

The man who would later take over Radstock’s ministry after he was forbidden to return to Russia was Colonel Vasilii Alexandrovich Pashkov. He tried to avoid meeting Radstock, but after unexpectedly meeting him, Pashkov prayed to accept Christ.^[20] Pashkov spread Radstock’s message of personal religious conversion to peasants, reaching people that Radstock could not have reached on his own. Pashkov was one of the richest and most influential people in Russia, and he was able to start many different social projects, including tea rooms, literacy programs, and a shelter for homeless children. Similarly, Count Modest Modestovich Korff, another wealthy and influential member of Russian society who converted, helped publish a large number of religious books and brochures in addition to a weekly newspaper.^[21]

Considering Gladwell’s cultural factor of influential people, Radstock clearly did not fall into the categories of connector, maven, or salesman. However, Chertkova, Pashkov, and Korff were powerful connectors and organizers, and perhaps Pashkov was a salesman as well.^[22] Yet, Radstock’s message was quite “sticky,” as it met Heath and Heath’s categories of simplicity, unexpected (coming from a foreigner), credibility (Radstock was very sincere), and using stories. Radstock was perhaps not as concrete or emotional as some other preachers, and this may have turned some away from him.^[23] In any case, one big advantage Radstock and his followers had was the publication of the first official Russian Bible translation, released between 1867 and 1876 by the Holy Synod.^[24] Radstock’s movement was always based on the Bible,^[25] and having copies widely available in Russian greatly affected people’s worldviews, as they could read and interpret the Bible by themselves for the first time. All of these factors provide some cultural reasons why the movement was able to change worldviews and why it “tipped” toward awakening.^[26]

Considering justice and transformation of culture, James Davison Hunter wrote that “Change is typically initiated by elites who are outside the centermost positions of prestige” which would clearly fit someone like Elizaveta Chertkova.^[27] Chertkova was influential not just in lending Radstock credibility, but also in her involvement in a ladies’ committee that visited and provided social assistance to those in prison.^[28] And, in considering Hunter’s “Cultural Matrix,” it is clear that this religious movement affected the higher

^[18] Leskov N. *Schism in High Society: Lord Radstock and his Followers*. 1995:48.

^[19] Puzynin A. *The Tradition of the Gospel Christians*. 2010:104-105.

^[20] Brandenburg 1977:106.

^[21] Coleman 2005:17.

^[22] Gladwell 2002.

^[23] Heath, Heath 2008.

^[24] Heier 1970:37.

^[25] Brandenburg 1977:104.

^[26] Gladwell 2002.

^[27] Hunter 2010:41.

^[28] Brandenburg 1977:107.

echelons of Russian society in each of Hunter's categories, "The True," "The Good," and "The Beautiful."^[29] The movement was written about by the newspapers of the day, by Dostoevsky, and by Tolstoy.^[30] Furthermore, Radstock tried to avoid politics and any conflict with the Russian Orthodox Church. He never spoke about denominations or doctrines outside of the need for personal repentance and salvation. Radstock did not even push logical arguments, but focused on personal experiences.^[31]

Finally, one more reason this movement was successful was that it created a new influential subculture of Evangelical Protestant Christianity, much like what Andy Crouch calls Christians to do today.^[32] Edmund Heier asserted that the movement's most effective means of propaganda was their literature ministry, which from 1876-1884 produced several million items, including Old and New Testaments, the weekly periodical "The Religious Workman," and over 200 different pamphlets.^[33] This ministry and varied ministries to people's physical needs were effective at helping create a new subculture, and, in turn, awakening. Even after Pashkov and Korff were exiled from Russia for their preaching and prayer meeting ministries,^[34] the "Evangelical Christian" movement (or "Gospel Christians"^[35]) continued and had a lasting effect on Russian culture.

Growth of an Influential Christian Subculture

Our second period of awakening again was affected by the historical factors of increased religious freedom and openness to the West. In April 1905, Russian Tsar Nicholas II declared the Edict of Religious Toleration in order to quell a growing desire among the people for reform.^[36] This new law did not provide full religious freedom, but it did allow non-Orthodox groups to register and hold services legally. Over the next seven years, the Evangelical Christians and Baptists grew by about 33%. These groups were especially adept in their organizational ability, using methods widely known in the West but unfamiliar to the Orthodox.^[37] Two particular features that were attractive were "the participatory nature of evangelical services and the opportunities for associational life and personal development for people of different ages, educational levels, and interests rarely available elsewhere."^[38] As Russians embraced Westernization and modernization, they also grew more open to new religious ideas. Furthermore, in the opinion of Evangelical Christian leader Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov, "Probably no nation on the earth or in the history of the Christian Church, was so ready for the spiritual harvest as the Russian people, with their long centuries of seeking after God."^[39]

[29] Hunter 2010:91.

[30] Leskov 1995:3.

[31] Corrado S. "Early Russian Evangelicals: Ministry Lessons for Today." 2000:11-13.

[32] Crouch 2008.

[33] Heier 1970:118.

[34] Brandenburg 1977:113.

[35] Coleman 2005:95.

[36] Rowe 1994:45.

[37] Coleman 2005:27-29.

[38] *Ibid.*, 39.

[39] Prokhanoff I.S. In the Cauldron of Russia 1869-1933: Autobiography of I.S. Prokhanoff. 1933:250.

Although perhaps Prokhanov overstates the failings of the Orthodox Church, God had clearly spiritually prepared the people for awakening.

In 1917, Communists took power in Russia, and the new Soviet state guaranteed freedom of religion at an even greater level than had been allowed before.^[40] Lenin and the Bolsheviks felt that, especially in the midst of fighting a civil war, they didn't need to wage war on religion as well. They believed Marx's theory that religion would die out on its own.^[41] In fact, the communist leadership believed Orthodoxy to be a greater threat to them than Evangelical Protestantism, so they hoped to draw people away from the Orthodox Church through the freedom granted to Protestants.^[42] In addition, about 2000 Russian prisoners-of-war who had been converted in Germany returned, bringing a new force of "foreign missionaries." The historical factors of World War I, civil war, and the famine of 1921 all increased people's interest in the Gospel,^[43] as did the tragedy of widespread alcoholism, which stood in contrast to Evangelicals' self-control.^[44]

Turning to cultural factors, there were many strong leaders of the evangelical movement. Dei Ivanovich Mazaev, president of the Russian Baptist Union, was wealthy like Pashkov, and helped finance the Baptists, including supporting several full and part-time missionaries.^[45] He was clearly a talented organizer.^[46] William Fetler, Vladimir Filimonovich Martsinkovsky, and Ivan Prokhanov ministered through such methods as music concerts (orchestra and choirs), interdenominational Bible studies for soldiers and factory workers, and outreach to ethnic minorities.^[47] Fetler also helped organize the London-based Russian Missionary Society and Martsinkovsky was one of the leaders of the Student Christian Movement and gave public lectures on such topics as "The Gospel and Freedom" and "Revolution of the Spirit."^[48] It is likely that both Fetler and Martsinkovsky were connectors, mavens, salesmen, and organizers,^[49] but Prokhanov stood out even more as an innovative organizer, risk-taker, and motivator. He had received an education abroad, like Fetler,^[50] which gave him many ideas from the West. Prokhanov's creativity and organizational ability produced several hymn books, the first evangelical Bible courses, and even a Bible college.^[51] Prokhanov was even elected as one of the vice presidents of the Baptist World Alliance in 1911, holding the position until 1928.^[52] Considering all this, it is clear that Prokhanov was a connector, maven, salesman, and organizer of a very high level – a catalyst for change and influence.^[53]

[40] *Ibid.*, 175-176.

[41] Marsh C. Religion and the State in Russia and China: Suppression, Survival, and Revival. 2011:54.

[42] Sawatsky W. Soviet Evangelicals since World War II. 1981:37.

[43] Orr 1981:54.

[44] Prokhanoff 1933:19, Coleman 2005:60-61.

[45] Coleman 2005:29.

[46] Sawatsky 1981:79.

[47] Karetnikova M.S. The Missionary Movement in Russia: The 19th and 20th Centuries. 2005:69.

[48] Coleman 2005:167, Rowe 1994:65.

[49] Gladwell 2002.

[50] Coleman 2005:94.

[51] Prokhanoff 1933.

[52] Coleman 2005:111.

[53] Gladwell 2002.

The power of the movement's Gospel message was seen in telling one another stories, often by ordinary believers about their personal conversion, both in public and in private. These stories directly conflicted with the Orthodox Church's idea that territory and culture determine one's church. In addition, the Orthodox Church often conducted mission through confrontation and debate. The "softer" evangelical methods proved more effective, as church membership became voluntary and based on personal spiritual experience.^[54] "Sticky" conversion stories were concrete and sometimes unexpected and emotional, meeting Heath and Heath's criteria for change,^[55] including a change of worldview.

Sending missionaries also played a key part in the evangelical awakening. The Baptists were missionary in spirit, following Johann Oncken's slogan, "Every Baptist a Missionary."^[56] By 1928, the Evangelical Christians had over 600 missionaries serving across Russia and Siberia. As Prokhanov noted, "The churches without missions usually were dying."^[57] In addition to this being a key spiritual factor, Heath and Heath's study on change also shows cultural reasons why mission work is important. A call to mission provides both clarity of direction (what needs to be done) and emotional motivation for that direction (God's love and our love for those who need God). It is this combination of rationality and emotion, when combined with the "clear path" provided by religious freedom that makes the way for change.^[58] As Coleman commented, "If mission was the fuel that drove the evangelical movement, the missionary network served as a web to bind it together."^[59]

The results of these mission efforts were significant. The Evangelical Church grew from about 150,000–200,000 in 1917^[60] to about 900,000 in 1929, including the new movement of Pentecostals.^[61] This occurred despite the fact that the Evangelical Church was still harassed by the government during this period,^[62] including imprisoning some of its leaders, like Ivan Prokhanov. Clearly, spiritual, historical, and cultural factors were all at work, as Prokhanov himself testified.^[63]

Considering the transformation of society, the church under Prokhanov emphasized spiritual education work since, "churches which were occupied with missions and which neglected their own spiritual education could not make any spiritual progress."^[64] Thus, prayer meetings, Sunday Schools for children, associations for young men and women were all developed,^[65] creating a healthy and growing subculture with the worldview changing Bible playing an important role. Interestingly, even the government had realized

^[54] Coleman 2005:47, 63, 83.

^[55] Heath, Heath 2008.

^[56] Coleman 2005:32.

^[57] Prokhanoff 1933:153, 155.

^[58] Heath, Heath 2010.

^[59] Coleman 2005:42.

^[60] Sawatsky 1981:27.

^[61] Dyck J. Revival as Church Restoration:

Patterns of a Revival among Ethnic Germans in Central Asia after World War II. 2005:78, Rowe 1994:91.

^[62] Coleman 2005:178.

^[63] Prokhanoff 1933:241-251.

^[64] Ibid., 155.

^[65] Prokhanoff 1933:155-156.

the importance of prayer meetings for the Evangelicals' faith, and had focused a campaign against prayer meetings before the 1905 Edict.^[66] Furthermore, the Evangelical Christian Church under Prokhanov was able to produce the first legal evangelical journal, "The Christian" and a complimentary supplement, "Brotherly Pamphlet." These publications served to unite the evangelical community^[67] and are another good example of the power of "culture making" in producing change and creating influence.^[68]

There were some negative elements that came out of this period of evangelical awakening as well. As early as the revolution in 1905-7, it was said that "some evangelicals do seem to have been swept up in the increasing politicization of their society."^[69] Even Ivan Prokhanov became very interested in politics and pushed for a Christian Democratic "Resurrection" Party, an idea that was rejected by the Union of Evangelical Christians in May 1917.^[70] Hunter criticizes Christians for getting too caught up in politics, since "Values cannot be achieved politically because politics is invariably about power – not only about power, but finally about power."^[71] When the communist government felt its power was being threatened by the growing influence of evangelical groups, it lashed out against them through the April 1929 law on religious associations and the arrest or exile of over 100 local Baptist preachers and national leaders.^[72] Instead of politicization, Hunter proposes the idea of being a "faithful presence," which means that Christians influence through their relationships, not just power.^[73] As explained above, many Russian Evangelicals were a "faithful presence" as well, and would continue to be through the hard days of communism.

The second area that would prove detrimental to Evangelicals was something that at first brought them great success – their ability to copy Soviet forms of culture. Evangelicals had waited a long time to do more than just avoid persecution – they wanted to be a part of and contribute to Russian society.^[74] With the new freedoms they gained, Evangelicals were able "to develop an entire subculture devoted to building Christ's kingdom on earth."^[75] Soviet leadership encouraged the Evangelicals to develop "models" of communal living that would parallel Bolshevik organizations. This included church structure, agricultural communes, and even planning for a utopian, collectivist city.^[76] Of course, the problem with this idea was that Christians could not both "honor" Soviet forms and deny their "ends," or an atheistic worldview. Their worldviews eventually clashed, especially when the Christians became more economically successful. The Christian's parallel forms were declared "counterrevolutionary" and, thus, forbidden.^[77] Thus, making culture

^[66] Coleman 2005:22.

^[67] *Ibid.*, 29-31.

^[68] Crouch 2008.

^[69] Coleman 2005:132.

^[70] *Ibid.*, 143.

^[71] Hunter 2010:172.

^[72] Coleman 2005:221.

^[73] Hunter 2010.

^[74] Coleman 2005:117.

^[75] *Ibid.*, 156.

^[76] *Ibid.*, 198-199.

^[77] *Ibid.*, 209-210.

as Crouch suggests can be a good idea,^[78] but the worldview behind the culture made must always be taken into account. Christians should never attempt to “hide” their worldview behind a cultural form, but should use cultural forms to promote their Christian worldview.

In the end, the tremendous growth of the Evangelical Church would wither under communist persecution. The mission work done in beginning of the 20th century was commendable, but getting too involved in politics and copying communist forms gave the communist leadership an excuse to punish Evangelicals and prohibit their institutions. Eastern Slavic Evangelicals would have to wait sixty years before the next awakening.

Freedom and a Flood of Missionaries

The historical factors of religious freedom and openness to the West came yet again through Glasnost, and then, the end of communism in 1991. As government controls lessened, there was a tremendous interest in Christianity that Michael Rowe described as an “Evangelical Explosion.”^[79] For example, evangelists could go outside and simply yell “Jesus loves you” and gather a crowd of people that would take all of the Gospel tracts they had. One in five people would come to church the next day and half of them would come forward and repent.^[80]

Yet, there are different views as to how spiritually prepared the people really were. Mikhail Dubovik, one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Mission “Hope to People,” said that the evangelical witness and prayers over the past 70 years during communism finally yielded results.^[81] However, Sergei Golovin, president of the Christian Center for Science and Apologetics, maintained that multiple generations of atheistic propaganda had led the people far away from God. While the people saw that atheism led nowhere, they had little Christian knowledge and were open to many kinds of spirituality, including occultism, magic, and Eastern religions.^[82] In any case, the people were spiritually open, but they did not necessarily believe in God the Creator or that they were sinners in need of salvation, as most people did during the two previous awakenings studied.^[83]

In this new atmosphere of freedom, both nationals and foreigners began to send missionaries. The numbers of Protestant missionaries coming to the Soviet Union and then the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) grew to over 5,600 from about 561 different ministries by 1997.^[84] This great influx of foreign missionaries led to political backlash from the Orthodox Church, who felt overwhelmed by foreign religions. Western missionaries

^[78] Crouch 2008.

^[79] Rowe 1994:229-238.

^[80] Golovin S. Biblical Strategy of Evangelism. 2003:4-5.

^[81] Dubovik M. (Lecturer). Mission Seminar. DCU. 04.04.2011.

^[82] Golovin 2003:30-31.

^[83] Golovin S. Worldview: The Missing Dimension of Evangelism in Postcommunist Society. 2009:53.

^[84] Deyneka P., Deyneka A. Evangelical Foreign Missionaries in Russia. 1998:56-57.

often came to the CIS thinking that all the people were atheists or, if they knew about the Orthodox Church at all, that it was a dead church and its leaders had compromised with the KGB.^[85] Unlike Lord Radstock, many Western missionaries advocated leaving the Orthodox Church for new Protestant churches. This led to the Russian Orthodox Church pushing for laws restricting foreign missionaries.^[86]

One of the reasons that so many Western Protestant missionaries went to Russia in the 1990's was the sense of urgency. No one knew how long the door to ministry would stay open, therefore, as many missionaries as possible would be sent with the express purpose of evangelizing. Walter Sawatsky called this the "frantic evangelism phase."^[87] As one might guess, this method was not the most effective at yielding real fruit. Although the Gospel message is inherently "sticky" and a worldview changing story,^[88] Sergei Golovin pointed out that often "traditional methods of evangelism during the awakening were engaged in telling only the last part of the biblical story, reducing the cosmic drama to its happy end only."^[89] Many of the missionaries sent in urgency were simply not well trained or very effective in imparting the Gospel story (i.e. they were not connectors, mavens, salesmen, or organizers).^[90] Many stayed such a short period of time that they couldn't be a "faithful presence."^[91] And in some cases, foreign missionaries didn't partner with any nationals, doing, in the words of Walter Sawatsky, "mission without ecclesiology."^[92] In other cases, foreigners forced Eastern Slavic people to strictly follow foreign mission guidelines, irrespective of culture or individual gifts. This also often led to failure.^[93]

Despite these problems, foreign mission work did many good things. Mission agencies with previous experience in the Soviet Union avoided many of these mistakes and yielded fruit. Peter Penner judged this period of foreign mission work to be positive overall, with good results in training national leadership through theological education, expanding church work, mission, and evangelism.^[94] Bibles and Christian literature were made available through the efforts of many mission organizations.^[95] Thus, some worldviews were changed and some "Christian culture" was produced.^[96]

While foreign missionaries were coming in, many Eastern Slavic Evangelicals were emigrating out. From 1988, a sharp increase in Christian emigration began which would continue for years to come, causing a serious leadership drain.^[97] This surely had some negative effect on the possibility for

[85] Sawatsky W. Return of Mission and Evangelization in the CIS (1980's-present): An Assessment. 2005:104.

[86] Deyneka, Deyneka. 1998:57.

[87] Sawatsky 2005:99.

[88] Heath, Heath 2008.

[89] Golovin 2009:133.

[90] Gladwell 2002.

[91] Hunter 2010.

[92] Sawatsky 2005:107.

[93] Penner P.F. Critical Evaluation of Recent Developments in the CIS. 2005:130-131.

[94] *Ibid.*, 145.

[95] Hill K.R. The Soviet Union on the Brink. 1991:270-279.

[96] Crouch 2008.

[97] Hill 1991:324, Sawatsky 2005:100.

evangelical awakening in the CIS, with the loss of many key Christians (potential connectors, mavens, salesmen, and organizers) who could help lead to change.

Another negative effect came from established national churches that would not accept the influx of new people. The churches simply weren't ready for the huge numbers of seekers.^[98] When new people couldn't find a place to fit in, they headed back out the door. The next time they were invited, they would respond by saying, "I've been there, tried that. It helps you – great. It didn't help me any. That's not for me."^[99] Certainly, many opportunities were lost.

Turning to national mission efforts in the 1990's, there is a brighter picture. After the fall of communism, national churches began reaching out in a great variety of ways.

In a country where there had been no missions and no charity work for sixty years, these new missionary groups saw enormous needs all around them. It was hard to know where to begin and so they tended to do something of everything: evangelistic meetings, prison visiting, Sunday schools, distribution of Christian literature, church planting, talks in schools, hospital visiting, distribution of relief.^[100]

However, the church was at a disadvantage for reaching the more influential places in society since members had been forced to be poor and on the margin of society during communism.^[101] This was, of course, a disadvantage for reaching into the higher places of Hunter's Cultural Matrix.^[102]

Ukrainian Evangelicals, however, were very active in ministry, with a reported 900 Ukrainians serving as cross-cultural missionaries in 2001, over one-third of them in Russia.^[103] One example was the "Light of the Gospel" mission society, founded in 1989 out of a prayer meeting.^[104] Many of their missionaries were trained at Donetsk Bible College^[105] and were given autonomy to do mission work as appropriate for the culture they lived in.^[106] By 1993, Light of the Gospel had opened about 70 missionary stations in Russia, Ukraine, and Central Asia and had established four regional branches in Yakutsk, Kazan, Kharkov, and Makeyevka, soon after opening a branch in Moscow.^[107] One of their greatest accomplishments was establishing a new denomination of "Light of the Gospel" churches in Yakutia, where no evangelical churches had existed previously.^[108]

Looking at other areas, in Central Asia the Union of Evangelical Christian Baptists in Kazakhstan joined together with some Mennonite groups and has

^[98] Levushkan P. The Crisis of the Early 1990's Awakening. 2007:27.

^[99] Golovin S. Worldview. 2008:59-60.

^[100] Rowe 1994:248.

^[101] Sawatsky 1981:355.

^[102] Hunter 2010:91.

^[103] Wanner C. Communities of the Converted: Ukrainians and Global Evangelism. 2007:135.

^[104] Melnychuk O. The History of and Lessons from the First Eastern Slavic Mission "Light

of the Gospel." 2011:219-221.

^[105] Sawatsky 2005:101.

^[106] Menshov A. We Preach Christ to Those Who Don't Know Him: A Few Questions for the Director of Missionary Work, Taras Pristupa. 1991:6-8.

^[107] International Association "Light of the Gospel." 1994:2-3.

^[108] Melnychuk 2011:225.

produced a multi-ethnic church that supports its own missionaries, albeit with some foreign sponsorship.^[109] Also, in southern Russia a new denomination focused on mission work called the “Evangelical Christian Missionary Union” was founded in 1993 with 4 or 5 new churches, growing to 35 churches across 10 oblasts of Russia by 2001.^[110] This union had a very positive relationship with the foreign Christian and Missionary Alliance, as the Alliance helped expand their vision for mission work, encouraging the use of mentoring for leadership development and raising national resources for mission.^[111]

Finally, it is also worth noting the tremendous growth of theological education institutions in the former Soviet Union. This was seen as an important need by Russian Christian leadership, and Peter Deyneka’s “Russian Ministries” listed 229 schools being formed by 1999.^[112] Most of these were set up with foreign sponsorship, leading to a spirit of independence from local churches and church unions. Since much of this foreign aid has started to dry up, these schools have had to form closer bonds with local churches and their leadership.^[113]

Looking back over this period, it is difficult to evaluate objectively since it was so recent. It is hard to point to one or two influential leaders since so many were involved in mission work. The transformation of society was attempted in several ways, some successfully (e.g. opening theological schools, ministering to the needy) and some not (e.g. foreign missionaries trying to change society without national partners). The cultural factor of faith or worldview change was very important at this time, so much so that Sergei Golovin concluded that a true awakening had not occurred since so many people who professed faith publically did not eventually join the church.^[114] Whether this was an awakening or not is debatable, but it is true that there were spiritual, historical, and cultural factors of an awakening at work. The difficulty is discerning the amount of true church growth, taking into account Christian emigration from the CIS and the fact that many newly professing Christians never really joined the church. On the one hand, Sergei Golovin points to figures of the increase in the number of religious organizations and the baptisms in the Russian Evangelical Christian Baptist Church that show a decline after 1992 and 1993, respectively.^[115] Yet on the other hand, considering Light of the Gospel and the Evangelical Christian Missionary Union, we know of church growth occurring through national mission work both before and after 1993. Therefore, more research is needed to better understand the big picture.

^[109] Sawatsky 2005:101.

^[110] Rybikov S.F. Report from the Missionary Department. 30.05-02.06.2001.

^[111] Rybikov S.F. Former Director of Missionary Work, Evangelical Christian Missionary

Union, interview with the author, 29.12.2011.

^[112] Penner 2005:139.

^[113] Penner 2005:145.

^[114] Golovin 2009:2.

^[115] Golovin 2009:55-56.

Conclusions

Looking back over these three periods of awakening, there were several common factors. Historically, each came at a time of increased religious freedom and openness to the West. Spiritually, each movement was connected to a time of spiritual searching. In each case, the Bible and mission work, with both foreign and national missionaries, played an important role. Culturally, in each case the national missionaries had the greatest impact on society. These points fit with the idea that the best way to make change happen is to have an infusion of outsiders with new ideas, but yet, to have a majority of “home-grown” leaders that can keep the faith in a culturally appropriate way.^[116] Furthermore, historian Andrew Walls has written about the importance of the “indigenizing” and “pilgrim” principles, in which Christianity becomes “local,” and yet, it is also connected with the worldwide church which “is not fully at home in this world,” giving the local church a greater vision for mission.^[117]

Considering the differences, in the case of Lord Radstock’s awakening, it can be connected to a previous awakening that led to Radstock’s conversion. Radstock did his best to avoid politics and conflict with the Orthodox Church, although his the fact that his influential converts were influential (like Chertkova, Pashkov, and Korff) eventually led to backlash from the Orthodox. The awakening in Prokhanov’s time can be connected to the creation of an influential subculture led by creative leaders such as Prokhanov. Eventually, they also felt a backlash from the communist government when they became too influential and a threat.

Finally, the awakening from the 1990’s needs further analysis. A great spiritual thirst appeared following the end of communism, but the people may have been, in fact, less ready to accept the Gospel due to the change in people’s worldviews that had occurred under communism. Despite having greater numbers of foreign missionaries than the first two awakenings, it is not clear that they had the connectors, mavens, salesmen, and organizers that the previous awakenings had. Gladwell makes the point that the nature of the messenger makes a great difference in how the message is accepted,^[118] and thus, a few key missionaries can have a greater effect than a multitude. It is clear that in some cases, national missionaries were able to make a difference, probably due to their individual gifts and because of their better understanding of the Eastern Slavic worldview and how to make the Gospel message “sticky” for them.

^[116] Collins, Porras. 2002:169-184, Schein E.H. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. 1992:323-325.

^[117] Walls A.F. *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. 1996:53-54.

^[118] Gladwell 2002:91.

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