

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RUSSIAN EVANGELICALS (1874-1929). A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

### ***4.1 The Rise and the Initial Stage of the Evangelical Movement in St. Petersburg (1874-1884)***

#### **4.1.1 The First Converts among the Upper Class**

It has been already mentioned that a series of conversions among the upper class took place soon after Radstock's arrival in St. Petersburg. One of the first men converted was Colonel V. A. Pashkov, a future leader of the movement. Almost immediately the largest evangelical meetings were held in Pashkov's and N. Lieven's grand mansions. The revival had started.

Besides Pashkov, there were several famous aristocratic names among Radstock's followers: Madame Chertkova, Count Korff, Princess Lieven and her sister Princess Gagarina, Madame Peuker, Countess Ignateva, Count Bobrinskiy, Baron Nikolai, Count Shcherbinin, Madam Zasetskaya as well as such noble families as the Shuvalovs, Peylens, Golitsyns, Chicherins, and even a family of one of the great princesses (Heier 2002:62-63). This impressive list of names and titles is not comprehensive.

These people formed the core of the new evangelical group in St. Petersburg. This was a stream of genuinely Russian evangelicalism because, although influenced by some foreigners, it had Russian leadership, it consisted of and for Russian people; the services after Radstock's departure were conducted in the Russian language. Although the participants of the movement did not come up with a name for themselves, the outsiders first called those believers Radstockists and then, a few years later, Pashkovites. After all, Radstock had spent very little time in St. Petersburg.

The author will attempt to describe briefly those who were converted under Radstock's ministry and who soon became active in the movement. Since it was upper class ladies who first responded to Radstock's preaching, the author will start with them.

#### **4.1.1.1 Prominent Women**

Neither secular nor ecclesiastical Russia of the second half of the nineteenth century left much room for women's activity outside the home. The situation was slowly changing by the turn of the century when women started to gain access to higher education, jobs, etc. From the very beginning the Radstockist-Pashkovite movement was strongly characterised by active participation of women. It actually started with women who invited Lord Radstock to St. Petersburg and opened their homes for his preaching. His meetings "were disproportionately both attended and hosted by women" (Corrado 2000:56). Leskov argues that it was due to Chertkova's activity that Radstock had such warm welcome among the aristocracy of St. Petersburg (Leskov 1877:286). It was also women who provided a link between Pashkovite group and the Evangelical-Christian congregation after the male leaders were exiled out of Russia.<sup>102</sup>

Among the most active Pashkovites who were at the heart of the movement were two sets of sisters. Madames Chertkova and Pashkova were born in the family of Count Chernyshev-Kruglikov, a hero of the Patriotic War of 1812. He belonged to the Orthodox Church, and so did both of his daughters (Leskov 1877:278; Kovalenko 1996:72). Princesses Natalie Lieven and Vera Gagarina were daughters of Count von Pahlen. Their palaces, situated next to each other in Morskaya Street, were among the first homes to be opened to the evangelical meetings of Radstock.

#### **Madame Chertkova (1834-1923)**

Madame Elizaveta Chertkova, "the main Radstokian lady" (Leskov 1877:268), was the wife of the General Adjutant to Tsar Alexander II. She was one of those who first invited Radstock to St. Petersburg after she had met him abroad, heard his sermons, and decided that he was a man much needed in Russia (Karev 1999:129). The purpose of her trip to Europe in 1872 was to seek consolation after the death of her two youngest sons. Her son Misha was being brought up by a pietistic Lutheran governor. When dying he tried to

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<sup>102</sup> One should remember that at basically all stages of the evangelical movement in Russia the number of women (normally addressed as "sisters") in the churches surpassed the number of men (normally addressed as "brothers").

convince his mother to believe the gospel. This made such an impression on her that she gave up her social life at the court and went abroad looking for a form of Christianity which could quench her spiritual thirst. She visited protestant churches in England and Germany, but it was only when she heard Lord Radstock preach in a small gathering in Switzerland that she found what she wanted (Prokhanov 1993:54-55; Karev 1995:129).

According to Kovalenko, she returned to St. Petersburg a born-again Christian and started giving generously to the work of charity (Kovalenko 1996:70). Even Leskov noticed that she came back to Russia “a completely different person, more secure” and immediately offered a large sum of money to establish a shelter for homeless (Leskov 1877:283). Soon she invited Radstock to St. Petersburg and introduced him to her high ranking friends. Her home was among the five original homes opened to regular evangelical meetings. The others belonged to Princesses Lieven and Gagarina, Colonel Pashkov, and Count Bobrinskiy (Karev 1999:130).

Years later when the other homes stopped holding evangelical meetings for various reasons, hers continued functioning as a church for almost forty years until about 1912 when Dom Evangeliya was completed, the church building project that she personally and generously supported. She was a “member” there till the end of her life. She also wholeheartedly supported Pastor Fetler’s evangelistic work from the time of his arrival to St. Petersburg in 1907 until his banishment in 1915 (Kovalenko 1995. Online).

In her memoirs S. Lieven pointed out that “Chertkova was pietistic by nature and followed the church’s [Orthodox] rituals for a long time. Little by little she realised that new wine is not to be poured into old wineskins” (Lieven 1967:42). She was commended by Leskov for “exemplary holiness of her private life”. Although Leskov did not speak favourably of the movement in general, he made an exception for Chertkova, “She is considered an example of strict honesty, free of any suspicions like a Caesar’s wife . . . In spite of her straightforwardness and boiling activity, she is completely clean of any censures” (Leskov 1877:277-278).

Her “boiling activity” was mostly revealed in the areas of philanthropy and evangelism (Leskov 1877:277, 283). Along with other Pashkovites she was active with sewing and laundry shops, also used as an evangelistic tools (Lieven 1967:47-48). Besides, Madame Chertkova used to evangelize in the

Voronezhskaya gubernia (Ornatsky 1903:9). The result of her work was that in Perly, Ostrogozhky uezd, a congregation of evangelical Christians appeared (AUCECB 1989:104) after one of the peasants started gathering “sectarians” in his home to read Gospel and sing “Favourite Verses” (Terletsky 1891:81). S. Lieven also recalled that Chertkova sometimes “participated in the ministry of the word” (Lieven 1967:112), a common Russian evangelical idiom for preaching.

Along with her friends and relatives Madame Chertkova got involved in prison visitation. She was a member of the Lady’s Committee for Prison Visitation. S. Lieven recorded two accounts of how Chertkova kept coming to a prison hospital to read to the prisoners from the gospel and «gained souls of dying people» (Lieven 1967:37-42). It was through her ministry that a sailor-nurse Shilov who was considering a suicide got saved and later became a presbyter of the Evangelical Christian church in Dom Evangeliya (Kovalenko. Online. 15 August 2005).

Her oldest son Vladimir was of one of Tolstoy’s closest associates. He and his wife were active defending dissenters – Old Believers, Dukhobors, Molokans, Stundists, Baptists, Pashkovites – who were persecuted by the Orthodox Church and Autocracy.<sup>103</sup>

According to Karev, Chertkova had a prominent place among the founders and first leaders of Stundism in the North of Russia (Karev 1999:130).

### **Princess Natalie Lieven**

Another active Pashkovite lady who opened her home for evangelical meetings was Princess N. Lieven. In the words of Brandenburg, the palace of Prince and Princess Lieven became “a focal point of the evangelical movement in St. Petersburg” (Brandenburg 1977:25).

The Lievens, who were a Protestant family, were considered one of the oldest noble families of the Baltic. According to tradition they descended from the first Livonian chief who was baptised soon after 1200. In the eighteenth century Catherine the Great called the wife of General von Lieven from Estonia to act as a tutor to her grandchildren, among whom were the future tsars

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<sup>103</sup> Foreword to the collection of materials by Bonch-Bruevich “Presledovaniya Baptistov” Paris 1902, in Kovalenko. Online. 15 August 2005.

Alexander I and Nicholas I. Since then, and particularly from the reign of Alexander I, the von Lieven family remained close to the imperial court and held high positions. Count Lieven, a curator of Dorpat University, was among the friends of Golitsyn, who promoted the translation and printing of the Bible during the reign of Alexander I. He had tried to put men of the German revival movement into the theological faculty there, in order to overcome the rationalism which was prevailing in the Baltic lands at the time. Indeed, “this family was a witness to the biblical gospel in Russia for a hundred years” and became a kind of traditional link for Protestant influence in St. Petersburg (Brandenburg 1977:25, 30, 103-104).

Princess N. Lieven and her husband, the Master of Ceremonies at the court of Alexander II, were converted in England prior to Radstock’s visit to St. Petersburg (Nichols 1991:22). Before her marriage, Natalie Lieven visited England with her mother. There she found out about meetings in Blackwood's home. She went out of curiosity, but “the Word of God touched her heart and by faith she received forgiveness of sins and redemption in the blood of Jesus” (Lieven 1967:15-16). This happened around 1870 (Savinsky 1999:142).

Once the revival in St. Petersburg started, the Lievens’ home was opened to meetings not only on Sundays but also during the week. The meetings were usually held in the spacious white drawing room (Latimer 1908:79). S. Lieven recalled that, “Our guests often admired our house and my mother used to tell them, 'This house belongs to the Lord, I am nothing but Christ's servant’” (Lieven 1967:69). Chertkova commented on N. Lieven's devotion to Christ saying that, “I never met a person who would so fully without hesitation in all actions first of all seek the Lord's glory” (Lieven 1967:114). The Lieven household also held 8:30 a.m. devotions in which believers from among servants were present as well (Corrado 2000:85).

N. Lieven became a widow in 1881 when her husband died soon after his beloved monarch Alexander II was assassinated by revolutionary terrorists. N. Lieven had to raise her five children alone (Lieven 1967:67). Lieven paid special attention to bringing her children up “in faith” and in understanding the importance of conversion. The conversion experience was one of the hallmarks of the movement and her daughter Sophia’s conversion can serve as a good example. Sophia’s spiritual turning point took place at the age of fourteen after her mother inquired about her spiritual condition with the following words, “Do

you have the Holy Spirit?” (Lieven 1967:107). A year later she confronted her daughter regarding her unregenerate behaviour and suggested she pray.

My mother’s prayer struck me. For the first time I realised what real prayer was . . . I suddenly realised that my mother was actually talking to God about me . . . I knew what I was expected to do, to ask first for God’s forgiveness, and then for N. V.’s, but my whole being was against it . . . However God’s grace prevailed . . . Only after I knelt down I felt the deepness of my sinfulness . . . then for the first time I realised the greatness and mercy of Christ’s sacrifice on the Calvary. I would not dare to approach God so great and holy, but then I saw the cross of Christ . . . As soon as I started praying, the burden fell off and I received inner assurance that I was forgiven and accepted by the Lord . . . This was a decisive hour in my life . . . Both of my sisters experienced something similar, and when in the autumn we returned to the city we were full of desire to serve the Lord (Lieven 1967:108-110).

N. Lieven’s son Anatoliy was highly respected among Protestant Christians and in 1909 he was elected as the chairman of the Russian Evangelical Union (AUCECB 1989:154).

The palace at Bolshaya Morskaya 43 was functioning not only as a church but also as a hotel for preachers. N. Lieven served with her home, inviting Radstock, Baedeker, Müller, and others to stay with her family as guests. Many of Baedeker’s meetings, as well as those of G. Müller, were held in her house (Latimer 1908:9). The room usually set apart for the use of Dr. Baedeker was known as Malachite Hall. “This was the ‘prophet’s chamber,’ and many honoured servants of the Lord have enjoyed the hospitality provided by the noble hostess in that beautiful room, among others Mr. and Mrs. Müller” (Latimer 1908:79).

A number of outstanding men preached the gospel in this palace. Besides Radstock, Baedeker, and Müller, there were Stockmayer, Kargel, Fetler, Prokhanov, Nikolaii, Mazaev, and Odintsov, quite a mixture of Open Brethren, Keswick speakers, Russian evangelicals and Baptists. Baedeker and his wife, as well as Kargel and his wife and their four daughters, stayed there for extensive periods of time. The delegates of the 1884 and 1907 congresses had both sessions and meals there; Lieven also housed the six-week Bible courses for young preachers.<sup>104</sup> Princess Lieven’s palace at Bolshaya Morskaya 43 remained the centre of evangelical meetings for over 30 years, long after the first leaders of the movement were exiled. Savinsky must be mistaken when

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<sup>104</sup> Pavlov 1884?:28-29; Prokhanov 1993:125; Kovalenko Online. 15 August 2005.



writing that the meetings in her home stopped in the mid-1890s when she was forced to leave the country (Savinsky 1999:354). Kahle is closer to the truth, dating the end of the meetings in Lieven's palace as late as 1910 (Kahle 1978:83).

However, N. Lieven did much more for the movement than just open her home for meetings and guests. After Pashkov and Korff's banishment in 1884 she basically assumed leadership of the meetings held in her palace. Princess Lieven was reported to the tsar Alexander III, and was told to stop meetings, with the threat of exile. Her famous response was, "Ask His Majesty whom I have to obey, God or Emperor." Alexander III supposedly responded, "She is a widow; leave her in peace", so the meetings in her home continued for many more years (Fountain 1988:40; Lieven 1967:68).

N. Lieven did a lot to preserve the original identity of the Pashkovite movement. Although she was among those Pashkovites who decided to get baptized by Müller in 1883 (Savinsky 1999:354), at the meetings in her home believer's baptism was never a condition of having fellowship or sharing the Lord's Supper with those who held to infant baptism. Nichols thinks that "Lieven's ministry was crucial to the survival of the Evangelical Christians in Russia" (Nichols 1991:24).

When all the male leadership was removed, her leadership successfully fended off the aggressive Baptist doctrine. The Baptists attempted to take leadership of the Bible studies by asserting their doctrines, which were more restrictive and prohibitive than the Pashkovites'. Princess Lieven, in keeping with Colonel Pashkov's teaching, maintained an open fellowship in her home (Nichols 1991:22-23).

Nichols' statement holds some truth, but it seems to be an exaggeration. If one considers a list of guests and speakers at Bolshaya Morskaya 43, it becomes clear that Baptists were welcomed there along with other evangelicals. Nichols rightly calls Lieven's palace "the incubator for many of the future leaders of the Evangelical movement". Among those future leaders he mentions Prokhanov, radio evangelist Earl Poysti, and student leader Baron Nicolaii (Nichols 1991:23). Strangely enough, in his dissertation Nichols does not mention Kargel who was very close to Lieven's family and played an extremely important role in the history of the congregation that held meetings in Lieven's palace.

### **Madame Pashkova**

Madame Pashkova, Alexandra Ivanovna, is best known as E. Chertkova's sister and Pashkov's wife. She came to believe in "the pietistic gospel" when she met Radstock in England (Nichols 1991:41). Later she became instrumental in introducing her husband, a future leader of the Pashkovite movement, to Lord Radstock.

Lord Radstock was a regular guest in the Pashkov's home in St. Petersburg (Nichols 1991:41; Corrado 2000:41). At first Colonel Pashkov tried to avoid Radstock, but upon returning from his Moscow estate he could no longer do so as Radstock was to dine in his home. As usual the dinner was followed by Radstock's sermon and prayer. Pashkov listened patiently as Radstock made comments about the book of Romans (Nichols 1991:41), seemingly one of Radstock's favourite books. It was Radstock's prayer that deeply impressed Pashkov (AUCECB 1989:83). During the prayer Pashkov experienced something that changed his life for good. He afterwards declared, "It was as if a ray from heaven . . . shot through my breast. I arose from my knees, ran into my bedroom, and gave myself to God" (Latimer 1908:82).

Along with Madame Chertkova and Countess Gagarina, Madame Pashkova participated in running sewing rooms for poor girls in St. Petersburg (Lieven 1967:47-52). She also actively participated in musical ministry at the meetings in her home. Mrs Pashkova frequently played the organ while her three daughters sang during the meetings in their palace (Lieven 1967:18; Nichols 1991:42).

### **Princess Vera Gagarina**

Princess Vera Gagarina was a sister of Princess N. Lieven. At the time of the St. Petersburg revival she was a young, pretty, happily married, rich woman who had everything that a person could wish for. She got converted at Radstock's meeting being struck by the verse in Genesis 3, where God addressed Adam with the words, "Where are you?" At the end of the meeting Lord Radstock said he had a feeling that somebody among those present should give oneself to Christ or maybe had already done so. He asked that person to stand up and Gagarina did so. Since then even her appearance changed. S. Lieven recalled that Gagarina "began to dress simply and



modestly, though with good taste". She undertook hospital and prison visitation reading the Word of God to the sick and imprisoned. For the rest of her life she was known for her generosity toward the poor and for her zeal in spreading the Word of God" (Lieven 1967:34-36). Gagarina was also responsible for two sewing rooms (Lieven 1967:48). Together with Konstanza Kozlyaninova, Princess Gagarina oversaw visitation of poor women in the Pesky district.<sup>105</sup>

During summer time Pashkov's cousin, Gagarina, along with Konstanza Kozlyaninova (both ladies were the members of SESER), used to visit Gagarina's husband's estate Sergievskoe (Tul'skaya gubernia). They took along religious literature and gathered many people both at home and at the Gagarin's school for girls. They explained the Gospel and sang hymns (Terletsky 1891:80-81). V. Gagarina's evangelistic activity in the country is described by archpriest Sakharov in this way:

Princess Gagarina, Pashkov's cousin, is the most zealous preacher of the Pashkovite falsehood in province. She diligently propagates this heresy in her Sergievsky estate, in Tula gubernia, Krapivensky uезд. She gathered listeners to her place or visited homes of her acquaintances where listeners gathered, mainly women, distributed books and brochures, etc. There were occasions when right in the middle of the village trade fair her home analogion was brought out to the market place and among loud market crowd the sonorous voice of this preacher was being heard. She argued that works did not mean anything in the matter of salvation, and a man was saved only by faith. We heard this teacher ourselves and were convinced that she was straightforward and hid nothing. "We have sinned", said the preacher during one of her talks, "we were born in sin and do not have power to gain God's forgiveness of sins by ourselves; but the Lord in His love towards us sent His only begotten Son for our salvation; He took our sins upon Himself and suffered death on the cross. So, after we are saved, we have a heavenly home prepared for us; and we will enter there. He invites and waits for you to come. He says, 'Come to me'. He wants only your faith in the Saviour who has redeemed us from sin and death"... When a peasant woman mentioned that they often address their Lady, and She, their Heavenly Mediatress, helps them, and they address also the Saints, and they intercede for them before God, the preacher noted that such prayers are useless... Then she added that, "you may if you like address our Lady or Saints but this will be of no use for your salvation" . . . After Gagarina finished with a prayer, she said that those who had heard her should not keep this to themselves but pass it on to other people so that they could also be saved (Sakharov 1897:21-23).

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<sup>105</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 43, in Corrado 2000:99.

Sakharov admits that Gagarina established an excellent school in her estate and an exemplary hospital for common people, and used these establishments to spread her teaching (Sakharov 1897:23). During Gagarina's absence the meetings were held by local Pashkovite activists. The "Pashkovshchina" (Pashkovism) continued to exist in Sergievskoe even after it was forbidden on 24 May 1884 (Terletsky 1891:80-81).

Later, when Saveliy Alekseev (a future presbyter of the Second Evangelical Christian congregation in St. Petersburg) was exiled and his wife and daughter followed him to the Caucasus, their son was left with V. Gagarina who brought him up in her home (Lieven 1967:77).

Gagarina also helped with nondenominational work among students. S. Lieven recalled that when this ministry was developing V. Gagarina always remained a "proven source" of financial help (Lieven 1967:120).

### **Princess Catherine Galitsina**

Princess Catherine Galitsina was a granddaughter of the President of the Russian Bible Society and a cousin of N. Lieven. Princess Galitsina and her two daughters came to faith through the ministry of Lord Radstock during one of his visits to St. Petersburg. She was remembered as a very gentle and soft person. She patiently endured the loss of almost all her fortune after her husband's death (Lieven 1967:50).

Princess C. Galitsina must have written memoirs because Peter Masters quotes from them when describing the beginning of St. Petersburg revival,

By Heaven's power all doors were thrown open to him [Radstock] – halls, chapels and private houses; whole crowds pressed in to hear the glad tidings. It was just after a week of religious rites that I went to see my cousin, Princess Lieven. There I met Lord Radstock, who had just arrived in St. Petersburg (Masters *Men of purpose*, 58, in Fountain 1988:22).

Like E. Chertkova, in the beginning Princess Galitsina was strongly attached to the Orthodox Church.

Catherine derived great pleasure from the pomp and splendour of the Russian Orthodox Church ritual, and she told the English lord about the emotions it stirred within her. But Radstock was not prepared to leave her trusting the shallow, emotional feelings drawn from ritualistic religion. He wanted her to know Christ, and told her how she could (Masters, 54, in Fountain 1988:22).

Searching for God she began to attend every possible meeting held by Radstock. Later she wrote, “At length, after a most blessed sermon, I remained for a private conversation and there we both knelt in prayer before the One who became my Saviour forever” (Masters, 54, in Fountain 1988:22). P. Masters points out that Princess N. Lieven soon followed her cousin in “going to Christ for forgiveness of sins and an experience of new life” (Masters, 54, in Fountain 1988:22), but he must be mistaken with chronological order, because N. Lieven had converted a few years earlier.

Later on, while in England, Galitsina visited Radstock’s home, stayed with his family, and was very impressed by Radstock’s life (Fountain 1988:51-52). Her daughters were also involved in the Pashkovite ministry, busy with the sewing room in Pesky district (Lieven 1967:50).

### **Countess Elena Ivanovna Shuvalova**

Countess Shuvalova, born as Countess Chernysheva-Kruglikova (sister-in-law of Madame Chertkova), was another zealous follower of Radstock’s teaching (Prugavin 1909:194). According to Kovalenko, she was among those few people who were converted during Radstock’s visit to Moscow, an ancient Russian Orthodox citadel (Kovalenko 1996:70).

Countess Shuvalova was the wife of statesman Petr Shuvalov, the head of the Main Police Department. Due to her position, she was quite successful in interceding on behalf of the believers who did not have a “voice” and were suffering persecution. Ironically, some evangelical meetings took place right in the room of Shuvalov’s coachman, who was a believer, after such meetings were strictly forbidden (Lieven, 1967:74-75).

Along with other Pashkovite women Countess Shuvalova engaged in visiting hospitals (Corrado 2000:101).

Heier uses the Shuvalov family as an example to show that the soil of the revival was prepared years before Radstock’s arrival in 1874. In 1869 Petr Shuvalov went to Pastor Dalton requesting him to console his brother Pavel Shuvalov whose wife had died. Dalton’s visit to their home became the beginning of regular group meetings of their relatives and friends for reading and discussing the Bible passages. Heier points out that according to various sources, in the 1860s and 1870s there were other independent Bible study groups in St. Petersburg (Heier 2002:50).

### **Madame Yuliya Zassetskaya (died in 1883)**

Madame Zassetskaya, a daughter of Davydov, the famous soldier-poet of the Napoleonic wars, became another “ardent follower of Radstock” (Fountain 1988:32). She and her youngest sister, Countess E. D. Viskonty, provided a strong link between the movement and such famous Russian writers as Leskov, Dostoyevsky, and Solov’ev (Heier 2002:68). Upon her invitations Dostoevsky visited Radstock’s meetings, “but found it difficult to see any good in it” (Heier 2002:69; Fountain 1988:32). She was a close friend of Dostoevsky and his wife Anna Grigor’evna. Many times the great writer argued with her about religious issues but could not win her back to the “national” church. She considered herself no less Russian than he was; besides she knew the Bible and modern works of English and German theologians (Heier 2002:69-70).

It was Zassetskaya who provided Leskov with materials for his book about Radstock, “The Great Schism”, but she found the book offensive and felt guilty (Heier 2002:80). However, two years later, in 1878 Leskov admitted in *Religiozno-obshchestvennyy vestnik* (Religious Community Herald) that he was too hard on Radstock. This restored his friendship with Zassetskaya (Heier 2002:80).

Zassetskaya opened the first wards for the homeless of St. Petersburg. She spent all her fortune on the poor and was personally involved in operating the ward (Heier 2002:68-69). Pobedonostsev reported that Yuliya Zassetskaya has in her care shelters in the outskirts of Petersburg where she goes there to preach and to pray; in her prayers she avoids mentioning the Mother of God and Saints (Pobedonostsev 1880:3).

She employed her giftedness in literature and translated into Russian John Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress”, an extremely popular book among the Radstockists. It was published in 1878 in three parts and highly commended by Leskov in the same year in *Religiozno-obshchestvennyy vestnik* (Religious Community Herald) (Heier 2002:69).<sup>106</sup> Zassetskaya also translated Bunyan’s “The Holy War” (Fountain 1988:32). In 1877 she published a collection of

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<sup>106</sup> This was not the first publication of *Pilgrim’s Progress* in Russian as it is indicated in “The History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the USSR” (AUCECB 1989:85). The book had been published in Russian in 1782 under the title *Lyubopytnoe i dostopamyatnoe puteshestvie khristianina k vechnosti cherez mnogie priklyucheniya*.

devotional sketches in the spirit of religious awakening called *Chasy dosuga* (The Hours of leisure) (Heier 2002:69).

She was the only person among the Radstockists who openly announced her break with the Orthodox Church, which was an act of great courage at that time (Heier 2002:69).

### **Madame Maria G. Peuker (died in 1881)**

Madame Peuker nee Lashkareva was another passionate follower of Radstock. She was highly educated and had many high standing friends in major European cities. In 1872 she participated in the World's Prison Congress held in London and was a chairman of St. Petersburg's prison committee, which upon her initiative founded in St. Petersburg a shelter for women released from prisons. She personally ran this shelter for a few years (Heier 2002:82-83). In 1875 while abroad, M. Peuker and her daughter Alexandra were converted to Christ through the preaching of D. Moody (AUCECB 1989:84).

M. Peuker was an editor of a monthly magazine *Russkiy Rabochiy* [Russian Workman] that was being published in St. Petersburg in 1875-1886. Leskov, who at first was very critical towards this enterprise, later changed his opinion and wrote to Madame M. Peuker in 1879 that the magazine should be restored. That same year he became its consultant and published some of his own articles on its pages. M. Peuker's daughter, Alexandra Ivanovna, continued her mother's work of publishing the magazine. Leskov's participation made the magazine very popular. Peuker carried on extensive correspondence with her readers (Heier 2002:81-82).

Peuker evangelized by the means of both written and oral words. Ornatsky points out that she used to evangelize in Novgorodskaya gubernia (Ornatsky 1903:9). Well after Pashkov's banishment, Alexandra Ivanovna Peuker often spoke at the meetings held by Madame Kamensky in the workers' neighbourhoods. Those meetings were attended by some foreign guests who also spoke there. The daughters of Colonel Pashkov, who had returned to their homeland, sang there their duets.<sup>107</sup> Women played an especially important role in musical ministry. S. Lieven recalled that A. I. Peuker played the harmonium and a group of young girls, including Pashkov's daughters, three daughters of

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<sup>107</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 105, in Corrado 2000:86-87.

the minister of justice Pahlen, and two Golitsyn princesses sang evangelistic songs (Lieven 1967:18).

### **Countess M. Yasnovskaya**

Although Radstock's ministry in Moscow did not have the same resonance as in St. Petersburg, among those sincerely converted there were already mentioned Countess Shuvalova and Countess M. Yasnovskaya. The latter worked later with Baptist Pastor Fetler in St. Petersburg. Yasnovskaya was preaching, editing the magazine "Gost", and translating Christian literature (Kovalenko 1996:70).

#### **4.1.1.2 Colonel Pashkov (1831-1902)**

Pashkov and his ministry provided a major link between the meetings held by Radstock and those of Evangelical Christians. He assumed leadership of the group after Radstock's first visit, and later became the main preacher when Radstock was not allowed to return to Russia (Fountain 1988:37; Kovalenko 1996:73). Under Pashkov's guidance the evangelical movement became truly Russian in character, language, and practice, spreading beyond the drawing rooms of Russian nobility and reaching other classes of society. His influence was notable to the extent that participants of the St. Petersburg evangelical revival became known as Pashkovites. This man who stood at the beginning of St. Petersburg's evangelical movement and shaped it significantly for the future certainly deserves close attention in this paper.

Vasiliy Aleksandrovich Pashkov, one of the wealthiest Russian noblemen of his day, came from a distinguished aristocratic family and was one of the most popular members of the St. Petersburg society (Fountain 1988:32). V. Pashkov was the eleventh generation from Grigoriy Pashkevich who emigrated from Poland to Russia in the late 1500s (Corrado 2000:31). As a child he attended an elite military school of the Corps of Pages and upon graduation he was accepted into *Kavalergardy* (the Chevalier Guards) with the rank of cornet. He retired as a colonel, the highest rank within the Guards (Corrado 2000:35).

Pashkov was regarded as a "personal friend" by Tsar Alexander II (Nichols 1991:47). Their palaces facing the Neva River were not far from each other. "Connections" mean everything in Russia and Pashkov was certainly a man of means and connections, related to a number of high ministers. For



example, his sister Ekaterina was married to Aleksandr Timashev, a general adjutant who served as Minister of Internal Affairs from 1868 to 1878. The two men were friends. His wife's sister Elizaveta was married to Grigoriy Ivanovich Chertkov, an infantry general and general-adjutant to the tsar from 1870 until his death in 1884. Pashkov's uncle, Mikhail Vasilievich, was known for his leadership of the Department of External Commerce (Corrado 2000:35-36).

By the time of Radstock's arrival in St. Petersburg Pashkov had already retired from the military, enjoying good connections and enormous wealth (Bogolyubov 1912:7). He owned three large estates besides his grand palaces in St. Petersburg. It is important to name them because they were to become the Pashkovites' evangelical nests. Vetoshkino was located in the Sergachevskiy uezd of the Nizhniy Novgorod gubernia (Kovalenko 1996:72). Krekshino, where Pashkov would preach most actively, was located in the Zvenigorodskiy uezd in Moscow gubernia (Ornatsky 1903:9). Matcherka was located in the Morshanskiy uezd of the Tambovskaya gubernia. He also had estates in Orenburzhskaya and Tverskaya gubernias (Nichols 1991:41; Kovalenko 1996:72). Pashkov also owned copper mines in the Urals in the Ufa gubernia near Bogoyavlenskiy (Corrado 2000:37-38).

Pashkov's religious life was practically non-existent before he met Radstock. "Pashkov was completely indifferent towards the matters of faith; in canonical issues he was childishly ignorant" (Zhivotov 1891:23-24). Pashkov later described his life as an Orthodox in the following words, "without Christ, foreign to the testament of the promise, without hope and without God in the world... For forty years I lived a vain, sinful life, far from God, with an accusing conscience, to the vexation of others and to my own damnation".<sup>108</sup> Interestingly enough, during this "vain" period of Pashkov's life, the Russian Bible Society was holding its annual meetings in one of the halls of his palace.<sup>109</sup>

Pashkov's conversion was a direct result of Lord Radstock's ministry in St. Petersburg. M. Korff, who dated his conversion as March 1874, claimed that Pashkov's conversion preceded his own by one month. Pashkov had reportedly spent two months at his Moscow estate after Radstock's arrival trying to avoid

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<sup>108</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 68-69, in Corrado 2000:38.

<sup>109</sup> Dalton, *Lord Radstock and Colonel Pashkoff*, 107-108, in Corrado 2000:38.

the English preacher, which puts a possible date of Radstock's arrival a few months earlier than commonly believed.<sup>110</sup>

Later Pashkov explained his conversion experience to an Orthodox opponent in the following way:

Being enlightened through the light of God's word, I saw myself as estranged and hostile, the logical result of my evil deeds (Coll 1:21). I recognised that I was a lost sinner, that I was incapable of doing anything for my own salvation... I turned to Him, as I had lost any trust in myself, and confessed to Him my sins and the confused depravity of my heart. The Lord allowed me to believe in the forgiveness of my sins in His name...<sup>111</sup>

Another account is found in Pashkov's letter addressed to the tsar and written after his banishment:

There was a day in my life when I saw myself accused before the throne of Judgement of holy God who hates sin. His Word by the Holy Spirit reached me and awakened my conscience, and now I can speak about Jesus Christ. The Light of the Word, the holy law of God, enlightened all hidden corners of my heart and revealed to me the depths of evil in me, which I had not even suspected. He awakened in me the desire to get freed from sin, which had bounded me in many different ways . . . I wanted to have this forgiveness from holy God and a personal experience of being freed from the power of sin (Lieven 1967:60).

Following this remarkable experience of "giving himself to God", Pashkov's lifestyle changed drastically. According to Korff he became "a mighty weapon in the Lord's hands".<sup>112</sup> He started spending hours reading Scripture and praying, evangelising, and spending his assets on the poor.<sup>113</sup> Pashkov evangelised his upper-class friends in any possible ways, for example, "by a familiar and persuasive method known as 'button-holing'" (Latimer 1908:35). In his youth Pashkov had gained the reputation of a good dancer (Zhiivotov 1891:24). Later in his life a woman commented that he had tried to "catechise her during a mazurka".<sup>114</sup> The grand ballrooms of his palaces were eventually converted into prayer halls (Pobedonostsev 1880:1).

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<sup>110</sup> Karev 1999:124-127; Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 15, in Corrado 2000:40.

<sup>111</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 169-170, in Corrado 2000:42.

<sup>112</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:128.

<sup>113</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:127

<sup>114</sup> Anatole Leroy-Beauliev, *The Empire of the Tsar and the Russians* Vol. 3 NY: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1902, p. 471, in Nichols 1991:40.

Both of Pashkov's mansions in St. Petersburg, at French Embankment 10 and Lomanov Pereulok 3 in Vyborg district, became places of public worship services (Kovalenko 1996:73). Korff recalled that in Pashkov's palace, one of the largest palaces in St. Petersburg where the halls were naturally big, at first meetings were small, but with time those halls became so overcrowded that there was not enough room for everybody.<sup>115</sup> Archpriest Sakharov wrote emotionally, "What a heart melting sight these meetings were! A cabman in his soiled *zipun* and tar smelling boots sits next to a refined aristocratic woman" (Sakharov 1897:18).

Pashkov did not limit himself to meetings in his home. Soon after his conversion Pashkov started taking the gospel to hospitals, prisons, and factories. His methods were personal conversations, reading Bible passages, and handing out New Testaments and booklets. He visited stables with cabmen, factories, plants, and any place he could find crowds of people and preach (Pobedonostsev 1880:1; Sakharov 1897:18). In this way over time Pashkov's preaching ministry grew out of the palaces into the streets. Pashkov reportedly went to the homes of the rich and the poor, where he read the Gospel, explained it, and urged his listeners to believe in Christ and repent (Feofan 1880:1).

Pashkov learnt much working with Radstock over the course of four years in St. Petersburg.<sup>116</sup> Meetings led by Pashkov were similar in style and content to Radstock's, except that Pashkov preached in Russian. Pashkov was even criticised for copying not only the content of Radstock's sermons, but also his manner of speaking (Bogolyubov 1912:7). The fact that Pashkov's teaching did not differ from that of Radstock's was noticed by other Orthodox opponents. "The meetings and talks of Radstock and Pashkov were identical in both content and form" (Ornatsky 1903:7). "Pashkov adopted Radstock's teaching in all fullness and even became such a popular teacher himself that he surpassed his mentor" (Sakharov 1897:18).

Obviously, Pashkov did not have any formal theological training. He did not actually believe it was necessary, saying, "I do not think that in order to be a servant of God a certificate, diploma, or title is necessary... I am a preacher of

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<sup>115</sup> Korff, *Moi vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:125.

the Word of God just as you [his Orthodox opponents] are”.<sup>117</sup> What Pashkov learnt he learnt from Radstock and from his own systematic reading of the Scripture. He used to get up early in the morning and read Scripture and pray for two hours.<sup>118</sup> According to the report of the Nizhegorodskiy governor to the Minister of the Interior, it was only two years after Pashkov’s conversion that he was already holding “readings of the gospel to people . . . with many attending the readings” (Zapiska 1884:12). Thus, in 1876 Pashkov started preaching in his estate, and from 1882 he was travelling across other gubernias, leaving after his visits “centres of propaganda” (Kushnev 1916:47).

It seems that Pashkovites really believed that simply reading the Bible to the illiterate was powerful enough to help people transform their lives. According to a newspaper article in 1880, peasants travelled up to sixty miles to hear the Gospel.<sup>119</sup> In 1882 Pashkov was forced to leave his Krekshino estate in Moscow gubernia for holding meetings (Corrado 2000:89-90). The Bishop of Tambov reported that Pashkov visited his Matcherskoe estate twice during the summer of 1882, each time holding religious discourses with his own workers and others (Zapiska 1884:21).

One can easily trace the connection between Pashkov’s way of doing ministry and Radstock’s. Pashkov’s goal in evangelism was no less than to bring to faith the entire population of Russia, including the emperor himself (*Grazhdanin* 13 (1876)), while Radstock was hoping to meet the Russian emperor to tell him about salvation in Christ and “to sing with him a new song to the Lamb”, but this was not meant to happen (Karev 1999:126). These men were used to thinking in a stately manner regardless of how naive they could be at times!

Originally Pashkov was hoping to accomplish his goals without creating a separate sect outside the Russian Orthodox Church (Corrado 2000:49). In this he concurred with Radstock, who “did not establish any separate sect and required nothing similar from his followers” (Leskov 1877:291). Another commonality was avoidance of theological debates with the Orthodox. Seeing

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<sup>116</sup> Even after their banishments these two men stayed in contact until Pashkov’s death (Corrado 2000:46).

<sup>117</sup> *Sluchaynaya vstrecha*, 76-77, in Corrado 2000:60.

<sup>118</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:127.

<sup>119</sup> Quarterly Reporter (July 1880): 12, in Corrado 2000:87.

proclaiming the Gospel of Christ as his only goal, Pashkov explained that “such a discussion would not further the cause of my Christian preaching. That is an issue of doctrine which I do not touch upon in my speaking”.<sup>120</sup>

Like Radstock he did not resort to logical proofs when persuading people to believe.<sup>121</sup> An unbelieving professor, Emile Dillon, put it this way:

Revelation to him [Pashkov] was very much more than the conclusion of a syllogism. Conversion by argument is very often no conversion at all. The true religious apostle communicates his faith, his enthusiasm, his charity, as fire kindles fire. For religion is catching, although it is only the truly religious man who is aflame. To the supernatural world there is no access by mere reasoning, one can perceive only with the inner sense, if at all, the fine threads which link the petty humdrum life of men with the calm sphere of the eternal. Hence Colonel Pashkoff never took his inspiration from outside; his words flowed from an out-welling reservoir within; and went from heart to heart, drawing people towards him in some subtle way, virtue, as it were, going out of him (Dillon, 334, in Corrado 2000:58).

Pashkov was not understood by the Baptists for his acceptance of infant baptism as a legitimate ordinance (Alexii 1908:322-323). The records also lack particular accounts of communion services being held during the “readings” of the Bible and prayer meetings, although the AUCECB’s “History” mentions that it was Radstock who introduced St. Petersburg believers to “open” communion (AUCECB 1989:87). Among early Pashkovites there were no developed worship forms; they came together for Bible readings that consisted of collective singing, a sermon, and more singing (Pobedonostsev 1880:1). In this way Pashkov maintained “the informal distinctive of British pietism” (Nichols 1991:105).

Pashkov’s views on the ordinances must have changed over the course of about ten years following his conversion, as he was baptised in 1882<sup>122</sup> or 1883.<sup>123</sup> Reportedly Pashkov and three other believers were baptised by George Müller, and the Lord’s Supper started to be held each Sunday at the

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<sup>120</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 78-79, in Corrado 2000:50-51.

<sup>121</sup> This is still the case with most of Russian believers. There is something about Eastern mentality and perception that is not as rational or logical or systematic as Western

<sup>122</sup> Kovalenko 1996:74; Gutsche W. *Westliche Quellen des Russischen Stundismus*, S. 60 with a reference to Pierson A. T. *George Mueller of Bristol*. London, 1901, p. 65-71, in AUCECB 1989:87.

<sup>123</sup> If Corrado is right and the Müllers’ stayed in St. Petersburg from January through March of 1883 (Corrado 2005:105), then Pashkov must have been baptized in 1883.

Lievens' palace (Corrado 2000:68), an innovation that must have started after Müller's visit. However, this new practice related primarily to the post-Pashkov period of the congregation's history, since Pashkov was forced to leave Russia in 1884. In spite of being baptized himself, Pashkov never imposed believer's baptism upon others, nor did he make it a requirement for participation in the Lord's Supper; rather he interceded before the Baptists on behalf of believers who had been baptized only as infants (Alexii 1908:322).

Just as the authorities could not tolerate having Radstock in Russia, they also could not tolerate Pashkov. Even his wealth and connections were unable to save him from being banished from his motherland. Pashkov's expulsion did not come without warning. In 1878 the authorities became concerned with Pashkov's meetings and ordered the city police to ban such gatherings. However, by 1880 the meetings were more popular than ever, welcoming people of all classes and ages and being copied by some of Pashkov's followers (Pobedonostsev 1882:6). According to Kushnev, Pashkov was first forbidden to preach in St. Petersburg in 1877 and then again in 1880 (Kushnev 1916:47). In May 1880 Pobedonostsev wrote to the tsar in a report concerning the Pashkovites and Pashkov in particular, "While there is time we must take measures to put an end to the Pashkovite and similar meetings . . . to forbid informal prayer meetings and private preaching of Pashkov . . . send Pashkov, at least for some time, out of Russia's boundaries" (Pobedonostsev 1880:4).

The "liberal" tsar Alexander II agreed with the proposed measures and as a result St. Petersburg *gradonachal'nik* [the city governor] received an order to keep under surveillance and not allow any prayer meetings in the homes of Pashkov or his followers (Pobedonostsev 1882:6). Furthermore, Pashkov was "invited" to leave the country for some time, the meetings were temporarily stopped, and Pashkov went abroad for the summer of 1880 (Pobedonostsev 1882:7; Corrado 2000:52). When he returned from England he moved his activity to Krekshino, Moskovskaya gubernia (Nichols 1991:66), and to Nizhegorodskaya, Tambovskaya, Tul'skaya inner gubernias (Skvortsov 1893:57; Terletsky 1891:74). Prayer meetings with preaching, organisation of schools and hospitals, distribution of booklets, and charity remained his preferred evangelistic methods (Ornatsky 1903:9).

In July 1880 the governor of Nizhegorodskaya gubernia reported to the Minister that since 1876, whenever Pashkov would come to his Vetoshkino



estate for three or four months, he would read and explain the Gospel to the peasants. He held similar “readings” at about ten neighbouring estates. After the “readings” he distributed New Testaments and other booklets. Pashkov travelled from Vetoshkino to other villages only on Sundays and holidays when people were not working. During haymaking he went right into the fields to preach. Pashkov held regular 10 a.m. “readings” in the Vetoshkino hospital and 3 p.m. “readings” in his home. In Pashkov’s absence during the summer of 1880 the “readings” were conducted by a hospital nurse and a manager of his estate (Zapiska 1884:12-13).

When newspaper rumours about the Pashkovites ceased Pashkov returned to the capital (Skvortsov 1893:57). In spite of the ban Pashkov resumed his activity when he returned to St. Petersburg in 1881,<sup>124</sup> and in 1882 he became even more active preaching openly with Count Bobrinskiy (Pobedonostsev 1882:7). Pobedonostsev reminded the Minister of the Interior of the tsar’s orders of 1880 and insisted on sending Pashkov and Bobrinskiy abroad (Pobedonostsev 1882:9). It was also reported that in the summer of 1882 Pashkov twice visited his Matcherka estate (Morshanskiy uezd) and held religious talks. After he left the estate a teacher named Bykova started to gather pupils on Sundays and teach them songs from the Pashkovite songbooks *Lyubimye stukhi* and *Radostnye pesni Siona* (Zapiska 1884:21).

Pashkov’s contacts with evangelical groups and individuals are evident from a number of reports to the office of ober-procurator. Around the time of the Rikenau Baptist Conference in Tavricheskaya gubernia held on 20-22 May 1882, Pashkov was in that gubernia visiting Berdyanskiy uezd and preaching in Astrakhanka, Novovasil’evka, and Novospasskiy villages (Zapiska 1884:14). It was probably then that Pashkov came up with the idea of holding a congress that would bring together the various evangelical groups.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Nichols mentions another forced leaving of St. Petersburg. After Alexander II’s assassination on March 1, 1881, Pashkov had to leave the capital again due to Pobedonostsev’s pressure on the new tsar Alexander III. Pashkov and Korff moved their work to the Volga region where they met Stundists, Baptists, Pashkovites, and Molokans and supplied them with Christian books and tracts (Nichols 1991:66).

<sup>125</sup> According to Terletsky, Pashkov visited Molokans in Novovasil’evka, Tavricheskaya gubernia in 1881 (Terletsky 1891:130). The author cannot tell if it was the same visit or two different ones.

The Consistory report mentions that Pashkov sent Wieler 13 poods<sup>126</sup> of New Testaments and other books (Zapiska 1884:14). Y. Delyakov, who is identified in a report as a colporteur of the SESER, received money and books from Pashkov; he also travelled to St. Petersburg frequently, and had written correspondence with Pashkov (Zapiska 1884:14-16, 18). It was also reported that a presbyter in Prishib village, “the main sectarian point with a prayer house in which the sectarians gather twice a day for Bible reading and singing”, annually received from St. Petersburg large amounts of books and up to 500 roubles (Zapiska 1884:17). Pashkov was in touch with Molokans in villages Androsovka and Tyaglovo-Ozero, Nikolaevskiy uezd, concerning matters of faith and provided religious literature for free distribution (Zapiska 1884:17). It was also reported that Pashkov suggested that some poor Stundists from Dubovyy Log village move to better lands in his Orenburg estate; he promised financial help to those who could not afford to relocate (Zapiska 1884:20). Obviously, Pashkov was making special efforts to build relationships with different evangelical groups.

In 1883 Pashkov<sup>127</sup> and Korff began to plan for the united conference (Nichols 1991:67). Actually, the Pashkovites had been warned by authorities not to hold the congress, but they proceeded with their plans (Corrado 2000:151). Uniting various evangelical groups seemed to hold crucial importance for them. Opposition to Pashkov climaxed around the time of St. Petersburg’s congress of evangelical believers in April 1884. The police dismissed the congress and arrested visiting delegates. Evidently the Pashkovites’ attempt to unite different evangelical groups was “the last drop” for the authorities.

A month later (on April 30 – May 1) Wieler called the first Baptist Congress in Novovasil’evka where the Baptist Union was formed. Pavlov mentions that Pashkov was present (Pavlov 1999:247), although this is very unlikely. The minutes of this Congress in Alexii’s “Materials” do not contain Pashkov’s name among the guests. The only person from St. Petersburg mentioned is Kargel (Alexii 1908:569-570). Furthermore, Kargel’s letter containing a detailed description of the Congress was addressed to a “dear

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<sup>126</sup> A pood is a unit of weight, used in Russia, equal to 36.1 pounds or 16.39 kilograms.

<sup>127</sup> It could be that Pashkov felt that his time in Russia was getting short. According to Terletsky, in 1883 Pashkov held “talks” in St. Petersburg openly for everybody (Terletsky 1891:77).

brother in the Lord”, most probably Pashkov (Klippenstein 1992:43). Kargel would not have written this report had Pashkov been present.

On 24 May 1884 the tsar issued the command to close the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading which was still functioning and to take measures to prevent further spreading of Pashkov’s teaching over the territory of the empire. The Society that had done so much for spreading Scripture was closed; books and tracts that had not been distributed were confiscated (Kovalenko 1996:74). Soon the Pashkovites found themselves under the strict watch of the police. In June the banishment followed. Pashkov was summoned by the Minister of Justice and given a document to sign promising not to hold meetings in his home, not to preach, not to distribute Bibles, not to pray in his own words, etc.

Pashkov answered that he could have given up distributing tracts, but to give up distributing the Bible, God’s holy Word, was more than he could do. According to his belief, such a demand could only come from those who had broken any link with Christianity, because the “Bible contains genuine teaching of Christ which all ought to follow” (Prugavin 1909:248). The authorities gave Pashkov and Korff only two days to get out of the country, which was reluctantly changed to fourteen days for Pashkov. Then he left for Paris. Korff’s request to delay his departure due to his wife’s pregnancy was denied.<sup>128</sup> Pashkov’s family joined him in Paris two years later.<sup>129</sup>

After 1884 Pashkov travelled and preached across Europe, in Paris he preached in connection with McCall Mission. He also contributed financially to General Booth of the Salvation Army, Hudson Taylor of China Inland Mission, and French preacher M. Saillens.<sup>130</sup> Pashkov also continued supporting the Guinesses in London who ran the Institute for Home and Foreign Missions (Nichols 1991:71). In addition, Pashkov and his wife had a close friendship with the Comptons of the “Pont de Brique” ministry in Paris (Nichols 1991:71).

While in exile Pashkov regularly corresponded with his Russian friends and co-workers Princess N. Lieven, V. Gagarina, I. Kargel, and I. Prokhanov (Corrado 2000:163). He also wrote to the tsar, requesting permission to return to St. Petersburg temporarily. He managed to convince the authorities that he

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<sup>128</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 63-64, in Corrado 2000:160.

<sup>129</sup> Pashkov, *Iz Perepisky*, 74, in Corrado 2000:161; Nichols 1991:71.

needed to return to Russia to see his ill son and to settle his business affairs. Pashkov was allowed to return to Russia only once. As is often the case with studying Russian evangelical history, there is a problem with dates. According to Nichols, it was in 1887 for a three month visit (Nichols 1991:71). According to Kovalenko, Pashkov was allowed to come for a three month visit when his son was ill in 1892-1893 (Kovalenko 1996:75). Savinsky also dates this return to 1892 (Savinsky 1999:181). Pashkov's visit made a strong impression upon the young S. Lieven. She remembered the words of his prayer, "Show them what Thou canst do in Russia through a handful of people fully dedicated to Thee" (Lieven 1967:62).

During Pashkov's stay in St. Petersburg the tsar heard of more prayer meetings and Bible-readings. He sent for Pashkov and pronounced his famous verdict, "I hear you have resumed your old practices . . . which you know I will not permit . . . I will not suffer you to defy me. If I had thought you would have repeated your offences, you would not have been allowed to return. Now go; and never set your foot upon Russian soil again" (Latimer 1908:36). Ironically, in spite of considering Pashkov "a dangerous man for Orthodox Russia" and insisting on his banishment, Pobedonostsev respected him.<sup>131</sup>

Pashkov died on 31 January 1902 (New Style) at the age of seventy-one. His family and his close friend Korff were with him during his final days. Theodore Monod, a well-known French pastor, held a large funeral service at the Church of St. Martin in Paris. Pashkov was buried in Rome in the Cimitero Acatolico al Testaccio (Protestant Cemetery). Princess Vera Gagarina sent her three nieces, Princesses Mary, Alexandra, and Sophie Lieven to attend the funeral (Lieven 1967:63).

### **Pashkov's theology**

Knowing that Pashkov never received theological training, that his conversion and discipleship came as results of Radstock's ministry, and that the two stayed in touch for the rest of their lives allows one to expect that their theology would be very similar. As already mentioned, doctrinally Pashkov did not introduce anything significantly different from that believed by Radstock.

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<sup>130</sup> Dillon, 336; Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 54, in Corrado 2000:165.

<sup>131</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:127.

Besides, Pashkov himself declared that he held to the same “Bible Christianity” as Lord Radstock (Fountain 1988:37). This fact was noticed by both friends and foes. Both Radstock and Pashkov preached salvation through the recognition of one’s sinfulness before the Lord and faith in Christ, “Admit your sins and believe in Christ, and you are His: you will become a partaker of new life, in which good works will naturally follow the faith” (Ornatsky 1903:5). According to a contemporary, Reformed pastor H. Dalton, “Pashkov’s talks were almost a literal repetition or a copy of those of Radstock”.<sup>132</sup>

Pashkov’s teaching, according to Skvortsov, could be summarised in several statements. First, salvation has been fulfilled; all who believe in Christ are saved. Second, salvation is given to freely without any assistance by man. Third, man is saved only through faith in Christ and in order to receive salvation he needs only to recognize himself as a sinner, unable to please God by his own efforts, then turn his eyes on Christ, believe that He wants to save him, and put all his hope in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Fourth, anyone who received Christ does good works which do not save but are the fruit of faith; they follow out of it (Skvortsov 1893:59).

So far it sounds like typical Protestant soteriology. However, the author is interested in more specific theological views of Pashkov. One must remember that Pashkov was converted through the ministry of Radstock, baptized by Müller, and instructed by Baedeker. Among those whom Pashkov supported was Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary to China. Needless to say, all of these men were to a greater or lesser extent connected with the Open Brethren circles and Keswick Conferences. From all of them Pashkov learnt the principle of “living by faith” and trusting God to provide for spiritual and material needs, as well as other Brethren and Keswick principles.

The problem with studying Pashkov’s theology is that Pashkov avoided theological disputes and discussions as did Radstock and Baedeker. Needless to say, he did not write theological works. Corrado finds that the most reliable depiction of Pashkov’s teaching comes from his 1880 correspondence with Protoierey [Archpriest] Ioann Yanyshhev, who at the time was the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy and the priest of St. Isaac’s Cathedral. Pashkov was not eager to enter this public debate, but since Yanyshhev insisted

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<sup>132</sup> *Vera i razum* [Faith and reason] 1884 (II) Ja, p. 166, in Terletsky 1891:30.

Pashkov wrote a letter clarifying his views (Corrado 2000:61-62). In the spring of 1880 *Tserkovnyy vestnik* [The Church Herald] published a number of articles written in regards to their dialogue. Pashkov answered Yanyshhev in his typical manner. He stated that his knowledge was limited to the Biblical accounts and that he had no desire or interest to debate theology.<sup>133</sup> Since Pashkov's theology for the most part remained "unwritten", the author will have to rely upon secondary sources in order to reconstruct it.

The central point of Pashkov's soteriology learnt by him from Radstock was the doctrine of justification by faith alone (Sakharov 1897:17). Pashkov used to preach that all have sinned and gone astray, but Jesus shed His blood for all people. While Christ's death was sufficient to save everybody, only those who put their trust in Christ will be saved. Those who think that good works or following church rites can justify them before God are not saved and are not His disciples. For justification and salvation faith alone is needed (Sakharov 1897:19). This was the point where most problems with the Orthodox started. Archpriest Ornatsky rebuked the Pashkovites for presenting salvation as something "extremely easy and quick: believe in Christ the Saviour, and you are saved" (Ornatsky 1903:11). In his report to the tsar, Pobedonostsev accused Pashkov in teaching the following "dangerous" ideas: "Love Christ; do not trouble yourself about good works; no good work will save you; Christ has already saved you once and for all and nothing further is needed" (Pobedonostsev 1880:2).

However, Pashkov never taught license to sin or that believers should not do good. Both Radstock and Pashkov taught that good deeds come as a result of faith in Christ (Sakharov 1897:46). Even Zhivotov noticed that although the Pashkovites "preach faith without works, at the same time they base all their actions on charity and with an open hand help the poor" (Zhivotov 1891:22). The doctrine of assurance of salvation gradually getting stronger in a believer's heart was yet another teaching learnt from Radstock and held by the Pashkovites that separated them from the Orthodox (Sakharov 1897:41, 44, 54).

Sanctification was another important tenet of Pashkov's faith. The Pashkovite confession of faith states, "I believe that every Christian must lead a

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<sup>133</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 68-79, in Nichols 1991:87.



holy life and in the fear of God carry out his obligations before God, neighbour, and himself; only such a life proves that we are children of God” (Kushnev 1916:52). Some accused Pashkov of claiming that believers no longer sin (the same charge was brought against Keswick conventions in England) (Corrado 2000:65). When confronted, Pashkov denied the charge in the following way, “Now I hate sin, although I still sin”.<sup>134</sup> Nichols points out that although Pashkov did not teach Radstock’s general progression to full sanctification, he did teach that a Christian would produce a life of good works (Nichols 1991:100).

Another interesting feature of Pashkov’s faith and ministry related to sanctification actually links him to Kargel, in that both emphasised the important role of the Holy Spirit and His supernatural influence in everyday life. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that a person is born again, according to the Pashkovite confession of faith (Kushnev 1916:52). The Holy Spirit indwells a believer from the time he repents, strengthening his faith and working out his salvation (Sakharov 1897:56). Like Radstock, Pashkov believed in the Holy Spirit’s ability to lead believers. This confidence in the Holy Spirit’s leadership of every believer allowed Pashkov to maintain an open acceptance of different theological positions in “minor issues” and can explain his downplaying the role of the church. “If the Holy Spirit works directly in every person giving him grace and resurrecting to new life, why would one need the church, rites, and the hierarchy?!” (Sakharov 1897:57). Skvortsov noticed that Pashkov went even further than Luther in speaking about the ecclesiastical system. Pashkov acknowledged neither the educational nor the instructional role of the church (Skvortsov 1905:50). As for supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit, Pashkov (as Radstock before him and Kargel after him) exercised healing of the sick and casting out demons (Lieven 1967:19-22).

Just like Radstock, Pashkov considered the Scriptures exclusively authoritative and verbally inspired (Nichols 1991:86). Pashkov had strong faith in the promises of the Bible. Writing to Delyakov, a colporteur, Pashkov described the Word as being “invested with the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit”.<sup>135</sup> Nichols also emphasised that:

Pashkov shared Radstock’s love of the Scripture . . . This is evident by his memorisation of massive amounts of Scripture. His sermons were

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<sup>134</sup> “Sluchaynaya Vstrecha”, 77, in Corrado 2000:66.

<sup>135</sup> Pashkov, *Iz perepisky*, in Corrado 2000:53.

characterised by a rapid movement from passage to passage, trusting the Holy Spirit to use the divine words to work conviction in the hearers. Pashkov's main priority became the distribution of Bible to the masses (Nichols 1991:87).

Pashkov and the Pashkovites held that all who accept Christ can comprehend the Scripture and teach it to others. Scripture alone was seen as the source of finding truth and strengthening in faith. Ornatsky summarised the Pashkovite attitude towards Scripture as follows,

Believe only in what is written in the Bible; read it, you will understand the things that the Holy Spirit reveals to you; it is all right if you do not understand something; do not seek any other guide to understanding the Word of God except your believing spirit (Ornatsky 1903:11-12).

Thus the Pashkovites attempted to understand the Word of God on their own with the help of the Holy Spirit, who instructs believers into every truth; the leading of the Holy Spirit was also left to one's own judgement (Ornatsky 1903:23).

Similar observations were made by Sakharov. In his view, a Pashkovite believer insisted on reading and understanding the Bible without any help from outside. None of the Pashkovite booklets mentions the Church as a guide for correct understanding of the Word of God; the basis and source for understanding biblical truths is inner illumination acquired through diligent prayer and strong and living faith (Sakharov 1897:49). Thus, the interpretation of the Scripture was left to every believer's judgment. Malitskiy, who analyzed the Pashkovite doctrine on the basis of the booklets published by SESER, came to the conclusion that in the Pashkovites' view everyone who received Christ could understand the Bible and interpret it to others. To some extent the Scriptures could be understood also by those who had not received Christ (Malitskiy 1881:13).

Pashkov desired that the believers make Russia ready for the imminent return of Christ. In Nichols' opinion this belief that the return of Christ could occur at any moment reflects the pre-millennial views of British piety (Nichols 1991:96). Radstock did not associate with any churches when he was in Russia. It appears that Pashkov also considered himself a part of the Church of Christ, that is, the Universal Church. He actually remained a formal member of the Russian Orthodox Church until his death (Corrado 2000:69-70). Like Ivan Kondrat'ev, one of his peasant followers from Tverskaya gubernia, Pashkov

seemed to understand church as a gathering of believers (Sakharov 1897:62). Rejecting church hierarchy, the Pashkovites taught the priesthood of all believers (Ornatsky 1903:20).

Like Radstock, Pashkov recognised only two ordinances as beneficial for believers, that is, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Pashkov wrote that he could not but recognize the ordinances established by the Lord and His Apostles, but he was also convinced by the Word of God that all ordinances were established only for the believers, and only for such they have the grace-giving action (Bogolyubov 1912:8). However, water baptism was not a requirement for the Pashkovites; they considered it a private matter conducted mostly for simple folks (Sakharov 1897:65). Pashkov himself did not see the time of water baptism (in childhood or adulthood) as something that would affect a person's salvation (Kushnev 1916:81). As for the Lord's Supper, it was performed as a fulfilment of the Lord's commandment (Sakharov 1897:65). Besides baptism and the Lord's Supper, the author did not find any other ordinances ever mentioned by the Pashkovites.

Like Radstock, Pashkov was a member of the Evangelical Alliance (Nichols 1991:104). Radstock's "non-denominationalism" was transmitted to Pashkov who sincerely believed that this new teaching would enrich and more fully explain the Orthodox experience. According to Nichols, Pashkov consistently resisted attempts to move the Evangelical Christian revival away from a non-denominational position (Nichols 1991:104).

It must be also added that evangelism was the core of Pashkov's pietistic theology, just as it was for Radstock. Everything else paled in comparison. Pashkov's enormous wealth and energy were put to the service of evangelism. He financed the printing of Bibles and Christian booklets and then distributed them freely or sold them at a very low price (Bogolyubov 1912:27). Pashkov's cheap canteen also served evangelistic purposes (Bogolyubov 1912:2; Sakharov 1897:18).

In addition, Pashkov took the gospel to homes and public places in St. Petersburg and the inner gubernias, regularly preaching at the meetings. Pashkov's sermons were rather unvaried in their content, at least in the opinion of Orthodox opponents'. He used to say that people had strayed from God, that all were sinners and under condemnation, but the Lord Jesus Christ by His blood had satisfied God's righteousness for sins and saved all people. But in

reality only those who trust Jesus Christ alone for their salvation get saved.

Those who think that good works, fulfilling rites, or rituals have to do with salvation are not saved and are not Christ's disciples. For salvation one needs only faith.<sup>136</sup> Similar description is provided by Terletsky, "For instance, Pashkov always preached that people went astray from God, that all were sinners and under damnation, but Jesus Christ took upon himself their curse and saved them, therefore in order to be saved and justified one must believe in Jesus Christ, and not to rely on good works which cannot save" (Terletsky 1891:105-106). This is nothing but an evangelistic sermon in brief. If this is what Pashkov preached regularly, then preaching for him was actually evangelizing.

Kushnev emphasised that the Pashkovites were more active and successful in propagating their teaching than other "sectarians" (Kushnev 1916:56-57). Indeed, the goal of Pashkov and the Pashkovites was to spread the gospel all over the Russian empire (Sakharov 1897:19) and beyond.

Summarising, it can be said that Pashkov strongly believed in salvation by grace through faith and actively spread his beliefs. The Bible personally read and understood under the guidance of the Holy Spirit held the highest authority for Pashkov. He strongly preached repentance and conversion. The new birth of a believer was to be expressed in a sanctified life. Spiritual fellowship of believers was more important than organisation, hierarchy, or particular rules in following the ordinances. He did not want to create a new sect and to the end made extra efforts not to get into theological arguments and to stay as acceptable to the Orthodox as possible. Pashkov had little interest in dogmatic theology and was careful to avoid theological debates.

From the discussion above it seems that theologically Pashkov was in perfect agreement with Radstock. Their Christology, anthropology, soteriology, eschatology, and bibliology appeared to be identical. It is difficult to find an area in which Pashkov would differ theologically from a man who in Pashkov's opinion once had preached "sheer nonsense" (Zhivotov 1891:24). The only area in which they seemed to differ a little was ecclesiology. Pashkov moved closer to the Open Brethren in his approach to baptism and communion than Radstock ever did.

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<sup>136</sup> *Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie* 1890, vol. I, in Sakharov 1897:19.

A similar conclusion concerning the Brethren and Mildmay-Keswick influences was made by Nichols. In his dissertation Nichols shows a theological succession from Radstock to Pashkov and finally to the 1913 Confession of faith written by Kargel (Nichols 1991). His conclusion is that Pashkov's theology is very similar to Radstock's and, in its turn, to Mildmay and Keswick theology, which became known to Pashkov through the teaching of Radstock (Nichols 1991:85, 110). "There is no doubt that Mildmay's theology and social activity were transmitted to Pashkov, by Radstock, as an example to follow" (Nichols 1991:84). The author cannot but agree with this statement.

#### **4.1.1.3 Count Korff (1842-1933)**

Count Modest Modestovich Korff was another key figure in St. Petersburg revival. A close friend, associate, and co-worker of Pashkov, he shared the destiny of being banished from of Russia.

Born of Swedish, Baltic, and Russian court nobility with both Protestantism and Orthodoxy in his background, Korff was baptised and raised Orthodox (Corrado 2000:46). He wrote his memoirs, which are extremely valuable for restoring his own story as well as that of the movement.

Count Korff held the high position of Lord Chamberlain at the tsar's court. He was "a confidant of almost every member of the Royal Family".<sup>137</sup> In Korff's own words, during his early life he was religious but not redeemed,

The benefits I had in this world spoiled me, but in my heart I feared God . . . My dear deeply believing mother always supported me, her only son, with her constant diligent prayers. Being a young man I took an effort to be moral, I enjoyed the company of priests, diligently attended church services, prayed a lot, but I did not know Him who carried my sins to the cross . . . No one from the clergy ever told me that my sins were redeemed by the blood of Christ.<sup>138</sup>

Like Pashkov, Korff owes to Radstock's ministry his distinct conversion experience, though even before that in 1867, "although not born again yet"<sup>139</sup> he carried three thousand copies of the Gospel of John from the World Exhibition in Paris to St. Petersburg and distributed them with the Holy Synod's permission.<sup>140</sup> When Korff came across a flag saying "the Bible" at the

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<sup>137</sup> Peter Masters, *Men of Purpose*, 58, in Fountain 1988:21.

<sup>138</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:120.

<sup>139</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:121.

<sup>140</sup> Karev 1999:121; Nichols 1991:17-18; Fountain 1988:21.

Exhibition, he thought the Bible was some kind of a new invention—and this was a man who attended Orthodox services regularly, went to confession, knew the Orthodox catechism, was pious, and loved to pray.<sup>141</sup> In 1870 he was asked by the British Bible Society to build a pavilion for distributing the Scripture. As a result, 62,000 copies of the Bible were distributed there, again with the Holy Synod's permission (Nichols 1991:18; Fountain 1988:21). Interest spread, especially among the noble families in St. Petersburg. Private Bible studies began to be held in the homes of the upper class (Ellis & Jones 1996:41). These Bible studies must have taken place prior to Radstock's arrival.

Korff was impressed by Radstock's "devotion to Christ and full assurance of the inspiration of the Bible".<sup>142</sup> Korff also appreciated Radstock's honesty and sincerity. Sometimes when Radstock was asked to explain difficult passages from the Bible, he answered simply, "I wish I could, but I do not understand this either".<sup>143</sup> Korff confessed that he has never met a man

who would with such love try to convince me on the basis of Scripture that Christ with his redeeming blood saved me from eternal perishing . . . One of the first questions he [Radstock] asked me was whether I was sure that I was saved. I answered negatively. 'Here on earth nobody knows if he is saved; we will find out when we get to heaven'. Then he asked me, 'Who was the Word of God written for, for those on earth or for those in heaven?'. 'Undoubtedly for those on earth'. Then he started to quote scriptural passages, one after another, clearly proving, that believers in Christ can have that knowledge . . . The Lord was knocking at the door of my heart.<sup>144</sup>

The terminology that Korff uses to describe his conversion, which became the defining moment in his life, is very similar to that of Pashkov and typical for the whole revival. Korff described later his confession that took place on 5 March 1874 in the following way, "I wanted to give myself to Christ, but could not. . . . bring myself to separate from the world and all the things that bound me to it... But God heard the prayers of my friends. He removed the distrust of Christ out of my heart and surrounded me with his light".<sup>145</sup> As a

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<sup>141</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:120-123.

<sup>142</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:122.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:123.

<sup>145</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:124; Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 19, in Corrado 2000:48.



result, “I passed from worrying uncertainty to the holy assurance of eternal salvation. This was my birth from above. Since that time I started to grow spiritually and to follow Christ”.<sup>146</sup>

Later Korff wrote an essay *Moyo obrashchenie* [My conversion] which was published in St. Petersburg in 1909. He insists that conversion and spiritual rebirth is a supernatural event – the greatest event in his life – that gives assurance in the forgiveness of sins. “I used to belong to this world, now I belong to the Lord Jesus” (Korff 1909:5). In the essay he quotes pastor *Funke, Frederik Gode, Gossner*, missionary *Gebikh*, pastor *G. Nitsh, P. Kenel, O. Stockmayer, Dr. Braun*, etc. This list gives an idea of the range of theological literature read by Korff.

Korff also recalled, “The joy over our salvation in Jesus Christ, which we had not known previously, moved us to share this good news with others, not to ‘place a lighted lamp under a bushel’”.<sup>147</sup> “These stately men”, Pashkov and Korff, went to preach in smoke-filled tea-houses with coachmen and workers, in stables with the carriage drivers, and in factories (Corrado 2000:86). Korff visited doss-houses, prisons, orphanages, etc. He became Pashkov’s assistant in the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading.<sup>148</sup> Korff also visited the tea-rooms of the cab drivers, talked to them and distributed tracts and Bible portions (Nichols 1991:19).

Korff, ten years younger than Pashkov, became his lifelong friend. They listened to each other’s confessions and pointed to each other’s sins. Korff was present at Pashkov’s deathbed. His last words to him were, “We shall see each other again in Christ’s presence”.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, Korff’s faith was strong. He wrote in his memoirs, “I know from my own experience how real He is, that all promises are yes and Amen in Him”.<sup>150</sup>

In 1875 Korff travelled to Kiev gubernia to visit Stundists in the villages of Chaplinka and Kosyakovka, to make contacts and to promise them financial help on behalf of the St. Petersburg Pashkovites, which was eventually received by the Kiev Stundists (Terletsky 1891:123). As a matter of fact, a sizeable group

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<sup>146</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:124.

<sup>147</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 20, in Corrado 2000:104.

<sup>148</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:131.

<sup>149</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 33, in Nichols 1991:42; Karev 1998:127.

<sup>150</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 71, in Corrado 2000:53.

of “brothers” was imprisoned there for a long time, and two of them died in the Kiev prison.<sup>151</sup> Along with Pashkov Korff was at the heart of organising the 1884 evangelical conference in St. Petersburg, which was broken up by the police.

Indeed, the situation had changed since the Holy Synod financed the building of the Bible pavilion at the Industrial Exhibition (Nichols 1991:18). Distribution of tracts and Bible portions to cab drivers was now forbidden (Nichols 1991:19). In 1878 when all public gospel meetings were banned (although the meetings continued in Pashkov’s and Lieven’s homes), Korff and his wife organised sewing-rooms for the poor in different parts of the city. While women were working there somebody would read to them from the Bible. Korff’s wife was in charge of one of those sewing-rooms. They ran these workshops for about two years until the government closed them as well.<sup>152</sup>

In June 1884 Korff was offered a paper to sign identical to the one presented to Pashkov, whereby he would promise to stop preaching, holding meetings, praying in one’s own words, having fellowship with Stundists, etc. The Minister of Justice threatened him, “Unless you sign it, you will have to leave Russia”.<sup>153</sup> Korff’s response was,

I know the tsar; I value him and respect him deeply; I know him as an honest and good man with a large soul. I also know that his Majesty respects men who act according to their conscience and who are not false, and I cannot act against my convictions and my conscience... I submit to the will of my master and remain to him a loyal subject. I will love him with my whole heart, and I will respect him for the rest of my life.<sup>154</sup>

According to Corrado, Alexander III was extremely displeased with the action taken, nevertheless he reluctantly submitted to the joint decision of the Chief Procurator Pobedonostsev, Minister of Internal Affairs D. Tolstoy, and Minister of Justice D. Nabokov.<sup>155</sup> In 1870 Korff had freely distributed 62,000 Bibles, including to members of the royal family. Fourteen years later he was banished from Russia for that same thing. According to Heier, by that time the ecclesiastic authorities had come to understand that access to the Bible and its

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<sup>151</sup> Corrado 2000:148; Pavlov 1999:240.

<sup>152</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:130-131.

<sup>153</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:131-132.

<sup>154</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 62-63, in Corrado 2000:159.

<sup>155</sup> Polovtsov, *Dnevnik*, vol. 1, 231, in Corrado 2000:160.

ungoverned interpretation could cause dissenters to spring up in the Empire (Heier 2002:50).

Korff's wife, Elena, was very supportive of her husband. Upon returning to Princess Gagarina's home that day Korff found a telegram from his wife, saying, "Remain strong in the Lord, and do not depart one step from the word of God".<sup>156</sup> Elena Korff refused to stay in St. Petersburg, and though she was pregnant she followed her husband to her parents' home in Paris against her doctor's orders. The Korffs left behind all their possessions when they departed Tsarskoe Selo on 27 June 1884.<sup>157</sup>

Eventually the Korffs moved to Baden-Baden, Germany and later to Switzerland. Count Korff died in Basel in November 1933, at the age of ninety-one (Nichols 1991:70). Kovalenko supplies different years of his life (1843-1937) which would make Korff ninety-four when he died (Kovalenko 1996:76). S. Lieven also remembered that she visited ninety-four-year old Korff in Switzerland who died a few months later (Lieven 1967:64).

In Korff's life, as in Pashkov's, one can see a distinctive conversion experience clearly dividing his life into two parts, i.e., before and after being "born again". Korff himself emphasised this division a number of times. After conversion he threw himself into evangelistic work and charity, which eventually brought him into conflict with the established Church and, hence, the autocracy. Not much dogmatic theology can be deduced from his memoirs. The author will assume that it did not differ much from that of Radstock and Pashkov. His favourite topic was the redemptive work of Christ and assurance of salvation. His ministry largely focused on the publishing and distribution of Bibles and Christian literature.

#### **4.1.1.4 Count Bobrinskiy (1826-1890)**

Another active leader of the Pashkovite group was Count Alexey Pavlovich Bobrinskiy. He also came from a noble family and owned a large estate of Bogoroditsk in the Tul'skaya gubernia (now the estate is a large museum and park). During the Crimean War he was promoted to Colonel of the Corps of Nobles. From 1871 to 1874 he was a Minister of Ways and Roads.

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<sup>156</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:132; Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 62-63, in Corrado 2000:160.

<sup>157</sup> Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 63-64, in Corrado 2000:160.

Fountain describes Count Bobrinskiy as a man of “colossal intellect” and deeply read in German philosophy (Fountain 1988:30). He was especially fond of the German philosopher Karl Robert Eduard von Hartmann (Corrado 2000:92). As a result he developed a deep scepticism almost to the point of nihilism (Karev 1999:128). Overall Bobrinskiy held liberal political views, was “a man of principle”, and very loyal to the tsar (Corrado 2000:92-93).

Bobrinskiy’s conversion (like Radstock’s) was connected to his experience as an officer during the Crimean War, where he fell ill with typhus fever and almost died. After regaining consciousness, “he vowed that he would pray every day to the God he did not yet know”. His life was spared and for the next twenty years he prayed to “the unknown God” (Fountain 1988:30; Latimer 1908:80).

Count Bobrinskiy’s wife invited Lord Radstock to dinner where the two men met for the first time. Radstock, as usual, brought up the subject of the Gospel and referred to the Epistle to the Romans. Bobrinskiy challenged him with questions concerning some “contradictions” in the Bible. Lord Radstock asked him which particular contradictions he meant. That night Bobrinskiy stayed up late trying to compile the list but, as he recalled later, “every Bible verse that I brought forth to defend my opinion became an arrow against me, and in our conversation I received a clear impression of the power of the Holy Spirit. I could not explain what was happening to me, but I was born again from above” (Karev 1999:128). In this way a casual conversation with Lord Radstock “resulted in a flood of light such as arrested Paul on the Damascus road” (Latimer 1908:34). Bobrinskiy suddenly realised that “Jesus was the key, the beginning and the end of all. Falling on his knees in prayer, he sought mercy and forgiveness and knew straightaway that he was forgiven” (Fountain 1988:30-31).

From that moment in 1874 Bobrinskiy devoted his entire life and wealth to the cause of the Gospel. He opened his home for prayer meetings and Bible hours (Karev 1999:129). His estate in Bogoroditsk became a centre of agricultural and social improvement, but primarily a centre for the spreading of the Gospel (Fountain 1988:31). It seems that Bobrinskiy loved the country and spent most of his time at his estate where he held religious meetings until his death in 1894 (Corrado 2000:92).

Another reason why Bobrinskiy concentrated his work in Tul'skaya gubernia may have been that he saw more opportunities there than in the capital where most state and church officials were located. Nevertheless, his activity did not go unnoticed by Orthodox opponents. Both Terletsky and Ornatsky pointed out that Count and Countess Bobrinskiy had carried out meetings with prayers, preaching, and singing in Bogorodsk (Terletsky 1891:75; Ornatsky 1903:9). According to Nichols, in 1881 Bobrinskiy, who had recently retired, succumbed to Pobedonostsev's pressure and permanently moved to his Tula estate (Nichols 1991:66).

Korff wrote that whenever Bobrinskiy happened to be in St. Petersburg, he discussed the congregation's matters with Pashkov and Korff.<sup>158</sup> He would also hold eight o'clock meetings on Saturday evenings for young people and for those of "maturer years" (Latimer 1908:80). Occasionally Dr. Baedeker preached at Bobrinskiy's St. Petersburg home (Latimer 1908:80-81). In 1877 Bobrinskiy distributed thousands of New Testaments at the Moscow Exhibition (Karev 1999:129). Chief Procurator Pobedonostsev complained to the tsar that Bobrinskiy and Pashkov had established a shelter for the poor with one condition, that they listen to their preaching (Pobedonostsev 1882:8).

After his conversion experience Bobrinskiy looked no further for scientific proofs in the matter of his faith. Lev Tolstoy, a good friend of Bobrinskiy, was impressed by his sincerity and vital faith. Soon after his conversion Bobrinskiy visited Count Lev Tolstoy at Tolstoy's estate Yasnaya Polyana. It is said that the two men on occasion spent eight hours on until six o'clock in the morning absorbed in the essential question of the revelation of God in Christ (Heier 2002:92). The impression gained after a meeting with Bobrinskiy is described by Tolstoy in a February 1876 letter to Prince S. S. Urusov:

A few days ago I was visited by Bobrinskiy, Aleksey Pavlovich. He is a remarkable person, and as if on purpose our conversation turned to religion. He is an ardent believer, and his words after your [visit] had the same effect on me, they provoked in me an envy of that integrity and peace that you possess (Tolstoy 1992:249).

A month later, in March of 1876, he once again expressed his admiration of Bobrinskiy's faith in a letter to his aunt, A. A. Tolstaya, a lady-in-waiting to the Empress:

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<sup>158</sup> Korff, *Moi vospominaniya*, in Kovalenko 1996:74.

Nobody ever has spoken to me better about faith than Bobrinskiy. He cannot be contradicted, because he does not set out to prove anything; he merely says that he believes, and one feels that he is happier than those who do not possess his faith. Moreover, one senses that this happiness of his faith cannot be acquired through one's intellect, but only through a miracle (Tolstoy 1992:261).

Tolstoy was in correspondence with Bobrinskiy but unfortunately these letters are lost (Tolstoy 1992:306-307, 522).

Along with opening his home for meetings, Bobrinskiy himself used to preach. He was, in fact, a brilliant speaker equally at home addressing common folk in tea rooms and the upper class in elegant salons (Nichols 1991:20). His exceptional speaking abilities earned him the nickname "Spurgeon of Russia".<sup>159</sup> He never passed up an opportunity to preach to both upper and lower classes, whether at home or abroad (Corrado 2000:94).

In the case of Bobrinskiy, the author sees the same paradigm. Bobrinskiy responded to Radstock's gospel preaching. His encounter with the Bible brought about a mystical change in his whole worldview, which led to a complete change in his lifestyle and activity. From that moment his goal became testifying to others about what God had done for him. He did it through typical Pashkovite means: holding gospel meetings in his home, distributing Bibles, preaching, having personal conversation, and philanthropy. Bobrinskiy died in 1894 in Cannes, France (AUCECB 1989:126).

#### **4.1.2 *Domus Ecclesiae*—Social Setting for Establishing a Church**

St. Petersburg's revival of the 1870s took place primarily among the nobility who opened their palaces and mansions for meetings. Those homes literally became house churches. Newly-converted enthusiastic believers did not actually need church buildings because their own halls could cater to more than a thousand people. Furthermore, the owners were not the only people living in their palaces and mansions; armies of servants, sometimes relatives and friends sharing their homes all became quickly involved in the meetings. In this way, a prominent feature of the apostolic church—house churches—found its way into the early history of St. Petersburg evangelicals. For these newly converted Orthodox nobles the concept of church gradually changed from being

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<sup>159</sup> Latimer, *Under three tsars*, 75, in Corrado 2000:94.



an Orthodox cathedral to a gathering of believers. This experience turned out to be beneficial during the Soviet regime when believers could not own the needed number of church buildings.

In this section of the paper the author will first concentrate on first-hand descriptions of people who attended those meetings. Then the author will analyse the social profile of the evangelical group as the aristocrats reached out to less fortunate people. After that the author will attempt to examine the theological and practical peculiarities of the group. Then the author will concentrate on their two main hallmarks, evangelism and philanthropy. Finally, the author will try to demonstrate how they reached out to similar evangelical groups beyond St. Petersburg.

Now, since the main “players” have been introduced in a previous section, the author can move towards discussing their ministry and theology. Naturally, there will be some overlaps with the material already presented, but from this point on the author can start summarising the whole picture of St. Petersburg Pashkovites.

#### ***4.1.2.1 St. Petersburg’s Mansions as Church Meeting Halls***

Radstock’s evangelistic meetings in St. Petersburg were not attended by large numbers of people. A typical meeting would have about 40 people of both sexes primarily from high society. Preaching and praying was conducted in French<sup>160</sup>, a language understood only by Russia’s privileged class. However, it was not long before the private drawing-hall “chamber” meetings with Radstock grew into public meetings held in Russian with hundreds present. Korff recalled that meetings began to be held in every home where the owner was converted.<sup>161</sup>

Reportedly by the end of Radstock’s ministry in St. Petersburg (1876) meetings were held regularly in at least five homes of Russian aristocrats: Colonel Pashkov, Princess N. Lieven (Morskaya 43), Princess V. Gagarina (Morskaya 45), Count Alexey P. Bobrinskiy, and Madame E. Chertkova (Karev 1999:130; Karetnikova 2001:31). Zhivotov mentions that in the first year of Pashkovism there were already up to twenty preachers and four auditoriums in different parts of St. Petersburg (Zhivotov 1891:41).

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<sup>160</sup> *Tserkovno-obshchestvenny Vestnik*, in Sakharov 1897:16-17.

<sup>161</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:125.

After Radstock's banishment Russian-language preaching started, making the meetings appealing to lower classes. As Heier rightly pointed out, reading the Scripture and preaching in Russian was a new phenomenon in Russia and as such stirred considerable curiosity (Heier 2002:116-117). As time progressed, the number of homes opening for meetings multiplied. The orthodox periodical *Missionerskoe Obozrenie* reported meetings held in forty aristocratic homes, and according to various sources, from 700 to 1500 people were present at any given meeting (Corrado 2000:77). By 1880 the Pashkovite meetings in St. Petersburg became extremely successful and were forbidden by the authorities (Corrado 2000:87). In the spring of 1880 Pobedonostsev reported to the tsar that "the halls are becoming too small for the meetings, last Sunday there were no less than 1500 people in attendance representing every grade in society" (Pobedonostsev 1880:1). Shortly before his banishment from Russia, Count Korff recalled a meeting with over 700 present, which was also attended by Pobedonostsev.<sup>162</sup>

St. Petersburg society man R. S. Ignatev, who attended out of curiosity, described his first impressions of a Pashkovite meeting in the early 1880s:

Sunday at 8 a. m. I stepped onto the spectacular perron of the large house of V. A. Pashkov on Gagarin Embankment (now French Embankment), which was painted grey. The large private residence of old manor style had well-lit windows shining over the Neva and round lanterns of frosted glass brightened the entrance... In the large antechamber, servants took our coats and invited us inside. Along with other guests I climbed several steps of a wide white staircase to the first landing and entered through a tall door on the right, draped with a massive silk portiere, where I found myself in a brightly lit hall. The hall was large and long, with a row of windows along the embankment. It was lighted brightly with chandeliers and wall lamps. No decorations were on the walls. Rows of chairs filled the hall. In the distance, a small table stood near the entrance to the next room, separated from the first with the same manner of drapery, and next to it was a small harmonium with a keyboard (Ignatev, 186, in Corrado 2000:75).

A similar picturesque description is found in an article from the *Peterburgskie Vedomosti* [Petersburg News] January 10, 1880 written by a man who happened to visit a public meeting at Pashkov's palace. The article writer was surprised to see how Pashkov's *dvornik* [janitor] assured simple people, strangers, that there would be "readings about the things of God" and that they could enter the palace without a doubt, then how a hall-porter opened the door,

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<sup>162</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:125.

liveried lackeys helped guests remove their coats and showed the way up to the grand staircase covered with carpets (Prugavin 1909:201-202).

According to Prugavin, such meetings took place every day, in different parts of the city, and Pashkov preached at all of them: on Mondays in some officer's flat at Peterburzhskaya storona, on Saturdays in the flat of a bookbinder at Konnogvardeyskaya Street 2, near Smol'nyy Monastery. Similar "readings" took place at Princess Volkonskaya's home in Furshtadskaya Street (Prugavin 1909:211).

Terletsky adds several more addresses. He wrote that by the end of 1870s the Pashkovites had spread all over Petersburg. The following are some addresses: Zakhariievskaya 11 Apt.13, Sergievskaya 20 Apt.5, Myasnaya 20, Kavalergardskaya 2, Dyagtyarnyy pereulok, Vasil'evskiy Ostrov 7 & 17 linii, Vyborgskaya Storona (Dom Shamanskogo) (Terletsky 1891:5). Some meetings were secret (only for the believers), while others were open for anybody. There were also special meetings for a tight circle of Pashkovites (Kushnev 1916:50). Besides men and women children were present as well (Terletsky 1891:5). By 1882 the Pashkovites had expanded to the outskirts of St. Petersburg; their missionaries were mostly women (Terletsky 1891:77).

During the first few years Pashkovite meetings were announced by advertisements in newspapers and held openly (Ornatsky 1903:7). Lackeys used to go into the street to invite passers-by to come in; Pashkov printed hundreds of thousands of invitations; newspapers carried "reports" of his meetings the same way they printed reviews of plays or concerts (Zhivotov 1891:32-33). Besides printed invitations, there were "coachmen, chambermaids, and all kinds of other servants," who "turned into missionaries proclaiming the good news" (Karetnikova 2001:32).

As Terletsky concluded, "This way, not attending Orthodox cathedrals the Pashkovites opened their homes for religious services" (Terletsky 1891:105). Terletsky provides a brief description of such services. They started with an improvised prayer, always short and simple, followed by a sermon or an exposition of a verse from the New Testament. The sermon was followed by another kneeling prayer. In the end everyone sang from *Lyubimye stikhi* or *Pesni Siona*, accompanied by an organ or a harmonium. Sometimes after services they distributed New Testaments with underlined verses or brochures

published by the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading (Terletsky 1891:105-106).

As a matter of fact, the songs from *Lyubimye stikhi* [Favourite verses] were sung in other meeting places in St. Petersburg as well as in other regions of Russia, for example, in Tverskaya gubernia or Petrozavodsk (Terletsky 1891:65, 85, 89). This hymnbook contains thirty-six songs, almost half of which are still being sung in Evangelical-Christian Baptist churches to this day. Among them there are some well known songs translated into Russian, including "Just as I Am", "Way to Salvation", and "Whiter than Snow". ++++

#### **4.1.2.2 Social Makeup of the Church – Crossroads of Upper and Lower Classes**

The basic unit of St. Petersburg high society in the nineteenth century was a household consisting of a master-host with his immediate family, friends, relatives, guests, and servants, which in some ways resembles society of the apostolic time. Those Russian households valued hospitality as a virtue. The host would be present at the dinner table even if he did not like the guests. Russian society of the time was not individualistic. Such St. Petersburg households provided the primary context for Radstock's evangelising and later for bigger gospel meetings. The diversity of attendance of the Pashkovite meetings was truly unbelievable. The unity of the classes presented at those meetings was unthinkable and unheard of hitherto. This was one of the most remarkable features of those meetings. Contemporary socialists could only dream of such a classless society.

Corrado points out that along with Pashkov's changed life came a change in his view of social order (Corrado 2000:118). On Sunday evenings "the splendid apartments which were formerly open only to the elite of Russian society for balls and routs, now stood open and were filled to overflowing by crowds – mostly belonging to the very lowest of society – who desired to hear the good news of salvation".<sup>163</sup> Ignatev's description of the audience at the meeting he attended helps to visualise a group in the context of a Christian household,

Around me were such various, diversified, ill-assorted people! Among factory workers in dark blue and grey smocks and threadbare coats were

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<sup>163</sup> Dalton, *Lord Radstock and Colonel Pashkoff*, 11, in Corrado 2000:76.

the dark unpretentious blouses of “learned” women and young ladies of society. Next to long poddyovkah huddled modest youth, evidently students... with fervent, searching eyes, holding copybooks on their knees. Scattered throughout were the dark elegant dresses of society ladies, black smoking jackets, the red stripes of generals, silver epaulettes, and academic badges.<sup>164</sup>

Indeed, those present for worship at Pashkov’s palace were “from every brand of society. Preachers were recruited from among the masses, some of whom almost knew the Bible by heart, it was said” (Fountain 1988:39). In the nineteenth century, as for that matter in any century, barons, counts and princesses did not associate with servants, factory workers, or peasants. No wonder that this brotherhood that characterised the Pashkovite meetings attracted lots of attention and aroused people’s curiosity.

Is it possible to say precisely who composed the Pashkovite community in St. Petersburg? It does not seem so. There were no membership lists available due to the fact that during the first years of the group’s existence there was no such concept as “membership.” To be a believer meant to be a member of the universal church. This idea was in agreement with Radstock and early Darbyists. Neither it is possible to estimate the percentage of the various social groups present.

The Pashkovite meetings were inclusive not only socially but also ethnically. Kargel wrote in one of his letters, that “Russians, Germans, Lithuanians, Swedes, Estonians, Finns, and Englishmen found themselves together in Pashkov’s home for this purpose” that was asking God to prevent further bloodshed during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78.<sup>165</sup> Besides, the Pashkovites did not try to create a new “sect” and did not encourage people to leave their traditional churches, Russian Orthodox, Lutheran, etc. This resulted in people who formally belonged to different denominations worshiping together.

Among the groups represented, noble women deserve special attention because they seemed to be attracted in greater numbers than men. Women were numerous and very active in the movement, not to mention that the first converts were from among women. As time went on in the evangelical movement in Russia women were consistently found in larger numbers than

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<sup>164</sup> Ignatev, 186, in Corrado 2000:77.

<sup>165</sup> Kargel, ix, in Jakob Kroeker, *Der achtzigjährige Verfasser. Zur Einführung*, in Corrado 2000:77.

men. A few reasons can be pointed out. First, men were the prime targets of persecution. Second, the movement gave women opportunities for self-expression; they no longer stayed in the background. Philanthropy was an important outlet for the Pashkovite women. Outside the formal setting of meetings, and even occasionally in them, the Pashkovite women took the lead in music, translation, and even preaching. After the banishment of the male leaders, the women took upon themselves the leadership of the whole movement (organizing services, opening their homes to meetings, choosing and inviting speakers, etc.). The words of Bebbington about “the age when avenues for women into any sphere outside the home were being closed” and “Christian zeal brought them into prominence” (Bebbington 1989:26) can be applied not only to Britain, but also to Russia.

It is also important to point out that this kind of social acceptance was not a mark of only the early days of the revival characterized by “the first love”; it remained the movement’s trademark as long as the upper class existed in the country, that is, until 1918. This crossing of social barriers became especially evident at the April 1884 congress. Social differences were unimportant. V. G. Pavlov described the brotherhood experienced at the 1884 congress, at which “a peasant dined next to a count, and distinguished women served simple brethren,” as the greatest highlight of his life (Pavlov 1999:197-198). For instance, at one meeting in the Lieven’s palace a converted cab driver led the Bible study (Brandenburg 1977:112). More than a decade later, in 1897 Penn-Lewis was impressed that “the Princess and her coachman sat together, drinking the cup of the Lord and breaking the bread that speaks of His broken body”.<sup>166</sup>

However, in spite of the great mixture of people from all social strata who were welcome in the palace on Gagarinskaya embankment, Zhivotov ironically mentions that common visitors were seated in the back and were not mixed with aristocrats, although all were being called “brothers” (Zhivotov 1891:31). Another custom of St. Petersburg’s upper class was to leave the capital for the summer season and to retreat to their country estates, which ended up helping to spread the evangelical teaching across Russia’s countryside. Prayer

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<sup>166</sup> Penn-Lewis, 10, in Corrado 2000:114.



meetings with sermons were common at the country estates of many Pashkovites (Ornatsky 1903:9).

“Pashkovite nests” were established in nearly every part of European Russia (Fountain 1988:38). It has been already mentioned how active was Count Bobrinskiy promoting spiritual and agricultural reform in his Tula estate. Princess Vera Gagarina succeeded in establishing a congregation in her Sergievskiy estate in the same Tula gubernia. Madame E. Chertkova laboured in Voronezh gubernia, Korff worked in Kiev gubernia (Karetnikova 2001:33). Gradually the villages with “Pashkovite nests” appeared in Tverskaya, Yaroslavskaya, Tul’skaya, Voronezhskaya, Olonetskaya, Tambovskaya, Penzenskaya gubernias, Rostovskiy and Uglichskiy uezds, the town of Petrozavodsk, and other places (Kushnev 1916:60).

On the other hand, the habit of spending summers in the country weakened the St. Petersburg congregations, and, as time went on, influenced the social profile of the congregations’ leadership. Lower class believers who were always in St. Petersburg eventually became leaders. For understandable reasons they were less educated, simpler, stricter, and more rigid folk, although they did not lack sincerity, Christian zeal, and dedication to the cause (Lieven 1967:103, 71).

The main cause of “social” problems, however, was Korff’s and Pashkov’s banishment. Korff recalled that the news about their exile soon spread across Russia: “Brothers were very sorry that we had been exiled. To take the place of us two elders, they decided to send seventeen brothers to St. Petersburg”.<sup>167</sup> The author cannot tell if this plan was ever carried out but if those “seventeen brothers” actually did arrive, they would have been quite different from Pashkov and Korff in their origin, education, culture, etc. They would not possess the same theological openness either. But apart from those “seventeen”, there were quite a number of simple men among the Pashkovites in St. Petersburg who considered themselves qualified to teach and preach.

The fact is that social “scissors” did exist among the Pashkovites to some extent. This is clear from Pashkov’s secret reason for visiting Russia around 1888, i.e., to calm down the leadership struggles between older noble ladies

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<sup>167</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:132.

and younger inexperienced leaders.<sup>160</sup> There is also a hint of these problems in S. Lieven's memoirs where she sadly describes the poor sermons of those who could hardly read a passage and could occasionally build a sermon on a misread word or the case of a Pashkovite lady (countess Shuvalova who used to wear "worldly" dresses) who was forbidden to take part in the Lord's Supper when the "brothers" found something inappropriate in her behaviour (Lieven 1967:71, 74).

Overall, similar to Great Britain in the 1870s, in St. Petersburg evangelicalism became the religion of both the poor and the prosperous (Bebbington 1989:26). The unity of the classes among the Pashkovites was truly amazing, even with some minor misunderstandings and problems.

#### **4.1.2.3 Theological and Practical Peculiarities of the Church in St. Petersburg**

There is no need to mention again the extent to which Radstock and Baedeker influenced the Pashkovites. This must be quite obvious by now. Both of them came to Russia mainly because they felt that they were called to preach the gospel. Their followers were converted but still saw themselves theologically unfit. That is why Pashkov, Korff, and Bobrinskiy kept inviting foreign preachers. One of those preachers was the above mentioned Stockmayer from Switzerland, who in the course of a few weeks held talks on sanctification and possibly on divine healing. In 1882-1883 their work was continued by an Open Brethren pastor G. Müller, who baptised Pashkov and three other believers from the St. Petersburg congregation, including N. Lieven and Madame Klassovskaya (Kovalenko 1996:74; Savinsky 1999:153).

Müller's main topic while in St. Petersburg was sanctification, which he viewed as the main thing in Christian life (Karetnikova 2001:37). In those days the St. Petersburg group could not be classified as an "organised congregation". From time to time they had "breaking of the bread" introduced by Radstock, open to all Christians whether baptised as infants or as adults (Savinsky 1999:152). Although Pashkov decided to get baptised, he did not make it a condition for participation in the Lord's Supper or any kind of ministry among the believers (Sakharov 1897:64). Baptism was still a matter of individual

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<sup>168</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 90, in Nichols 1991:72.

conscience. According to Nichols, the records lack any accounts of communion services being held during the Bible studies or prayer meetings (Nichols 1991:109), but it seems that Savinsky is more to be trusted in this matter and that the Pashkovites had the Lord's Supper prior to Müller's visit.

The foreign Christian workers mentioned above were to a large degree responsible for shaping early Pashkovite theology and practice. One can rightly expect to find many similarities between the Pashkovites, the Open Brethren, and the Keswick movement. In Bogolyubov's report, W. Fetler, a Baptist pastor in St. Petersburg, commented at the All-Russia Baptist Congress held in St. Petersburg that the Pashkovites are nothing but Plymouth Brethren (Bogolyubov 1912:3). According to Sawatsky, the early Pashkovites followed the example of Plymouth Brethren, as they did not lay hands, did not baptize, and did not make lists of group members (Sawatsky 1995:34). It is a little strange, though, that neither Fetler nor Sawatsky specified that the Pashkovites were much closer to Open Brethren than to Plymouth Brethren.

Pashkov's preaching, mentioned above, was very different from that of the Orthodox priests and very similar to that of Radstock in both content and form. The very idea of a layman preacher must have been shocking to an Orthodox audience. Pashkov began his sermons reading a passage from the Bible; his sermons were characterised by simplicity and a touch of his own experience, as he explained the plan of salvation in the first person (Corrado 2000:83). S. Lieven recalled:

The deep conviction of V. A. Pashkov and personal testimony about renewing power of God through the work of the Holy Spirit that he had experienced did miracles. The listeners fell to the feet of the Lord with deep repentance and stood up new people, washed by the blood of the Saviour, born again children of God. This way God added the saved ones to the church (Lieven 1967:17-18).

According to Ignatev, "There was nothing special, nothing wise in what Pashkov said. He did not offer theological subtleties from the Gospel texts . . . But his sincere speech affected equally the simple folk gathered in his luxurious palace as well as those of high society".<sup>169</sup> Similar things had been said about Radstock.

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<sup>169</sup> Ignatev, 187, in Corrado 2000:83.

These early leaders tried to follow the teaching of the Scripture to the best of their understanding. Their critics kept pointing out that the Pashkovites recognized only the Holy Scriptures as the source of knowledge about God, and rejected the Holy Traditions.<sup>170</sup> “In general the brochures [published by SESER] very often carry a thought about the Holy Scripture as the exclusive source of our religious knowledge, our beliefs, and instruction; the guidance by the Holy Tradition is being omitted for some reason” (Terletsky 1891:57). When reading the Scripture the Pashkovites recommended trusting one’s own mind and the Spirit’s illumination. Without such illumination from the Holy Spirit the Pashkovites considered the words of the Scripture as “dead letters” (Kushnev 1916:54). Since the hermeneutical principles of the early Russian evangelicals constitute the main interest of this dissertation, the author will discuss the Pashkovite attitude towards Scripture in greater detail. The author will rely on the booklets published by the Pashkovite Society (SESER) concerning the topic under consideration.

The first booklet that contained instructions concerning reading the Scripture was published in 1877 under the title *Chemu uchit Svyashchenoe Pisanie?* [What does the Holy Scripture teach?]. It is a very brief description of what the Old and the New Testament are about from the classical Protestant point of view. First, it teaches a Christological approach towards the Scripture, “Both the Old and the New Testament testify about Christ, and God’s holy men in ancient times, having been taught by the Holy Spirit, knew it and believed in Him” (Chemu uchit . . . 1877:4). Second, it points out to the fact that the Scripture was inspired by the Holy Spirit, can be understood, and teaches about the true God and the only way of salvation. “The Holy Scripture is given to us by God’s mercy through the Holy Spirit so that we can understand it all . . . and believe that there is the *only* true God and the *only* Saviour” (Chemu uchit . . . 1877:7). Third, it insists on the uniqueness of the Scripture which deserves a special approach.

Let us open the Holy Scripture with reverence and beg God to allow us through our Saviour and the Holy Spirit to understand its content well, because the Holy Scripture is a sealed book which we cannot understand without the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Therefore we should diligently read, constantly penetrate, carefully consider and apply

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<sup>170</sup> Malitskiy 1881:22; Kushnev 1916:53; A.Yartsev, *The Cult of Evangelical Christians*, M.: Atheist Publishing House, 1930:4, in Ellis & Jones 1996:212.

portions read to our hearts. . . We are looking for life: *this book reveals it*; if we do not find life in it we will be lost forever (Chemu uchit . . . 1877:8).

A couple of booklets on Scripture reading were published in 1882. The one called *Dva slova o Svyatoy Biblii* [Two words about the Holy Bible] is a very short introduction to all the canonical books of the Bible. It also suggests a very Christocentric approach to the Old Testament. For example, the peaceful reign of Solomon is presented as a prototype of the peaceful reign of Christ (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:10). A few more quotes will further the point:

You will ask, ‘Does the whole Bible testify about Jesus Christ?’ ‘Yes. The Old Testament points to the promised Messiah, to Christ, that is, to God’s anointed one, while the New Testament speaks about Jesus as Saviour. In this way the whole Bible has to do with the Lord Jesus Christ (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:3-4).

Both the Old and the New Testament constitute one inseparable inspired Word of God, therefore the books of the Old Testament are just as important as the books of the New Testament (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:4).

The essence of the Old Testament books is Jesus Christ (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:7).

The booklet promotes a very personal attitude of the reader towards the text: “View it [the Holy Bible] as a dear letter received from the heavenly Father, in which He tells you what to believe, all that you should avoid, and all about how you should live during our short stay on this earth” (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:4). It should be also mentioned that in the last chapters which contain instruction about why and how one should read the Holy Bible, an unknown author quotes a number of church fathers and celebrated Orthodox bishops, including St. Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria; St. Basil the Great; St. Theophilus of Alexandria; St. Cyril of Jerusalem; St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; St. Tikhon; St. John Chrysostom; St. Irenaeus (*Dva slova* . . . 1882:23-27). This is further evidence that the Pashkovites did not have sectarian overtones.

Another booklet published the same year (1882) was *Kratkoe rukovodstvo k chteniyu Novogo Zaveta* [Short guide to the reading of the New Testament]. The booklet included a brief story of creation, the fall, and salvation; a short dictionary of some Bible terms (e.g., synagogue); instructions for reading the Bible; some maps of Palestine and the Roman Empire with explanations; and a list of Bible references on main events of the New

Testament. The following are the instructions suggested to those who are starting to read the Bible:

How should one read the Word of God? The Word of God is not like a man's word, therefore we should not read it like an ordinary book. The Word of God contains wonderful "power of God unto salvation of every one that believeth" (see Rom. 1, 16); the Word of God is "the sword of the Spirit" (see Eph. 6, 17) for fighting against temptations of the spirit of darkness; the Lord Himself when tempted by the devil repulsed him with words from the Holy Scripture (see Matt. 4, 1-11); the Word of God dispels our wrong beliefs (see Matt. 22, 29); it is the seed sown into our hearts that brings forth good fruit (Lk. 8, 11; Mk. 4, 20).

If you want to profit from reading of the Word of God:

1. Read it with reverence. Before reading cleanse your heart from all the worries of the world and ask the Lord Jesus to open your understanding so that you "might understand the Scriptures".
2. Apply what you read to yourself as if it was written to you . . .
3. Read without haste, trying to understand every word. If you do not understand a word, ponder what it might mean, and pray that the Lord would teach you; if you still do not understand, leave it and go on reading; the time has not come for you to understand that word; you will understand it later.
4. If you understood some instruction from the Word of God, start doing it from that very hour, asking the Lord to help you . . .
5. There is great benefit for strengthening our faith and piety when we heartily thank our Saviour for His great mercy and love when reading God's word (Kratkoe rukovodstvo . . . 1882:18-19).

Interestingly, some very similar instructions can be found in St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. He was a canonised Orthodox saint who lived in the eighteenth century. The Pashkovites published a number of excerpts from his well known work *Istinnoe Khristianstvo* [True Christianity] (1770-1772) (Heier 2002:59). A booklet *O Slove Bozhiem* [About the Word of God] (1895) is an extract from Tikhon's writings and contains general paragraphs concerning the essence, meaning, and use of Scriptures, and stresses the importance of following the Word. "Monarchic edict is published so that his subjects can know and do his will, so was the Word of God written so that we could live according to its rule" (Tikhon 1895:15). The Scripture is continually compared with food for one's soul. "As our body is being fed and strengthened by food, so is our soul fed and strengthened in faith by the Word of God" (Tikhon 1895:26). Then, Tikhon insists on the availability of the Scripture for common folk, a point, no doubt, especially appreciated by the Pashkovites.

Those who think and teach that the Word of God should not be read by simple people but only by priests and other sanctified persons are sinning. Such opinion is a thought and machination of the devil who



diverts people from this profitable reading so that without reading of the Holy Scripture they would not have true and living faith and would not be saved (Tikhon 1895:13-14).

And finally, the instructions for readers:

Those who want to read and to hear the Word of God with profit for their souls should mark the following:

- 1) It is God's precious gift, therefore one must read and hear it with reverence, interest, and fervour . . . Praying to Him in truth and spirit . . .
- 2) One should hear or read the Word of God not in order to become sharp-witted or have an eloquent tongue, but to behold God and Christ, God's Son, and His holy will, and his way to receive eternal salvation. This is the proper end of reading or hearing of the Word of God!
- 3) To conceal it in one's heart like a precious spiritual treasure . . . and to feed one's soul by it as the body is fed with bread and even more so. Because as the body without food becomes weaker and dies, so faith without the food of the Word of God becomes weaker and perishes (Tikhon 1895:18-19).

The Pashkovite newspaper *Russkiy Rabochiy* [Russian Workman] in 1884 published an article called "How one should read the Holy Scripture" which was very much in tune with the approach to reading and understanding the Bible presented above.

When reading the Holy Scripture we are not alone; the Lord is with us, He talks to us, and we can talk with Him... Read the Bible with a strong intention to fulfil its instructions... Your doubts will fade away as the light penetrates your hearts and the word of God is fulfilled in you! Perhaps at first many things will seem dry, but the more we grow in spiritual life, the better we are going to understand the meaning of the Holy Scriptures. Its meaning is unclear only to those whose life is not lived according to the will of God, but it is very clear to those who live according to the will of God (*Russkiy Rabochiy* (5) p. 4, in Terletsky 1891:61-62).

In order to get an idea of how the Pashkovites viewed typology, one should consider the booklet *Dshcher' Siona. Razmyshlenie na Pesn' Pesney*. [Daughter of Zion. Reflection on the Song of Songs] (1883) signed by initials N. S. G. This commentary on the first chapter and the first two verses of the second chapter of the Song of Songs is written entirely from the typological point of view for the edification of the readers. The bridegroom is Christ, his bride is the Church or a believing soul, and so on to less important things mentioned in the book. The booklet might not be a translation from a foreign language because it quotes V. A. Zhukovsky, a Russian writer of the first half of

the nineteenth century. N. S. G.'s approach to the interpretation of types and images is well summarised in the following statement:

This book is filled with deep parallels with which the Lord is teaching a believer's soul as He once used parables to teach people. For those who read superficially these parallels are nothing but empty sounds and poetic images; but for a believing and searching soul they contain teaching, instruction, and consolation, just as the Lord's parables remained for some people interesting stories, while for the disciples they became the source of life. . . In order to understand images presented in the Scriptures one must be a disciple of Christ, to move into that blessed closeness to Him . . . For those who truly want to learn from Him and dwell in His Word, He opens their minds to understanding the Scripture and reveals the mysteries of God's Kingdom, which are hidden from others (N. S. G. 1883:32-33).

The Pashkovites' great emphasis on reading the Scripture resulted in being very well acquainted with its content. Furthermore, as Heier points out, one could often meet peasants who knew the Bible almost by heart (Heier 2002:130).

According to Karetnikova, the Pashkovite favourite and the best understood areas of theology were soteriology and Christology (Karetnikova 2001:27). Malitskiy, who based his study of the Pashkovite doctrine on the verses underlined in the copies of the New Testament that were meant to be distributed, came to the conclusion that all those verses fall under one of three categories: justification by faith; God's great love for mankind; and steadfastness of God's promises (Malitskiy 1881:3). One must keep in mind, however, that those New Testaments were distributed to people who, in the Pashkovites' opinion, were unsaved, which would have influenced the choice of passages that had been highlighted.

Public prayer was also most unusual for an Orthodox audience. Both Radstock and Pashkov opened their meetings with a prayer "in their own words... pronounced on their knees with their face to a chair, head bent down" (Ornatsky 1903:7). The Protestant prayer book of E. A. F. Bersier<sup>171</sup> was popular among aristocratic Pashkovite women, but it was never used during public meetings (Corrado 2000:78). Kutepov describes how prayer was conducted at Pashkovite meetings:

The preacher addressed those gathered, 'Shall we pray?' With that, everyone present knelt. The preacher began to speak whatever prayer

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<sup>171</sup> It is included in 1877 edition of Leskov's *Velikosvetskiy raskol* [Great Schism].

came to mind . . . Only members of the Holy Trinity were addressed in prayer, and for the most part only one idea was revealed: that man is saved through faith in Christ the Redeemer alone. The prayers were generally disconnected, the same thing over and over again, and prayer was not long, five or ten minutes. Sometimes prayer was closed with singing of 'Favourite verses' accompanied by the organ.<sup>172</sup>

Ignatev pointed out that other people present at the meetings were welcomed to pray as well, "several present began to speak improvised prayers aloud, as if feeling in themselves a surge of ecstasy, highly moving, passionately pronounced, from the inmost recesses of the heart. Prayers flowed from their mouths without hesitation, as though inspired from above".<sup>173</sup> There were some meetings held specifically for the purpose of prayer. According to Kargel, prayer meetings often lasted for hours.<sup>174</sup> Prayer was something they resorted to when having doctrinal disagreements such as the controversy over the issue of baptism at the 1884 St. Petersburg congress, or at a time of problems with authorities such as when Korff went to the Minister of Interior while believers were gathered to pray at Princess Gagarina's home.

Singing was another important feature of the Pashkovite revival, one that is characteristic of revivals in general. Singing as a congregation was new to people used to Russian Orthodox services. *Lyubimie Stikhi* [Favourite Verses] published in 1880 was the first Pashkovite songbook. Pobedonostsev recalled, "Everywhere [at the Pashkovite meetings] you find laid out hymnbooks, translated into rough Russian verse from a collection of well-known English hymns" (Pobedonostsev 1880:2). Hymns were used to open and close services. Ignatev recalled, that "The entire hall rose together, as if one person, and stood to sing, accompanied by the harmonium, of course not very harmonious, but of one spirit. They sang Pashkovite psalms, put to verse in books, a large quantity of which were strewn throughout the hall".<sup>175</sup> As mentioned, Pashkov's wife accompanied on the harmonium, and all three of their daughters sang (Lieven 1967:18).

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<sup>172</sup> Kutepov, 62-63, in Corrado 2000:79.

<sup>173</sup> Ignatev, 187, in Corrado 2000:79.

<sup>174</sup> Kargel, ix in Corrado 2000:114.

<sup>175</sup> Ignatev, 187, in Corrado 2000:80.

Alexandra von Peuker, who originally wanted to train for the opera and during her visit to England was converted through evangelist Moody,<sup>176</sup> became yet another active member of the small household community in the Lieven's palace. Now she used her voice to serve the church and formed a women's choir with a number of young girls, including the Lieven daughters, the Pashkov daughters, two Golitsyn princesses, Countess Shuvalova, two Kozlyaninov sisters, and three daughters of Konstantin von der Pahlen, the Minister of Justice (Brandenburg 1977:108).

Women contributed significantly to the hymnology of the movement, translating Western hymns into Russian. Most songs were translated from German or English Protestant hymns; some were those sung by American gospel singer Ira D. Sankey, associate of D. L. Moody, with melodies adapted to suit Russian tastes (Corrado 2000:81). In addition, the Pashkovites wrote some new songs. For instance, Shulepnikov, Korff's father-in-law, composed melodies to Psalms and other Christian hymns for corporate singing (Lieven 1967:43). Princess Mary, an older sister of Sophie Lieven, translated into Russian a German Sunday School song "Laß die Herzen immer fröhlich und mit Dank erfüllet sein," which became a favourite song at the Sunday school conducted at the Lieven's palace (Corrado 2000:81). As for the quality of songs, Princess Sophie remarked that most of the songs "were musically somewhat primitive, having been taken straight from the English revival hymns".<sup>177</sup>

An important contribution to the success of those meetings was the custom of serving refreshments after the official part was finished. "During the 'talks' lackeys dressed in tail-coats and white ties served tea and cookies; on the tray there always was a bottle of rum or cognac of the highest quality" (Zhivotov 1891:31). Pashkov "mingled with the crowd, shaking hands, exchanging bows, blessing the visitors, and answering questions" (Corrado 2000:84). There were also evening meals to which everybody present was invited; it was a four-course meal of "Strasburg pirog", cold appetizers, a hot dish, and champagne. The conversation was about spiritual matters and lasted until very late (Corrado 2000:84-85). An observer recalled, "What surprised me was that I was not at a masquerade, yet non-masked people came to me freely

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<sup>176</sup> Moody and Sankey preached the gospel message in the British Isles between June 1873 and August 1875 (Bebbington 1989:162).

with questions, just as masked guests at a masquerade ball would do”.<sup>178</sup> It was Radstock’s custom adopted by Pashkov to meet with people individually after the formal part of the meeting. Holding meetings in homes allowed for this atmosphere of the personal touch and individual attention towards visitors.

The “Pashkovite” period of evangelical history in Russia also introduced children’s ministry. Almost from the very beginning children (those of the Pashkovites as well as those brought from some shelters) were included in the meetings. As the movement spread across the country, Pashkovite activity focused even more on children and schools. With the increase of persecution, children’s ministry at the Lieven palace became more systematic. Madame Klassovskaya, the governess of the Lieven children, began a Sunday school for the children of the home, including the children of servants, altogether about thirty children (Lieven 1967:79; Corrado 2000:115-116). The three Lieven sisters along with an older Baroness Julie Sass led a group for girls on Sunday afternoons under the patronage of the YWCA. Meetings for young women also took place at the Lieven palace and at the Chertkova’s hall on Vasil’evskiy Island with elderly Elizaveta Chertkova herself sometimes speaking to young ladies.<sup>179</sup>

To summarise, the Pashkovite meetings and ministry grew out of Radstock’s “talks” which focused on salvation by faith that can be obtained here and now and the consequent assurance of salvation. Under Pashkov’s and Korff’s leadership the meetings became larger and more frequent. Their form of preaching, praying, singing, and children’s ministry were passed on as their legacy to the Evangelical Christian churches and can be still found in Russian congregations today.

#### **4.1.2.4 Philanthropy and Evangelism**

In addition to crossing social barriers, charity was another prominent Pashkovite characteristic. However, it would be difficult to discuss Pashkovite philanthropy apart from their evangelistic outreach. On the one hand, the good works they did were a natural consequence of their salvation. On the other hand, their compassion was not an end in itself; they used it in a practical way

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<sup>177</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 37, in Corrado 2000:81.

<sup>178</sup> Glebov, 305, in Corrado 2000:85.

<sup>179</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 94, in Corrado 2000:117; Lieven 1967:111-112.

to extend to others the love of Christ they had found for themselves. This link between evangelism and charity was not a Russian phenomenon. From the very beginning Evangelicals in Britain actively promoted philanthropy, for instance, Wesley's generosity was legendary (Bebbington 1989:70). G. Müller provided the mode for orphan homes living out the principle of entire dependence on God. Corrado pointed out the similarity of Pashkovite charitable institutions to those in Europe (John Wesley's) and South America (D. L. Moody's) (Corrado 2000:71). Philanthropy became a trademark of the evangelical movement in St. Petersburg as well.

The Russian Orthodox Church with its emphasis upon "good works" has always promoted concern for the poor. What the evangelical revival added was zeal. To a critical outsider it was strange that "people preached only faith without deeds and at the same time based their actions on charity and generously helped the poor" (Zhiotov 1891:22). Pashkov was particularly active, using his great wealth for evangelistic and benevolent purposes. What he did was despised by his fellow-aristocrats, but tolerated by the Orthodox Church in the beginning (Fountain 1988:37).

Pashkov, Korff, and a number of Pashkovite ladies regularly visited hospitals (Lieven 1967:19, 25-26, 38). Stead also described this:

It was no uncommon sight to see a great lady, to whom all the salons of St. Petersburg were open, scurrying through the streets on a humble drozhky, to read and to pray by the bedside of some dying girl in the foul ward of the local hospital. No infection deterred them from the discharge of their self-imposed duties; no place was too dark for them to illuminate it with the radiance of their presence.<sup>180</sup>

Besides hospitals, the Pashkovites also visited prisons. Princess Vera Gagarina who had no children was especially devoted to this selfless ministry (Corrado 2000:102-103). According to Dalton, prison work was carried out

in such an unpretentious way that scarcely anyone would think of recognising in the gentle and kindly Bible-reader who day after day makes her appearance in the prison-cells, one who bears an honoured and noble name in the Russia metropolis.<sup>181</sup>

Pashkov himself often visited prisons and had a reputation for calming down difficult prisoners. In this work he was supported by the Minister of

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<sup>180</sup> Stead 355-356, in Corrado 2000:100.

<sup>181</sup> Dalton, *Lord Radstock and Colonel Pashkoff*, 110, in Corrado 2000:102.



Justice, Count Pahlen, who provided Pashkov with a pass to visit prisoners in St. Petersburg, including political prisoners (Corrado 2000:102-103).

Pashkov and Korff had a special ministry among cab drivers. They visited tearooms for cab drivers, talked with customers, distributed tracts and Bible portions, and gave short evangelistic addresses (Brandenburg 1977:111). Pashkov and Korff even opened some new tearooms for them. This eventually led to opening a student low priced canteen serving good quality food (Corrado 2000:119). Pashkov reportedly paid Shimanskiy 32,000 roubles for a small plot of land in Lomanskiy pereulok in order to construct a building with cheap apartments and a canteen (Zhivotov 1891:42). That inexpensive canteen could feed up to one thousand people daily (Corrado 2000:119). The people who served in the canteen at the corner of Bol'shaya Samsonievskaya Street were Pashkovites—they not only fed the poor but also preached the gospel (Skvortsov 1905:45).

Later three more eating-places were opened. Originally intended for students, they later became available to anyone in need. Tracts and Bible portions were given out freely in those places (Nichols 1991:45). In 1882 Pobedonostsev complained to the tsar that Pashkov opened and kept financing “a free canteen for the poor”, where he and Count Bobrinskiy preached (Pobedonostsev 1882:8). The walls of the canteen had been decorated with Bible verses. However, at the order of the authorities the Bible verses were removed from the walls; later the canteen was closed and one of the cooks was even expelled from St. Petersburg for having given a New Testament to a policeman on the street (Corrado 2000:120).

To combat social injustice and help the poor earn a living, a bold project was undertaken. Two sisters, Madame Chertkova and Mrs. Pashkova, along with Princess Gagarina continued a work which had been handed to them by a stranger: sewing rooms for poor girls in St. Petersburg. These women taught mostly single girls how to sew, provided material, sold the finished products, and gave the girls a commission from the work.<sup>182</sup> The Pashkovite ladies gathered poor women once or twice a week in the evenings to sew and complete various handicrafts. The city was divided into five districts between Count Korff's wife, Colonel Pashkov's wife, Madame Chertkova, and Princess

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<sup>182</sup> Brandenburg 1977:111-112; Lieven 1967:47-52; Kovalenko 1996:78.

Vera Gagarina who oversaw two districts. Sometimes Count Korff would read aloud and testify about Christ to women gathered at his wife's sewing circles (Corrado 2000:121).

As time went on the visitation of poor women continued, although with new Pashkovite ladies in charge. According to S. Lieven, Princess Vera Gagarina and Konstanza Kozlyaninova were responsible for the Pesky district; Alexandra Kozlyaninova was responsible for the district near her home, which was later taken up by Princesses Mary and Sophy Lieven.<sup>183</sup> Thus, "pastoral care was also provided as the poor women were visited in their dwellings by the Pashkovite ladies" (Brandenburg 1977:112). The Pashkovites also arranged social events for them, especially at Easter and Christmas, where women and their children were fed, entertained, and introduced to the Word of God (Corrado 2000:121-122).

The sewing women completed most of their work at home and received payment immediately. In order to sell the products, annual bazaars were held in the Pompeii and Malachite Halls of the Lieven palace. There were occasions when visitors stole pieces of this semi-precious stone from the columns of the beautiful Malachite Hall, so the Pashkovites temporarily rented a place on Voznesenskiy Prospect until a lower store in the palace was set up for the bazaar. This work continued until the beginning of World War I (Corrado 2000:121-122; Lieven 1967:51-52).

These Pashkovite ladies also set up laundry rooms in each district of St. Petersburg which operated in a similar manner providing jobs for the poor and inexpensive services for districts (Nichols 1991:22).

During the 1877-78 Russian-Turkish War, Pashkovite society ladies left their homes to serve as voluntary nurses.<sup>184</sup> They also organized sewing evenings to help wounded soldiers, and they visited soldiers in the Mikhaylovskiy Palace, where some rooms had been converted into a military hospital.<sup>185</sup>

According to the newspapers, twice a week at a children's shelter in Galernaya Harbor, Pashkov and the Pashkovite ladies preached, sang, and distributed booklets (Pobedonostsev 1882:8). Pashkovites also started a home

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<sup>183</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 43, in Corrado 2000:99.

<sup>184</sup> Dalton, *Lord Radstock and Colonel Pashkoff*, 110, in Corrado 2000:127.

for boys and a home for girls (Nichols 1991:22). This was another area of Pashkovite ministry: founding schools, workshops, and homes for poor children. The Pashkovite school located in Lomonosovskiy Pereulok was in existence before January 1883, since by then the Police Chief was already attempting to close the school.<sup>186</sup> Orthodox Archpriest Ornatsky considered this area of Pashkovite activity the most dangerous. According to Ornatsky the Pashkovites were:

rearing small children in a sectarian spirit in Pashkovite shelters and workshops, where children are taught not to pray according to Orthodox rites . . . not to go to priests or ask for priests' blessings. Such a workshop exists now [1903] in St. Petersburg, at one of Pashkov's buildings on the corner of Sampsonievskiy Prospekt and Lomanov Pereulok on the Vyborg side, and one must wonder why Orthodox parents allow underage children to go to work there (Ornatsky, 1903:8-9).

Other schools were opened on the estates of Pashkovites where aristocratic ladies taught peasants to read.<sup>187</sup>

Another charitable institution founded by Pashkov in one of his buildings in the Vyborg side was an inexpensive shelter for homeless women (Corrado 2000:126). In the words of Professor Emile Dillon, Pashkov spent his property

most generously, on the poor and suffering, with a secrecy and tact to which I [Professor Emile Dillon] have never seen a parallel. Students who had been starving on black bread and weak tea were enabled to finish their studies; families about to disperse for lack of subsistence were kept together by relief from an unseen source; the sick were cared for by his physicians or sent to hospitals at his expense... In a few years he spent a large fortune in works of Christian charity.<sup>188</sup>

Unfortunately, Pashkovite charity, especially Pashkov's personal generosity, was often misunderstood; some even took advantage of it. There were rumours that Pashkov was "buying" followers with money (Bogolyubov 1912:29), or that poor people who showed interest in joining the "sect" were fed free of charge at the low-priced canteen (Bogolyubov 1912:29). Pobedonostsev reported to the tsar that Colonel Pashkov often paid money to his listeners who

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<sup>185</sup> Krusenstjerna, *Im Kreuz*, 85-86, in Corrado 2000:127.

<sup>186</sup> V. A. Pashkov, St. Petersburg, to Ober Politseimeister P.A. Gresser, [Jan-Feb. 1883], Pashkoff Papers, fiche 2/1/a, 11, in Corrado 2000:125.

<sup>187</sup> Dillon, 332, in Corrado 2000:125.

<sup>188</sup> Dillon 332, in Corrado 2000:45.

missed work and to his own workmen he paid the day's wages (Zapiska 1884:13). Later Kushnev ironically mentioned that Pashkov "was flush with money and gave out his publications" (Kushnev 1916:47). Some may have thought Pashkov was wasting his fortune, but time has shown how right he was. Although Pashkov could not have known this in the beginning, his ministry in Russia was limited to ten years. Then, after the 1917 Revolution all private property was confiscated and nationalized anyway.

In summary, one cannot but notice similarities between the Pashkovite movement and British evangelicalism of the time. In both cases believers did not wait for people to come to them but they went to where people were. In both cases women's ministry became common and acceptable. In both cases meetings included domestic servants and representatives from the working classes. In both cases meetings were followed by private conversations. In both cases there were special meetings for children, working women, young people, etc. In both cases philanthropy played a significant role in believers' lives. This kind of behaviour naturally turned heads. Some accused them of hypocrisy and wrong motives, while others were stunned to see the change in their lives caused by receiving the gospel message. A lot of continuity can be found between Pashkovite philanthropy and the evangelical practices of Great Britain. Sewing meetings for the poor, hospital and prison visitations, homes for orphans and prostitutes are only a few examples.

#### **4.1.2.5 Publishing activity**

It should be remembered that besides personal contacts, significant evangelistic outreach was achieved by distributing Bibles, tracts, and Christian literature. One must remember that Russians were and still are a nation of readers. The task of printing Bibles and evangelical literature was undertaken by the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading (SESER) founded in 1876 with the approval of the Holy Synod. Korff claimed that it was Pashkov's idea and initiative to organise the Society. Pashkov was its president and a generous sponsor. He also allocated one of his halls for storing publications, well over a million pieces of literature. Although after 1862 the Holy Synod alone had the right to print the Scripture in Russian, it did not hold a monopoly on distribution. By 1881 Pashkov and his followers had distributed thousands of Bibles at their own expense, many of them with passages

highlighted by hand in the fashion of the Marked Testaments familiar in England. In 1882 Pashkov paid the British Bible Society to print complete Bibles. In addition, Pashkov published New Testaments with Psalms himself.<sup>189</sup>

In St. Petersburg the Pashkovite literature was available at the bookstore of J. Grotte at Liteyny Prospect 56 as well as in bookstores in other large cities (Corrado 2000:141). Kushnev mentions that Grotte's bookshop was located in Bol'shaya Morskaya Street near the Angliya Hotel (Kushnev 1916:8). In 1882 Count Bobrinskiy organised booths at the Moscow Exhibition where over 120,000 brochures were distributed in the course of four and one-half months (Corrado 2000:143).

Another method already mentioned of distributing literature was by colporteurs, among whom Pashkov worked most with Delyakov. Their close collaboration continued even after Pashkov's exile (Karetnikova 2001:30). The message was also spread by seasonal workers who took Bibles and tracts home to their villages (Fountain 1988:38). "The booklets were given out for free in the preacher's home after the sermon, they were taken to peasants' homes by colporteurs, sometimes peasants were caught with these booklets at their work places, in victualling-house, and in pothouses" (Sakharov 1897:20).

This way, there was a sufficient amount of Bibles in the country. The Society distributed its printed materials, including New Testaments and Bibles, among wide circles of the Russian population. Due to its activity the New Testament in Russian made its way into many remote villages; it became available to the *muzhik* [a peasant man]. Already in 1886 (!) the Pashkovite brochures were found in Siberia being translated into the languages of ethnic minorities and distributed among them (Kushnev 1916:58). In time the Pashkovite literature spread from Murmansk in the north to Tiflis in the South, and from Finland in the West to Sakhalin in the East (Corrado 2000:186).

Prugavin admitted that "one cannot help seeing serious merit of the Pashkovites in this area. The reading of the gospel did its work. Under the influence of this reading, peasants started thinking about moral, religious, and social issues" (Prugavin 1909:246). The Pashkovites generously supplied their printed materials to other evangelical groups in Russia who gladly received the

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<sup>189</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:131; Karetnikova 2001:30; Savinsky 1999:149; Corrado 2000:139.

Bibles and other Christian literature. That is why Sakharov complained that the Pashkovites “feed with their juices a great tree of Russian Stundism as the adherents of this sect gladly use printed editions of the Pashkovites” (Sakharov 1897:26).

The Society published a hymnbook *Lyubimye stikhi* [Favourite verses] and many other spiritual booklets. Sakharov presents a list of the booklets’ titles which includes 113 entries (Sakharov 1897:26-28), while Skvortsov’s list includes 117 titles (Skvortsov 1893:75-81). Skvortsov also pointed out that there were more than two hundred brochures altogether, some of which were reprinted up to twelve times, approximately five thousand copies each time (Skvortsov 1893:75). Among the books were already mentioned Russian translations by Yuliya Zasetskaya of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*<sup>190</sup> and *The Holy War*. Translations of Spurgeon’s sermons were especially popular.<sup>191</sup> Until its forced closure in 1884 the Society managed to publish about two hundred titles including Spurgeon’s sermons, some of which had up to twelve printings (Kovalenko 1996:80; AUCECB 1989:85). However Sakharov points out that, even after 1884, some Pashkovite publications appeared in 1891 and 1892, permitted (according to cover copy) by an ecclesiastical superintendent of printing (Sakharov 1897:24).

Some observations can be made about Pashkovite literature in general. First of all, most of their publications came out anonymously. The author will probably never be able to identify the writers and translators of these items. Whether it was the result of caution in the face of possible persecution, Christian modesty, or both, the author cannot tell. Interestingly, the earliest publications of Plymouth Brethren writers also came out anonymously or were signed only with initials (Ehlert 1957:55-56). Most booklets published were translations from English and German, among which some were written by

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<sup>190</sup> The Public Library in St. Petersburg contains a copy of Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress” published in Russian in 1782 under a long title *Lyubopytnoe i dostopamyatnoe puteshestvie khristianina k vechnosti cherez mnogie priklyucheniya* [The curious and memorable journey of a Christian to eternity through many adventures]. Then there are *Sochineniya Ioanna Byuniana* [Works of John Bunyan] (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, corrected, from German translation) published in 1786-1787. These publications preceded Zasetskaya’s translation of 1878 by a century.

<sup>191</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:131; Karetnikova 2001:30; Savinsky 1999:149; Kovalenko 1996:80; AUCECB 1989:85.



Radstock, while others were products of the Russian mind (Sakharov 1897:20; Ornatsky 1903:7-8).

Skvortsov formulated the main idea behind all of the brochures: “Have the Bible and read it, believe in Jesus and look at Him – this is the main and essential thing for salvation. Everything else is not so important” (Skvortsov 1893:76). Commenting on the brochure “Two old men who grew younger”, Terletsky notes, “When reading a brochure one cannot help seeing the traces of Protestant pietism mixed with mysticism” (Terletsky 1891:46). Indeed, the main goal of such brochures was evangelism and the edification of believers. Then, according to Nichols, the SESER purposefully tried to maintain a theologically neutral position (Nichols 1991:51). One reason could be that Pashkovites stood on non-denominational grounds, while the other could be that from the very beginning of the SESER Pashkovites had to deal with censors. Korff recalled:

I often had to go to the censor’s office at the Alexander Nevskiy Monastery. Not infrequently did this lead to theological discussions with the censor. I tried to prove to him, a learned monk, that it was not his duty to defend Orthodoxy, but rather that his job was to see that literature printed did not represent dangerous teachings. ‘Your literature represents the doctrines of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and Wesley, and they shake the Orthodox Church. Therefore they are dangerous,’ was his usual reply (Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 49-50, in Corrado 2000:145).

In 1880 even the Chief Procurator could not find a good reason to hinder the distribution of the Society’s publications. Four years later the attitude changed again, and the Society was shut down on 24 May 1884 (Skvortsov 1893:76). The government confiscated a large number of books. Pashkov’s letter written in November 1884 indicated that, “This [confiscation] deprived us, as stated, of the cost of the books: the Society twelve thousand rubles and myself nine thousand rubles”.<sup>192</sup> The total publications of the Society reached several million items (Fountain 1988:38).

The publications can be divided into several groups. The titles of the booklets speak for themselves:

– On sin, repentance and salvation (e. g. “Do you believe that you are a sinner?”, “Repentance,” “Joyful news,” “Good news,” “About Jesus Christ’s readiness to receive sinners,” “Returning of a sinner to God” “Come to Jesus,”

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<sup>192</sup> Pashkov, Shortgrave, Newcastle, Essex, England, to Petr Vasilievich, St. Petersburg, 14/26 November 1884, Pashkoff papers, fiche II/1/b, p.1, in Corrado 2000:146.

“Tonight or never,” “The way to salvation,” “Have you made peace with God?,” “He loves me,” “Talks of two friends about the new birth,” “Make them come in” (by Spurgeon)).

- On the meaning of Christianity and Christian life (e.g., “What is a Christian?,” “The name of a Christian and its meaning,” “Do you fulfil the will of God?,” “Children of God, His heirs,” “Do you pray?,” “A few rules of good conduct,” “Do you thank God?,” “A reminder to Christians from the Word of God,” “Christ is all in all,” “About faith in Christ”).

- On the Second Coming and life after death (e.g., “Think of future life”, “Wheat and weeds”, “Heaven and hell” (by Spurgeon), “Saved or lost – be ready,” “Wedding garment,” “Wedding feast”).

- On the Scripture (e.g., “What does the Holy Scripture teach?,” “Thoughts on the Song of Songs,” “Two words about the Holy Bible,” “A short guide to the reading of the New Testament”).

- Excerpts from Orthodox writers (St. Tikhon and the Reverend Michael) on the Scripture, Christian faith, good works, repentance, etc.

- Simple stories for children.

- Against drunkenness.

*Russkiy Rabochiy* [Russian Workman], a monthly newspaper released to meet the needs of the rapidly growing working class, carried articles written by Orthodox writers, e.g., St. Tikhon, St. Ephraem the Syrian, St. John Chrysostom, archbishop Eusebius of Mogilev (Terletsky 1891:63). This points again to the broadmindedness of the Pashkovites. The newspaper outlived the Society by two years, and was closed in 1886.

Leskov’s detailed study of *Russkiy Rabochiy*, titled *Sentimental’noe blagochestie* [Sentimental piety], criticised the newspaper for being artificial, in that the persons described in the articles were more English than Russian, even if they were called by Russian names (Leskov 1877:305-316, 329-330). He rightly rebukes the publishers for not being well enough acquainted with the realities of Russian life. Leskov also criticised the newspaper for preaching salvation by faith alone without personal merit (Leskov 1877:317-320). He attributed this to the “extreme views of modern Protestants” among whom he named Moody, whose writings were being eagerly translated by the ladies of high society (Leskov 1877:319-320). According to Leskov, “The thought of such

easy access to heaven for anybody who turned to Christ with faith alone surely contains a serious danger” (Leskov 1877:320). In Leskov’s opinion, the newspaper was not what Russian workmen needed (Leskov 1877:265).

Later in 1895 the Russian Workman was revived by Princess M. N. Shcherbatova under a different name, *Voskresnoe Chtenie* [The Sunday reading], similar in form and content to its predecessor (Sakharov 1897:25).

The prayers of Bersier, a French Reformed pastor, became very popular among the Russian Pashkovite ladies of high society in Petersburg. The prayers were translated into Russian for distribution among people who did not know French (Leskov 1877:(II)3-4). Starting in 1877 Bersier’s sermons and other writings were published in St. Petersburg some fifty-five times. The author believes that they deserve closer attention. One of the *Sermons par Bersier* (Paris 1879), titled “Is prayer effective?”, was translated from French by A. Kunitsina and published in 1880. It is about “the instinct of prayer that lives deep down in every human soul” (Bersier 1880:4). Bersier insists that direct prayer to God, not a repetition of memorized words, is more than a spiritual exercise; it can change the course of things (Bersier 1880:11).

“The court preacher”, another sermon from volume two of *Sermons par Bersier*, was also translated by A. Kunitsyna and published in 1880. It is about John the Baptist’s courage and truthful nature. It is directed against the hypocrisy of high society and the need to disclose it. Bersier’s sermons continued to be translated and published even after SESER was shut down. For instance, “Life lived in vain” was published in 1891. The preacher insists that human life that is not directly or indirectly lived for God is fruitless; life that pursues personal interests and praise is utterly useless for God. Again Bersier preaches against the emptiness and futility of high society life with its excessive leisure, with late mornings without prayer and serious reading. He urges his reader to remember his duty because idleness in a Christian perverts one’s soul.

Such was the type of reading which to a great extent formed and moulded the Pashkovites’ worldview.

#### **4.1.2.6 Attempts to Unite Different Evangelical Groups**

The main disagreement between aristocratic Pashkovites and peasant Stundists, Baptists, and Molokans was over the issues of their relationship with

the Orthodox Church and infant baptism, which for years prevented an official merger. However, there were a number of attempts to find common ground, many cases of communication and mutual help, and plenty of ties on a personal level.

Pashkov was “a valuable friend to the Stundists scattered over southern Russia” (Latimer 1908:36) for a number of good reasons. After Korff visited Stundists in the Ukrainian gubernias (provinces) of Chaplinka and Kosyakovka in 1875, Baptists and Stundists began to call on Pashkov when staying in the capital, and the Pashkovites supplied them with literature (Corrado 2000:148). Distribution of literature printed by the SESER was a task shared by Pashkovites and southern believers, especially Stundists and Molokans. By 1879 Pashkov himself had visited the Stundists and participated in their activities (Corrado 2000:148-149).

By the 1880s Pashkovite influence was widely spread due to distribution of literature, “voluminous correspondence”, and Pashkovite travels (Corrado 2000:150; Sakharov 1897:19). It has already been mentioned that Pashkov and Korff visited different Evangelical believers in Volga region in 1881, and at about the same time Pashkov got closely involved with the needs of the Ukrainian peasants (Nichols 1991 66-67). Fountain also points out that “Pashkov and Korff undertook extensive preaching tours into the interior, especially into regions heavily populated by the Nonconformists, and the new movement was joining forces with the Nonconformist sects, especially those in the South-West of Russia” (Fountain 1988:38).

Actually, it was the “enemies” of the evangelicals that saw Stundists and Pashkovites as parts of the same movement long before the various evangelical strands began discussing a possible merger. The common term used to describe the evangelicals was “Stundo-Pashkovtsy.” This could be partly due to a certain measure of ignorance or, perhaps, their opponents actually saw through the small differences into a bigger picture. It was the “enemies” again that worried about a possible merger the most. In May 1880 Pobedonostsev wrote to the tsar about the danger created by Pashkov:

He [Pashkov] calls into existence a new schism which, rising in the north, from the capital, and from the upper class of society and the governing intellectuals, threatens to coalesce with the Stunda which sprung up among the peasants of the South-West of Russia (Pobedonostsev 1880:4).

It was persecution that became an important unifying factor. First, unfriendly newspapers and periodicals created free publicity. For instance, in April 1880 after reading an article in *Tserkovno-Obshchestvennyy Vestnik* № 35 aimed against Pashkov, the Vladikavkaz congregation of Baptists began communicating with Pashkov. They wrote, “The editor describes your sermons and prayers, not memorised, but heartfelt, as is your entire worship service... we easily recognised that you were our brothers...”<sup>193</sup> Second, persecuted Stundists needed the Pashkovites’ help, support, and intercession. Besides, sharing a prison cell tends to unite people. J. Kroeker told an interesting story of a stormy Stundist conference, which ended in dispersal by the police. Two leading representatives, one for infant baptism and one for believers’ baptism, were arrested and put into the same prison cell where “a moving reconciliation took place, sealed by many brotherly kisses” (Brandenburg 1977:92).

In any case, by the end of the 1870s Pashkov and Korff knew a number of Nonconformist groups that preached salvation by faith around the Empire. The Ukraine and the Caucasus, then parts of the Empire, were home to the main branches of the evangelical movement. When on 20-22 May 1882 Mennonite Brethren and Baptists had a conference in Rikenau (Tavrisheskaya gubernia), Pashkov wrote a letter asking them to receive visiting believers from St. Petersburg as brothers and sisters and allow them to participate in the Lord’s Supper regardless of being baptised as infants only.

The minutes of the Baptist Conference in Rikenau contain the following information: Brother Wieler reported that brother Pashkov wishes that Baptists would allow believers from St. Petersburg to take part in the Lord’s Supper in spite of being baptised only as infants. Brothers E. Bogdanov, A. Mazaev, and I. Skorokhodov argued that if they allow this, it would mean that infant baptism was right and Baptists were wrong. However, they decided not to send back any categorical answer and left this issue to be solved in the future (Alexii 1908:567-568). On the one hand, Mennonites and Baptists did not want to sound too harsh (Karetnikova 2001:37-38) because they did not want to scare away the Pashkovites. On the other hand, they considered adult baptism an issue of such great importance that it could not be treated lightly. Nevertheless,

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<sup>193</sup> Dmitriy Udalov, Vladikavkaz, to Vasilii Pashkov, St. Petersburg, 8 April 1880, in hand-written copybook No. 2, in Corrado 2000:148-149.

doctrinal differences in the points of baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper did not hinder the Baptists from receiving Pashkovite literature and financial help. Thus the Pashkovite leaders in St. Petersburg were left to think that association with Baptists was possible.

It seems that around the same time in 1882 Pashkov and his followers were already planning to convene an all-Russia evangelical congress for Bible-centred believers. Pashkov, who was baptised about the same time, now had much more in common with Baptists than previously. The goal of the congress was "to unite different groups of believers in Russia so that they could get to know each other and then work together".<sup>194</sup> Another goal was to unite those groups under a common doctrinal statement written in terms acceptable for all (Corrado 2000:151). The plan was delayed until 1884 when on March 24 letters signed by Pashkov and Korff were sent to Stundists, Baptists, Mennonites, Molokans, Dukhobors, and Evangelical Christians (Zakharovtsy)<sup>195</sup> asking them to send delegates to St. Petersburg (Corrado 2000:152; Ellis & Jones 1996:29-30). Pashkov and Korff provided travel money for those who could not afford it (Nichols 1991:67). Pashkov's wealth allowed him to pay the expenses of about one hundred people or more during their time in St. Petersburg. The Pashkovites used to think and act in a stately manner, set high goals, and see them reached.

The beginning of the united conference was set on 1 April 1884 and was planned for eight days (Karetnikova 2001:42; Ellis & Jones 1996:29-30).

Pashkov engaged a roomy hotel in St. Petersburg and invited the widely scattered bodies to send delegates to the capital city for a series of meetings... They came, to the number of about four hundred. The meetings I believe were held in a hall in the palace of Princess Lieven. Tickets were issued to each person; Dr. and Mrs. Baedeker's tickets were Nos. 1 and 2 respectively (Latimer 1908:36).

Dr. Baedeker was present to welcome the guests. Seventy people were out-of-town delegates who lodged in Pashkov's hotel (Ellis & Jones 1996:29-30). Besides the Baedekers there were a few other foreign delegates. The exact number of delegates is not known. Corrado finds the number of one hundred

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<sup>194</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karetnikova 2001:39.

<sup>195</sup> Kovalenko mentions only Stundists, Baptists, Brethren Mennonites, and Evangelical Christians (Zakharovtsy) (Kovalenko 1996:74).



the most reliable estimate (Corrado 2000:152). Sessions were held in the houses of Pashkov, Korff, and N. Lieven (Karetnikova 2001:42).

The 1884 Congress was a high point of the evangelical movement culminating the ministry of Pashkov and Korff before their banishment from Russia. The idea of allowing various evangelicals to meet each other and possibly to find common ground for unity overpowered officials' warnings to not call the conference. Corrado reveals an important fact that on 20 March, two weeks before the united congress, Pashkov and Korff were summoned to appear before General Orevskiy, chief of St. Petersburg political police. He ordered them to stop preaching, stop circulating literature, and not receive delegates from the South. When they refused, General forbade them to correspond with the southern believers whatsoever, and ordered them to leave Russia within a fortnight. If they did not comply, they faced the danger of losing the right to manage their estates. Princess N. Lieven was also forbidden to receive the delegates at her home. Pashkov, Korff, and Lieven ignored these orders and continued as if nothing had happened (Corrado 2000:151).

They would not have taken the risk (Pashkov himself often submitted to what he saw as unjust requests of the authorities) unless the congress to unite the evangelical groups was a matter of such great significance to them. It was a matter of great significance to the authorities as well. They feared nothing more than seeing "sects" scattered all over the vast empire suddenly gathering together.

The 1884 congress is described by a number of participants in many details and with great warmth.<sup>196</sup> Especially memorable was a sense of brotherhood that crossed denominational, social, and national borders:

The halls and drawing rooms for the sessions were filled with people of different classes: among the peasants, official employees, workers, tradesmen there were princes, counts, barons, and ladies from high society (Pavlov 1884?:28).

The sessions started on 1 April. The stated goal of the conference was "to strengthen the brethren in the faith, to deepen their understanding of the Bible, and to emphasise brotherly fellowship" without creating "denominational uniformity" (Brandenburg 1977:112). The main issues being discussed were

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<sup>196</sup> Pavlov 1999:197-198 "Vospominaniya ssyl'nogo"; Pavlov 1999:248-249 "Pravda o baptistakh", Latimer 1908:36-38.

spreading the gospel and church organisational matters. The latter issue involved significant controversy (Kovalenko 1996:74). The idea of merging even without reaching “denominational uniformity” was too bold and utopic for the time. Pashkov must have been a great optimist hoping to unite those groups under the same doctrinal statement! The doctrinal differences that Pashkovites viewed as minor proved to be much more important to other groups.

Baptist delegates even refused to participate in the Lord’s Supper held at the Congress because the majority of St. Petersburg believers had not been re-baptised as adults.<sup>197</sup> The Baptists and Molokans, who had been influenced by J. Oncken, practised closed communion (Nichols 1991:68). The Mennonite Brethren also rebaptised everyone who joined their groups; any former baptisms were considered invalid (Kushnev 1916:170). For those groups, “shared communion was possible only with those who had been baptised as believers, by immersion” (Brandenburg 1977:112). In the St. Petersburg group, however, the question of rebaptising adults by immersion was left to the individual conscience (Sakharov 1897:64).

A meeting to discuss the issue of baptism was held on 3 April at the home of Princess Lieven. The draft of the Pashkovite statement on baptism seemed too broad for those holding stricter views, caused arguments, and had to be dropped from the document. It read, “We recognise baptism as an ordinance instituted by God . . . How this command will be fulfilled depends on the conscience of the individual and is left to the individual’s understanding of the Word of God”.<sup>198</sup> As soon as it became clear that the participants would not agree on the issue of baptism, Pashkov, Baedeker, and Radcliff suggested dropping the subject, because “further discussion could create mutual displeasure” (Karetnikova 2001:43). After a few days of discussion and arguments they decided to concentrate on ethical issues (Nichols 1991:68).

Mennonites, Dukhobors, Molokans, Baptists, and Stundists could not possibly agree theologically. The issue of baptism was not the only thing that differed in their views. Mennonites with their longer history did not want to be allied with the Baptists. Apart from other differences, they firmly held to their privilege of refusing armed service, while Baptists were more tolerant in this

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<sup>197</sup> Pavlov 1999:248; Corrado 2000:153.

matter; furthermore, Baptists did not forbid the use of tobacco, as the Mennonites did (Brandenburg 1977:91).

Unfortunately, not much can be found in the literature and sources about the specific content of speeches. Pavlov recalled that nobody announced the speakers; anybody could stand up and speak (Pavlov 1999:197). Pavlov himself spoke about the biblical foundations for unity pointing out that it can be reached through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and returning to the Apostles' teaching (Pavlov 1884?:28). Englishman Reginald Radcliffe spoke on methods of evangelising, warning not to repeat the mistakes of English and German Baptists, namely, not to pay preachers for preaching. He also insisted that women should not be allowed to preach. However, there was a woman speaker at the conference, most likely Princess Lieven, who spoke on the topic "Do not love the world" (Pavlov 1884?:29).

The decision about supporting preachers/missionaries and women's ministry was unanimous: "preachers are entitled to financial support and gifted sisters should be allowed to preach" (Karetnikova 2001:43). A number of Pashkovite ladies (Chertkova, Lieven, Gagarina, the Kozlyaninov sisters, the Kruezer sisters, Peuker, Zasetkaya, and many others) not only evangelised but saved the Petersburg Pashkovite congregation from closure during the difficult times, preached and counselled, especially until Kargel returned in 1885 from Finland and Alekseev was chosen as presbyter in 1888 (Karetnikova 2001:43-44).

On 6 April, the fifth day of the conference, at Bol'shaya Morskaya 43, luncheon was served by Princess Lieven (Ellis & Jones 1996:29-30). However, the Princess, Pashkov, and a few foreign guests waited in vain.

No delegates appeared... A large force of police that had lain in wait for them arrested every one. In the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, whither they had been taken, they were carefully searched and separately interrogated as to whence they had come, their purpose in coming, who paid their charges, and their opinions on political and other matters (Latimer 1908:36-37).

The principal officer warned the delegates, "You have no lawful business in St. Petersburg; and therefore we have to send you all back at once to your

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<sup>198</sup> Kushnev 1916:81; Bogolyubov 1912:18; Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 57, in Corrado 2000:153.

homes... If any of you are again discovered in this city, you will be arrested and punished” (Latimer 1908:38).

According to Stead, the time that Molokans, Stundists, Baptists and other delegates spent in the prison of St. Peter and Paul’s fortress contributed more to the desired unity than had the meetings called for that purpose.<sup>199</sup> Overall, as a result of the conference, “a good foundation had been laid for communication between the groups” (Nichols 1991:68) despite theological disagreements. The great value of the 1884 congress in St. Petersburg was that the representatives of various evangelical movements got to know each other. The Pashkovites were the ones who had potential to fulfil this task.

After the St. Petersburg Congress was interrupted by the authorities, in the end of April of the same year a Baptist Conference was organized in Novovasil’evka. Delegates were mostly from the south of Russia and the Caucasus. The chairman was I. Wieler and the vice chairman was I. Kargel. The issue of shared participation in the Lord’s Supper for those baptised as infants and as adults was raised again. After many discussions most of delegates expressed their readiness to share the Lord’s Table with all genuine believers if testing reveals them as such. The Conference resumed leaving this question open for the sake of those who did not have “clarity in this issue from the Lord” (Alexii 1908:580). The Conference commissioned Kargel, as a representative of the St. Petersburg brothers, to express hearty gratitude to St. Petersburg believers for substantial offerings to their missionary work (Alexii 1908:584).

After the dismissal of the conference in St. Petersburg the authorities started taking decisive measures: in May the SESER was closed, in June Pashkov and Korff were ordered to leave the country. Count Korff recalled later, “I was supposed to sign an undertaking not to preach any more, not to organize any more meetings, not to engage in free prayer, and to give up all relations with the stundists and other religious communities” (Brandenburg 1977:113). In June 1884 Pashkov and Korff were both banished from Russia; they lived the rest of their lives in exile (Fountain 1988:39).

While in the exile, Pashkov corresponded with I. Wieler (a German Mennonite, the first president of the Baptist Union), V. Pavlov (the Baptist leader

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<sup>199</sup> Stead, 365-366, in Corrado 2000:154.

from Tiflis), Ryaboshapka and Ratushnyy (Ukrainian Stundist leaders), Y. Delyakov (Persian missionary in Russia) and many others (Corrado 2000:163). While the official merger did not work out, personal ties were not broken. Needless to say, Pashkov not only wrote letters, but continued to support a number of projects financially. Using his high connections he also interceded before the authorities on behalf of believers. He even wrote to the tsar himself, arguing that “so-called Evangelical sectarians and Baptists” are not “apostates who deny their native land and people, who separate themselves from everything Russian, who are rebels against the supreme authority, and advocates of the universal levelling of ranks”.<sup>200</sup> Pashkov’s correspondence in exile indicates closer contact with Stundists and Baptists than with his own followers (Corrado 2000:172).

To summarise, it must be said that Pashkovites were the first ones in Russia who attempted to unite all other evangelical groups which were similarly Bible-minded. In so doing, they set a precedent. About a month later Baptists met in Novovasil’evka and as a result a Baptist Union was formed. By the late 1880s, outside of the capital evangelicals were commonly known as “Stundo-Pashkovtsy” and “Stundoevangelisty”, no longer distinguishing Pashkovites from Stundists (Corrado 2000:172). In 1897 the Orthodox Missionary Congress came to the conclusion that Stundism had absorbed Pashkovism to the point that Pashkovism does not constitute a separate “sect”, it totally merged with Stundism or joined the Baptists.<sup>201</sup>

### 4.1.3 Conclusion

So, what was the rise and the initial stage of evangelical movement in St. Petersburg like?

In general, literature about the early Pashkovites carries many emotional overtones. “Friends” are praising them while “enemies” are cursing. The studies lack distinct periodisation of that ten-year period as if the movement remained the way it was during those first “naïve” days of Radstock’s “talks”. I will attempt to fill this gap.

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<sup>200</sup> Stead, 390-391, in Corrado 2000:164.

<sup>201</sup> Deyat. 3 Vseross. Miss. s’ezda 1897 g., p. 133, in Kushnev 1916:54.

Through the preaching of Lord Radstock a significant spiritual movement took place among the Russian aristocracy. The first two years 1874-1876 were filled with Radstock's presence, with the conversions of future key Russian leaders including Pashkov, Korff, and Bobrinskiy. During this time meetings grew out of private "chamber" conversations into massive public gatherings. It was a time of almost unlimited freedom. The evangelical group in St. Petersburg was known by the nickname "Radstockists". It must have been Radstock who introduced the Brethren practice of open "breaking of the bread" among his St. Petersburg followers. Actually, in Russian Evangelical-Baptist churches even today the communion is called *khleboprelomlenie* which literally means "breaking of bread".

During the next two years or a little longer, 1876-1878, the group was still mostly concentrated on evangelism with Pashkov becoming the leading figure. The group started to be identified as Pashkovites. Although the movement experienced bad press from Orthodox enthusiasts, there was no official persecution yet, except for Radstock being forced to leave the country. Korff wrote, "All this joyful time when we could freely preach the gospel lasted about five years".<sup>202</sup> It was during this time that the movement crossed social, national, and denominational barriers. By 1878-79 the revival reached its highest point in terms of its public activity: a number of homes opened for meetings, attendance was high, popularity was at its peak, printing of Christian materials was abundant.

During the next four years, 1878-1882, the group still lacked any distinctive church organisation, but the search for identity had started. It seems that with Baedeker's arrival in 1877, the group started moving closer towards an Open Brethren type of congregation. With Pobedonostsev as Ober-procurator from 1880 the Pashkovites started facing difficulties in their ministry and had to "slow down" their activity. Even prior to that "in 1878 all public meetings were forbidden, but the Lord helped us to continue meetings in the homes of Pashkov and Lieven".<sup>203</sup> However, according to Korff, "before 1882 all our spiritual

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<sup>202</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:125.

<sup>203</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:131.



activity was predominantly evangelistic,<sup>204</sup> which means that the group was broadening its boundaries.

During the last two years of the ten-year period under consideration, 1882-1884, with Pashkov and Korff still in Russia, the movement had to adopt new forms. According to Korff, “after the big public meetings came under the ban we started sewing workshops [in 1882]”.<sup>205</sup> During this search for identity G. Müller was invited. Now there were more meetings for prayer and edification. With the baptism of Pashkov, Lieven, and a couple others the group moved even closer to Open Brethren structure. The Pashkovites, however, preserved a genuine open communion and did not pressure those who held to infant baptism. This was a time of intense search for connections and unity with other evangelical Bible-minded groups across Russia, especially in the south-western parts.

In the years after Pashkov’s and Korff’s banishment and before the edict of freedom of conscience, 1884-1905, the leadership moved to women, mostly to Lieven and Chertkova, who preserved semi-legal meetings.

By 1884 the theological profile of the Pashkovite group in St. Petersburg became very consistent with the conservative evangelicalism of Great Britain of that time, particularly with Open Brethren and the Keswick convention. Russian literature on the movement consistently makes Radstock a member of a Darbyist church or at least somebody close to becoming a member.<sup>206</sup> This seems to be a mistake because Radstock was much closer to Open Brethren. Even more so were his close friends and followers to Russia, Baedeker and Müller. Hence, the Pashkovite movement should have been bearing the character of Open Brethren rather than Exclusive Brethren. The author cannot agree with James Rushbrooke, a past president of the Baptist World Alliance, who classified the movement in St. Petersburg as “bearing the character of so called ‘Plymouth Brethren’ or ‘Darbyists’” (Rushbrooke 1999:189).

As in Britain, the movement in Russia began within the Established Church. It was persecution that drove believers out of the Established Church and actually strengthened the ranks of Nonconformity, as was the case with Wesley and Methodism (Fountain 1988:18-19). Like Keswick and early

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<sup>204</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karev 1999:130.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

Brethren, “the evangelical revival in Russia in the second half of the last century had this non-denominational character” (Brandenburg 1977:xi).

Of the three streams which constituted the Russian evangelical movement: Stundist, Baptists and Evangelical Christians (the latter linked with the name of the Englishman Lord Radstock), only the Baptists had from the beginning a definite denominational character . . . The Evangelical Christians were noted for their extreme openness (Brandenburg 1977:xii).

The Pashkovite movement was non-denominational, as often happens with such spontaneous revivals. Radstock came from the Open Brethren, who themselves “strove for a Christianity without organization and official positions” (Brandenburg 1977:109). It is not surprising then that Russian evangelicals became non-denominational as well, in the Brethren sense of the word (it has nothing in common with modern ecumenism): having fellowships with all saints regardless of their denominational affiliations, as long as the definition of a “saint” comes from within the group.

Nichols points out that revival movements are rarely known for their systematic theology and are more concerned with a person’s relationship with Christ. This was certainly true of the Pashkovite movement. Radstock and Pashkov succeeded in motivating people towards pietistic Christianity and tried to stay as non-denominational as possible (Nichols 1991:82). Another important point made by Nichols is that for Russians the ability to implement a Christian belief system is more important than the defining that belief. Nichols sees this as the central reason why pietistic teaching exerted such enormous influence on Russian society. “Russians were drawn to a theological system, which offered a distinct ethical system, not distinct theology” (Nichols 1991:109).

The Pashkovites recognised the Bible as the only source of their spiritual authority. In their “no theology” approach that they had learnt from Radstock, they read the Bible, preached the Bible, memorised the Bible, printed the Bible, and believed the Bible. They were people of the Book. Like evangelical believers of all generations, the Pashkovites did not doubt that God inspired the Bible. This belief was transmitted to them by Radstock, Baedeker, and other foreign preacher-teachers who worked among the Pashkovites in St. Petersburg. It seems that just as Wesley avoided “philosophical speculations,

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<sup>206</sup> Kovalenko 1996:69, Karetnikova 2001:28; Savinsky 1999:141.

intricate reasonings, show of learning, difficult words, technical terms and educational manner of speaking” (Bebbington 1989:52), so did Radstock, Baedeker, and then Pashkov.

Bebbington also points out that “the overriding aim of early Evangelicals was to bring home the message of the Bible and to encourage its devotional use rather than to develop a doctrine of scripture” (Bebbington 1989:14). This statement applies perfectly to the group under consideration. It is very hard to find written theories of infallibility or inerrancy. It seems that the leaders were even avoiding theorisation and forming doctrines and gave reports concerning their beliefs only when forced. In their personal life the role of the Scripture was very clear – it was to be received without questioning and obeyed immediately.

From the absence of written material on the topic it appears that Russian evangelicals were almost unaware of the growing controversy in the Western evangelical world over the issue of the attitude towards the Bible, the attitude that divided the Evangelical world into conservatives and liberals in the wake of the First World War (Bebbington 1989:14). Considering that Russian evangelicals loved C. H. Spurgeon’s sermons, translated and printed them in large quantities, they were close to Spurgeon who claimed that “the plenary verbal inspiration of the Holy Scripture is a fact and not a hypothesis” (Bebbington 1989:14).

Another important characteristic of the Pashkovites was a distinctive repentance and conversion experience. Once they “found Jesus” or “came to know Jesus” they preached over and over again that salvation can be obtained through the blood of Christ here and now and that a believer can have assurance of salvation. The words of the Quaker statesman John Bright addressed to a Congregational preacher could be easily applied to St. Petersburg Pashkovite preachers: “The atonement, always the atonement! Have they nothing else to say?” (Bebbington 1989:14). The assurance of salvation that characterized Pashkovite belief marked the great break with eastern Orthodoxy. It is to this doctrine that Bebbington attributes the success of evangelicalism: “the dynamism of the Evangelical movement was possible only because its adherents were assured in their faith” (Bebbington 1989:42).

After the official ban on big evangelistic meetings and due to preaching of men like Stockmayer and Müller, the focus was shifted to sanctification. In this way the Pashkovites also followed the British evangelical path. “The

implications of the cross for life were also important for Evangelicals. There was a bond between the atonement and the quest for sanctification” (Bebbington 1989:16). As the doctrine of justification was still the most outstanding part in Radstock’s and, probably, the Pashkovites’ preaching, so the doctrine of sanctification would come forward later in the preaching of Kargel, the Russian preacher of sanctification.

In practical and organisational matters the Pashkovites in St. Petersburg were open-minded and flexible in many ways: they had a desire to fellowship with other evangelical-minded groups; they allowed freedom of conscience in the issues of baptism, Lord’s Supper and church membership; they remained loyal to the Established Church as long as they could; they had no tradition concerning dress code, smoking or drinking, no lists of “dos” and “don’ts.”

Summarising, it must be said that there was a large measure of continuity between British and Russian (St. Petersburg) Evangelicalism. For instance: non-denominationalism, vivid new birth experiences, trusting in Christ alone for salvation, the ideal of “primitive Christianity,” and philanthropy (prison visiting, attendance on the sick, help for the poor). Nichols sees no coincidence that the social work of the Pashkovites in Russia was so similar to that in England through the Evangelical Alliance, Mildmay Conference, and later the Keswick Conference – the bodies that through its representatives played the decisive role in the spiritual and practical formation of the Pashkovites. In both countries there were restaurants and hospitals for the poor, provision of reading materials, care of orphans and prostitutes, etc. Both Pashkovites and pietistic British revivalists established independent groups that conducted Bible studies and prayer meetings (Nichols 1991:110).

The Brethren influence upon the Pashkovites was decisive and lasted for decades but it was not static. With the change of preachers one could see changes in the organisation and theological accents as well as in the practices of the Pashkovite congregations. These changes will be dealt with in greater detail below. At this point the author will only say that in spite of many similarities the Pashkovite group was not a mirror reflection of Plymouth or Open Brethrenism.

The question is: what was distinctively Russian in the Pashkovite movement? Did Pashkovites resemble English evangelicalism because of Radstock’s influence or did they accept Radstock because there was something

in them already that made Radstock so acceptable? To the author's mind, the answer to this question is in one word – *blagochestie* [pietism]. Having been reared in the Orthodox pietistic traditions and values, those St. Petersburg aristocrats were naturally drawn to somebody who actually embodied pietism in his life, that is, to Radstock. Even more so, Radstock showed them how they could become genuinely pietistic once they obtained salvation.

There was obvious discontinuity between British and Russian Evangelicalism as well. Russia at the time did not enjoy religious and political freedoms as did England. Lack of freedom restrained the movement from joining forces and spreading to its full potential. There are other differences as well. For instance, in Russia there was not much stress on self-examination, and no Calvinist-Armenian struggle at the time. Another influence in Russian Evangelicalism, partly derived from the Russian Orthodox Church, was the mystical element.

In general the Pashkovite movement can be best characterized as evangelical, pietistic, devotional, non-denominational, loyal to the established Church, and Bible-centred. Along with other evangelical movements in Russia it could be classified as Stundism when understood in the broader sense of the word, because it rallied around Bible studies in private homes.

#### ***4.2 The Development of the Evangelical Movement under Social Pressure (1884-1905)***

As mentioned above, the state church and ecclesiastic state were inseparable in “Holy Russia”. Evangelicalism threatened to disturb society, a society that historically was no friend to freedom of thought, a society united around three main ideas, i.e., monarchism, orthodoxy, and nationalism. A clash between the state and the growing evangelical movement was inevitable. However, Russian nobility always experienced greater freedom than other groups of the population in this “police” state, as Leroy-Beauliev rightly noted: “If there is freedom anywhere in Russia, it is in the drawing room”.<sup>207</sup>

That is why persecution against the Pashkovites took time to unfold. But whether in England or in Russia, to preach that “good works were as filthy rags seemed subversive to any morality” (Bebbington 1989:22). Actually this was

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<sup>207</sup> Leroy-Beauliev, *The Empire of the Tsars*, 471, in Nichols 1991:43.

one of the main accusations against Pashkov. Pobedonostsev worried that the “one-sided and narrow” teaching of Pashkov that came down to calls to “love Christ, not to worry about works, no work will save you, Christ has already saved you once and forever, nothing else is needed” was “extremely dangerous” and would create “an indifference to sin” (Pobedonostsev 1880:2).

The Orthodox Church became seriously alarmed when the movement started spreading beyond the drawing rooms of the aristocracy into the streets (Nichols 1991:43, 46). Uneducated and simple folk were not so diplomatic or interested in keeping status quo in their relationship with the Orthodox. The Pashkovites encouraged listeners to believe in Jesus and be saved, to read and search the Scripture for oneself leaving the outcome in the hands of the Holy Spirit. As a result there were some cases of religious radicalism, a phenomenon well known in history, for instance, at the time of Luther. There were cases when Stundists burnt or chopped up icons and spoke disrespectfully about Orthodox saints or rituals (Kushnev 1916:25). Even the aristocratic Pashkovites did not encourage worshipping icons or attending the Orthodox Church (Bogolyubov 1912:29-30; Kushnev 1916:57). Since the Pashkovites entrusted interpretation of the Scripture to peasants, the result was Bible Christianity in its freest form. Sometimes after hearing a sermon about the uselessness of icons, the peasants simply threw them out of their homes. Such instances further aggravated the relationships between Pashkovites and the Established Church (Heier 2002:130-131).

In April 1880, K. P. Pobedonostsev, the notorious enemy of all “foreign” religions, became the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, the highest ecclesiastical body. His dream was “to break the backbone of Russian Baptism, Stundism, and Radstockism” (Mitrokhin 1997:241). In May of that same year he wrote a letter to Alexander II concerning the dangers of the Evangelical Christians in St. Petersburg (Pobedonostsev 1880:1-4). On 25 May 1880 the tsar agreed with the recommendation and sent orders to the police to repress the movement (Nichols 1991:66). But it was not until the reign of the next tsar Alexander III, with whom Pobedonostsev was very close, that the Ober-procurator could get to realisation of his dream (Mitrokhin 1997:241).



#### 4.2.1 Persecution and Survival of the Movement

On 24 May 1884 by Royal Authority the order came “to close the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading and to take measures to the termination of further spreading of Pashkov’s teaching on the whole territory of the Empire” (Edict of St. Petersburg Ecclesiastical Consistory, October 4, 1884 № 3448). Soon after that Grotte’s bookshop had to go out of business; Pashkov’s “talks” also had to stop (Terletsky 1891:78).

The dispelling of the Congress in April 1884, the closing of the Society, and the exiling of Pashkov and Korff marked the end of the “peaceful period of the development of the evangelical movement in St. Petersburg” (Karetnikova 2000:44). The Pashkovites’ activities in St. Petersburg started tapering off and their growth rate slowed (Corrado 2000:167). Although Terletsky states that “the sect was little weakened in its actions after its prohibition” (Terletsky 1891:90), historical accounts of this period are filled with stories of persecution and survival, while very little is said about their theological profile and growth. The author would suggest that major changes in the leadership of the movement and new political conditions that forced the group to continue its activities almost illegally must have drastically influenced their outlook.

The situation in the summer of 1884 was critical indeed. Pashkov, Korff, and Bobrinskiy were gone. Meetings were banned. N. F. Lieven was requested to stop evangelical activity. She and Chertkova lived under the constant threat of exile as well. Somebody demanded the banishment of the widowed princesses.<sup>208</sup> Under such conditions the very existence of the St. Petersburg evangelical congregation might have come to its end (Karetnikova 2000:49). But although Lieven and Chertkova were reportedly sentenced to banishment, it never actually happened (Lieven 1967:68). The idea had been “met with a stern rebuke from the tsar, ‘Let my widows alone!’ he exclaimed. And thence-forward they entertained their Christian guests, and held Bible-readings and prayer-meetings in their drawing-rooms” (Latimer 1908:78). However, the threat of being banished was always there.

After Pashkov’s and Korff’s expulsion, double surveillance on behalf of police and ecclesiastical authorities was established over other active Radstockists, including Count Bobrinskiy, Elizaveta Chertkova, N. P. Zinov’ev,

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<sup>208</sup> Chertkova’s husband had died suddenly in 1884 (Corrado 2005:161).

Princess V. Gagarina, and the N. F. Fon Kruezer family (Prugavin 1909:249). So the Pashkovite believers continued their meetings learning how to survive under new circumstances. For another twenty years they would have no alternative to gathering for meetings in private homes.

According to Sakharov, after the law of 1884 the promotion of Pashkovism did not end, but went from being “open” to being “hidden”. The fact that the Pashkovites did not become extinct is evident from a number of court hearings in the late 1880s and early 1890s; legal proceedings were held against Pashkovites in the Tver’, Novgorod, Yaroslavl’, Moscow and Orel gubernias.<sup>209</sup> As for public activity, a number of open disputes were held between the Pashkovites and Orthodox priests. For instance, they took place on 26 February 1887, a couple of times in March 1887, and then in the spring of 1889 (Terletsky 1891:90-91).

Thus, the evangelical movement continued despite the suppression by the authorities and the Established Church. In 1891 Zhivotov wrote that one can hardly find a section or even a block in St. Petersburg without one or another religious congregation. “At the present time in St. Petersburg one can number thirty two congregations and sects besides those that are forbidden and hiding” (Zhivotov 1891:7-8). In the same year (1891) Zhivotov also wrote that in spite of all measures, in the fifteen years since the beginning of the movement the number of followers and gathering places did not dwindle (Zhivotov 1891:30).

The Orthodox leaders were alarmed by the growth of Pashkovite “heresies” and other “sects”. In August 1891 Pobedonostsev convened a special Orthodox conference in Moscow to devise methods of preventing the spread of sectarianism in the Empire. He was concerned with the rapid growth of the Baptist, Stundist, and Pashkovite “heresies.” According to statistics, twenty-eight out of forty-one dioceses were badly “infected”, and “the virulence of the infection” was entirely beyond the control of the clergy. The persecution was about to begin in earnest (Latimer 1908:189; Fountain 1988:39).

According to the resolutions adopted by the conference,

The rapid increase of these sects is a serious danger to the state. Let all sectarians be forbidden to leave their own villages... Let all offenders against the faith be tried, not by a jury, but by ecclesiastical judges. Let their passports be marked, so that they shall be neither employed nor laboured, and residence in Russia shall become impossible to them. Let

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<sup>209</sup> Sakharov 1897:23; Pashkovtsy, *Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*, 64, in Corrado 2000:97.

them be held to be legally incapable of renting, purchasing, or holding real property. Let their children be removed from their control, and educated in the orthodox faith (Latimer 1908:190).

Latimer quoted a few “anti-sectarian” articles of the law that illustrate the legislative situation confronting the non-orthodox believers and resulting in a growing number of Stundists, Molokans, and Baptists exiled to the Caucasus:

Article 187. Offence: Leaving the church for another religious community. Punishment: Loss of civil and personal rights. Transportation. In milder cases eighteen months in a reformatory.

Article 189. Offence: Preaching or writing religious works to pervert others. Punishment: First offence, the loss of certain personal rights, and imprisonments from 8 to 16 months. Second offence, imprisonment in a fortress from 32 to 48 months. Third offence, banishment.

Article 196. Offence: Spreading the views of heretics or dissenters, or aiding such. Punishment: Banishment to Siberia, Transcaucasia, or other remote part of the Empire (Latimer 1908:190-192).

In general the harassment of the Pashkovites was not as severe as the attack on Stundists and Baptists (Lieven 1967:74). The high social standing of the Pashkovites allowed them to get away with many things for which their southern brothers were sent to prisons or even killed. However, the persecution in St. Petersburg deprived the Pashkovites of their main leaders and forced them to discontinue large public meetings, stop printing literature, and cut back on charity. Persecution did not eliminate the group but permanently changed its profile. However, persecution sealed one thing – meetings would continue to be held in homes for the years ahead.

By the end of the nineteenth century the movement was getting activated again. At the Third Orthodox Missionary congress in Kazan’ in 1897 it was reported that the Pashkovite movement in the capital was growing fast, with up to forty meetings places (Pashkovshchina 1897:5). In the same year archpriest Sakharov wrote that Pashkovism was continuing to spread in both the higher and lower classes in the capital, especially among factory workers. “After being quieted in 1884 this sect is more active than ever. In all parts of the city it has its centres of propaganda and Pashkovite missionaries are working all over the city” (Sakharov 1897:3). By 1897 the Pashkovites reportedly had spread to the gubernias of Moscow, Nizhniy Novgorod, Tambov, Tver’, Tula, Tautide, and

others.<sup>210</sup> In addition, the movement had spread as far as Poland, Lithuania, the Persian frontiers, and Siberia.<sup>211</sup>

#### 4.2.2 House churches without Pashkov and Korff

Naturally, “the exile and persecution of Pashkovites led to a leadership vacuum in the group” (Nichols 1991:74). Princess Lieven and other prominent ladies privately continued calling prayer meetings and inviting preachers from abroad. They also invited preachers from Stundist and Baptist groups in Russia, “which further served to bring the three groups together” (Fountain 1988:40). Korff briefly mentions, “The news of our exile has rapidly spread across Russia. Brothers were very sorry to hear about our banishment. And instead of us, two leading brothers, they decided to send to St. Petersburg seventeen brothers”.<sup>212</sup> What happened to that plan is not clear. It seems that immediately after the exile of the male leaders the leadership was temporarily assumed by the ladies, primarily all Chertkova and Lieven (Karetnikova 2000:49, 76).

Emphasizing the role of N. Lieven Brandenburg pointed out that the Lieven’s palace became the centre for converts in the capital after the exile of Pashkov and Korff up until the year 1917 (Brandenburg 1977:114). The meetings at Pashkov’s palace on Gagarinskaya Embankment were moved to Lievens’ palace at 43 Bol’shaya Morskaya (Lieven 1967:68). Princess N. Lieven personally organized the meetings in her home (Corrado 2005:162). In 1909 Latimer testified that “such meetings have been held uninterruptedly until the present day”.<sup>213</sup> Actually the meetings continued until 1917 when the revolutionaries seized her palace (Karetnikova 2000:49).

The palace was under police surveillance, but there was no interference. The believers tried to avoid any commotion. Professor Karl Heim, who was in St. Petersburg at the beginning of the twentieth century and attended a service at the Lieven home, recalled that at the end of the meeting those present were asked to leave the house in small groups, not all together (Brandenburg 1977:114).

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<sup>210</sup> Kutepov, 63, in Corrado 2000:97.

<sup>211</sup> Dillon, 332, in Corrado 2000:97.

<sup>212</sup> Korff, *Vospominaniya*, in Karetnikova 1999:132.

<sup>213</sup> Latimer, *Under Three Tsars*, 73, in Corrado 2000:169.

Among “numerous others” whom N. Lieven often invited to preach and teach were Baron Nikolaii and his friend Alexander Maksimovskiy who served at the Council of State (Lieven 1967:80). Her home was always open to Kargel and Baedeker during their long stays in St. Petersburg. Lieven also spoke in public, as evidenced in 1884 when she prayed publicly and spoke at the congress (Corrado 2000:169). Another important feature was that the whole household (including interested servants) gathered every day for prayer at 8:30 a.m. and took turns reading a chapter from the Bible and discussing it (Lieven 1967:83).

Regarding the role of this house church, Nichols points out that “in 1906, long after the early leaders were exiled, Princess Lieven’s home was the centre for the underground Evangelical Christian movement” (Nichols 1991:22). He also concluded, that “Lieven’s ministry was crucial to the survival of the Evangelical Christians in Russia” (Nichols 1991:24).

However, N. Lieven’s palace was not the only place St. Petersburg evangelicals gathered. E. Chertkova also continued to host meetings and even had a special house built on her property on Vasil’evskiy Island for that purpose (Lieven 1967:73). Later she spoke at the meetings held there for young people. Then, starting in 1910 she supported the ministry of W. Fetler, a young Baptist preacher, by hosting meetings for him in her home.<sup>214</sup>

Meetings continued even in one of Pashkov’s homes at the Vyborgskaya side, as well as in some other homes (Lieven 1967:74). “Some other homes” included the palace of Duchess Shuvalova on the Moyka River, Zimnyaya Kanavka Street. The Duchess was the wife of the chief of the police department. Her coachman was a Pashkovite and hosted meetings in his small room in the basement which could hold no more than twelve people. The believers meeting under the very nose of the police chief had to be especially careful (Lieven 1967:75; Popov 1996:22). Yet another gathering place at Bol’shoy Sampsonievskiy Prospect 93 is mentioned in the Orthodox periodical *Missionerskoe obozrenie*, describing a meeting that consisted of three prayers and three sermons.<sup>215</sup> Interestingly, this is the usual number of sermons

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<sup>214</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 63, 97, in Corrado 2000:169.

<sup>215</sup> *Missionerskoe obozrenie* (Feb. 1902): 294-302, in Corrado 2000:168. Nine articles published between 1899 and 1909 by Agniya Dvinskaya described various events among Pashkovites.

preached during one service in the Evangelical Christian Baptist churches up to this day.

Prokhanov recollected that during in his student years in St. Petersburg he was taken to an evangelical meeting and felt as if he were among the catacomb Christians in ancient Rome. The believers entered a dark corridor by ones or by twos. There they were met by the host of the basement room, a military school *storozh* (a watchman), who admitted only those he knew personally or those who were accompanied by a regular member of the group. The small room was very crowded with up to twenty-five people present. The believers had to be very quiet, with no singing, preaching in a low voice (Prokhanov 1993:63-64).

Prokhanov as young student often attended those meetings. “In those days it was impossible to hold public meetings in Russia. All meetings were secret... Every week meeting places had to be changed” (Prokhanov 1993:63). The meetings were also secretly held in homes of believers in the countryside<sup>216</sup> and even in the forest. Prokhanov’s suggestion to hold summer services in the woods (Prokhanov 1993:64) set a precedent for the years under the Soviet regime.

As for preaching, a number of ladies including Chertkova, Lieven, Gagarina, the Kozlyaninov sisters, the Krueze sisters, Peuker, and Zasetskaya not only evangelized but also “served with the word”. It was they who saved St. Petersburg congregations from being closed and dismissed, especially right after Pashkov and Korff’s banishment and before Kargel’s return from Finland in 1885 (Karetnikova 2000:44). Thankfully, at the April 1884 Congress the issue of women speaking in public had been addressed; it had been decided that gifted sisters must be allowed to preach (Karetnikova 2000:43). However, with time men began assuming roles of leadership among the Pashkovites, especially as informal meetings were replaced with more proper worship services (Corrado 2000:171).

A few observations concerning the Pashkovite meetings of this period can be made so far. First, after the exile of the original leaders the believers still continued to meet around the city, but in smaller and scattered groups. There was hardly any central leadership or co-ordination between the groups.

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<sup>216</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 63, 70-71, in Corrado 2000:167.



Meetings continued due to believers' strong desire to meet for services as well as the initiative of individuals who opened their homes. Second, private homes remained the only option for such meetings in the years to come. House churches became the norm for Russian evangelicals well into the twentieth century. Third, the believers were successfully learning how to observe the rules of security and continue ministry underground. The paradigm of semi-underground meetings continued throughout most of the next century with the exception of a couple of decades. Fourth, the active role of women in church life became common practice among St. Petersburg evangelicals. Besides, they outnumbered the men then (and still do today).

#### **4.2.3 Change of Social and Theological Makeup**

During the years of persecution the evangelical movement stopped spreading among Russian nobility in the way it had prior to 1884. The growth of the movement was shifted to the lower classes. As time went on certain changes started to take place in the social make-up among the evangelicals in St. Petersburg. In 1897 Sakharov wrote that the meetings were still attended by cabmen along with "barons" (Sakharov 1897:3-4). However, it seems that the idyllic situation of simple and noble folk serving God in perfect harmony in a church setting, glimpses of which one could admire in the first period of the Pashkovite movement, was no longer so idyllic. According to S. Lieven, during the first year of the evangelical movement social and class distinctions did not show up in personal relations between the believers (Lieven 1967:102). However, after the first leaders were exiled, people unprepared for leadership positions took their place (Lieven 1967:103). In a way, the Pashkovites repeated the history of the Brethren who eventually became "a predominantly lower middle-class body", even though "the leaders of the first stage of the movement were drawn almost exclusively from the upper ranks of society" (Brock 1984:30).

It has already been mentioned that Pashkovite ladies used to invite various preachers to help with the services. With the exception of Kargel and some other visiting preachers (Baedeker left Russia only in 1895), the local brothers were of simple origin and lacked education. Some of them could hardly read or write (Lieven 1967:70-71). They did not lack zeal and fervour, but there was a huge gap between simple "brothers" and highly cultured and educated

“sisters” (Lieven 1967:71); this was a gap in upbringing, education, mindset, and experience in Christian service between the “old” Pashkovites and newly converted ones.

S. Lieven’s memories shed some light upon the changes that were taking place in the congregation. Her memoirs are almost the sole source that helps decipher what was happening among St. Petersburg evangelicals during the years of Pobedonostsev’s persecution. S. Lieven remembers that the meetings were very simple when there were no travelling preachers present. There were hardly any educated brothers left. Count Bobrinskiy almost never showed up in St. Petersburg. Kargel, who had been invited to preach in one of the churches in Finland, rarely visited St. Petersburg. Others were simple and uneducated; their preaching, though sincere, was not always clear. One Sunday morning Pypin, an elderly factory worker, mentioned that he learnt to read in his fifties only after he came to know the Lord. However, his brief observations from the Bible were very valuable. S. Lieven graciously does not mention the names of the preachers who could base their argument on a misread word of the Scripture (Lieven 1967:71).

According to Corrado this was “a result of inexperience and insecurity”: the newly converted preachers clung closely to the literal Word of God, with no room for discussion. While an admirable solution given the circumstances, this led to pride, one-sidedness and disagreement, and conflict arose between the uneducated men and educated society women of broader views.<sup>217</sup>

Such were some of the men who were gradually assuming the leadership positions, “while sincere in their faith they did not excel in preaching” (Corrado 2000:171). Untrained preachers could produce nothing but low standards of preaching. The irony of the situation was that at the same time there was no lack of well-educated “sisters”, who sometimes preached during the meetings and conducted Bible studies in small groups (Lieven 1967:71-72).

The differences in culture and upbringing were another cause for social clashes. Certain incidents could not be avoided, such as one with Duchess Shuvalova. S. Lieven recalled, “Our leading brothers were strict and once they found something inappropriate in sister Shuvalova’s behaviour. They forbade her to take part in the Lord’s Supper . . . After a while she was restored” (Lieven

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<sup>217</sup> Corrado 2000:171-172, based on Lieven, *Eine saat*, 61, 64, 90-91.

1967:74-75). This kind of church discipline would have been unthinkable under the ministry of Radstock or Pashkov. In general it appears that “simple” folk were not very gracious to the “noble” ones (although the opposite was true during the first years of the movement).

Finally, the most important cause of “misunderstandings” was a difference in theology and mentality. The more strict Baptist views of new preachers clashed with the more open Brethren position of the Pashkovites. Newly converted simpler folk were more receptive to rules and regulations, whereas the “old school” of Pashkovites was dedicated to spiritual freedom. Besides, the brothers who were coming to St. Petersburg from the south and southwest of Russia were mostly Baptists with Molokan heritage. Strictness was in their blood not only when it concerned Baptist doctrine on believer’s baptism, Lord’s Supper, ordination, church membership or discipline, but also when they dealt with all kinds of details regarding lifestyle and dress. Nichols, who plainly sees Baptist influence as a negative one, points out:

When all the male leadership was removed, her [Lieven’s] leadership successfully fended off the aggressive Baptist doctrines. The Baptists attempted to take leadership of the Bible studies by asserting their doctrines, which were more restrictive and prohibitive than the Pashkovites’ (Nichols 1991:22).

Those “attempts” were not very successful. The meetings in Lieven’s home preserved the openness of their original nature including open communion. However, Lieven’s influence was limited to her home and did not reach other evangelical groups around the city. Reportedly, many Pashkovites joined the Stundists and Baptists. According to Nichols, “those who joined the Stundists tried to persuade this group to adopt a more tolerant, evangelical, pietistic perspective” (Nichols 1991:74). Although they must have succeeded to some extent, usually in times of persecution the groups with stricter rules and better organisation have a greater chance of survival.

Pashkov was aware of some tension among St. Petersburg evangelicals, and he returned to Russia in 1887 or in 1892.<sup>218</sup> The official reasons for his visit were the illness of his son and some business matters. However, Nichols points out another important reason of Pashkov’s visit to Russia, that is, the leadership struggle within the Evangelical Christian group, because his young disciples

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<sup>218</sup> Nichols 1991:71; Kovalenko 1996:75; Savinsky 1999:181.

clashed with the older ladies who did not want to submit to the inexperienced leaders.<sup>219</sup> Gradually this submission did take place. S. Lieven points out a reason for the change in the leadership's social outlook. As it was pointed out above, the noble members of the congregation used to spend summers in the country while "simple brothers" stayed in the city. Thus the leadership functions (choosing of the brothers' board, admitting new members, excommunication of backsliders) completely fell into their hands (Lieven 1967:103).

On the other hand, there were positive developments as well. S. Lieven remembered that with the growth of the movement new workers appeared "in the field", both from intellectual circles and from the simple folk. Gradually they were learning how to conduct Christian work and become independent leaders. Among the latter she mentions two pastors – Alexander Ivanovich Ivanov and Nikolay Ivanovich Dolgopolov (Lieven 1967:80). Pavel Nikolaii's occasional sermons were especially loved (Lieven 1967:80), as were the sermons of Vasiliy Stepanov, a young Baptist preacher.<sup>220</sup>

Stepanov was born in Peski, a village in the Tambov area, into a Molokan family. He started to preach soon after he was baptized in 1892. It was during his military service in St. Petersburg that he actively attended the Pashkovite meetings. In 1903 he was ordained as a presbyter of his home church in Peski (Kovalenko 1996:118; AUCECB 1989:150). S. Lieven mentions him as Brother S., a Baptist, who had a clear and convincing testimony about Christ. He participated in the meetings on the Vyborg side of St. Petersburg and was especially loved by young people (Lieven 1967:82).

N. Odintsov, a leading figure in the Russian Baptist movement, was not a stranger in the Lieven's home. It was he who was honoured to announce the tsar's edict on freedom of conscience in the Red Hall of Lieven's palace on that memorable Easter morning in April 1905 (Lieven 1967:105). There must have been more cooperation between Lieven and Odintsov prior to that day.

I. Prokhanov was not yet playing a decisive role in the St. Petersburg evangelical movement during this period. However, he was very active. From 1888 to 1893 he studied at the Institute of Technology and attended the Pashkovite meetings. He also illegally published the Christian magazine

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<sup>219</sup> Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 90, in Nichols 1991:72.

<sup>220</sup> Lieven, 64, in Corrado 2005:161.

*Beseda*. From 1894 he was under police surveillance. In January 1895 he had to leave St. Petersburg illegally through Finland for Stockholm. He returned to St. Petersburg only after his marriage in 1901. Then he published a Christian songbook *Gusly* (1902) and a collection of Christian poetry *Struny serdtsa* (1904-1905).<sup>221</sup>

S. Lieven recalled that Prokhanov rarely visited Lieven's palace during his student years. His activity was mostly concentrated in a different part of the city among brothers who used to gather in small private homes (Lieven 1967:99). He quickly became a regular preacher at such meetings, and they changed under his influence. He taught adult baptism and insisted on a strict and moral lifestyle, much in tune with his Molokan upbringing (Corrado 2005:167). In Nichol's opinion, "He shifted the freedom in lifestyle to a more legalistic basis" (Nichols 1991:101). With time he became an unofficial leader of the meetings in "the other part of the city", and his meetings were known for good organisation and evangelistic fervour (Corrado 2005:168).

Prokhanov's strong leadership style was especially appealing to the young people who craved activity. By 1895 with Prokhanov's participation the first Baptist congregation of St. Petersburg was organized with A. Berdnikov as its pastor (Savinsky 1999:242). S. Lieven also points out that until that time (must be referring to Prokhanov's appearance) believers were led by simple uneducated brothers who strictly watched over the lives of other church members and were very serious about their ministry. Wine and smoking were not allowed.<sup>222</sup> Abstinence from both was a condition of church membership. Icons had to be removed as well. Ladies were taught to dress modestly and not wear jewellery (Lieven 1967:101-102). In S. Lieven's opinion, this was the way those newly converted brothers expressed their first love, but sometimes they went overboard in their methods (Lieven 197:102).

Jakov Kroeker was another preacher invited by Dr. Baedeker to the St. Petersburg circle of Princess Lieven. Kroeker was born in 1872 in the Mennonite colony of Gnadenthal, trained at the Baptist seminary in Hamburg,

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<sup>221</sup> Prokhanov 1993:52, 58, 62-69, 109-113; Kovalenko 1996:106-107.

<sup>222</sup> The author cannot help recalling of how cognac was served during meals at Pashkov's palace.

and called by the German Mennonites to be an itinerant preacher in Russia.<sup>223</sup>

His contact with Dr. Baedeker, whom he met at conferences, meant a great deal to him (Brandenburg 1977:150-51). For a number of years Kroeker travelled to the capital every winter for six to eight weeks in order to serve many groups of believers there. Here in St. Petersburg he also met German visitors, mostly representatives of Blankenburg Alliance circles such as Otto Stockmayer, Fritz Otzbach, and others (Brandenburg 1977:151).

Kroeker, who travelled Russia from the north to the deepest south, made some insightful observations about “childhood diseases” in the evangelical movement:

First there was the soulish element. Sighs and tears belonged not only to conversion, but to every prayer meeting. The emotional Slavic soul will never let this go completely. But the danger remained that the movements of the soul were confused with the working of the Holy Spirit . . . Widespread lack of experience, ignorance of church history and so on brought about many an immature judgement. They lacked the wisdom which comes from the school of life and a historical orientation (Brandenburg 1977:151).

Brandenburg concludes that it was not surprising that there was “tremendous legalism and narrow-mindedness. This was a fertile ground for Adventism and Sabbatarianism; but even the strict Baptist circles were not free of legalism. In this context, the breadth of the Lieven circle was considered suspicious” (Brandenburg 1977:151).

The lack of sources makes it impossible to fill in many gaps in the histories of separate congregations. It is only known that by 1895 there were a few groups led by Kargel, Prokhanov, Berdnikov, and others (Savinsky 1999:244). It seems that the various congregations were aware of each other. Believers from these congregations would visit each other in spite of differences in doctrine and practice. However, there was no coordinating centre or united leadership. From the second half of 1890 “simply believers” or Pashkovites started to be called “believers of evangelical faith” (Savinsky 1999:244). But it was only after 1910 that the Orthodox stopped targeting Pashkovites by name.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> It cannot be overemphasised that those Mennonite, Baptist, and Stundists movements were not completely independent of each other. They constantly overlapped and their workers’ paths crossed all the time.

<sup>224</sup> Wardin, *Evangelical Sectarianism*, 315, in Corrado 2000:186.



In general during these twenty years there was a tendency in St. Petersburg evangelical circles of departing from the Open Brethren principles and assuming Baptist features. Suddenly one finds an organized church structure with a board, church membership, and excommunication practices. The decision of whether to take part in communion could be made by someone other than the person him/herself. Spiritual freedom and structural flexibility was gradually giving in to church order.

According to S. Lieven, the evangelical congregation that gathered in N. Lieven's palace (including Kargel) kept an open view concerning church membership and baptism. All the congregations that gathered in other parts of the city held more strict views. Prokhanov, coming from his Molokan background, was on the strict side (Lieven 1967:104; Prokhanov 1993:29). Corrado also concludes that during the time of doctrinal arguments in St. Petersburg, Kargel held the position of Pashkov, Korff, and Bobrinskiy saying that it was not necessary to rebaptise believers (Corrado 2005:166). Kargel's role deserves special attention and will be discussed below. N. Lieven seemed to trust him wholeheartedly. She saw him as the person who would continue the line of Pashkov and Korff. However, Kargel did not become the type of leader who could have united the evangelical groups scattered around St. Petersburg. He was more a theologian and an itinerant preacher than a leader or organizer.

Most importantly St. Petersburg evangelicals remained Scripture-centric. A collection of reports titled *Pashkovshchina* [Pashkovism] (1897) contains the Pashkovites' confession of faith which circulated as a handwritten copy among St. Petersburg Pashkovites. Concerning the Scripture it states:

I believe that the Holy Scripture of the Old and the New Testament is the divinely inspired revelation of God's will and is the perfect and only rule of faith and a God-pleasing life (Pashkovshchina 1897:3).

Englishwoman Penn-Lewis recalled her 1897 visit to the Pashkovite community: "What struck me first was their implicit faith in the Bible as the Word of God. Their one question was, 'What does the Word of God say?' The fact that it said anything settled it for them: it had to be obeyed".<sup>225</sup> In fact, at the time of her visit the decisive influence upon the community belonged to Kargel.

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<sup>225</sup> Penn-Lewis, 10, in Corrado 2000:53.

At the end of the century, during her visits in 1890 and 1897, Penn-Lewis was also impressed by the spirit of sacrifice, prayer, and generosity.<sup>226</sup>

As for reading materials, in the 1890s the range of Christian literature in Russian was enriched by Farrar, Brooks, Geik, Jones, Drummond, Montefeltro, Newman, Newton, Spurgeon, Febr, Todd (Komarskiy 1896). Somehow it was possible to publish these authors in translation.

#### **4.2.4 I. V. Kargel's Role and Activity**

Soon after the exile of Pashkov and Korff, in 1885 Kargel, not yet forty years old but already an accomplished theologian, accepted Lieven's invitation and moved his family from Finland to St. Petersburg, allowing him to labour there full time (Karetnikova 2000:44, 50). Kargel, his wife, and four daughters occupied a lower floor apartment in Lieven's palace (Lieven 1967:81). For the next ten years (1885-1895) he served the Pashkovites (Corrado 2005:166).

At that time, while Prokhanov was studying at the Institute of Technology, the spiritual leadership of the congregations was in the hands of Kargel (Brandenburg 1977:131). Brandenburg writes of his reputation:

All who knew Kargel remember him with deep gratitude. He was a pastor and a preacher of sanctification. He was concerned to deepen men's faith, to get the believers rooted and grounded in the word of God, and to lead them into a life of complete yieldedness to the Lord, believing in the victorious power of the Holy Spirit. Not only the older men, but also the young ones, especially students and academics, held him in great memory (Brandenburg 1977:132).

According to Kovalenko, Kargel was a leading presbyter of a Petersburg congregation of evangelical Christians around the turn of the century as well; his ministry was mostly geared towards edification of the church (Kovalenko 1996:51). As N. Lieven was spending more time outside of St. Petersburg, the leadership of the meetings in her home was wholly entrusted to Kargel (Lieven 1967:106).

According to Karetnikova, Kargel had a strong influence upon the St. Petersburg congregation in matters of faith and doctrine. The central theme of his preaching from the very beginning was sanctification connected with deepening believers' knowledge of the Lord. He did not drive away those who

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<sup>226</sup> Penn-Lewis, 10, in Corrado 2000:167.

did not see the necessity of being baptized by faith, so St. Petersburg believers continued to practice “open communion” until 1888 when Alekseev, a converted shoemaker, was chosen to be a presbyter.

Alekseev remained a presbyter until his death in 1926, excluding ten years when he was in jail (1893-1903) (Karetnikova 2000:76-77). During those ten years Princess Gagarina cared for Alekseev’s son and reared him in her home (Lieven 1967:77). S. Lieven emphasises Alekseev’s role only after his return to St. Petersburg from exile. In St. Petersburg he served as a presbyter of the so-called Second Evangelical Congregation (the one associated with Kargel) (Lieven 1967:77).

Why it was Alekseev and not Kargel who became the presbyter is not quite clear. One reason could be that after Kargel moved to St. Petersburg he continued to travel extensively and was often absent from the city (Lieven 1967:81). S. Lieven recalls that each time Kargel returned from his missionary journeys the believers crowded around to listen to his stories. His main role during his stays in St. Petersburg was to help with the congregation’s business and train the local brothers (Lieven 1967:82).

Another reason Kargel did not become a full time presbyter of the Second Evangelical congregation had to do with his leadership style. Unlike Prokhanov and Fetler, Kargel saw the edification of the church as his main objective. He was a theologian, not a religious activist. It should not be surprising, therefore, that young Pashkovites were drawn to Prokhanov, an active person always full of ideas and projects. Eventually around 1903 a group of young people from Kargel’s congregation started a separate church with Prokhanov as their head.

The third reason could be that "simple" Alekseev was better suited than Kargel to the changed social outlook of the evangelical congregation that had become more "democratic" in the original meaning of the word.

#### **4.2.5 Conclusion**

So, what were the main characteristics of the evangelical movement in Russia in 1884-1905? First of all, this period was characterized by persecution, severe against Stundists and Baptists, less severe against the Pashkovites. However, persecution did not destroy the movement. On the contrary, the movement grew as evangelical believers learned new methods of underground

work, including holding secret services, interceding for those persecuted, and living under police surveillance.

Due to the courage of the Pashkovite ladies, the ministries of I. Kargel and Dr. Baedeker, and the correspondence of Pashkov, the Pashkovites did not disappear completely, though they did reach a certain plateau. Their best years had passed. According to Heier, Pashkovism “aimed at Russia’s transformation through the application of moral and religious principles”, but it failed as inner disagreements along with the unequal struggle with church and state authorities did not allow this movement to work out its potential (Heier 2002:4, 157). Although Pobedonostsev did not succeed in breaking the backbone of Russian Stundism and Pashkovism, his policy did not allow either of these movements to continue developing at the same pace. Pashkovism and Stundism were slowly giving way to a more organized Baptist movement.

Among the forty meeting places around St. Petersburg, it appears that only Lieven’s house church preserved the original spirit of Open Brethrenism and Keswick, including the practice of open communion. However, in spite of certain differences and misunderstandings between the Pashkovites, Baptists, and Brethren Mennonites, their mutual ties were growing stronger. During those twenty years a generation of new evangelical leaders came to the front, and not without the influence of Lieven’s “incubator”. Kargel’s role became much more important than it had been before 1884. Among others I will mention Baron Nikolaii, A. Maksimovskiy, I. Prokhanov, A. Ivanov, N. Dolgopolov, V. Stepanov, A. Berdnikov, and S. Alekseev, prominent men who would serve during the next period of evangelical history in Russia.

#### ***4.3 The Growth of the Evangelical Movement during the Revolutionary and World War I Period (1905-1917)***

Statistical data shows that the period of twelve years starting in 1905 (the beginning of the first Russian revolution when political and religious freedoms were granted by Tsar Nicolas II) and including World War I (which led to two more revolutions) was actually very productive for the evangelical movement in Russia. The number of churches and Christian activities was growing quickly. Statistics found in various sources differ, but all still point to rapid growth among Evangelical Christians and Baptists.

According to Sawatsky in 1905 in Russia there were 86,358 Baptists and 20,804 Evangelical Christians (Sawatsky 1995:23).

Mitrokhin presents a similar number of Evangelical Christians in Russia by 1905, about 21,000 (Mitrokhin 1997:230).

According to Savinsky the number of Russian-Ukrainian Evangelical Christians and Baptists more than doubled (from 20,000 to 50,000) over the period of six years (1905-1911) (Savinsky 1999:262).

According to an advertisement, in 1909 in St. Petersburg “readings of the Word of God” were held in several places: every Sunday in Tenishevskaya auditorium at 33-35 Mokhovaya Street; on Wednesdays and Fridays at 79 Bol’shoy Prospect in Vasil’evskiy Ostrov; on Thursdays at 40 Kazanskaya Street, etc. Those meetings were openly advertised (Korff 1909:16).

According to the report of Z. T. Sweeney, by 1913 evangelical congregations in St. Petersburg and Moscow reached memberships of nine hundred and seven hundred respectively. Sweeney estimated that the Evangelical Christians across Russia numbered approximately 100,000 (*Christian Standard*, 1891, in Ellis & Jones 1996:149).

According to Hargroves, by 1914 the membership of the Russian Baptist Union, which by that time had absorbed Stundists, was 97,000 (Hargroves 1959:250-257). By that time Prokhanov’s group numbered 8500 members, among them Jacob Zhidkov and Alexander Karev (Hargroves 1959:250-257). Kargel’s congregation consisted of 1500 members (Corrado 2005:171).

According to Elliott and Deyneka, by 1917 the evangelicals had grown to number several hundred thousand (Elliott and Deyneka 1999:197).

It would be safe to conclude that in general the number of evangelical believers tripled from 1905 to 1914.

#### **4.3.1 The Edicts of 1905-1906 and their Effect on Religious Freedom**

Such rapid growth was very much due to an edict of toleration signed in April 1905, which marked the beginning of a number of changes in the life of Evangelical Christians. The Act, entitled “On the Strengthening of Religious Toleration” issued on 17 April 1905, Easter Sunday, was met with enthusiasm by believers, as S. Lieven recalled:

I remember how in April 1905 on the morning of Christ’s lightful resurrection in house number 43 Bol’shaya Morskaya in our Red Hall, my

mother stood up with a shining face in front of a multiple gathering and said that she could announce to brothers and sisters a joyful message, which would be read by brother Odintsov. The brother read the tsar's *ukaz* loudly and distinctly. It granted freedom to believe according to one's own conscience. Then all gathered fell on their knees and with tears of joy thanked the Lord for this precious gift (Lieven 1967:105).

Jakob Kroeker was another eyewitness in the palace of Princess Lieven that Easter morning. He recalled:

It was in the year 1905. If I remember correctly, there was to be a Christian conference in St. Petersburg over Easter. I too had come from the south of Russia to be there. But we had no idea what a great political event we were to experience there. Nicholas II had conceived the great and fine plan of giving the great Russian empire complete freedom of belief through a manifesto on the first day of Easter. . . On the eve of the first day of Easter we received a sudden invitation to come to an early prayer meeting the next day in Princess Lieven's palace. . . After all guests arrived, one of the big folding doors opened and our beloved princess came into the room, deeply moved, holding a copy of the manifesto in her hand. She could hardly read the glad news for inner excitement and joy.<sup>227</sup>

According to Jasnevitch-Borodaevskaya, "everybody, at least for a time, became brothers, and single heartedly have forgotten quarrels, rejoiced, and congratulated each other".<sup>228</sup> Indeed, "the edict of liberty of conscience of 1905 when the tsar granted his subjects freedom in matters of religion was the greatest step in the recognition of the right of humanity since the ukase of 1861 by which twenty-three millions of serfs were emancipated" (Latimer 1908:42).

Half a year later the famous Manifesto of 17 October 1905 was published granting freedom of conscience, speech, meetings, and unions. In the words of Prokhanov, this manifesto "transformed toleration into freedom of conscience and the autocracy into a parliamentary form of government" (Prokhanov 1993:122). Further clarification came a year later, in the 17 October 1906 decree "On the Order and Formation and Action ... for Communities" which legalised Evangelical and Baptist churches (Ellis & Jones 1996:141). This personal *ukaz* was issued regulating the activity of the old believers and sects, making it possible to legalise Evangelical and Baptist congregations under certain conditions (Savinsky 1999:251). According to the law of October 1906, religious congregations outside the state churches would be permitted the rights

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<sup>227</sup> Kroeker, *die Sehnsucht des Ostens*, pp. 18 ff., in Brandenburg 1977:128-29.

<sup>228</sup> Jasnevitch-Borodaevskaya, *Bor'ba za veru*, 375, in Savinsky 1999:250.



of a person at law and allowed to keep their own church records, if at least fifty people signed a request for this (Brandenburg 1977:134).

As a result of the proclamation of religious tolerance, evangelical work was officially recognised. Preaching of the Gospel got full freedom. Marriages performed by presbyters were now allowed. Congregations could choose a name, write an *ustav* [organisational charter], and get registered (Lieven 1967:104-105). Nobody knew how long this new freedom would last. It was time to act. Needless to say, the time had arrived for dynamic leaders.

Meanwhile Natalie Lieven and her family were gradually spending less time in the city of St. Petersburg and therefore exerting less influence on the congregation (Lieven 1967:106). The church leadership in Lieven's palace "went completely into the hands of Kargel" (Lieven 1967:106). He used to preach there on Thursdays. The following is a description of a meeting held in 1907:

In a large hall there were benches and a pulpit in the front. People of all stations in the society gathered there. The seats for the rich and for the poor were not divided. All sat simply next to each other. Next to a countess there was a scavenger, next to a princess – a cabman. There was neither choir nor a harmonium or any other musical instrument in this meeting. The only thing that drew people here was a thirst to hear the pure Word of God (Grachev 1997:52).

United worship of the rich and the poor, an outstanding characteristic of the Pashkovite services, had been preserved even into the twentieth century.

It was during this time that Prokhanov's role became especially significant. His great organisational skills could finally be fully realised. The congregations scattered throughout the vast country were united into the All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians. Every *gubernia* [province] had a fraternal union with a presbyter at the head to watch over the congregations (Lieven 1967:105-106).

Prokhanov complained:

During that period evangelical churches and groups in Russia were not at all connected with each other; besides separate churches did not have proper organisation. Often there was more chaos than order inside the groups, and even the Evangelical church in St. Petersburg was not an exception (Prokhanov 1993:136).

In 1908 Prokhanov registered his evangelical congregation under the name of First Evangelical Congregation of St. Petersburg. Later Kargel registered the house church at the Lievens' as the Second Evangelical

Congregation. After that a Russian Baptist congregation was also registered (Savinsky 1999:251). The congregations led by Prokhanov and by Kargel existed independently of each other (Lieven 1967:105-106). This was when the Pashkovites finally adopted the name “Evangelical Christians”. Until then they had preferred to call themselves “simply believers”.

Two ministries that started around 1895, work among young girls and work among students, continued to grow (Lieven 1967:107). One of the groups for young ladies met at the Lieven palace on Sunday afternoons. Girls took turn leading the meetings where they read and studied the Bible and learnt “spiritual” songs. Afterwards they continued their discussions over tea (Lieven 1967:111-112). Similar meetings were started later in the new meeting hall built by Chertkova (Lieven 1967:112). After 1905 when the Lievens’ spent less time in St. Petersburg, “evangelical congregations grew so strong and big that they themselves started work among youth” (Lieven 1967:115). P. N. Nikolaii started a work among students and Maksimovskiy helped him. A. I. Peuker helped Nikolaii with a ministry to female students. Among those who helped to finance the work was V. F. Gagarina (Lieven 1967:116-117, 119-120). This type of evangelical outreach continued until the Revolution put an end to it (Lieven 1967:122).

Starting in 1906 six-week courses in St. Petersburg were held for preachers. Kargel taught on sin and sanctification, Prokhanov taught theology proper, interpretation of gospels of Mathew and John and the history of evangelical movement abroad. Other lecturers included Nikolaii, Maksimovskiy, Offenbergl, and Strautman (Savinsky 1999:296-97). Grachev dates the beginning of Bible courses a year later, December 1907. They were initiated by Prokhanov and held at 43 Morskaya Street. Besides courses already mentioned, Offenbergl taught how to study the Bible; Stramberg was to lecture on the Holy Spirit; Nikolaii on parables; Strautman on the life of holiness. In addition, the students were to hear the sermons of Kargel and Grebb (Grachev 1997:69). Thus, in the area of Christian education Prokhanov, Kargel, and Nikolaii found ways to work together.

Christian publications of this period became very numerous and varied. Since they allow one to evaluate (to some extent) the theological preferences of the Russian evangelicals of this period, they deserve some attention.

In 1908 “Pchela” publishing house located in St. Petersburg, Nevskiy Pr. 68, released a catalogue that included different publications of the complete Bible, New Testaments with Psalms, five different hymnals, a Bible theological dictionary, John Bunyan’s “The Holy War” and “The Pilgrim’s Progress”, Otto Funke’s “The school of life”, Henry Drummond’s “The city without a church”, I. Frey’s “The land where Jesus Christ lived”, Lutard’s “Apologia of Christianity”, A. Shilov’s “Thoughts about God-man”, etc.<sup>229</sup>

By 1909 *Knigoizdatel’stvo dukhovnoy literatury* [A publishing house of spiritual literature] in St. Petersburg, 5 Kazanskaya Street, had a catalogue with sixty-seven different publications. Among them there were books written by W. Fetler, Dr. Campbell-Morgan, Dr. R. A. Torrey, Charles Finney, Colonel Wade, Dr. C. D. Gordon, Amy Le Feuvre, Philip Mauro, John Watson, M. Timoshenko, I. Timoshenko, Gibbon, Count Korff, I. Riney, R. R. Kuldel, etc.<sup>230</sup>

The most popular foreign writers were Henry Drummond, Reuben Torrey, and Charles Finney.

Henry Drummond (1851-1897) was a Scottish evangelist, a writer, and a lecturer in natural science. For two years Drummond co-operated with the Moody and Sankey mission. He was actively interested in missionary and other movements among the Free Church students.<sup>231</sup> Drummond was “discovered” by Russian evangelicals quite early. Some of his books were published even before the edict of toleration. Among his books translated into Russian and published in St. Petersburg were: *Vysshee blago* [The highest good] (1892); *Estestvennyy zakon v dukhovnom mire* [Natural Law in the Spiritual World] 1896 (the main argument of this book was that the scientific principle of continuity extended to the spiritual world); *Kak preobrazit’ nashu zhizn’* [The changed life] (1900); *Samoe velikoe v mire* [The Greatest Thing in the World] (1900); *Gorod bez khrama* [The city without a church] (1907); *Ideal’naya zhizn’* [The Ideal Life] (1910); and *Programma khristianstva* [The Programme of Christianity] (1912).

Another popular writer whose books were actively translated into Russian was American preacher Reuben Torrey (1856-1928), Congregationalist, evangelist, and Yale graduate. Torrey had also studied at

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<sup>229</sup> The list is published at the end of Kargel’s 1908 edition of *Svet iz teni* . . .

<sup>230</sup> Korff 1909.

German universities, and was later invited by Moody to lead a Bible school in Chicago. An advocate of the divine origin and inerrancy of the Scriptures, he travelled extensively and preached in many countries (Savchenko 1994:236). Among his books translated into Russian were: *Kak privodit' chelovecheskie dushi ko Khristu* [How to bring men to Christ] (1909); *Kak poluchit' polnotu sily* [How to Obtain Fullness of Power] (1909); *Ad: dostovernost' ego sushchestvovaniya* [Hell: certainty of its existence] (1909); *Neverie, prichiny, sledstviya* [Unbelief, causes, consequences] (1910); *Kreshchenie Dukhom Svyatym* [Baptism with the Holy Spirit] (1910); *Ispolnyay sluzhenie tvoe* [Make full proof of thy ministry] (1910); *Spasenie* [Salvation] (1911); *Kak preuspevat' v khristianskoy zhizni* [How to Succeed in the Christian Life] (1912); *Potryasayushchiy vopros* [Practical and perplexing Questions Answered] (1916).

The third popular writer among Russian evangelicals was Charles Finney (1792-1875), a pastor from New York City, then president of Oberlin College (Savchenko 1994:235). Finney experienced a dramatic conversion and baptism of the Holy Spirit. Although he affirmed salvation by grace through faith alone, he also stated that it depended on a person's will to repent. Works were viewed by him as the evidence of faith while unrepented sin in the life of a professing Christian meant the absence of saving faith. Finney became a Presbyterian minister and an important figure in the Second Great Awakening, sometimes even called "the Father of Modern Revivalism". He was known for some innovations like women praying in public services and extemporaneous preaching.<sup>232</sup> His books translated into Russian were: *Kak sodeystvovat' dukhovnomu probuzhdeniyu?* [How to assist spiritual revival?] (1909); *Vozrastanie v blagodati* [Growing in grace] (1909); *Otstupniki* [Backsliders] (1908).

This literature was to some degree responsible for forming the theological views of Russian evangelicals.

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<sup>231</sup> Wikipedia. Online. Accessed on August 26, 2009.

<sup>232</sup> Wikipedia. Online. Accessed on August 26, 2009.

### 4.3.2 Further Relationships between Evangelical Christians and Baptists

The issue of the relationship between Baptists and Evangelical Christians remained quite complicated. The history of their movement towards each other is full of paradoxes. Ever since the 1884 united congress, the two movements were repeatedly drawn together then apart. Below are some major landmarks borrowed from Popov's research.

Even prior to the edict of toleration in 1902 two representatives from the Petersburg evangelical congregation, V. I. Dolgoplov and G. M. Matveev, attended the Baptist congress in Rostov-on-Don (Popov 1995:4-20). Then, in 1903, Baptists and Evangelical Christians met illegally in Tsaritsin to choose an appropriate name for the movement that would be mutually acceptable (Popov 1995:4-20). The following year, in 1904, Evangelical Christians from St. Petersburg, Kiev, Konopol', and Sevastopol met in Rostov-on-Don and applied for entry to the Baptist Union on the condition that its former name be restored (Popov 1995:4-20).

In May 1905 in Rostov-on-Don an illegal Congress of Evangelical Christians and Baptists was held where the much anticipated decision to unite was made. The Congress accepted the name of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (Savinsky 1999:265). Mazaev commented that "from that historical moment we ceased being Baptists and almost started forgetting that we were Baptists".<sup>233</sup> In January 1907 a united Congress of Evangelical Christians, Evangelical Christians-Zakharovtsy, and Evangelical Christians-Baptists was held in St. Petersburg chaired by Kargel. At the end the participants conducted the Lord's Supper together (Savinsky 1999:267-268), an important event, which had proved impossible at the 1884 congress. Kovalenko also mentions likely the same conference hosted by Kargel's congregation in 1907 attended by Pashkovites, Baptists, Molokans and Presbyterians; Prokhanov was also present (Kovalenko 1996:107).

It is important to remember, as Savinsky points out, that until 1909 there was no clear difference between Evangelical Christians and Baptists (Savinsky 1999:297). From 1905 to 1909 the congregations of the Baptist Union were

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<sup>233</sup> Mazaev D. I. "Not that road" // Baptist. 1911. № 34, in Savinsky 1999:265.

called Evangelical Christian–Baptist (Kovalenko 1996:107); after 1909 Baptists and Evangelical Christians parted again.

Prokhanov was inspired by the grand but rather unrealistic idea of reforming Russian people. He knew that he might not gain support for this from the leaders of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists, so he started to organize a union of the First and the Second evangelical congregations in St. Petersburg and congregations in the Crimea and Ukraine. In this way, in 1909 the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians was founded. Prokhanov remained its president for twenty-five years. In 1909 and 1910 Prokhanov invited the Baptists to join him in activities such as magazine publishing and Christian education.<sup>234</sup> What Prokhanov wanted was a union with Baptists on his own terms.

Overall, “prior to the Revolution, neither group was ready for the move. The Baptists were not in agreement with Prokhanov’s emphasis on social regeneration. The Evangelicals were not enthusiastic about the Baptists’ perceived restrictive doctrines” (Ellis & Jones 1996:164). Brandenburg thinks that it could be due to Prokhanov’s “rather erratic and enterprising nature” which was alien to the Baptist brethren, that they preferred to remain independent (Brandenburg 1977:134).

Three congresses of the Evangelical Christians (not to be confused with Evangelical Christians-Baptists) were held during this period. The first one took place in September 1909 in St. Petersburg (Savinsky 1999:291). Among other issues they discussed ways of uniting with Evangelical Christians-Baptists and Mennonites (Savinsky 199:22-93). The Second congress took place in December 1910 through January 1911. Baptist leaders Mazaev and Balikhin sent a telegram calling “for peace to distant and near”. The delegates discussed incidents of unending local persecution. They also made a decision to call the union “The Union of Evangelical Christians” (Savinsky 1999:293-294). The Third congress took place in December 1911 through January 1912. Prokhanov was chairman; Kargel was his main assistant. The delegates discussed the issues of singing in churches, Sunday schools, youth ministry, women’s ministry, laying on of hands, and marriage and divorce (Savinsky 1999:294-295).

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<sup>234</sup> Prokhanov 1993:137; Savinsky 1999:300-301; Samoilenkov 2001:28.



After 1912 the government forbade holding any congresses of All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians (Prokhanov 1993:138). World War I was at the door. Altogether, Prokhanov chaired all ten union congresses held from 1909 to 1928 (Prokhanov 1993:138; Kovalenko 1996:108).

Besides the friction between the union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists and All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians, there were tensions between other evangelical groups in St. Petersburg. The author needs to repeat that alongside Prokhanov's "First Congregation" a much older congregation had been gathering at the Lievens' household, which later organized itself in a similar fashion and was called "The Second Evangelical congregation". After Prokhanov agreed to lead the group of young people who split from Kargel's congregation and almost secretly registered his "First Congregation", the relationship between these two churches suffered. Even the Orthodox were aware of this split. In 1912 Bogolyubov stated that St. Petersburg Pashkovites divided into two parts, "the first one is *prokhanovtsy* or 'free Baptists'. Those do everything like Fetler and Mazaev do. Other Pashkovites are following Kargel and keep old Radstockian traditions. Those are faithful to Pashkov until now" (Bogolyubov 1912:30-31).

Another tension could be sensed between Kargel's congregation and Fetler's Baptist church. Fetler, who in the beginning was ministering side by side with Kargel and did not seem to see anything wrong in such cooperation, then started building a Baptist church. Some of the members in his church had been attending services at the Lieven palace. When speaking about the Pashkovites at the All-Russia Baptist Congress in St. Petersburg in September 1910, Fetler pointed out that Evangelical Christians and Baptists could enjoy only "spiritual fellowship", but not a "practical union". His argument was that Evangelical Christians in Russia started with Radstock, a Plymouth Brethren. According to Fetler, Plymouth Brethren and Baptists in England do not share any fellowship; Plymouth Brethren deny any special name and call themselves simply "Christians"; they reject the office of presbyters; anyone can preach at their meetings; they break bread every Sunday, not only on the first Sunday of the month, as Baptists do. According to Fetler a union with the Evangelical Christians was possible only if they accepted the Baptist confession of faith and expressed their desire to join the Baptist Union (Bondar 1911:57; Bogolyubov 1912:3).

When considering the above mentioned facts, the author does not think that a union of different evangelical groups in Russia was possible at the time. Although after announcing the edict of toleration everybody “became brothers, and single heartedly have forgotten quarrels”, as Jasnevitch-Borodaevskaya said, it was only for a time.

#### **4.3.3 Increase of Social Pressure before and during World War I**

Prugavin points out repeated cases of religious oppression already in 1908. In October 1908 all prayer houses in Petersburg known as “Pashkovite” or “Baptist” had to be closed. They had been opened after the Manifesto of 17 April 1905 and operated openly in different parts of the city. On 11 and 12 of October there was not a single meeting because of the police order. Only after Stolypin’s intervention were the prayer houses reopened (Prugavin 1909:258-263).

From 1912 (even from 1910) religious freedom in Russia became more and more limited. As during the time of Pobedonostsev, evangelical believers were again oppressed and persecuted (Savinsky 1999:302). By 1911 Orthodox voices began to sound more and more loudly, insisting on stronger measures to limit the dissenters (Ellis & Jones 1996:152).

World War I had not yet started, but “the pressures resumed in 1912 and 1913. In 1913, a 140-page report was submitted to the Fourth State Duma [Russian Parliament] featuring complaints about the Evangelicals in various *gubernias*, whose prayer houses were shut down and rights to worship curbed due to accusation of pan-Germanism” (Ivanov 2002:22-45). The declaration of war in August 1914 brought many initiatives of the Evangelical Christians to a standstill, and persecution broke out once again (Ellis & Jones 1996:150).

The war became an excellent excuse for discontinuing various freedoms including religious freedom. Needless to say, Baptists and Mennonites (two denominations tracing their roots to Germany) became the scapegoats during this war against Germany. According to Ivanov, “the onset of World War I resurrected some of the most reactionary conservative elements in the public and the government calling for a *revanche* against the religious minorities who grew and consolidated themselves between 1905 and 1914” (Ivanov 2002:22-45).

Treason and lack of patriotism became a label, that was attached to... Germans, sectarians, pacifists, and to almost everything non-Orthodox and non-Great Russian... The charge of pan-Germanism and social sabotage was also brought against Russian Evangelical sectarians: Baptists, Stundists/Evangelical Christians, Adventists, and some other groups. They were accused of a conspiracy to demolish the two pillars upon which the Empire rested, the Monarchy and Orthodoxy (Ivanov 2002:22-45).

With the beginning of the war it was as though the tolerant Manifesto of 1905 had never been issued (Brandenburg 1977:157). Stundists once again, as before 1905, even without trial were being exiled to Siberia by governors and police authorities (Brandenburg 1977:157). The general sentiment against the Germans had a profound effect on the Stundist, Baptist, and Mennonite communities. "You have a German religion" was a common accusation (Brandenburg 1977:157). The press stated categorically that Emperor Wilhelm had given the Baptists money "in order to undermine the Russian people" (Brandenburg 1977:158). Orthodox missionaries spread rumours about Baptists becoming traitors and helping Germany (Savinsky 1999:309-310). Unfortunately, Russians tended to believe such accusations.

In 1915 Prokhanov wrote a "note" about the difficult situation of evangelicals in Russia. According to Prokhanov, from the beginning of the war persecution against evangelicals had become similar to Pobedonostsev's times (Prokhanov 1915:2). A number of their meeting places in Odessa, Kazan', Moscow, etc., were closed (Prokhanov 1915:2-5). They were persecuted even for meeting for tea at each other's houses (Prokhanov 1915:5). Over fifty preachers were sent to prisons and to Siberia (Prokhanov 1915:7-10). Even before the war there were publications saying that Baptists, Evangelical Christians, etc., are "the avanguard of Germany" (Prokhanov 1915:15). Prokhanov pointed out that evangelicals were patriots of their country, who with rare exceptions did not reject military duty, and he listed a number of men who were killed or wounded (Prokhanov 1915:41-46).

According to Ellis and Jones, the publication of both *Khristianin* [The Christian] and *Utrennyaya Zvezda* [Morning Star] was suspended. Meetings in St. Petersburg and across Russia were forbidden. Prayer houses were closed. The Bible school was closed. Neither the Evangelical nor Baptist unions were permitted to conduct congresses or conferences. "The anti-German sentiment during the war lumped the Evangelicals with the Stundists and accused them of

fostering a ‘German religion’” (Ellis & Jones 1996:153, Savinsky 1999:309-310). By the end of 1914 “Raduga” Publications, managed by Prokhanov and Braun, a Mennonite, was shut down as well (Ivanov 2002:22-45).

On 7 March 1915 the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a secret circular to the heads of the police departments and gendarmerie, ordering them “to increase the pressure on the sectarians and socialists alike” (Ivanov 2002:22-45). In June 1915, the Petrograd<sup>235</sup> mayor wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs that Stundo-Baptists are “nothing but nurseries of Germanism in Russia”.<sup>236</sup> As a result the Baptist leaders continued to be exiled, and their hospitals and prayer houses were shut down (Ivanov 2002:22-45). For example, in 1916 the hospital at Petrograd’s *Dom Evangeliya* was closed by the authorities, and Petrograd evangelical churches were closed too, as many soldiers were attending the services (Ivanov 2002:22-45). Evidently the officials were afraid of certain pacifistic influence, because hundreds of Evangelical Union members, Baptists, and others refused to bear arms or be drafted (Ivanov 2002:22-45).

It is important to point out that the evangelicals continued their philanthropic and evangelistic activities during wartime. The Baptists from *Dom Evangeliya* (Fetler’s congregation) set aside six apartments and a big hall for the wounded where “sisters” took care of them. Churches in other cities did similar things. Baptists and Evangelical Christians started “Good Samaritan” funds to support hospitals, help the families of the dead and wounded, and print Bibles and other Christian literature (Savinsky 1999:308-309).

Prokhanov took an active role by writing many petitions to the government “calling to release the imprisoned preachers and assuring Evangelicals’ support of the war effort” (Ivanov 2002:22-45).

Not only persecution but also the lack of fuel and food caused many to leave St. Petersburg during the war. Only a small group stayed from Kargel’s congregation of 1500 members. Although some returned in the 1920s, only a few original members survived (Corrado 2005:171).

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<sup>235</sup> A former name (1914-24) of Saint Petersburg.

<sup>236</sup> TsGIARF, Fond 821, Opis 133, Delo 331. Reel 12, in Ivanov 2002:22-45.

#### 4.3.4 New Evangelical Leaders in St. Petersburg and Their Input

This period of history was characterised by a number of new evangelical leaders who played important roles shaping the movements.

##### 4.3.4.1 *Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov (1869-1935)*

I. Prokhanov, probably the most outstanding leader in the Russian Evangelical movement of this period, was a controversial figure. Extremely gifted and energetic, he was highly praised by some, and rebuked by others.

For instance, N. I. Saloff-Astakhoff said that Prokhanov “accomplished more than any man since the days of the Apostles”.<sup>237</sup> According to Ellis and Jones, he moved “into the vacuum created by the exile of such leaders as Pashkov, Bobrinskiy, and others” and became “a natural leader who, almost single-handedly, led the Evangelical Christians to remarkable heights during the first quarter of the twentieth century... his genius for organisation well-matched by his boundless energy” (Ellis & Jones 1996:133-134). Further on, Ellis and Jones continue praising him:

[Prokhanov] quickly grasped the need for the biblical expression of faith and for unity among believers...Pashkov's removal in ten years left the movement weak both in leadership and in its perception of how it should develop as a church of Christ. Prokhanov's entry brought vision, energy, and organization. He gathered the scattered remnants of the Pashkovites and Stundists and framed, almost single-handedly, the Evangelical Christians as a closely knit, rapidly growing, confessing body (Ellis & Jones 1996:176).

These and similar statements leave the impression that nobody else continued the work after Pashkov's and Korff's banishment. Nichols does not even mention Kargel in his masters dissertation, and describes Prokhanov as “a long-awaited leader” who “would soon capture the moment and unite the Evangelicals” (Nichols 1991:74-76).

Brandenburg is a little more critical in his perception:

[Prokhanov] always had fresh plans and was tireless in putting them into practice. It may not always have been easy to work with him or under him, but those who got to know him found it difficult to resist his influence. He was without doubt the most important and gifted leader of the Evangelical Christians among the Russians. He was a reformist figure of great and varied talent (Brandenburg 1977:131).

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<sup>237</sup> Saloff-Astakhoff, 130-131, in Corrado 2000:180.

Corrado also points out “the rigidity and strictness of his [Prokhanov’s] meetings” which “may have resulted more from his leadership style than theological beliefs” (Corrado 2000:174).

A brief review of Prokhanov’s biography can help to clarify his position which greatly influenced the further development of the movement, because due to his activity the movement became “both an extension of himself and distinctly Russian” (Ellis & Jones 1996:176). Prokhanov was born into a Molokan family in Vladikavkaz and from the age of seven was brought up by Baptist parents.<sup>238</sup> A simple question on a scrap of paper “Do you love Jesus Christ?” restrained him from suicide and led to reading the New Testament and to a spiritual awakening. After being baptized in the Terek River in 1887 he joined a Russian Baptist congregation. However Prokhanov himself avoided the word “Baptist” and called that congregation “a local group of Christian believers”.<sup>239</sup>

While his years as a student at St. Petersburg Institute of Technology from 1888 to 1893, Prokhanov became acquainted with the Pashkovites, who were meeting secretly in private homes, including those who grouped around the Lieven household (Brandenburg 1977:131). He immediately became a regular preacher and soon began organizing meetings in the woods (Prokhanov 1993:64; Kovalenko 1996:106).

While Kargel and those believers who met in Lieven’s home retained the characteristics of the early Pashkovites, Prokhanov became the unofficial leader of meetings in smaller homes on the other side of the city. Under Prokhanov’s leadership the meetings took on a different character. Influenced by the strict Baptists of the South and having studied in Western Europe, Prokhanov taught believer’s baptism and insisted upon a strict, moral lifestyle consistent with his Molokan upbringing. His meetings were known “for their organization and outward focus” (Corrado 2000:174-175). During his student years Prokhanov started publishing the first magazine *Beseda*.

Looking for new forms of practical Christianity in 1894, Prokhanov initiated a community called *Vetrograd* which would copy the structure of congregations of the first Christians (Savinsky 1999:278). Together with other

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<sup>238</sup> Prokhanov 1993:29; Kovalenko 1996:105; Brandenburg 1977:131.

<sup>239</sup> Prokhanov 1993:46-48; Brandenburg 1977:131.



believers he founded a settlement in the Crimea. He wanted to provide an example to the Russian intellectuals who were influenced by socialist ideas, that a voluntary communism based on the Gospel was not impossible (Brandenburg 1977:132). He wrote of his vision of restoring apostolic Christianity:

The church of the first century, the Church of Christ and the Apostles, as it is revealed to us in the Acts of the Apostles and in their Epistles, is an ideal model for imitation in all times . . . Only the revival of Church in the spirit of primitive Christianity, with its all-embracing and creative religious power, will be able to overcome the spirit of unbelief as manifested in atheism, materialism, and free-thinking, and to prevent its further spreading in the world... Take the old and yet eternally new Gospel as the foundation of your life, to rebuild it according with the teaching of Christ, and then the earth and the heavens will be renewed (Prokhanov 1993:243, 245, 248).

However, the community did not last long (Savinsky 1999:278).

In 1894 Prokhanov came under police surveillance and had to leave the country secretly in order to escape persecution.<sup>240</sup> In 1895 he went to Finland and from there to the West to study theology. On Dr. Baedeker's advice and with Quaker Brucks' promise to pay for his studies, Prokhanov studied for a year at Bristol Bible College (Prokhanov 1993:92). After that he attended lectures at a Congregational College in London because he wanted to get in touch with other denominations (Prokhanov 1993:92). In 1896 with the help of the same Brucks and having letters of recommendation from Baedeker and Adams (Evangelical Union secretary), he moved to Berlin and was accepted to the University of Berlin's theology department (Prokhanov 1993:95) where he studied for a semester. During professor Garnak's lectures, Prokhanov got acquainted with rationalistic theology and higher criticism. After close consideration of Garnak's theory Prokhanov came to the conclusion that Garnak's position concerning the origin of the New Testament books was "much milder" than he had expected. According to Prokhanov, "he stood on a traditional point of view" (Prokhanov 1993:95-96). Finally he attended the department of Protestant Theology in Paris for a semester (Prokhanov 1993:96).

While abroad, Prokhanov continued publishing *Beseda* and wrote a great number of Christian songs (Kovalenko 1996:106). Another mission was to help his persecuted brothers in Russia (Kovalenko 1996:106-107). At Quakers'

request he helped ailing Dukhobors on Cyprus where they were on their way to Canada (Prokhanov 1993:100, 102-104). He was able to return to St. Petersburg only after his marriage in 1901 (Prokhanov 1993:109). In 1902 he managed to print 20,000 Christian *Gusly* songbooks at the state printing house (Prokhanov 1993:112). In 1904-1905 he published *Struny Serdtsa*, a book of Christian poetry (Kovalenko 1996:107).

By 1905 Prokhanov was an accomplished leader who had a theological education, experience in living in other countries, and great ambitions. New political conditions in Russia opened before him many opportunities. In January 1905 he agreed to lead a group of young people who had separated from Kargel (Savinsky 1999:281). Later that year he founded the Union of Christian Youth (Samoilenkov 2001:28). Prokhanov, because of his active ministry and missionary vision, could not be satisfied with “the passive mode” in the local church at St. Petersburg that was more concerned with inner perfection and sanctification. He was not in agreement with Kargel who was not ready to take advantage of new possibilities (Samoilenkov 2001:81-82).

After the decree of tolerance Prokhanov started publishing a weekly magazine, *Khristianin* [The Christian], which was both evangelistic and instructive for Christians, and “showed no denominational narrowness” (Brandenburg 1977:134). After the law of 13 October 1906 Prokhanov devoted himself to organizing congregations, something which Pashkov and his circle had paid little attention to until that time (Brandenburg 1977:134).

From 1907-1911 Prokhanov put a lot of energy into defending believers who were persecuted in spite of the edicts of October 1905 and October 1906 (Kovalenko 1996:107). In 1910 he started publishing the newspaper *Utrennyaya Zvezda* (Kovalenko 1996:1907). From 1910 to 1913 he published seven different songbooks (Kovalenko 1996:108). In 1913 he founded a Bible school (Samoilenkov 2001:28). Such are the facts showing Prokhanov’s active Christian ministry.

Since Prokhanov was the first to seek a legal basis with regards to the state, his congregation was called “the First Evangelical-Christian Congregation in St. Petersburg”; there he served as a presbyter for 20 years.<sup>241</sup> His “First”

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<sup>240</sup> Prokhanov 1993:88; Kovalenko 1996:106; Brandenburg 1977:133.

<sup>241</sup> Brandenburg 1977:134; Samoilenkov 2001:28.

evangelical congregation was formed from a number of secret Christian groups, some people from Berdnikov's Baptist congregation, and young people that broke away from Kargel (Savinsky 1999:281). An appeal to register was signed by 140 members; the congregation was registered in November 1908 (Savinsky 1999:287). This came as a surprise to the house church gathering for a longer time in Lieven's home. Since then two evangelical congregations in St. Petersburg existed independently of each other (Lieven 1967:106). Interestingly, the First Evangelical Christian congregation in St. Petersburg was organized according to a Baptist pattern with strict inner discipline (Savinsky 1999:282). Wardin also points out that "Evangelical Christians, led by Ivan S. Prokhanov, were very close in polity and doctrine to Baptists" (Wardin 1994:50-61). Karetnikova also agrees, that "service in Prokhanov's church was strictly Baptist" (Karetnikova 2009:38).

Thus, Prokhanov's congregation differed from Baptist congregations only in name. However, he wanted to have his hands untied and to stay independent from Baptist leaders in order to fulfil his goal, "creating the right, free and balanced life of the state" (Savinsky 1999:282), and "renewing Russia under the condition of spiritual regeneration and self-improvement of every individual".<sup>242</sup> Prokhanov wrote, "My goal was intensive missionary activity for the sake of future spiritual revival of Russian nation" (Prokhanov 1993:110). In this point he was in contradiction with Baptist leaders who saw the main goal as "saving souls" (Savinsky 1999:280). According to Savinsky, Prokhanov "needed" this "First congregation" in order to organize a believers' union which "should become an important lever of spiritual regeneration of Russian people".<sup>243</sup>

In other words, Prokhanov's goal was God's kingdom on earth, while the Baptist leaders were looking forward to the kingdom of heaven. The activity of the Baptists was mostly limited by their churches. Prokhanov went beyond these limits. For instance, he cooperated with the Orthodox. The Russian Evangelical Union could include Lutherans, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Orthodox, etc. (Savinsky 1999:284). It caused a negative reaction among Baptist leaders such as Mazaev, Churzin, Balikhin, and Zinov'ev (Savinsky 1999:284-5). Prokhanov's paradox was that, on one hand, he demanded closed

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<sup>242</sup> Prokhanov I. S., *Avtobiografiya*, in Savinsky 1999:280.

communion in his congregation (Savinsky 1999:282), while, on the other hand, he cooperated with representatives of other denominations.

Another inconsistency was that, on one hand, Prokhanov purposefully avoided the word “Baptist” in the name of his congregation and All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians founded in 1909, but, on the other hand, he was chosen as a vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance. According to Popov, at the request of Russia’s Evangelical Christians, led by Prokhanov, their church was admitted to the Baptist World Alliance, and later Prokhanov was elected a vice-president of the Alliance. This is how Prokhanov outlined the Evangelical Christians’ position on the unity issue: “Although Evangelical Christians wanted to stay spiritually independent, they joyously accepted unity with all Christians baptized in faith”. Naturally, the leaders of Russia’s Christians-Baptists were not happy with the Baptist World Alliance’s decision to admit the Evangelical Christians (Popov 1995:18).

Brandenburg praises “the genial personality of Ivan Prokhanov” for his extreme openness (Brandenburg 1977:xii), but Brandenburg fails to see a church politician behind this leader. Being “open” was only a part of the game. Summarising, it seems that the main complaints of the Baptist leaders were the following: Prokhanov’s focus on renewing Russia (versus renewing souls); uncontrolled Christian activity (versus church-controlled activity); hopes to reform the Orthodox Church without transforming it into an evangelical body, and collaboration with the Orthodox (versus non-collaboration).

Nichols portrays Baptists as “enemies” of Pashkovites and Prokhanov as their “saviour”:

Their waiting proved worthwhile . . . Prokhanov’s strong administrative skills allowed him to gather together like-minded Evangelical groups from across the country. This enterprise became known as the “Union of Evangelical Christians.” The doctrinal freedom and the innovative leadership style of Prokhanov caused the Baptists to withhold their formal participation. The Union of Evangelical Christians did not ordain clergy, nor did they require baptism, and held most of their meetings in private homes (Nichols 1991:76).

The author cannot agree with this position. Although it is true that the Pashkovites had certain problems in their relationship with Baptists, they did not

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<sup>243</sup> Savinsky 1999:282; Prokhanov’s letter, August 1906 // *Khristianin* 1908 № 10, in Savinsky 1999:282.

need Prokhanov's protection. Besides, they also had certain problems with Prokhanov.

When S. Lieven compared Prokhanov with Kargel she diplomatically noted, "If Kargel was moving deep down into spiritual life, Prokhanov was moving out far and wide". Her other statement explains what she meant, "Brother Kargel was seeking to deepen believers in the knowledge of the Lord and His Word, and brother I. S. Prokhanov was calling his members to active participation in congregational life: he organized the Youth Union, a choir and so on" (Lieven 1967:106).

Prokhanov's utopia was twofold, economic (his attempts to create Christian communes, Vetrograd and City of the Sun) and religious (his attempts to unite believers of different denominations and to reform Russia). However, his practical input cannot be underestimated. Russian evangelicals are indebted to Prokhanov for great publishing activity, mission activity, legal protection of the persecuted, Christian education, legal status, and much more.

#### **4.3.4.2 Willam Fetler (1883-1957)**

William Fetler was another outstanding evangelical Baptist leader in St. Petersburg. In 1907 he graduated from Spurgeon's Pastor's College in England and came to St. Petersburg in the same year (Savinsky 1999:261). In the beginning he sometimes preached at the Lieven palace as a "helper of brother Kargel" (Lieven 1967:106). Then he joined the gatherings in Chertkova's meeting hall (Savinsky 1999:261). His original plans were to go to China but they did not work out. Instead, he organized a Baptist church in St. Petersburg, joined by many from Prokhanov's "first" congregation.

Fetler became a very popular preacher and spoke in theatres and concert halls to gatherings numbering almost three thousand (Savinsky 1999:261). The main meetings were held in the Tenishev concert hall at 33/35 Mokhovaya Street, which had a capacity of seven hundred. He also initiated and actively participated in building *Dom Evangeliya*, whose capacity of three thousand made it the biggest evangelical meeting hall in Russia (Savinsky 1999:261). In 1909 he started publishing the weekly magazine *Vera* [Faith], which was later succeeded by *Gost'* [Guest] (Savinsky 1999:261).

Prokhanov's follower Saloff-Astakhoff claimed that Fetler was the first to introduce division among the St. Petersburg Evangelical Christians. Yet, as

Corrado noted, Prokhanov's method of assuming leadership from Kargel and the Pashkovites demonstrated a similar aggressive and divisive spirit (Corrado 2000:176). Despite the controversy surrounding his work, Fetler retained the confidence of many elderly aristocratic Pashkovite women (Corrado 2000:177). In 1915 he was banished from Russia without the right to return (Savinsky 1999:364).

#### **4.3.4.3 Pavel Nikolaevich Nikolaii (1860-1919)**

Baron Nikolaii was known as a missionary to students. According to Brandenburg, Nikolaii came from a Swedish family. His ancestors had been involved in diplomatic service in Austria and Russia. His grandfather, a tutor to Tsar Paul I, bought the estate of Monrepos near Vyborg from the Duke of Wüttemberg and settled the family there. Nikolaii's father was a minister for some time. From childhood Nikolaii was accustomed to praying and reading the Bible, and at age nineteen he was confirmed at St. Anne's in St. Petersburg, an event he took very seriously.

Nikolaii studied law in St. Petersburg, where he lived with his uncle, the Minister of Cults at that time. His closest friend was Count Konstantin Konstantinovich von der Pahlen, son of the Minister of Justice, one of the noblest figures in St. Petersburg before World War I. Through him, while still a student, he found his way into the Lieven household and the Christian circle there (Brandenburg 1977:136).

In Finland he often visited the family of Baron Wrede and together with the famous Mathilde Wrede visited Finnish prisons. During a Finnish Bible study circle someone mentioned the expression 'semi-Christian'. This expression disturbed Nikolaii and in 1888 he decided to live his life totally for Christ (Brandenburg 1977:137).

Before he started his ministry among students, Nikolaii visited Russian prisons with Dr. Baedeker. In 1898 he was able to write in his diary: "I feel so refreshed after my prison visiting... I cannot thank God enough for the privilege of being able to carry on this ministry at all." This was after he discovered that a cab-driver in Siberia was more grateful for the New Testament he gave him than for the fare he paid (Brandenburg 1977:137).

After getting acquainted in 1899 with John Mott, a well-known worker of the World's Student Christian Federation, Nikolaii started working among



students in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, and other cities (Savinsky 1999:357). At the Blankenburg Alliance conference, a conference of the German Evangelical Alliance similar to Keswick Convention in England, he met Hudson Taylor (Brandenburg 1977:138).

In 1903 when Karl Heim (who was later to become a professor of theology and student pastor in Münster and Tübingen) visited St. Petersburg, Nicolaii took him to meetings in the Lieven home. Heim called these evenings “a quite unexpected encounter with a piece of New Testament Christian life”. Further, “It was the greatest experience of my time in Russia that through Baron Nicolay and Princess Lieven I came into contact with this New Testament Christian movement.”<sup>244</sup>

Nicolaii’s views are well presented in his own words:

The people are all religious, but they are excitable, easily divided and shaken, because there are no leaders who are capable of seeing past the secondary things such as baptism, question of the Second Coming, Sabbath observation and so on, and energetically underlining the unifying aspect of faith in Jesus! That is, faith in our crucified king and the rebirth of hearts and spirits by his Spirit (Brandenburg 1977:147).

This attitude is very close to the original convictions of the Pashkovites. Nikolaii did not identify himself with Baptists or Evangelical Christians. However, he made quite an impact on the evangelical movement of the period. Heier considers Nikolaii “the only successor of Pashkov who remained truly non-denominational, which was central to the original movement”.<sup>245</sup> S. Lieven also stresses that Nikolaii was “wholly one of their men” (Lieven 1967:116).

#### 4.3.5 Conclusion

Russian historian and politician P. Milyukov felt that had the state not taken measures to limit Pashkovite and other evangelical influence, a Russian Reformation “would have been an accomplished fact”.<sup>246</sup> So, Prokhanov with his idea of spiritual regeneration of Russian people may have been not that utopic after all. However, history took a different route.

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<sup>244</sup> Heim *Ichgedenke der vorigen Zeiten*, Wuppertal 1964 R. Brockhaus Taschenbücher, Vol.76/77 pp.53-62, in Brandenburg 1977:139.

<sup>245</sup> Heier, “A Note on the Pashkovites and L. N.Tolstoy” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 5 (1962):114-121,119, in Nichols 1991:23-24.

<sup>246</sup> Milyukov, *Russia and Its Crisis*, 100, in Corrado 2000:180.

Indeed, religious freedom triggered quick growth in the evangelical movement in Russia. Various unions were formed. Congregations got names and registrations. The evangelical groups could finally legalize their activity. These changes caused certain structuring of the evangelical movement.

The most outstanding evangelical and Baptist leaders around St. Petersburg now were Prokhanov, Kargel, Fetler, and Nikolaii. After a long winter of severe persecution, the spring of freedom resurrected great dreams of the past. The explosive energy of a new generation of evangelical and Baptist leaders allowed the realisation of bold projects: revival meetings with thousands in attendance, holding regular congresses, publishing Christian books that were more varied and serious from a theological point of view when compared with the simple booklets published by SESER, starting Christian education, ministry among students, and so on.

The house church at Lieven's palace managed to preserve the original features of the Pashkovite meetings. Representatives from both high and low classes were still meeting together. They also preserved the practice of open communion. They continued special ministries for children, women, and young people. But they finally adopted an official name, the Evangelical Christians.<sup>247</sup> The Pashkovite ladies continued to influence the evangelical climate in St. Petersburg. In a way they were playing the role of "fairy godmothers" for the new leaders: N. Lieven hosted Kargel and his family, E. Chertkova stood by Fetler, A. I. Peuker helped Nikolaii to work among female students.

For a time persecution ceased to be a unifying factor for the different evangelical groups, and doctrinal and practical differences surfaced. Moreover, the personal ambitions of the various groups' leaders hindered the process of uniting. Despite several attempts, by the end of the period the evangelical groups were farther from merging than ever before. Nevertheless, reciprocal influence of the Pashkovites and Baptists was observed even by outsiders. In 1916 Kushnev wrote that the Pashkovites yielded a point to Baptists in the issue of adult baptism, while Baptist yielded a point to the Pashkovites stressing justification by faith alone (Kushnev 1916:66).

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<sup>247</sup> Prokhanov's church although bearing the same name was essentially Baptist, and this creates some confusion.

Unfortunately, the freedom was short-lived, as World War I put a quick end to many liberties and opportunities. This was especially hard on believers with German roots. Baptists and Mennonite Brethren, denominations of German origin, were targeted for persecution and suffered many false accusations.

#### **4.4 “Golden Age” of the Russian Evangelicals (1917-1927)**

The turmoil of World War I and all three Russian revolutions put an end to the “aristocratic” period in the history of Russian evangelicals. The revolutions of 1917 made some aristocrats flee the country, while others were almost totally eliminated. Hence, the end was put to “Plymouth”, or, more specifically “Open Brethren”, influence among Russian evangelicals. However, some of this influence was carried on into the 1920s and even the 1930s by Kargel.

Nevertheless, the period that followed the 1917 Revolution is often called “golden age”. In the words of Sawatsky, the “first ten years after revolution truly became ‘the golden age’ for evangelical confessions of all bodies” (Sawatsky 1995:24). Prokhanov considered the period from 1923 to 1929 as the “most productive” time in the evangelical movement all over the Soviet Union (Prokhanov 1993:205). Was it really so? Indeed, for Russian evangelical churches the first twelve years of Soviet rule became a time of “phenomenal growth and multisided development” (Sawatsky 1995:38). How could that be?

After the February Revolution of 1917 (the so-called Second Russian Revolution) the Provisional Government released all political and religious prisoners (Savinsky 2001:14). Long awaited freedom had finally arrived. Many Christian meetings were held all over the country. The Gospel was preached in the streets, squares, and other public places (Savinsky 2001:15).

After the overturn of October 1917, Lenin’s government announced its main decrees: factories and plants – to workers, land – to peasants, peace – to nations. Behind this rhetoric was the nationalisation of land and private property and separate negotiations for peace between Soviet Russia and Germany. These measures plunged Russia into four years of civil war. In January 1918 Lenin’s government issued a decree which separated the church from the state and education from the church.<sup>248</sup> All churches became equal in the eyes of the

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<sup>248</sup> Ellis & Jones 1996:160; Savinsky 2001:17.

state. And since the Orthodox Church was identified with the former regime of the tsarist state it became enemy number one for the Soviets. Other formerly persecuted religions could catch their breath.

Although the reign of terror cannot be considered “golden times” for anyone, this period was characterised by relative freedom for evangelicals and lasted about a decade. Big Christian meetings were taking place. Christian publications were renewed. Congresses were held regularly again. In the words of Brandenburg, the Bolsheviks at first “wooed the evangelical circles” (Brandenburg 1977:168). “The evangelical congregations, with an optimism that later proved to be groundless, sought to use this moment of generally changing conditions to spread the gospel” (Brandenburg 1977:168).

However, after finishing with the Orthodox, the atheistic authorities naturally turned against other confessions. As persecution against the Orthodox Church were a national policy in the 1920s, so persecution against all religion became national policy in the 1930s. In order to understand this period one must not forget that the Russian Revolution was against God (as Berdyaev rightly noted) (Savinsky 2001:10) and the Bolshevik party as well as the Soviet Government had clearly positioned themselves as ungodly.

This period was filled with a number of important events in church life that could be discussed in great detail. First, both the Baptist and the Evangelical Christian Unions came very close to uniting in May 1920. It was admitted that “there was no difference in doctrine, in life and practice of Baptists and the Evangelical Christians” (Savinsky 2001:38-41). However, this attempt to unite (like a number of previous ones) was not successful. The problem seemed to lie in church policy and the ambitions of some leaders in both camps. Second, lots of energy was put into missionary outreach both in Russia and abroad. Third, Christian philanthropy was not forgotten. For instance, an active stand was taken by Baptists during a mass starvation in the early 1920s in the Volga River area. Russian believers turned to their Western brothers and sisters asking them to help the dying areas. As a result, the American Relief Administration and other organisations in the West started sending aid. Fourth, this period of comparative freedom was used to publish the Bibles and hymnbooks which served as the only copies of this kind of literature for decades to come. Fifth, as the author mentioned above, congresses of both Unions were called regularly.

However, the author chose to concentrate on other burning issues of the period, i.e., the relationship with the Orthodox and involvement in politics, because the way various unions and leaders acted in these areas was very symptomatic and revealed where they truly stood theologically.

#### 4.4.1 Some Statistics

It is commonly accepted that real expansion of both Baptists and Evangelical Christians took place after the October Revolution. The extensive social and political upheavals of revolution, civil war, and collectivisation provided fertile ground for sects in general and the evangelicals in particular. The numbers differ from source to source. The truth must be somewhere in the middle.

According to official Soviet statistics, by 1917 the evangelical movement numbered 150,000 members. During the next seven years both Baptists and the Evangelical Christians became five times more numerous.<sup>249</sup> According to Mitrokhin, while they had only about 100,000 members before World War I, their number had risen to 500,000 by 1927.<sup>250</sup>

Hargroves estimates the numerical growth even higher: by 1922 the movement included 250,000 believers and by 1927 there were three thousand congregations with a membership approximating four million (Hargroves 1959:250).

In 1924 Prokhanov reported to Karl Borders that there were 1500 registered congregations; 300,000 recorded baptized believers, with families and adherents – 1.5 million. In 1926, Burnham reported the movement was approaching two million.<sup>251</sup> In St. Petersburg alone by 1922 Evangelical Christians had dozens of meeting places in the city and a number of places in the suburbs, among which were former Lutheran and Reformed church buildings deserted when German, Swedish, French and other foreign church members had left Russia (Prokhanov 1993:188).

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<sup>249</sup> Lyalina, *Baptizm i real'nost'*, Moskva 1977, pp. 58-69, in Sawatsky 1995:39.

<sup>250</sup> Mitrokhin, 1966, 74, in Lane 1978:139.

<sup>251</sup> Karl Borders, "The Evangelical Church in Russia", *World Call*, May 1924, p. 17, in Ellis & Jones 1996:174.

Naturally, most church members were new to the movement. As mentioned above, economic difficulties forced many people to leave St. Petersburg. Of Kargel's church of 1500, only a small number of original members remained or returned during the 1920s (Corrado 2000:179). Those thousands of people who filled churches in the 1920s knew very little about "the old days". Similar things must have happened in other churches in Petrograd.

As for the Baptist social profile, at its peak in 1927 Baptists were particularly strong in the western areas of the Soviet Union. Their social composition was almost identical to that of the population as a whole.<sup>252</sup> A significant input was made by Russian war prisoners. About 2000 newly converted soldiers returned after World War I. Fetler ministered extensively among them after he was banished from Russia in 1915 (Savinsky 2001:65).

According to Brandenburg, by 1928 the Russian Baptists had about 3200 congregations. The Union of Evangelical Christians was about the same size (Brandenburg 1977:188).

Numbers presented by Savinsky seem to be the most trustworthy. Over the post-revolutionary decade the number of evangelicals quadrupled (from 200,000 in 1917 to 800,000 in 1928). Obviously, this growth could not but bother atheists whose goal was to finish with believers by 1937 (Savinsky 2001:7; 12).

According to NKVD figures for 1926-28, there was a significant increase in the number of Protestants (twenty-two percent). Such growth could be explained by at least two factors. First, "religious liberty" announced by the Bolsheviks affected religious groups whose rights had been restricted before the Revolution. Thus, "Baptists, Evangelicals, Lutherans, and other confessions had a short lived opportunity to preach and expand their activity, provided they expressed loyalty to the Soviet authorities". A second reason for such increase in numbers was that Old Believers, Protestants, and other denominations did not have to hide their religious orientation any longer. However, "by the middle of the 1930s all religious activity was reduced to a bare minimum" (Walters 1999:85).

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<sup>252</sup> Klibanov, 1969, 73, in Lane 1978:148.



#### 4.4.2 Relations with the Orthodox

It has been already stressed that “for nine centuries the Orthodox Church acted as an absolute ruler on the religious arena of Russia” and it “has always been intolerant to schisms, and any alternative expression of faith by the Russian people” (Samoilenkov 2001:12-13). The Church was connected to the tsarist regime in such a way that the former could not stand when the latter fell:

[The Church], accustomed to existence under the paternalistic control of the State, found itself adrift in the turbulent sea of the revolution. A militantly atheistic regime disestablished the Church, confiscated its properties, desecrated its temples, burned its icons, killed thousands of its monks and deprived the rest of citizenship, and reduced the proud institution to the status of a despised semi-legal organization (Kazemzadeh 1999:238).

In 1922 the state confiscated all church treasures: gold, silver, and precious stones from the churches and monasteries. The Church resisted the surrender of sacramental objects, which led to severe repression. Patriarch Tikhon was placed under house arrest in May 1922. The Church was wracked with multiple schisms. Known as the *Obnovlentsy* [Renewers or Renovators], the schismatics included the “Living Church” (led by Krasnitsky), the “Ancient Apostolic Church” (led by Metropolitan Vvedensky), and the “Church of Regeneration” (led by Metropolitan Antonin) and were exploited by the government.<sup>253</sup> Secret Soviet police (GPU) used the existence of opposition for its own purposes. “The Renovators and the Bolshevic government were aligned in a cooperation of opposites to persecute the Patriarchal Church” (Malone 1980:245).

The first official contacts between the Evangelicals and the Orthodox Church took place in 1911 when Prokhanov addressed the Synod with a proposal to publish pocket canonical Bibles, but the Synod refused (Samoilenkov 2001:58). This schism in the Orthodox Church “served Prokhanov a signal for realisation of his idea of mass evangelical awakening among Russian people”. But if prior to this Prokhanov expected evangelical awakening from the “bottom”, from people, now he decided to use the hierarchs of Higher Church Administration in order to work evangelisation from the “top” (Savinsky 2001:76).

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<sup>253</sup> Ellis & Jones 1996:165-166; Savinsky 2001:76.

In September 1922 Prokhanov addressed the “Living Church”<sup>254</sup> with so called *Evangel’skiy Klich* [Evangelical Appeal]<sup>255</sup> on behalf of the All-Russia Union of Evangelical Churches named by him on this occasion “The Union of Free People’s Evangelical Church” (Savinsky 2001:42-43). He was invited to Moscow where he preached in Orthodox temples. In exchange Metropolitan Antonin (Church of Resurrection) spoke at a large meeting of the Evangelical Christians. On 15 March 1923 Prokhanov was invited to a congress of the Ancient Apostolic Church where he also preached (Savinsky 2001:77).

“Ugly collaboration of *obnovlentsy* with retributive organs of the Soviet state” was not a secret for many believers already in the 1920s (Krapivin 205:107). Was it a secret for Prokhanov? It is difficult to say what pushed him to make this unreasonable compromising step. Was it a desire to enter all open doors or his ambitions of becoming a great Russian reformer in case of success? Whatever the reason, the Baptists could not accept this. However, Prokhanov’s ambitions prevailed, and he proceeded with his contacts with the Orthodox at the expense of confrontation with the Baptists. As Savinsky thinks, Prokhanov saw himself as a religious reformer of the Church (Savinsky 2001:41). This is the key to understanding many of his actions.

Prokhanov personally visited Metropolitan Antonin who said that he agreed with almost everything in Prokhanov’s “Evangelical Appeal” (Prokhanov 1993:194). Later in March 1923 Prokhanov was invited to speak at the congress of the Ancient Apostolic Church where he was the first appointed speaker (Prokhanov 1993:195). A month later, in April 1923, the “Renewers” held a council during which they directed a message to Lenin, declaring loyalty to the “divinely appointed” revolutionary government, gaining them the label “The Red Council” (Ellis & Jones 1996:168). According to Brandenburg, it turns out that Prokhanov was present at this council and even spoke there:

In the spring of 1923 these opponents of Patriarch Tikhon held a council in Moscow. Because this council sent a letter of loyalty to Lenin,

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<sup>254</sup> Both Christian and secular researchers leave no doubt concerning the nature of “Living Church”. According to Savinsky, it was used by the Soviets to conduct the policy of the Soviet authorities (Savinsky 2001:40). Krapivin is even harder in his evaluation, saying that “Living Church” was a pro-Soviet church faction, sometimes called “red church” (Krapivin 2005:103). The Living Church was “too much aligned with Marxism” (Malone 1980:251).

<sup>255</sup> In 1922 Prokhanov distributed 100,000 copies of his article *Evangel’skiy Klich* [Evangelical Appeal] among the Orthodox (Kovalenko 1996:108-109).

recognizing the revolutionary government as a divinely appointed government, it is termed by conservative circles among Orthodoxy the 'red council'. Prokhanov was also invited, and he had the opportunity to give a speech (Brandenburg 1977:174).

According to Ellis & Jones, "Prokhanov's association with these groups . . . harmed the Evangelical movement in the minds of many" (Ellis & Jones 1996:168). However, Samoilenkov does not seem to see much harm in these contacts. Referring to the "Evangelical Appeal", he stated that Prokhanov called "progressive groups within the Orthodox Church" to concentrate on transformation of inner life (Samoilenkov 2001:58-59). Prokhanov's speech at the First All-Russia Congress of the Old Apostolic Congregations is seen by Samoilenkov as "an important event". It was there that on behalf of the All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians Prokhanov called for unification of the Renewal movement and Evangelical Christians if the Orthodox "agree to return to the early Christian foundation" (Samoilenkov 2001:59, 91). Samoilenkov admits that Prokhanov was ready to cooperate with the Orthodox Church even at the cost of breaking with Baptists (Samoilenkov 2001:95).

How typical for Soviet politics: *divide en impero!* It is rather strange that Prokhanov did not see that his actions lent support to the cause of Soviet politics. As far as the history of the evangelical movement in Russia is concerned, these contacts with the "red priests" made it impossible for Baptists and the Evangelical Christians to unite.

#### **4.4.3 Relations to the State: Political Involvement and the Issue of Military Service**

In 1901 Pavlov, a prominent Baptist leader, wrote to Bonch-Bruevich, "I do not want to touch on political issues... All Baptists and I reject the union of church and state which causes all persecutions for faith".<sup>256</sup> Russian Baptists were known for not wanting state involvement in church business. They suffered greatly from the state Church in tsarist Russia and therefore especially valued this principle (Savinsky 2001:70-71).

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<sup>256</sup> Bonch-Bruevich, *Znachenie sektantstva dlya sovremennoy Rossii*. From a letter to Bonch-Bruevich, June 18, 1901, in Savinsky 2001:20.

However, Prokhanov's view of political alignment was different from that of the Baptists'. On 17 March 1917 Prokhanov's idea of founding the first Russian religious political party "Christian democratic Party Revival" was accepted. This party was not related only to the All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians, but was meant to unite all Christians including Orthodox. Creating this party opened the door for political activity. A significant step in Prokhanov's political career was his election to the State Duma (Russian Parliament). Interestingly, Christian democrats with their candidate Prokhanov received more votes than Social-Democrats (Mensheviks) with a well-known revolutionary Plekhanov. Prokhanov's programme was addressed to various strata of the population and suggested a number of political, economical, and religious reforms.<sup>257</sup>

Actually, the idea of the formation of the Christian-Democratic "Resurrection" Party – a coalition of Christian Democrats – was declined by the fourth congress of the Evangelical Christians in Petrograd that took place in May 1917. The reason was "the unwillingness to get churches involved in politics". However, this did not stop Prokhanov. He proceeded with his own plans and became the Christian-Democrat candidate for the Petrograd district (Ellis & Jones 1996:162; Savinsky 2001:58).

The Baptist congress in 1920 stated that they keep neutral position in regard to political parties because "involvement in the politics of one party leads to enmity towards the other" (Savinsky 2001:56). But "new Prokhanov-style leadership" was characterized by "seeking cooperation with the Soviets" (Ivanov 2002:44).

Sawatsky pointed out that many leaders, including Pashkov, had been adherents of Christian socialism. They not only approved the socialistic idea but also managed to organize over the territory of the Soviet Union a number of prospering communes. Prokhanov dreamed of building his Soviet "City-Sun" called Evangel'sk that would become an exemplary city of brotherly love. His plans were even approved by the officials, and the local Soviet authorities promised him financial help and took part in the ceremony of symbolic foundation of the city – planting a few trees. A year later, however (in 1928), the building of the city was forbidden (Sawatsky 1995:37-38).

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<sup>257</sup> Prokhanov 1993:158-159; Ellis & Jones 1996:162; Mitrokhin 1997:259-262.

Although Prokhanov was certainly no friend of Bolshevism (Brandenburg 1977:183), he was flirting with the Soviets. He indicated his attitude to the Revolution in a report dated 6 April 1924: “Inasmuch as we saw social and economic reforms in the revolution, we welcome it. To some extent we saw in it God’s judgement on the guilty. Or else we consider it as purification, out of which Russia must come forth renewed”.<sup>258</sup> This is how Prokhanov stated his position when called to the account by the authorities, “I explained my attitude to the red government, pointed to Romans 13 and said that the ideals of the Soviet government were close to Christianity, because the ideas of pure communism corresponded to the second chapter of Acts”.<sup>259</sup>

Connected to political involvement was the issue of military service. In all history of Evangelical-Baptist brotherhood no other issue brought as much disturbance as this one (Savinsky 2001:27). In order to get a better understanding of this issue one needs to go back to the epoch of Great Russian reforms. One of them was a military reform. Among its measures was introducing in 1874 universal service. At the outset of World War I Russian Baptists and the Evangelical Union believers “reassured the government of their support of the war effort”. In their Confessions both Union stated military duty as an obligation. Prokhanov personally tried to persuade the authorities of “the Evangelicals’ loyalty in service” (Ivanov 2002:42-43).

During World War I both Baptists and the Evangelical Christians went to the frontiers with rare exceptions (Savinsky 2001:27). Meanwhile Mennonites and Dukhobors had always been strongly opposed to military service and suffered persecutions for that even back in the tsarist Russia (Savinsky 2001:28). In rural areas

where local pressures against Evangelicals always tended to be stronger, and the central government’s reach weaker... the dissenting peasants nurtured their understanding of the Gospel, based on the literal approach to many passages, including the Sermon on the Mount... Many peasant believers were prepared to stand by their convictions – after all, they were much better adapted to persecution than their brethren in St. Petersburg (Ivanov 2002:44).

During the Civil War the cases of refusing to take arms among Baptists and the Evangelical Christians became more frequent (Savinsky 2001:28).

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<sup>258</sup> Gutsche, p.102, in Brandenburg 1977:173.

<sup>259</sup> Gutsche, p.113, in Brandenburg 1977:182.

The Bolshevik party won partly due to its slogan “Peace to nations” and promises to put the end to the war. Indeed, in March 1918 Trotsky managed to conclude a separate peace treaty with Germany in exchange to enormous territories in the Western part of Russia. The war was over, soldiers went home... but not for a long time. In August 1918 the Soviets announced a compulsory draft to the army.

By the early 1920s Prokhanov addressed the Bolshevik government (with limited success) with a request for recognition of Conscientious Objector status for Evangelicals, “as the pacifist beliefs constituted some of their value” (Ivanov 2002:44). The decree of 4 January 1919 freed the citizens from compulsory military service on the ground of religious convictions. Mennonites, Dukhobors, Tolstovtsy, as well as Baptists and Evangelical Christians could use this opportunity not to serve or to serve in medical units after being approved by a people’s court (Savinsky 2001:28-29).

As Ellis and Jones rightly observed, the Bolsheviks, during their early consolidation of power, viewed the evangelicals as worthy of wooing. At the Communists’ Twelfth Party Congress it was acknowledged that the evangelicals had been “subjected to the most cruel persecution on the part of Tsarism.” Bonch-Bruevich, a secretary to Lunacharsky, the People’s Commissar of Education, persuaded Lenin and Trotsky to allow those “with conscientious objections against bearing arms” to serve in medical work (Ellis & Jones 1996:168-169).

Many Russian Protestants, including some leaders of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists, were pacifists and actively used the 1919 decree permitting alternative army service. However, in 1923 the authorities started to use pressure against both unions making them change their anti-military ideology (Sawatsky 1995:37). “The militaristic Communist state... appreciated Evangelical opposition to Tsarism on one hand, but wanted even greater loyalty, on the other” (Ivanov 2002:44). Besides, fast growth of evangelical churches was frightening the Soviets. The authorities could not fight with all non-conformists at once. The first strike was against the Orthodox. The second was against the Protestants. In 1925 the League of Militant Atheists was officially organized (Sawatsky 1995:25). It included all members of Soviet government, many scientific and cultural workers, and even some former



Orthodox priests (Savinsky 2001:10). A common atheistic slogan was “Religion is opium for people” (Savinsky 2001:10).

Regarding the issue of military service, it must be said that in 1922 Prokhanov, as a vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance, issued an appeal “Voice from the East” calling all Christians in the world not to participate in military affairs (Savinsky 2001:29-30). The Soviet government regarded this as a political act and used it as an pretence to intervene in church affairs (Savinsky 2001:30).

Kargel, who at the time was not a member of the Evangelical Christian Union, was very upset about the whole matter. It must be said that Kargel from the very beginning was for full recognition of military service. In his letter written in 1931 to the All-Russia Union of Evangelical Christians he calls those leaders in both Unions who made the decision not to serve in the army “intoxicated and lost”. Naturally the authorities “took these bulls by the horns”:

The whole sin that has been causing sufferings to the cause of the Gospel for over ten years was committed when against God’s will at the eighth Congress they got into politics over head and ears . . . This decision filled the congregations with young people who were not Christian and did not think of becoming such. All they wanted was to escape military service (Kargel 1991:264).

The burning question of military service was quickly solved to the Bolsheviks’ satisfaction after Prokhanov was imprisoned by GPU (political police). After spending three months in Lubyanka prison in Moscow, Prokhanov changed his position and signed a letter to his congregations calling brothers to fulfil their military obligation. The letter was immediately published the state newspaper *Izvestiya* [News] on August 1923 under the title, “The Letter of the Highest Union of Free People’s Evangelical Church”.

In a month this letter was discussed at the ninth congress of Evangelical Christians. The resolution was made “to acknowledge military service in Soviet Russia as obligatory for Evangelical Christians”.<sup>260</sup> This resolution was adopted by a significant majority (Brandenburg 1977:185). Prokhanov explained the situation: “The government wanted to see what the attitude of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists to it was. Now it is satisfied and thanks to this, there are unlimited opportunities for evangelism. Now for the first time there is real religious freedom” (Brandenburg 1977:185). A similar resolution was passed at

the Baptist Congress later the same year (Savinsky 2001:32). These resolutions elicited a wave of controversy in both Baptist and Evangelical Christian churches (Savinsky 2001:32).

A report written on 27.02.1924 by the chief of the 6-th Department of OGPU (the Soviet secret police) E. A. Tuchkov deserves special attention. It clears up many things that were going on behind the scenes. It concerns OGPU work accomplished among Evangelical Christians. According to this report, OGPU objective was to make sectarians to accept the mandatory military service in the Soviet Russia, to break their unity and to arrest the rise of their numbers. The best opportunity was to bring Prokhanov to account for spreading of antimilitary appeal "Voice from the East". Tuchkov reports that OGPU managed to make imprisoned Prokhanov acknowledge military service as obligatory and to compile a relevant appeal.

This caused a split at the following Congress of the Evangelical Christians. Prokhanov and five other leading persons in the Evangelical Union who had already signed the appeal were almost ready to admit their mistake. However, due to the presence of OGPU informer at the Congress it became possible to assure Prokhanov that by doing so he would undermine his own authority. In the end, the Congress with overwhelming votes accepted the resolution in agreement with the latter appeal. The disagreeing minority started a campaign against Prokhanov and his group. It came to the point when Prokhanov's closest helper, Andreev, asked the authorities to liquidate this group as a dangerous for the Soviets not only in respect to the military issue but also politically. At their request, Savel'ev was arrested.

Further Tuchkov goes on describing how OGPU managed to force the Baptist Union to issue a similar resolution. "Thus both Evangelicals and Baptists recognised mandatory military service for their members in the Soviet Russia and doing so produced a split in their ranks. This will undoubtedly stop the growth of sectarianism and lead to their moral decay".<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Samoilenkov 2001:54; Savinsky 2001:31; Sawatsky 1995:37.

<sup>261</sup> Tuchkov. Online. Accessed on November 26, 2004.

Military service was again one of the main issues at the tenth congress of the Evangelical Christians in 1926.<sup>262</sup> Both Prokhanov and Kargel were explaining the passages from Scripture that dealt with this subject. Most questions were directed to Kargel (Savinsky 2001:95-96). The leaders of the Baptist Union were not ready to defend pacifism either. In his speech at the Baptist Congress in 1926, Ivanov-Klyshnikov said, "If the Baptist Union should keep freedom of action, our congress should decisively refuse pacifism".<sup>263</sup> By submitting to the Soviet regime in this way, the evangelical leaders hoped to preserve freedom for preaching the Gospel (Sawatsky 1995:39).

#### 4.4.4 Theological Education and Publications

Support from America<sup>264</sup> allowed Prokhanov to launch the Bible school on 27 February 1912 at the main meeting place of the Evangelical Christian Church (Danishev's Gymnasium in Fonarnyy Pereulok in St. Petersburg) on the basis of the charter granted by the Department of Education. Unfortunately, the beginning of World War I put an end to this initiative (Ellis & Jones 1996:150). It was ten years later, in October 1922, that Bible school classes resumed (Prokhanov 1993:191).

S. Lieven recalled that after the Revolution two Bible schools were established: Evangelical Christians had their school in St. Petersburg while Baptists had theirs in Moscow (Lieven 1967:122). Besides Moscow and St. Petersburg there were Bible schools in Kiev, Orel and other places (Sawatsky 1995:41). There were short (from one to three months) courses held in different places. For instance, Kargel taught in Nikolaevka (Sumskaya area) and trained fifty-five preachers (Savinsky 2001:108).

According to Savinsky, until 1925 the Bible education offered by the Evangelical Christians was not of a very high quality (Savinsky 2001:108). In 1924 Baptists and the Evangelical Christians tried to cooperate in establishing a

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<sup>262</sup> It was at this congress that the delegates asked brother Prokhanov to publish a brochure explaining the spiritual condition of "our foreign brothers" in connection with the modernist movement among them, which "rejects much of the pure Christian faith" (Savinsky 2001:96).

<sup>263</sup> Steeves, p. 587, in Sawatsky 1995:23.

<sup>264</sup> As a matter of fact, the American Disciples continued sending financial aid for the needs of the Bible education until it was forbidden in 1929 (Ellis & Jones 1996:173).

Bible school. Nine-month combined courses were organised in Leningrad<sup>265</sup> with fifty students (twenty-five from each union). Unfortunately, this initiative did not have a continuation (Savinsky 2001:106).

The most successful enterprise in the area of Christian education was annual courses that started on 19 January 1925 in Leningrad. They functioned until 1929 (Savinsky 2001:108). According to Prokhanov, 422 pastors and preachers were taught at that school (Sawatsky 1995:41). Altogether (including nine-month courses) the courses existed for five and a half years (Savinsky 2001:108).

The main teachers were I. S. Prokhanov (Introduction into the Old and the New Testaments; Homiletics), Kargel (Doctrine; Revelation), Bykov (Exegesis), Kazakov (Apologetics), V. I. Prokhanov (History of Christianity), etc. (Savinsky 2001:108). Prokhanov's course on homiletics is being used in Russia even today. In his course Prokhanov insisted that God's Word must play the main role in a preacher's ministry; it should become as food for a preacher. "The goal of the sermon is writing God's Law in people's hearts" (Prokhanov 1989:65, in Samoilenkov 2001:30).

In December 1927, Moscow Bible Courses for Baptists started functioning. The curriculum was designed for three years, but the classes lasted only for one and a half years since authorities shut them down in 1929 (Savinsky 2001:107). According to Sawatsky, Moscow Bible School existed for four years (Sawatsky 1995:47). Among the teachers were Ivanov-Klyshnikov, Miller, Odintsov, and Datsko (Savinsky 2001:107). The academic level of these schools was not very high (Sawatsky 1995:41). Nevertheless, opening the Bible schools was a step in developing Russian Evangelical theology. "Russian Protestants could now not only read the Bible but also think theologically" (Samoilenkov 2001:88).

Christian publishing activity was also revived after the Civil War by both the Baptist and Evangelical Christian Unions. Publications included Christian periodicals, Bibles, New Testaments and hymnals. Prokhanov personally was prolific in this area (Savinsky 2001:05-107). Like great reformers of the past, Prokhanov believed that "only the Bible and the Gospel, freely spread and freely accepted, can help my motherland to reach the highest prosperity" (Prokhanov

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<sup>265</sup> The former name (1924-91) of Saint Petersburg.

1993:98-99). This belief was behind much of Prokhanov's activity in the publication ministry. Those copies of Christian literature that the evangelicals managed to print during these "golden years" served well for following decades despite being constantly confiscated during searches in believers' homes.

*Svet Vostoku*, a publishing house located in Wernigerode, Germany, by 1923 published the following literature in Russian: Beteck "The first page of the Bible";<sup>266</sup> Bokmelder "History of Christian Church"; Bunyan "The Holy War" and "The Pilgrim's Progress"; Hebelein "Josef and his brothers", "Day by day", "Life and liberty"; Charles Inwood<sup>267</sup> "Be filled with the Holy Spirit"; Yakov Kreker "Led by the Holy Spirit", "Alone with the Saviour", "The birth from above", "Perfection of the life of the atoned"; Ernst Modersohn "Sonntag oder Sabbat?", "Do you pray?"; D. L. Moody "Pleasure and profit in Bible study"; Nikolaii "Can an educated man believe in Jesus Christ as God?"; Smith "Apostle Paul, his life and epistles"; Tikhon "Characteristic of Christian faith"; Torrey "How to bring men to Christ"; Trapman "A young man before marriage"; Feeban "Spiritual advice for the newly saved"; etc.<sup>268</sup>

These were some of the books which formed the circle of reading of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists in the 1920s and the following decades.

#### **4.4.5 Persecution and Closing the Evangelical and Baptist Unions**

The Bolshevik Revolution set Russia on a course of official atheism that quickly led to a ban on foreign missionaries and by the end of 1930s "so repressed Soviet citizens of all faith" that religion was "on the verge of institutional extinction" (Elliot & Deyneka 1999:197). But the Soviet authorities did not fight with all confessions and denominations at once. They were eliminating denominations one by one.

When the authorities understood that they could not use the evangelicals for the purpose of "building communism," they quickly abandoned the policy of toleration (Sawatsky 1995:52). The unprecedented rise of evangelistic outreach in 1926 alarmed the atheists. They saw that mere propaganda would not suffice

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<sup>266</sup> Some titles are translated by the author arbitrarily.

<sup>267</sup> A revivalist preacher and leader in the Keswick movement.

<sup>268</sup> The list is added to the 1923 edition of Kargel's *V kakom ty otnoshenii k Dukhu Svyatomu?* [Where do you stand in your relationship to the Holy Spirit?].

and started taking stronger measures. In September 1927 the ministers of “Dom Evangeliya” Baptist church were arrested and sent to Solovki labour camps for three years (Savinsky 2001:111). There were cases of occasional arrests even during the “golden years”. But total war against religion was waged in the end of 1920s by means of both the colossal machine of atheistic propaganda and outright *chistki* [purges], the mass arrests of believers (Sawatsky 1995:47).

Already in April 1924 at a congress of Militant Atheists a frightening resolution was passed stating that sects, preachers, and church activists were political agents engaged in espionage (Savinsky 2001:116). Stalin’s first Five Year Plan began on 1 October 1928. On 8 April 1929 a regulation came into effect requiring mandatory registration of religious groups, forbidding missionary activity, and setting a number of limitations:

Religious associations may not: create mutual credit societies, cooperative or commercial undertakings... ; give material aid to other members; organize for children, young people, or women special prayer or other meetings, circles, groups, departments for biblical or literary study, sewing, working or the teaching of religion, etc., excursions, children’s playgrounds, libraries, reading rooms, sanatoria, or medical care (Savinsky 2001:116; Brandenburg 1977:189-90).

This regulation constituted official recognition of a changed policy towards religion in the country. Basically this law was forbidding the very activities responsible for the spread of the evangelical movement in Russia (Sawatsky 1995:47). On 24 April 1929, the government newspaper *Izvestiya* stated that “religious ideology is one of the main obstacles on the way of socialistic construction” (Sawatsky 1995:24). All obstacles were to be removed at any price.

These limitations were fixed on 18 May 1929 in a new edition of article 4 of the Soviet Constitution which allowed “free profession of faith and antireligious propaganda” (Savinsky 2001:116). These antireligious decrees marked the end of “golden age” in the history of Russian evangelicals and put churches under tight state control. All active Christians were put on a black list. Churches were to lose their leaders, who were considered *lishentsy*, that is, those who had no electoral rights because they were not engaged in productive work. As a result, *lishentsy* did not get ration cards, which forced them to rely on support from believers or else pay exorbitant prices on the black market (Brandenburg 1977:191). Waves of arrests and executions lay ahead.



Soviet religious policy's goal was the "eradication of religious prejudices", even though the methods varied (Brandenburg 1977:196). In 1929 both Unions were shut down; publications – forbidden; permissions to gather congresses – hard to get. In this situation no compromises with the state seemed to help (Sawatsky 1995:48). Prokhanov, after attending the Baptist World Alliance congress in Toronto in the summer of 1928, was not permitted to return to Russia. He died in Berlin in 1935 at age 66 (Ellis & Jones 1996:175).

This new policy resulted in persecution that did not wait long to start. Evangelical churches were rapidly losing their members. Whereas by 1929 the evangelical movement had reached half a million members, with families – over four million, by the mid-thirties the number of Protestants in Russia dropped to 250,000 (Sawatsky 1995:23). By the fall of 1929 over one hundred Baptist presbyters were arrested and all regional unions were closed. Those few presbyters who did not get arrested and did not go underground joined the Union of Evangelical Christians which continued its activity with great difficulties (Sawatsky 1995:24). The "golden age" for protestant churches was followed by a truly bloody decade of unprecedented persecution (Sawatsky 1995:24-25).

#### **4.4.6 Conclusion**

The "golden age" the Russian evangelicals came during a rather grave period of Russian history: Bolshevik Revolution, the Civil War, reign of terror, and a series of famines. But in spite of these circumstances or, maybe partly due to them, the Russian evangelicals experienced unprecedented growth. However, one should understand that such growth took place partially at the expense of the Orthodox Church and because of the possibility of avoiding compulsory military service. In addition, the time of phenomenal growth was followed by a period of phenomenal decline after 1928.

The Soviets, acting according to *divide en impero* principle, were at first fighting their main religious enemy that had been associated with the tsarist regime, that is, the Orthodox Church. Meanwhile, other confessions were enjoying some freedom. The GPU actively used various schisms within the Orthodox Church, especially the Living Church, in order to strangle the Church with the help of her own "sons". In this light Prokhanov's cooperation with the Renovators appears rather unwise if not provocative. Prokhanov's seeking cooperation with the Soviets did not do any good either to him or to his Union of

Evangelical Christians. All the advances of the Soviets came at a very high price. The Soviets expected loyalty and obedience. Flirting with atheists was a sign of short sightedness at the very least.

Humanly speaking the Russian evangelicals (including Prokhanov and his parents) suffered so much from the Established Church prior the Revolution that they could perceive the persecutions against the Orthodox as just retribution. Had they known that the same was waiting for them in the nearest future they might have had a little more compassion.

The “golden age” was the first period in Russian evangelical history without the Pashkovites. On a large scale there were no aristocrats left among the evangelical believers. Now Russian evangelicals had to look for sponsors for various Christian projects (such as the Bible education, translation and publication of Christian literature, helping the starving population) in the West, mainly in America. The issues that caused disagreements in the past – church membership, ordinances, choosing deacons and presbyters, and other – were now settled once and for all. The organized religion won. The spirit of the Open Brethrenism and Keswick was no longer felt. From that time on, the two main forces in the Russian evangelical arena were the Baptists and the Evangelical Christians.

Overall, both Baptists and the Evangelical Christians tried to use all new opportunities as best they could. Evangelism, open disputes with atheists, opening new churches, baptising and discipling multitudes of new members, printing Bibles and Christian magazines, holding conferences, establishing Bible schools – all of these efforts were aimed at spreading God’s kingdom in Russia. Russian evangelicals of that time were certainly brave and courageous people, wholeheartedly dedicated to the cause of the Gospel. This would be clearly evidenced by the mass martyrdom that followed the “golden age”.