

CHAPTER FIVE:

STUDY OF VITAL ASPECTS IN THE THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS OF IVAN VENIAMINOVICH KARGEL (1849-1937)

5.1 Kargel's Biographical Data in the Context of the Russian Evangelical Movement

I. V. Kargel was and still is one of the most outstanding Russian evangelical theologians, greatly respected in both Evangelical and Baptist circles. One of Kargel's contemporaries, Jacob Kreker, a leader of the mission "Light in the East", admitted that at least fifty percent of the evangelical movement among Russian people can be attributed to Kargel (Miller 2009:86).

Unfortunately there is no detailed and verified biography written about Kargel—it is yet to be written. At the present time it reminds a big puzzle with many pieces still missing. The existing material on Kargel's life and ministry is scattered, fragmentary, and often controversial. Kargel lived and ministered in a number of different countries, areas, and cities. As a result there are materials about him in Russian, English, German, Bulgarian, Finnish, possibly Estonian, and Latvian. There are still many important questions to be answered. Where and when was he born? Who were his parents? When exactly and for how long did he study theology? When was he ordained? When and where were most of his theological works written? These are only a few questions that pose a riddle to a researcher.

Taking into consideration the contradictory and fragmentary nature of Kargel's existing biographies, the author finds it important to collect all available data and go to a certain depth attempting to unfold the life story of a man who is still considered the foremost Russian Evangelical-Baptist theologian (Karetnikova 2001:75). The main sources on Kargel's biography consulted so far are biographies and memoirs of those who knew and remembered Kargel personally. Those sources are provided by S. Lieven (in whose mother's home Kargel lived and worked for extended periods of time), M. Korff (whom Kargel knew from the days of the St. Petersburg revival), A. V. Karev (the head of the

AUCECB after World War II), A. I. Mitskevich (who attended Kargel's Bible courses), N. I. Peisty (who remembered Kargel from his childhood and youth in St. Petersburg), D. J. Turchaninov (an eyewitness of last years of Kargel's life in Ukraine), Donald Miller (an American pastor from Soroczin, a town in Volyn, where Kargel had served as a pastor for one or two years). There was also an autobiographical work written by Kargel in German *Zwischen den Enden der Erde* (Wernigerode 1928), which was not available to most of Kargel's biographers.

Secondary sources were also consulted, i.e., biographical articles or historical monographs containing some biographical data on Kargel. Those were written by M. S. Karetnikova, I. N. Skopina (her article is almost an exact repetition of the AUCECB archival materials on Kargel), S. N. Savinsky, W. Kahle (a German scholar who had an access to Kargel's autobiography), A. W. Wardin, L. Kovalenko, I. P. Plett, etc. Other important sources used are Kargel's and his daughters' letters and an official AUCECB magazine *Bratskiy Vestnik* [Brotherly Herald]. Electronic sources were also used extensively.

5.1.1 Kargel's background and the early years: Influence of Russian Baptists

Most of Ivan (or Johann) Veniaminovich Kargel's biographers agree that he was born in 1849²⁶⁹ in Georgia²⁷⁰ into a German family. His father was a German and his mother was an Armenian (Kahle 1978:82). This way, Kargel was at least partly of German parentage (Wardin 1991:148-159). Having a German father, Kargel was raised in a German household (Nichols 2007:75), and he was most comfortable with the German language. Kargel's daughters used to say that they had cause to believe that their ancestors had come from Scotland (Skopina 2002:689). This is also mentioned in Kahle's account, "Nach Aussagen der Töchter Kargels war die Familie Kargel schottischer Herkunft. Die Daten der Übersiedlung nach Rußland lagen im Dunkeln, jedenfalls schon Generationen zurück" (Kahle 1978:81).

²⁶⁹ A German scholar W. Kahle, however, dates his birth five years earlier, in 1845 (Kahle 1978:82).

²⁷⁰ According to Klippenstein, Kargel was born in a Ukrainian German community (Klippenstein 1992:42).

Kargel grew up in a German colony in southern Russia where he, according to his own testimony, came to faith.²⁷¹ In 1851 Kargel's parents moved to Germany, then after a short time, as the conditions improved in the German colonies in southern Russia, they moved back to the Caucasus where Kargel spent his childhood (Turchaninov 2009:62). Karetnikova specifies that Kargel's family spent only two years in Germany.²⁷² Peisty recalled that "Kargel himself used to say that he spent his childhood in southern Russia where he got saved at a young age".²⁷³

According to Kargel's own testimony he was in London in 1867 (Kargel 2002:398). Skopina and Karetnikova both agree that he lived in London some time during that year (Skopina 2002:689; Karetnikova 2009:5).

Savinsky states that Kargel was converted in Tiflis (modern Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia) (Savinsky 1999:351). J. I. Zhitkov recalled that at the closure of the united congress in St. Petersburg in 1907, V. G. Pavlov pointed out the connection between St. Petersburg and Tiflis, saying "I. V. Kargel, our beloved preacher, was born again in our city, Tiflis, and I'm happy to see how God blesses his ministry here".²⁷⁴ When later in life Kargel reflected on his conversion he wrote, "Since then a truly wonderful God's life sprang up in me. The Lord Himself filled my heart and it was on fire to serve Him in everything and to obey Him only. It was a mere joy to fulfil His will because it never seemed too hard for me" (Kargel 2002:79-80).

In 1869 Kargel was baptized in the Caucasus, in Tiflis, by Nikita Voronin, only two years after this "first Russian Baptist" got baptised himself. The Tiflis congregation – "a small but peculiar Baptist brotherhood" organised in 1867 – became Kargel's home church (Karetnikova 2002:685; Skopina 2002:689; Kovalenko 1996:50; Nichols 2007:73; Sawatsky 1995:31). In this way, Kargel began his Christian ministry in Tiflis, in the "embryonic Russian Baptist church" (Nichols 2007:72). The Tiflis church was unique, combining both Russian and German cultures (Nichols 2007:73). The Tiflis Baptist congregation was indeed

²⁷¹ Den Angaben über Kargel liegen Sofija Lieven – „Kratkij ocherk zhizny i dejatelnoisty I. V. Kargelja“ in E.V.1-1940 S.8-10, in Kahle 1978:81.

²⁷² Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

²⁷³ Peisty. Online. 2 September 2004.

²⁷⁴ *Bratskiy Vestnik* 1957:60 № 5-6.

the cradle of a number of influential Baptist ministers in Russia and became a pattern for other congregations around the country.

Another candidate for Kargel's birthplace is Bulgaria, where he was allegedly born into a Lutheran family (Plett 1994:35). Karev also mentions Bulgaria as a place where Kargel spent his childhood and accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour (Karev 1999:136). M. Matveev, a native Bulgarian, also states that Kargel spent his childhood in Bulgaria where he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, was baptized, and spread the good news among the Bulgarians with great zeal (in those years Bulgaria was still under the Turkish yoke that lasted from 1395 until 1878). He adds that many were getting saved and baptized, so Kargel could be considered a founder of evangelical churches in Bulgaria.²⁷⁵

W. Kahle found a "Bulgarian version" in Gutsche, but personally prefers the "South Russia version" presented by Lieven:

Nach Gutsches Angaben stammte Kargel ursprünglich aus Bulgarien und habe auf diese Weise seinen türkischen Paß nach Rußland mitgebracht. Den Angaben von Sofija Lieven ist hier der Vorzug zu geben, daß Kargel aufgrund seiner Tätigkeit Rußland in Richtung Bulgarien verlassen hatte, später habe Kargel seine türkischen Staatsangehörigkeit zugunsten der russischen wieder aufgegeben.²⁷⁶

The question is how does one reconcile Kargel's presence in South Russia and Bulgaria at the same time? Could he actually have lived in both places in the course of the first twenty years of his life? There will certainly be a place for Kargel's Bulgarian ministry in the early 1880s. Most likely, this later ministry in Bulgaria added the researchers. Some of the questions get immediately answered if one considers Kargel's own account of his life found in Kahle's footnote. "Zwischen den Enden der Erde, Vorwort S.VIII berichtet über sich selbst, daß er 1869 in Tiflis bekehrt worden sei"(Kahle 1978:81). So, Kargel put his conversion in 1869 in Tiflis. He does not mention baptism, but it was possible that he got baptised the same year.

An important factor is that Kargel was growing up in a multicultural environment and from an early age was introduced to several languages. He travelled and lived in different countries: Georgia and Ukraine within the Russian Empire, Germany, England, and possibly Bulgaria. Kargel had a

²⁷⁵ Matveev. Online. September 2004.

²⁷⁶ Lieven, *Kratkij ocherk*, 8, in Kahle 1978:82.

distinctive conversion experience and was baptized as an adult. The Baptist church that he joined was also multicultural and bilingual. Above all, Kargel was there from the very beginning of its history.

5.1.2 Kargel's studies: influence of German Baptists

Kargel happened to be quite an educated man. He knew several languages including German, Russian, English, Bulgarian, and Finnish. He studied in Germany and England and received both technical and theological training (Mirt, p 1). However, Kargel's studies are a source of just as much confusion as the place of his birth or the circumstances of his childhood.

Nichols tells the most lucid and detailed story of Kargel's encounter with Oncken's Missionary School in Hamburg. According to Nichols, Kargel was accepted there "within months of his baptism." Already in the autumn of 1869, Kargel and sixteen other men from central Europe and the Russian Empire were enrolled at the school, but classes were postponed because of the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War. The school was to be reopened in February 1872, but the classes were postponed again until the spring of 1874 "for lack of funds" (Nichols 2007:73).²⁷⁷

However, Kargel did not waste time waiting for classes to begin in Hamburg. He travelled to the Mennonite colony of Molochna in southern Russia (presently part of Ukraine) and started ministering among the Mennonite communities. In 1873 he attended the second conference of the Mennonite Brethren (Nichols 2007:72, 74). During these meetings Kargel "received his calling into fulltime ministry" (Nichols 2007:74). This report is in full agreement with that of Klippenstein, who stated that after attending a conference in Klippenfeld, Molochna colony, Kargel began devoting himself to Christian work among Russian Germans (Klippenstein 1992:42).

At the suggestion of Karl Ondra (a Polish-born German who served as a Baptist missionary), Kargel moved to Soroczin, Volyn (presently part of Poland) to pastor a German Baptist congregation in place of deceased pastor Johan Kelm (Nichols 2007:74; Miller 2009:82). While involved in this ministry, Kargel was told about classes starting up in the Hamburg school. Along with Ondra, a

²⁷⁷ According to Miller's version, Kargel was enrolled for ten-month missiology courses in Hamburg a few years after his conversion (Miller 2009:82).

returning student, Kargel left the ministry in Poland in order to attend the Hamburg Missionary School (Nichols 2007:74). Thus, in 1874, Kargel received formal pastoral training in Hamburg offered by Johann Gerhard Oncken and the German Baptists (Nichols 2007:72).

Miller does not mention this trip to Germany to study at the Missionary School. According to Miller, Kargel remained in Soroczin until January 1875 when he was called to St. Petersburg to start a missionary ministry under German Baptist leadership (Miller 2009:82-83).

A number of other sources refer to Kargel's studies in Hamburg Baptist Seminary, stating that he actually graduated from there (Karev 1999:137; Savinsky 1999:351). Kovalenko writes about a German speaking seminary from which Kargel graduated with a basic knowledge of Hebrew and Greek (Kovalenko 1996:49). However, it is problematic to state categorically when Kargel attended the seminary and what subjects he studied there. Whether it was called "Baptistenseminar in Hamburg", "Theologisches Seminar in Hamburg" or "Missionary School", it evidently was the same seminary where prominent Baptist leader V. G. Pavlov studied.

Pavlov was baptised in Tiflis two years after Kargel, then studied in Hamburg for about a year starting in April 1875. Pavlov writes that when he arrived in Germany the "missionary school" had only six-month courses,²⁷⁸ which happened to be cancelled at the time. So Oncken assigned him to a local preacher who was to teach him theology and German (Pavlov 1999:244-245). Kahle mentions that V. G. Pavlov "war der erste russische Absolvent des Baptistenseminars in Hamburg in den siebziger Jahren" (Kahle 1978:19).

Who is wrong? Nichols, who dated Kargel's studies to 1874, or Kahle who wrote that Pavlov was the first Russian student there in 1875? It could be, though, that Kahle simply did not consider Kargel "a Russian student". But what is more important that strictly speaking there was no regular Hamburg seminary as yet at that time; there were only Bible courses which did not even function regularly. It is highly unlikely that students had an opportunity to get a good grasp of the ancient languages such as Greek and Hebrew.

²⁷⁸ The Baptist seminary in Hamburg was organised by J. G. Oncken, the pioneer of German Baptists. Oncken began to hold organized classes with his students in 1849, but only in 1880 a proper four-year seminary was established in Hamburg (Wardin, *Mennonite Encyclopedia*. Online. 10 September 2004).

Not much can be determined about the curriculum and theological concepts taught at the seminary, though they must have been in agreement with the views of Oncken himself and German Baptists at the time. Oncken's theology, certainly a decisive influence on the school, was known as "conservative, Calvinistic, and evangelistic. He favoured ministerial education, but not at the expense of spiritual preparation. He held spiritual gifts as a priority over academic preparation. Oncken's motto was 'every Baptist a missionary'"²⁷⁹.

H. Giesbrecht characterized the seminary as one of those Bible schools in Europe which moved its students "towards a greater appreciation for other denominations and towards a broader conception of the church as such."²⁸⁰ This way, being characterised by open-mindedness to a certain extent, the seminary valued devotion and dedication over academics. As expected, Kargel "took hold of Oncken's version of the baptist faith, including a strong Calvinistic approach to scripture, the centrality of pastoral authority and a strong emphasis on missions and evangelism" (Nichols 2007:74).

Kahle sheds more light on the role the seminary, or rather "missionary school", played in the Russian Evangelical-Baptist movement. However, Kahle does not seem to know that Kargel attended Hamburg seminary. Kahle only mentions that Kargel "was in Hamburg" in 1875:

Unter den Schulen und Seminaren, die für kürzere oder längere Zeit von russischen Staatsbürgern besucht werden konnten, soweit eine Ausreisegenehmigung vorlag, hat das Seminar der deutschen Baptistengemeinden in Hamburg die größte Rolle gespielt. Die von Oncken gegründete Predigerschule, später zum Seminar umbenannt, hat seit den siebziger Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts unter ihren Studenten eine große Zahl russischer Staatsbürger gehabt. Allein bis 1911 wird eine Zahl von 40 genannt . . . Bei Ausbruch des Krieges waren am Hamburger seminar 25 Studierende aus Rußland. Sie wurden von den deutschen Behörden interniert, soweit sie nicht rechtzeitig noch in ihre Heimat zurückkehren konnten. Die namhaftesten unter denen, die in Hamburg eine Ausbildung erfahren hatten, waren Vasilij G. Pavlov, der seine Studien 1876 beendet hatte, Ivan Venjaminovich Kargel, der um 1875 in Hamburg war, und Jakob Kroeker (Kahle1978:464-465).

²⁷⁹ Wardin, *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Online. 10 September 2004.

²⁸⁰ This tradition was carried on by Dr. Baedeker, who had helped to establish the "Allianz Bibelschule" in Berlin-Steglitz (1905), later renamed the Wiedenest Bibelschule (1919) (Giesbrecht H 1981 "Seeking a Faith to Live By: Some External Religious and Theological Influences" Winnipeg, Manitoba <http://www.directionjournal.org/article/?406>).

It is surprising, though, that Pavlov, who must have known Kargel from Tiflis, does not mention Kargel's presence in Hamburg at the same time as he was there. However, if Kargel was in Hamburg in 1874 (as Nichols suggests), then Kargel and Pavlov might not have seen each other while in Germany.

According to Nichols, Kargel finished his studies in Hamburg in August 1874 and returned to his ministry in Soroczin as a pastor of the local Baptist church, itinerant evangelist, and a church planter (Nichols 2007:77). Kargel came back to Poland "as a German Baptist, echoing the voice of Oncken and implementing the tools that he had learned in Bible school" (Nichols 2007:75).

Due to the Russian authority's unceasing interest in sects, we possess a trustworthy document which affirms that Kargel was already "a pastor" in 1874. A secret report addressed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs concerning a congress of German Mennonites and Baptists held on 17 September 1874 in Neydorf, a Mennonite colony (Zhitomir area), states that Kargel was there. About one thousand Mennonites and Baptists (among them nine pastors) from Volynskaya, Khersonskaya, and Ekaterinoslavskaya gubernias attended the congress. They gathered to discuss the tendency of believers to emigrate to America because of the lack of religious freedom in Russia and the issue of military service. Regarding military service, Pastor Ondra recommended excommunicating young men who try to avoid their military duty. This suggestion was unanimously approved of by the delegates.

In the report Kargel is called "a pastor" who announced the contents of a letter received by him from Oncken, in which Oncken expressed his negative attitude towards emigration to America based on what he considered the unsatisfactory spiritual condition of American believers. Pastor Pritskau suggested appealing to the Russian government requesting freedom of conscience for Baptists living in Russia. Kargel and Kesler were chosen to go to St. Petersburg in order to fulfil the mission.²⁸¹ This report reveals at least three important facts. First, by 1874 Kargel was a trusted pastor in German Baptist-Mennonite circles. Second, Kargel knew and corresponded with Oncken. Third, sometime toward the end of 1874 Kargel was supposed to visit St. Petersburg.

After returning from Hamburg, Kargel went back to his work in Soroczin and continued to pastor a local Baptist church, when "brothers" in Hamburg

²⁸¹ "Ezhenedel'naya zapiska" from RGIA Archaivs: SPb f. 1282 op. 3 delo. 124 l. 94-99.

asked him to serve as interim pastor in a small German Baptist church in St. Petersburg (Nichols 2007:77).

Turchaninov tells quite a different story about Kargel's student years. He says that after finishing school Kargel travelled to Germany where he graduated from "some" technical school and then went to St. Petersburg to work as a mechanical engineer (Turchaninov 2009:62). Skopina repeats Turchaninov's story about "some" technical college in Germany, after which Kargel supposedly started working in St. Petersburg as a mechanical engineer (Skopina 2002:689). It is really difficult to find a place in Kargel's biography where this technical education and engineering career could fit.

According to Kargel's testimony in *Zwischen den Enden der Erde*, "1873 an einer Konferenz in Klippenfeld (Molochna) teilgenommen habe, von diesem Zeitpunkt an setzte seine Tätigkeit ein, zuerst in Wolhynien, ab 1875 in Petersburg, um missionarisch unter Deutschen zu arbeiten" (Kahle 1978:81). Thus, Kargel attended the conference in Klippenfeld (Molochna) in 1873. Then he started his active ministry in Volyn and arrived in St. Petersburg as a German missionary in 1875. Not a word is said about his studies abroad, a technical college, or engineering work!

The author tends to agree with Nichols about Kargel's ministry in Soroczin before and after his studying at Hamburg's Bible school in the first half of 1874. By September he was already in the area of Zhitomir, with Oncken's letter to attend the Mennonite Conference. Then he spent a few more months in Soroczin, and left for St. Petersburg. By this time Kargel must have been an ordained minister who after his time in Germany acquired some understanding of German Baptist doctrine. One cannot expect, however, that he could have obtained profound theological education by then.

5.1.3 Kargel in St. Petersburg: from "a German Baptist Pastor" to a Pashkovite leader

So, after pastoring a Baptist church in Volyn, Kargel arrived in St. Petersburg in 1875 at the height of the revival among the aristocracy (Klippenstein 1992:42; Miller 2009:83; Nichols 2007:72). Kargel's task, however, was to pastor the German Baptist congregation in St. Petersburg, which he did from 1875 to 1880 (Wardin 1991:148-159). The small German Baptist church had been founded in 1855 (Nichols 2007:77). Originally Kargel

intended to spend only three months in the capital, but the need seemed so great that he asked his church in Soroczin to let him stay. The Soroczin believers were reluctant to do so (Miller 2009:82-83). Nevertheless, Kargel remained in St. Petersburg.

The German Baptist congregation which Kargel joined was probably the one mentioned by J. K. Dukhonchenko, whose archival materials contain the following information. In 1856 a tailor named Plenus from the Memel congregation moved to St. Petersburg and started distributing Christian booklets. While doing so he met a few likeminded believers and suggested holding Bible studies in homes. Thus, from around 1857 a group of about thirty people, mostly Germans, gathered on Sunday mornings and Monday nights.

In 1864 Oncken visited St. Petersburg to plead with the authorities to ease the conditions for the Baptist congregations in Poland and Latvia. It is likely that while in St. Petersburg Oncken met with the Baptist group. In his diary he mentions that late one night he baptized seven people who “had full hope for salvation and eternal life through the blood and righteousness of Christ”. Nothing is known of those baptized except that they were all Germans. Eventually the meetings were stopped because of some sin and the resulting excommunication of the Plenus’ couple. The remaining “faithful” joined a congregation formed later.²⁸²

Taking into consideration that Kargel was acquainted with Oncken and that Oncken knew of the need for a leader in this German Baptist congregation, it is possible to suggest that it was Kargel who undertook pastoral ministry there. Soviet historian Mitrochin actually attributes to Kargel the founding of the first Baptist congregation in St. Petersburg prior to 1880.²⁸³

During his five year ministry among German Baptists in St. Petersburg, Kargel was “building the congregation on the German model”. However, the work was not easy and the membership was growing rather slowly: from thirty-four in 1876 to sixty in 1880 (Nichols 2007:78). In 1877, two years after he started, there were only forty-five members in his church (Miller 2009:83). Eventually the church grew to one hundred members. From 1875 to 1880, the congregation met at 16 Pochtamtskaya Street (Karetnikova 2009:6). Later they

²⁸² J. K. Dukhonchenko *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov v SSSR // Materialy iz arkhiva Dukhonchenko*, pp.106-107, disc 1.0.

occupied a four-storey building at 4 Serpukhovskaya Street near the Warsaw railway station (Miller 2009:84). Nichols also points out that Kargel was the first person to register a religious body in Russia under a new law in 1879 (Nichols 2007:78).

Meanwhile Kargel did not lose his connections with Hamburg. He attended a Baptist conference in Hamburg in 1876, at which time he was asked to go to Estonia to baptize a group of ladies.²⁸⁴ He went to Estonia, baptized believers there, and then served there as a pastor for some time (Karetnikova 2009:10, 56-57). There must have been other Hamburg conferences attended by Kargel, “where he was often the centre of attention as word spread of his success in Russia”. Beginning in 1876, Kargel’s financial support started coming from American Baptists through the German Baptist Union (Nichols 2007:78).

While in St. Petersburg Kargel met Pashkov and attended Pashkovite services. When and how they first met is yet another big question. According to Savinsky, Kargel became close friends with the Pashkovites in 1875 (Savinsky 1999:351). Nichols similarly states that “Pashkov and other likeminded Russian aristocrats made a deep impression on Kargel, who began attending Pashkovite prayer meetings regularly in 1875” (Nichols 2007:80). Corrado attributes Kargel’s first acquaintance with the Pashkovites to prayer meetings during the Turkish War in 1877 (Corrado 2000:172). According to *Zwischen den Enden der Erde*, Kargel did not get acquainted with Russian brothers until 1877: “1877 machte er, der nach seinen Angaben damals nur unzulänglich russisch sprach, Bekanntschaft mit russischen Brüdern“(Kahle 1978:81).

Gradually, Kargel “came to work very closely with Pashkov as well as with a number of other leaders from Ukraine” including Johann Wieler, a Mennonite Brethren teacher and preacher (Klippenstein 1992:42). Kargel often preached at the Pashkovite meetings while remaining a pastor of his German Baptist church (Miller 2009:84) and reporting to the German Baptist Union (Nichols 2007:80). When young Kargel, not yet fluent in Russian, held his first

²⁸³ Mitrochin, *Baptists in the Soviet society*. Online. 15 September 2005.

²⁸⁴ It could be that trip about which Karev wrote that “after graduating from the seminary Kargel served as a preacher in one of the Baptist congregations in the Baltics” (Karev 1999:137). Actually, Kargel visited Estonia again later, in 1884 and 1886. His daughter Maria was born in Hansel, Estonia in 1886 (Karetnikova 2009:10).

public sermon at a Pashkovite meeting, it was Count Bobrinskiy who translated for him (Kargel ix-x, in Corrado 2000:91-92).

In the light of what has already been said concerning Kargel's biography, Turchaninov's account of how Kargel came across the Pashkovites sounds rather unlikely. Actually, Turchaninov hints that Kargel's conversion was the result of his meeting with the Pashkovites. Supposedly this story was told by Kargel himself. According to the story, Kargel met Pashkovites by chance. One evening on the way home from work he heard "strange" singing. The sign on the building read "Joiner's Shop". He walked in and in the basement he saw people of different social classes gathered together, joiners and smiths, princes and counts. After singing, a young girl read a passage from Matthew's Gospel and explained it. After another song Pashkov started speaking. His speech deeply moved Kargel. After the meeting Pashkov and Kargel got acquainted and Pashkov told him the story of his conversion (Turchaninov 2009:62-63).

Since then, in Turchaninov's words, Kargel "quickly started moving closer to God, and God was moving closer to him." Soon Kargel quit his engineering job and became a missionary (Turchaninov 2009:62-63).²⁸⁵

According to another version it was Dr. Baedeker who, seeing in young Kargel a dedicated servant of the Lord, brought him to Russia and to St. Petersburg. There in St. Petersburg Kargel became friends with Pashkov.²⁸⁶ Who knows, perhaps it was Baedeker who introduced Kargel to the Pashkovites? Whatever the case, Lieven's statement draws a good line, "Ivan Veniaminovich Kargel arrived in Petersburg being a believer, but he always considered Vasiliy Aleksandrovich Pashkov his spiritual teacher and father in Christ" (Lieven 1967:42). What is most important, "While in St. Petersburg, Kargel became acquainted with Victorian evangelicalism, which reflected a

²⁸⁵ This story is most probably borrowed from the AUCECB archives where it is told in the first person. There is an interesting detail added there. Supposedly, Kargel was very surprised when he saw a girl reading from the Gospel of Matthew: "What right does she have to read from the Book that belongs only to the priest?" (AUCECB Archive. History of REC – archival materials. Memoirs of Kargel's life and ministry. 0122a period 2 1851-1893. Disc 2). Kargel had never been Orthodox, so it is strange that he would have had such thoughts about the Bible being the "possession" of priests. Obviously this story of "meeting Christians and getting closer to God" could not have taken place in 1875 when Kargel was a pastor himself; either it was made up or took place much earlier in his life.

²⁸⁶ Peisty. Online. 2 September 2004.

pietistic understanding of the church rather than a denominational approach” (Nichols 2007:78). Slowly but surely Kargel was embracing these new ideas and ways of ministry.

Savinsky mentions that in August 1880 Kargel and August Libich, a presbyter of a German Baptist congregation in Odessa, were invited to Tiflis Baptist congregation for the ordination of the local ministers and “the proper organizing of the local church according to the Word of God” (Savinsky 1999:137-138). The minutes of the meetings of Tiflis congregation on 10 and 17 August 1880 are included in the “Materials” collected by bishop Aleksii (Aleksii 1908:636-640). In those meetings Kargel spoke in German and V. Pavlov translated into Russian (Aleksii 1908:640).

After visiting Tiflis, Kargel returned to Petersburg and continued preaching there (Skopina 2002:690). Later in 1880 Kargel decided to move to Bulgaria and settle in Ruse (Wardin 1991:148-159). It was Pashkov who asked Kargel to establish an evangelical congregation in Bulgaria and it was also Pashkov who supported Kargel for his mission work there.²⁸⁷ Plett also affirms that Kargel was actually “sent by Pashkov to work in Bulgaria” where he, Kargel, founded one Bulgarian and four German congregations (Plett 1994:35). Something must have happened in Kargel’s relationships with the German Baptists to change his orientation, for until now it was Hamburg leadership that had determined much of Kargel’s ministry: his studies in Hamburg, his trip to the Baltics, and his move to St. Petersburg. Now he is going at Pashkov’s request. In addition, the source of Kargel’s financial support also changed from the American Baptists through the German Baptist Union to the personal support from Pashkov.

Another important event took place in Kargel’s life in 1880: he married Anna Alexandrovna, an active Pashkovite girl, the very one who had supposedly preached from the Gospel of Matthew at the first Pashkovite meeting attended by Kargel in St. Petersburg.²⁸⁸ Soon after the wedding, which took place in Finland,²⁸⁹ Kargel and his wife went to work in Ruse, Bulgaria.

²⁸⁷ Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004; Wardin 1991:148-159.

²⁸⁸ Kahle 1878:81; Karetnikova 2009:19; Turchaninov 2009:64; Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

²⁸⁹ It is difficult to tell when Kargel first went to Finland. Osmo Pöysti, a Finnish author, mentions that Kargel visited Finland quite often prior to 1880. There were a couple

There he served in a small congregation for four years. It was during his service in Bulgaria that he acquired Turkish citizenship²⁹⁰ and passport (Miller 2009:84-85). Having Turkish citizenship helped him a great deal during his further ministry in Russia. Later, after he returned to Russia he acquired Russian citizenship as well (Karetnikova 2009:11). Kargel did not always stay at the same place in Bulgaria. When recalling his work there he wrote, “When working in ‘God’s field’ in Bulgaria, I visited for the third or fourth time Kasanlyk, a small town in Eastern Rumelia” (Kargel 2002:284). Missionary fervour also took him to Bucharest, Romania (Miller 2009:84-85).²⁹¹

Wardin provides important information about Kargel’s ministry in Bulgaria:

As an ordained Baptist minister on Bulgarian territory, he was in a prime position to help... On 19 September Kargel immersed five candidates, three men and two women, in the Tundzha River. The group was small partly because of the strict questioning by Kargel and Heringer, who would not accept all candidates... Kargel felt he had come to Bulgaria at a most propitious time since the Bulgarians had in 1878 been freed from their Turkish yoke and it was before the penetration of what he considered the acids of unbelief from the West. Kargel, who decided to study Bulgarian, undertook a vigorous ministry, which included travel to sites outside Ruse, such as Bucharest. Ruse...was the logical centre of his work because it provided access to other areas. Kargel quickly crossed ethnic barriers and reported on one occasion that he had baptized ten Bulgarians, two Jews and two Germans. In 1884 Kargel founded the Ruse congregation as an independent Baptist church with 28 members . . . Kargel's preaching and the Baptists' rebaptizing aroused much opposition from the Orthodox, which brought forth attacks

congregations in Vyborg and Helsingfors compiled of Russians. Kargel’s trips to Finland were financed by someone from the St. Petersburg aristocrats (Pöysti. Online. 15 September 2004).

²⁹⁰ The question of when and where Kargel acquired Turkish citizenship is problematic. Like Miller, Turchaninov states that it happened in Ruse, Bulgaria (Turchaninov 2009:64). According to Skopina, Kargel received Turkish citizenship after 1882 when he for some time lived in Romania (Skopina 2002:690). According to Kahle, Kargel lived in Bulgaria and Romania for some time in 1884 after the Novovasil’evka conference, and it was then that he got a Turkish passport (Kahle 1978:82)

²⁹¹ Peisty presents a very different version of why Kargel happened to be Romania. He writes that soon after Kargel’s conversion he started evangelising, which brought persecution against him. This made him leave Russia and move for some time to Romania, which at the time belonged to Turkey, where he continued his Christian service and, according to Peisty, accepted Turkish citizenship (Peisty. Online. 2 September 2004). Romania became independent from Turkey in 1878, so if Kargel really acquired Turkish citizenship in Romania, it must have been prior to 1878.

on the Baptists in tracts and newspapers, and even beatings and threats. Although the Congregationalists did not find the Baptists a serious threat, they nevertheless were irritated by their intrusion and their views on believer's baptism and closed communion (Wardin 1991:148-159).

Wardin's description of Kargel's ministry in Bulgaria presents a clear picture of Kargel as a Baptist leader who holds to adult baptism by immersion preceded by strict questioning of a candidate, and to closed communion. This is important to note, because later when Kargel took responsibility for the Pashkovite congregation in St. Petersburg, he did not insist on these points. Kargel's attitude towards "the acids of unbelief from the West" shows that he was fully aware of liberal tendencies among theologians in Germany and other European countries.

Nichols points out that "Kargel's model of ministry changed slightly in 1880, when he married a friend of the Pashkov's family and moved to Bulgaria" (Nichols 2007:80). J. Dyck in his Master dissertation about J. Wieler (Prague, 2007) sheds some light on the relationship of Kargel and his wife in the first years of their marriage:

In November 1880 Kargel and his Russian wife started their ministry in Ruse, Bulgaria under the guidance of Baptist church in Hamburg. Here, in Ruse, some serious differences between Kargel and his wife came to the surface. Anna, a child of Petersburg's awakening, saw the fellowship at the Lord's table as the centre of church . . . Being alone in this spiritual struggle in Ruse, Kargel and his wife experienced spiritual renewal. Anna wrote, 'At some times the Lord gave my husband and myself such thirst for the Holy Spirit, that we begged Him to keep us wholly in His care and absorbed in His Spirit'. After Kargel had been through this struggle he lost any interest in denominational order in the church, and even more so – to denominations as such. Anna wrote, 'Our precious, wonderful and faithful Father let my husband free of any narrowness' (Dyck, in Karetnikova 2009:20-21).

Kargel and his wife had four daughters; the eldest, Anna, was born supposedly in 1881 (Karetnikova 2009:57). Elena, the second daughter, was born in Ruse, Bulgaria, on 13 July 1883 (Borshch 2009:299). Elena was especially talented and worked as a translator in St. Petersburg.²⁹²

Nichols attributes to Kargel the start of the Baptist movement in Bulgaria (Nichols 2007:72). Kargel and his family lived in Bulgaria until 1884. Then, according to Wardin, "in spite of the pleadings of his church members in Ruse

²⁹² Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

to remain there, [Kargel] returned to Russia, where he became a respected leader and theologian in the Pashkovite/Evangelical Christian movement, highly regarded by all evangelicals, including Baptists, in that country” (Wardin 1991:148-159). When Kargel moved back to St. Petersburg in 1884 he “fully was over to the ideas of the Holiness movement” (Nichols 2007:72).

In April 1884, Kargel, “a German preacher from Bulgaria”, as Pavlov called him, along with Radcliffe and Baedeker participated in the united congress of the Pashkovites, Baptists, Mennonite Brethren, Stundists, and New Molokans in St. Petersburg called by Pashkov and Korff (Pavlov 1999:197). “Pashkov, Kargel, Korff and Baedeker hoped that the evangelicals of the Russian Empire could unite under an umbrella organisation similar to the European Evangelical Alliance” (Nichols 2007:81). Partly to this end the conference of 1884 in St. Petersburg was called. Kargel was “a key player” in Pashkov’s attempt to create such a cross-denominational evangelical organisation (Nichols 2007:80).

Korff recalled that Kargel had been active in organising that first united Congress. Along with Dr. Baedeker and Stundist Delyakov, Kargel – “a presbyter of one of Baptist congregations in St. Petersburg” – formulated six questions presented to the delegates.²⁹³ Another person actively involved in the planning of the 1884 conference was Johann Wieler, a Mennonite Brethren leader (Klippenstein 1992:43). After the conference was shut down by the police, Kargel and Wieler, and possibly some other leaders, immediately began planning another conference “to continue the agenda aborted in St. Petersburg”. Their planning led to “a very successful meeting of many evangelical representatives” held in Novovasil’evka²⁹⁴ (Tavrisheskaya gubernia) on 30 April – 1 May of the same year (Klippenstein 1992:43).

Wieler served as chairman and Kargel as vice-chairman of the sessions (Klippenstein 1992:43). This was the first independent Russian Baptist congress where the Union of Russian Baptists was formed (Savinsky 1999:200). Wieler and Kargel “opened the Lord’s Supper to those who had not been baptised by immersion, clearly outside both the boundaries of the Mennonite Brethren and

²⁹³ Korff, *Moi vospominaniya*, in Kovalenko 1996:50.

²⁹⁴ Novovasil’evka was one of the villages settled along the Molochnaya river – the center of sectarianism since the nineteenth century. First there were Dukhobors, then Mennonites, Hutterers, Molokans, Baptists and Evangelicals who settled there (Aleksii 1908:688)

the German Baptists... This reveals some of the influence of Pashkov's Pietism on both Wieler and Kargel" (Nichols 2007:81-82). At the last meeting of the congress Kargel, as a representative of St. Petersburg's congregation, was asked to express the Union's gratitude to "brothers" in St. Petersburg for considerable offerings to the missionary work of the Baptist Union (Savinsky 1999:202).

According to Nichols, Kargel was clearly "moving away from his German Baptist understanding of ministry toward a more open understanding of cross-denominational ministry, yet he returned to Bulgaria to build the Baptist denomination there and accepted the role of vice-president in the organisation that would yield a Russian Baptist Union" (Nichols 2007:82). The author does not see any inconsistency in Kargel's actions at the time. It seems that Kargel did not consider the differences between the Baptists and the Pashkovites as deep and dramatic as they are perceived by Nichols. One must remember that the Pashkovite leaders at the time sincerely believed that the union was possible.

A few days after the conference in Novovasil'evka Kargel wrote a letter to "My Dear Brother in the Lord", almost certainly meaning Pashkov, to whom he was reporting at the time. The letter originally written in German is dated 3 May 1884 and was written from Tiede in the Molochna colony, probably from the home of Wieler. It has been preserved in the personal papers of Pashkov, presently held by the University of Birmingham in Great Britain. Klippenstein quotes the letter, a summary of the conference, in his article. Concerning the issue of open communion, Kargel wrote:

May one take part in the Lord's Supper with those who have views of baptism different from our own? Many brethren speak to this issue, with the great majority feeling that this should not become a divisive issue. There was real joy concerning the open-heartedness which manifested itself in this discussion. It was thought advisable, however, to exercise patience towards a few brethren who were decidedly of another point of view.²⁹⁵

In this letter Kargel also mentioned, "As much as I was able to in the Russian language, I gave testimony to the Lord."²⁹⁶ From Kargel's letter one can sense how busy his schedule was. He wrote,

²⁹⁵ Kargel's letter, in Klippenstein 1992:45-46.

²⁹⁶ Kargel's letter, in Klippenstein 1992:46.

Tomorrow, or perhaps even tonight, I shall be holding meetings in the German colonies. A large assembly has been called in Rueckenau for Sunday at the new church of the Mennonite Brethren.

A mission festival will be held there on the seventh; I expect to be present also. That will leave a few days before I take my leave for the German conference. I shall try to utilize this time to preach the Gospel. If I learn that you plan to come for May 24, I would return to Astrakhanka, but otherwise I shall leave immediately thereafter for Odessa.

I am overjoyed to serve my Lord in this way. There is so much work that I almost lose my desire to travel to Germany . . .²⁹⁷

Kahle adds a few interesting facts, claiming that Kargel left Russia and lived in Bulgaria and Romania for some time in 1884 (Kahle 1978:82). Pöysti suggests that right after the Congress Kargel went to Finland where Russian laws were not followed as strictly, resulting in more freedom than elsewhere in the Empire and offering some people refuge during the time of persecution.²⁹⁸ However, these possible stays abroad could not have been very long, because in June 1884 Pashkov and Korff were banished from Russia and Kargel assumed responsibility for the orphaned Pashkovite congregation (Savinsky 1999:351). So, Kargel came back to St. Petersburg.

Financially supported by Pashkov, Kargel left Bulgaria to assist Princess Lieven and the St. Petersburg group in Pashkov's absence. At this point, he broke with the German Baptist style of church structure, leadership and theology, and began to grow deeper in the Pietistic view of the church and British Holiness theology (Nichols 2007:83).

However, in 1884 and for several more years Kargel's main residence was in Finland (Karetnikova 2002:684), where he preached at the invitation of a local Finnish congregation and could visit St. Petersburg only occasionally (Skopina 2002:691; Savinsky 1999:180).

The situation changed when Kargel accepted an invitation from Chertkova, Lieven, and Gagarina to move to St. Petersburg (Savinsky 1999:180; Karev 1999:137). In 1887 N. Lieven invited Kargel and his family to live in her palace (Morskaya, 43) (Karetnikova 2009:24, 27). As a Turkish citizen Kargel had no problems with the authorities (Savinsky 1999:180). While living at the Lievens' palace Kargel worked on his first major theological work on Old Testament typology, "The Reflection of Glories to Come: Thirty-two discussions on tabernacle and priesthood" (Karetnikova 2002:684). Living in St.

²⁹⁷ Kargel's letter, in Klippenstein 1992:47.

²⁹⁸ Pöysti. Online. 15 September 2004.

Petersburg afforded him access to the libraries of Princess Lieven, Colonel Pashkov, and the Krueze sisters (Karetnikova 2002:684).

Serving among the Pashkovites for about ten years, Kargel was not quick to implement any changes in the congregation. For instance, the Pashkovites used to reserve two hours for meetings every Sunday.²⁹⁹ This practice had started with Lord Radstock and continued into the time of Kargel's leadership. Kargel taught the "brothers" both in small group "evening gatherings" (Abendversammlungen) and in individual "consultations" (Beratungen), even after the exile of Pashkov and Korff.³⁰⁰ When doctrinal differences surfaced among the evangelical believers in the capital, especially concerning the matter of baptism and the Lord's Supper, Kargel "retained the position held by Pashkov, Korff and Bobrinskiy that a second baptism of believers was unnecessary" (Corrado 2000:172-173). As N. Lieven began spending less time in St. Petersburg, "the leadership over the meetings in our home was turned completely into the hands of Ivan Veniaminovich Kargel" (Lieven 1967:106).

Klippenstein points out that "Pashkov's exile gave Kargel increased opportunities of leadership in St. Petersburg congregations of believers. There is, however, little documentation to trace his movements precisely during this period" (Klippenstein 1992:43). In 1885 Kargel visited exiled brothers in a deserted mountainous place called Girususy in Armenia (Karetnikova 2002:684; Skopina 2002:691). In 1885, or a little later, Kargel was instrumental in transferring money from Pashkov to Ryaboshapka (Lyubomirka village) for building a "klunya" on the ground of the latter for the church meetings (Savinsky 1999:183). In 1888 Kargel carried out a three week evangelistic trip around Samarskaya gubernia, where he ministered mostly in German colonies (Karetnikova 2009:29). Kargel mentions his three-week evangelistic journey around Samara province in 1888 in his book "Where are the dead according to the Scripture" (Kargel 2002:193). Kargel's visits to Estonia in 1884 and 1886 were mentioned above.

²⁹⁹ Korff, *Am Zarenhof*, 46, in Corrado 2000:105.

³⁰⁰ Lieven, *Eine Saat*, 70, in Corrado 2000:105-106.

Kargel's third daughter, Maria, was born in Hansel, Estonia, in 1886.³⁰¹ It could be then that Kargel was serving as a preacher in a Baptist congregation in the Baltics (Savinsky 1999:351). A year later, in 1887, Kargel's fourth daughter, Elizaveta, was born in St. Petersburg.³⁰² All four of his daughters received a superior education and mastered several languages while living in Lieven's palace (Turchaninov 2009:64; Skopina 2002:690). The Princess provided for all the needs of Kargel and his family and saw that his daughters got an excellent upbringing.³⁰³ None of Kargel's daughters chose to be married; they remained his best helpers and co-workers. Kargel's wife, Anna Alexandrovna, died young of diphtheria in 1888 or 1889, while Kargel was abroad with his two older daughters. Kargel never remarried. A year later, in 1900, his eldest daughter Anna died at the age of nineteen.³⁰⁴

An important question is how could it be that Kargel, who had perfectly fit the profile of "a Baptist pastor" during his first stay in St. Petersburg in 1875-1880 and during his Bulgarian ministry in 1880-1884, later fit so well into a more "open" Pashkovite congregation? At times it looks like we are talking about two different Kargels. On the one hand, he was highly respected in the strict Baptist and Mennonite circles; he played a leading role at Baptist congresses; personally knew Oncken; stood for the baptism of adults by immersion, for serious testing before baptising, for closed communion, etc. On the other hand, when the time came for Kargel to lead the Pashkovite group, he continued Radstock's and Pashkov's tradition, which allowed more freedom on the issues of baptism and the Lord's Supper. S. Lieven recalled:

In the first years when V. A. Pashkov, Count Korff, and Count Bobrinskiy were still in St. Petersburg and had real influence, there was more freedom of opinion among believers, including the issue of church membership. Some people thought that to become a church member one has to be baptised by faith... others thought that those who were baptised as babies needed only faith and spiritual rebirth, but those differences of opinion created no obstacle to mutual fellowship. The main emphasis was on the candidate's sincere faith in Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour and a testimony of being born again. Once both

³⁰¹ AUCECB Archive. History of ECB – archival materials. Memoirs of Kargel's life and ministry. 0122a. Period 2. 1851-1893. Disc 2; Borshch 2009:300.

³⁰² AUCECB Archive. History of ECB – archival materials. Memoirs of Kargel's life and ministry. 0122a period 2. 1851-1893. Disc 2; Borshch 2009:300.

³⁰³ Karetnikova. Online. September 2004.

³⁰⁴ Skopina 2002:690; Turchaninov 2009:64; Miller 2009:85; Karetnikova 2009:25, 41.

requirements were met, a candidate was accepted as a church member and was welcomed to participate in the Lord's Supper. As time went on some differences appeared. Ivan Veniaminovich Kargel and those who attended meetings in our home held to the latter, freer direction; however, brothers who attended other meetings held to the first stricter view. Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov joined the stricter ones (Lieven 1967:104).

At the same time Kargel was gradually leading everybody to the understanding of the doctrine of baptism (Karetnikova 2002:685). Plett also points out that the Pashkovites became more "organised in their doctrine and more similar to Baptists" due to the ministry of such brothers as Kargel, Pashkov, and Stepanov (Plett 1994:83-84). Whatever the case, Kargel's way of leading Pashkovites towards "fuller understanding of baptism" was never harsh or offensive. One cannot find any complaints about him on behalf of the Pashkovites.

An interesting observation was made by a Swedish Baptist, who classified Kargel's congregation in St. Petersburg as typical Plymouth Brethren: „Der schwedische Baptist Byström unterschied im ersten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts in Petersburg Baptisten, Evangeliumschrsten, einen Kreis von sogenannten „freien Christen“ und die Brüder von der Prägung der Plymouth-Brüder unter Ivan Venjaminovich Kargel“ (Kahle 1978:83). That is how it was started by Radstock, continued by Pashkov, and basically preserved by Kargel. His goal was never to convert it into a typical German Baptist congregation, although he personally held to stricter Baptist views.

According to Nichols, Kargel's work from the late 1860s to the early 1880s was "denominational, specifically German Baptist". However, "while working in St. Petersburg from 1884 until 1888, Kargel made no attempt to organise the cell groups into churches" (Nichols 2007:80). "There is no record that he ever returned to his German Baptist congregation or re-established contact with the German Baptist Union. Nor did he re-establish his contacts with the proto-Baptist group he had helped found with Wieler" (Nichols 2007:83).

The transition of Kargel's views used to puzzle his contemporaries as well. It is explained by Kahle in this way:

Der Weg Kargels von Südrußland nach Petersburg, wo er nach dem Willen der verbliebenen „Pashkovcy“ die Gemeinde betreuen sollte, hatte nicht nur eine räumliche Veränderung für ihn bedeutet. Dieser Weg führte ihn auch von baptistischer Prägung zu der offenen Haltung, die den Petersburger Evangelischen zueigen war. Es war der Weg hin zum

Allianzverständnis der „offenen Brüder“. Seine baptistischen Freunde haben es Kargel zuweilen übel genommen, daß er in den die baptistischen Gemeinden bewegenden Fragen zu einer anderen Haltung gelangt war. „Daß er die Reihen der Baptisten verließ und in Petersburg Allianzmann wurde, konnten nicht alle seine früheren Mitarbeiter verstehen“ – Gutsche, Westliche Quellen S.67. Kargel hat diesen Weg selbst gedeutet. Dabei weisen seine Angaben deutlich auf seine Herkunft aus Rusland hin. Als einmal die Frage erörtert wurde, ob man Außenstehenden, noch nicht Getauften die volle Teilnahme am gemeindlichen Leben ermöglichen sollte, stimmte er dem zu unter Hinweis auf seinen eigenen Werdegang: Als er noch nicht wiedergeboren gewesen sei, habe er doch schon im Chor seiner Ortsgemeinde gesungen, die Worte der Lieder, die er damals sang, hätten ihm das Bewußtsein seiner Sündhaftigkeit erschlossen und ihm so den Weg zur Taufe und Wiedergeburt eröffnet (Lieven Kratkij ocherk S.8) (Kahle 1978:82-83).

It seems unlikely that Kargel, a man who can be characterized by integrity and genuineness, compromised himself. One will see his positive qualities demonstrated on many occasions. However, as he matured, it seems that he also learnt magnanimity and flexibility. He learnt to distinguish between major and minor issues in church leadership. These qualities helped him to draw bridges between the Evangelical Christians and Baptists in Russia. Another factor possibly contributing to Kargel's softening was his close acquaintance and collaboration with Dr. Baedeker.

5.1.4 Kargel and Dr. Baedeker: Brethren Influence

In the course of Russian Evangelical history the names of Kargel and Baedeker are closely connected. A famous prison preacher, Dr. Baedeker dedicated eighteen years of his life to evangelistic ministry in Russia. He chose Kargel as his main interpreter and obviously had considerable influence on him. Skopina dates Kargel's travels with Dr. Baedeker to 1887 (Skopina 2002:691). Baedeker's permit to visit prisons was granted by Tsar Alexander III himself, due to Princess Lieven's intercession through her friend, the tsar's wife. Kargel, as Baedeker's interpreter, also received a permit (Skopina 2002:691).

In her memoirs S. Lieven writes that Kargel, though living with his family in their home in St. Petersburg, often travelled. More than once he accompanied the elderly Dr. Baedeker in journeys all the way to Siberia. Upon their return, many people came to crowded meetings to hear about the trips (Lieven 1967:81-82). Karetnikova dates those journeys from 1887 to 1890

(Karetnikova 2002:684). Among the many journeys undertaken by Kargel and Baedeker, a trip across Russia stands out. Latimer, Baedeker's biographer, writes that Kargel accompanied Dr. Baedeker as an interpreter on his first major missionary trip visiting prisons across Siberia and the Far East,³⁰⁵ starting from Moscow on 11 May all the way to Saghaliën [now Sakhalin] where they arrived on 23 September (Latimer 1908).

There is a lot of confusion in literature concerning the year of that journey. Savinsky mentions 1889 (Savinsky 1999:212), Karev, Skopina, and Plett mention the next year, 1890 (Karev 1999:133; Skopina 2002:692; Plett 1994:75). Skopina actually quotes Baedeker's diary where 1890 is given as the year of that famous journey, "1890, June 21. Kargel and I are going to Minusinsk to find a brother... Tomsk, June 23. Three of us – Davidson, Kargel and myself – celebrated the breaking of the bread yesterday in the hotel ... Krasnoyarsk, June 30..." (Skopina 2002:692). Unfortunately, there is no way of telling whether she had the diary itself or used Latimer's biography of Baedeker.

In letters to his wife Dr. Baedeker describes Kargel as a very helpful man: "Mr. Kargel has been a great help to me this morning. He is bold, and speaks without hesitation. This is a great comfort to me" (Latimer 1908:113). "Dear Kargel has been most helpful in arranging for horses at every post-station, day and night" (Latimer 1908:143). During the journey Kargel made an extra effort to visit Pashkov's servant Kirpichnikov who had been exiled to Minusinsk for his beliefs (Latimer 1908:128-129). As a result of Kirpichnikov's faithful testimony, the first evangelical congregation appeared in Siberia (Savinsky 1999:238).

During the trip they distributed about twelve thousand Bibles and preached the gospel to about forty thousand prisoners (Latimer 1908:162). They visited a number of places outside Russia. "After a two-year journey Baedeker and Kargel came back to St. Petersburg through China, Tashkent, Rostov-on-Don, and then they had a three months rest at the Lieven's country house where they studied Scripture" (Skopina 2002:695). The AUCECB archive contains information that they had their families with them as well. It is also added that they searched the Scriptures from beginning to end on the topic of

³⁰⁵ During Dr. Baedeker's second big journey across Russia he was accompanied by Patkavan Tarajants (Karev 1999:133).

Israel.³⁰⁶ With Dr. Baedeker's Brethren views on eschatology it is not surprising that Kargel held to the dispensational approach when interpreting prophecy and future events.

During those years Kargel visited many places, including Israel. In his book, "The Old Testament Types", he wrote, "In the leprous home in Jerusalem in 1889 I saw many of those miserable people" (Kargel 2002:309).³⁰⁷ He preached in the Caucasus, visited Giryusy, German colonies in Russia, Samara, and other places (Skopina 2002:695). A tireless traveller, Kargel used to visit a congregation of Moscow believers who were followers of Radstock and Pashkov and had existed there ever since Radstock's visit (Savinsky 1999:213). Kargel used to visit a newly formed congregation which included a group established by Bible colporteurs and the Shuvalovs' group. Kargel himself preached and also translated for Dr. Baedeker. In Moscow they stayed at the Shuvalovs' palace. The police were pursuing Kargel, and on one occasion believers had to hide him during a police raid. Kargel, as well as Prokhanov, continued to visit the Moscow evangelical congregation in later years as well (Kovalkov 1966:65-67).

Kargel's preaching in Samara province in 1888 produced fruit: in ten years, around the turn of the century, a congregation was established in Samara which became for Kargel one of his "home churches", and he continued to visit it whenever he could.³⁰⁸ However, his main ministry was still with St. Petersburg's congregation. Although Kargel never became an official presbyter there, he constantly led the services in Lieven's home.³⁰⁹

At the end of the 1880s Kargel and his daughters moved to Finland (then a part of the Russian Empire) where he lived and worked for about ten years.³¹⁰ His long stay in Finland is also mentioned by Kahle:

Ende der achtziger Jahre war er vorübergehend in Petersburg, übersiedelte dann nach Finnland, wo er sich etwa 10 Jahre aufhielt.

³⁰⁶ AUCECB archive. History of ECB – archival materials. "Memoirs of Kargel's life and ministry." 0122a period 2 1851-1893. Disc 2.0; Turchaninov 2009:67.

³⁰⁷ In 1902 Kargel published an article "Ein Besuch in Jerusalem und Umgebung" in *Christliches Jahrbuch zur Belehrung und Unterhaltung*.

³⁰⁸ Savinsky 1999:239; Karetnikova. Online. September 2004.

³⁰⁹ Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

³¹⁰ Peisty. Online. 2 September 2004.

Sofija Lieven, die diese Angaben macht, waren die Gründe für den langen Aufenthalt in Finnland unbekannt (Kahle 1978:82).

Nichols explains Kargel's taking residence in Finland by "the persecutions and political turmoil of the late 1880s and early 1890s". In Finland he helped to organize the Russian Evangelical Free Churches. However, from Finland Kargel continued to visit the St. Petersburg Pashkovite congregation and to work as a translator for Baedeker. He also travelled to visit the Mennonite Brethren communities in southern Russia and hold month-long Bible classes there. During those years, many of his theological writings were published in *Zionsbote*, a Mennonite Brethren journal published for the immigrant congregations in North America (Karetnikova 2009:58; Nichols 2007:84).

In 1895 Kargel again accompanied Dr. Baedeker visiting exiled brothers in Elizavetpolsk province and in a remote settlement called Giryusy (Savinsky 1999:229). Besides encouraging the exiled brothers, Kargel handed them funds collected in Russia and abroad as well as those sent personally by Pashkov (Kovalenko 1996:51). Kahle calls Kargel "ein unverdächtiger Beobachter" (Kahle 1978:71). Writing of Kargel's and Baedeker's journey to Giryusy, Kahle revealed some discord between the exiled Baptists, Stundists, Sabbatarians, and Molokans. Certain problems were even caused by the distribution of the very gifts that Kargel and Baedeker had brought (Kahle 1978:71). Kargel and Baron Nicolaii carried on the visitation of prisons after Dr. Baedeker's retirement (Latimer 1908:201).

Kahle does not provide a specific year for Kargel's move to St. Petersburg, but mentions generally the turn of the century: "Kargel wurde um die Jahrhundertwende der Prediger der Petersburge Gemeinde, die ihren Rückhalt nach wie vor bei den Familien Gagarin und Lieven hatte" (Kahle 1978:81). According to Nichols, Kargel returned to St. Petersburg in 1898 in order to resume leadership of the groups started by Radstock and Pashkov. Prokhanov also returned to St. Petersburg that same year (Nichols 2007:84).

5.1.5 Back to St. Petersburg: Kargel and Prokhanov – two evangelical leaders

This time Kargel settled in St. Petersburg and started serving as pastor of the evangelical congregation which met in the Lieven home.³¹¹ Kovalenko also considers Kargel “a leading presbyter” of St. Petersburg’s evangelical congregation at the end of the nineteenth – beginning of the twentieth centuries, the years dedicated to collecting and preparing materials of his major theological work, “The reflection of glories to come” (Kovalenko 1996:51).

Describing the inner atmosphere in the Pashkovite group, Skopina says that at first a joyful unity in the Lord reigned with Kargel’s main goal of deepening believers’ knowledge of the Lord and His Word (Skopina 2002:695). However, the situation did not remain idyllic. Major political changes were in the air and some young people in the Pashkovite group craved more activity. As Nichols pointed out, “Prokhanov’s time had come; he was a well-travelled, educated, well-connected and gifted Russian who could unite the movement into a denomination” (Nichols 2007:87).

It is not perfectly clear when the split took place as a few young people left Kargel’s congregation. Some date it as early as 1903 (Savinsky 1999:281, 363), others – later. According to Skopina and Nichols, it happened in 1905 (Skopina 2002:685; Nichols 2007:86), according to Plett in 1908 (Plett 1994:87). Both Karetnikova and Plett blame it on Prokhanov. Karetnikova states that Prokhanov, wanting to start his own church, actually “stole” those few people from Kargel’s congregation (Karetnikova 2002:685). Plett writes that in August 1908 while Kargel was away from St. Petersburg, Prokhanov initiated the split, and then on November 1908 about two thirds of the members registered with the authorities (Plett 1994:87) with Prokhanov as their leader. Nichols comments:

By 1905 Prokhanov had organized the youth of Kargel’s church into a separate organization. In 1905, Prokhanov also registered the house group that Kargel was pastoring, but made himself pastor. Kargel was not willing to give Prokhanov full leadership, and soon registered another congregation... The two fellowships eventually came to terms and Kargel merged his congregation with that of Prokhanov (Nichols 2007:86).

³¹¹ Skopina 2002:695; Peisty. Online. 2 September 2004.

However, the story presented by Savinsky seems to be the most credible. He states that a few young people (F. M. Trosnov and a few others) who were disappointed with “the lack of activity” in Kargel’s congregation left in 1903. They formed a secret group and were looking for a leader. Prokhanov agreed to become the leader, added a few more scattered groups of believers around St. Petersburg, and in this way formed his own congregation (Savinsky 1999:281, 363). Skopina also writes that Prokhanov became the leader of this group only after those six or seven people had already left Kargel’s congregation (Skopina 2002:696). In 1908, after I. S. Prokhanov registered his group as the First Petersburg’s congregation of Evangelical Christians, Kargel registered his group under the name of Second Evangelical Congregation (Savinsky 1999:251; Lieven 1967:106), although they had come into existence in the reverse chronological order.

There were certain differences between these two congregations both called Evangelical Christian. Prokhanov’s congregation was patterned after Baptist congregations with strict inner discipline and “closed Lord’s supper” (Savinsky 1999:282). It has already been pointed out that in the issues of baptism and the Lord’s Supper Kargel was more tolerant and continued Radstock’s and Pashkov’s tradition. According to Karetnikova, although Kargel held to the Baptist views himself, he did not want to turn away believers who did not share his position on baptism. So the Pashkovites continued practising “open communion” until S. A. Alekseev was chosen as a presbyter, where he served until his death in 1926 (excluding ten years in prison, 1893-1903).

S. Lieven pointed out another difference between Kargel’s and Prokhanov’s congregations:

Little by little it became evident that the congregation led by him [Kargel] is somewhat different from the congregation of Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov. Brother Kargel wanted first of all to deepen believers in the knowledge of the Lord and His Word, while Prokhanov called his members to active participation in public life: he organised the youth union, chorus, and other things (Lieven 1967:106).

Though the split was painful to Kargel (Savinsky 1999:281), it did not turn him away from Prokhanov. The first decades of the twentieth century were very productive, as Kargel was preaching, participating in numerous conferences and congresses, writing his theological works, teaching at the Bible courses,

etc. In many of these things one finds Kargel working side by side with Prokhanov.

In 1903 Kargel was delegated by his congregation³¹² to the European Baptist Congress in Berlin (Savinsky 1999:351). Kargel was present for the few first days of the Baptist World Congress in London in June 1905 (Savinsky 1999:266), where the Baptist World Alliance was created. However, when Kargel returned and reported on the Congress, he said he regretted going because it was “not very spiritual” (Zhitkov 1957:61). In his article, Zhitkov goes so far as to characterize Kargel as a person holding Anabaptist views (Zhitkov 1957:61).

On 4 December 1906, an appeal to all believers was published calling to form a Russian Evangelical Union (Prokhanov’s idea). The Union was supposed to consist not of churches but of individuals (not necessarily Evangelical Christians or Baptists), with the main goal of regeneration of the nation. Kargel, Nikolaii, Prokhanov, and others signed the appeal. The Union was finally formed in 1909. However, some prominent Baptist leaders including Mazaev disapproved of it (Savinsky 1999:283-285).

In 1907 (from January 15 to February 1) Kargel was a chairman at the Second All-Russia United Congress of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, with New Molokans and other evangelical branches represented, held in St. Petersburg (Savinsky 1999:342). Kargel, along with Prokhanov and other leaders, represented the Evangelical Christians (Savinsky 1999:267). In fact, Kargel’s congregation hosted the Congress, which was dedicated to the issues of defending the legal rights of Christians and expanding gospel preaching after the edict of 17 October 1906 (Kovalenko 1996:51). It appears that Kargel was trying to bring to fruition the ideas of Pashkov and Korff of holding a united congress for various evangelical branches in Russia.

At the Third All-Russia Congress of Evangelical Christians (31 December 1911 – 4 January 1912) Kargel served as one of two vice-chairmen with Prokhanov as the chairman. In 1917 Prokhanov and Kargel led the fifth All-Russia congress of evangelical Christians (Skopina 2002:696).

³¹² Karetnikova makes a point that he was delegated by the Union of Russian Baptists (Karetnikova 2009:38).

Another important facet of Kargel's ministry was teaching Bible courses from their inception in 1905 to the very end in 1929 (Mirt, p 1). Karetnikova emphasises that during this whole period Kargel supported Prokhanov and attached importance and spiritual depth to everything he participated in.³¹³ Kargel taught six-week Bible courses held at Lieven's palace in 1905, 1906, and 1907 (Karetnikova 2009:40; Savinsky 1999:297).

During the first three years the courses enrolled only a few students. Kargel lectured on Revelation, sin and sanctification, and homiletics. Those lectures became the foundation of his two major theological books, "The Reflection of Glories to Come" and "Commentary on Revelation".³¹⁴ Students were both Baptist and Evangelical Christians since "there was no big distinction between the two until 1909" (Savinsky 1999:297). Savinsky names Prokhanov and Nikolaii among other lecturers (Savinsky 1999:297).

In the same period of time, 1906–1907, Kargel preached and taught the same courses on sin and sanctification, and Interpretation of the Revelation in Latvia (Liepae and Ventspils). Among Kargel's courses Skopina also mentions Doctrines.³¹⁵ These lectures probably laid the foundation of his written works such as "Christ is our sanctification", "Sin as the greatest evil in the world", commentaries on Romans and Revelation (Kovalenko 1996:51). In 1908³¹⁶ one of Kargel's major theological works called "The Reflection of Glories to Come" was published in St. Petersburg.³¹⁷ In 1909 the Mennonite Brethren publishing house in Halbstadt published it as well.³¹⁸

Kahle mentions that around this time the Evangelical Christian congregation which had been meeting in the Lieven palace for thirty-five years moved to a different location:

Die Versammlungen fanden im Palais der Familie Lieven in der Belaja Morskaja statt. Als dieses Haus von der Familie aufgegeben wurde,

³¹³ Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Mirt, p 1; Skopina 2002:696; Kovalenko 1996:51; AUCECB 1989:354.

³¹⁶ Kovalenko mentions 1913 as the year of its publication but this must be a mistake (Kovalenko 1996:51).

³¹⁷ The book was reprinted in St. Petersburg by "Bibliya dlya vsekh" in 1994.

³¹⁸ Bible courses (by correspondence) opened in 1968 by AUCECB used works of Russian theologians (Kargel, Prokhanov, Karev, etc) as the basis of theological subjects (AUCECB 1989:269).

übersiedelte die Gemeinde 1910 in ein Gebäude auf dem Stoljarnyj Pereulok. Dort blieb sie unter dem Namen der sogenannten „zweiten Gemeinde“ noch bis in die Revolutionsjahre hinein bestehen (Kahle 1978:83).

Yarygin briefly mentions an interesting fact: in 1910 Kargel and Fetler expressed the idea of establishing a “Brotherhood of the Acts of Apostles” (Yarygin 2004:38). An internet article provides some details. In 1910 a fast-spreading Pentecostal movement alarmed Russian Baptists and the Evangelical Christians. Their periodicals were filled with calls to beware of “dangers coming from destructors-Pentecostals”. Fetler suggested organizing *Obshchestvo Apostolov* [Apostolic Society] that would be instrumental in building a congregation similar to the church described in the Acts of the Apostles. Fetler’s idea was supported by I. Kargel and V. V. Ivanov.³¹⁹ Unfortunately the author was not able to find out what became of this initiative.

In 1912 another book by Kargel called *V kakom otnoshenii ty k Dukhu Svyatomu* [Where do you stand in your relationship to the Holy Spirit?] was published in St. Petersburg. It was written as a response to the rising Pentecostal movement which by this time had reached Europe and caused a split in the Evangelical Christian congregation in Helsingfors (Finland), a daughter church of the St. Petersburg congregation (Kovalenko 1996:52).³²⁰

In this connection an important incident must be mentioned. In his 1928 (or possibly later) treatise on the Pentecostal movement, Kargel mentions that twenty-three years earlier (that is, around or after 1905) he had lived in Estland [Estonia] where he came into contact with evangelical congregations impacted by Pentecostalism to the point of tumult. So, Kargel, for the first and the last time in his life, dismissed the congregation and on the following day invited those who wanted to attend decent meetings to come together and organize a new congregation (Kargel 2004:46).

In the same treatise Kargel mentions another encounter with the Pentecostal movement. It was around 1912-1913 when one of the leading

³¹⁹ *Khristianskie sekty Zapadnogo proiskhozhdeniya*. Online. 24 November 2004.

³²⁰ There were a number of splits in German Baptist churches connected with the growing Pentecostal movement. This caused leading German Baptists to write the “Berlin Declaration” (15 September 1909), signed by fifty-seven people, among whom was M. Korff (Kovalenko 1996:228).

Pentecostals came from London to St. Petersburg. “Sister Pashkova”³²¹ wanted to introduce him to Kargel, so she invited Kargel, Fetler, and the Englishman for dinner. The conversation was about baptism by the Holy Spirit. Later, after the war, Kargel heard that the Englishman had left the Pentecostal movement (Kargel 2004:48-49).

In 1913, as persecution against Baptists and Evangelicals grew stronger before the outburst of the World War I, Prokhanov, Kargel, and Dolgoplov drafted and signed a petition to the members of the Cabinet, State Council, and State Duma (Russian Parliament) concerning the legal status and conditions of Evangelical Christians (Prokhanov, 1913). This petition proved to be successful: Baptists and Evangelical Christians resumed their previously forbidden church services in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Kharkov.³²²

One of Kargel’s significant accomplishments was the Confession of Faith which he wrote in 1913 for his Evangelical Christian congregation. Much later, in 1966, it was adopted as the creed of the Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists at the All-Union Congress (AUCECB 1989:247). Why was Kargel’s Confession of Faith chosen above many others? The reason could be the great respect that Kargel was accorded in both Baptist and Evangelical circles. In view of the fact that the relationship between Baptists and Evangelical Christians in Russia was not always smooth, it is amazing how Kargel managed to enjoy a good reputation in both unions.

In spite of a certain negative “history” in Kargel’s and Prokhanov’s relationships, on the personal level they stayed in touch and often did ministry together. Anna Chekmareva, a student in St. Petersburg in 1907, remembered attending a Sunday service at Prokhanov’s church where Kargel was preaching a sermon from the Old Testament (Grachev 1997:39). Anna and her brother Peter had a chance to visit Kargel at home, who was by then widowed and living with his two daughters. When speaking of the Christian student non-confessional movement³²³ Kargel mentioned that everyone is to have his or her “Christian family.” He added, however, that personally he wished all believers

³²¹ It appears that some time after Pashkov’s death in 1902, Madame Pashkova returned to Russia, St. Petersburg.

³²² Karetnikova. Online. September, 2004.

³²³ Kargel took part in a two day conference in Finland along with P. Nikolaii. He also spoke in the students’ groups in St. Petersburg (Grachev 1997:82; 168).

had the very best relationships with each other regardless of their confessions (Grachev 1997:82-83). This is exactly what he tried to do in his own life. Nichols justly pointed out:

Kargel set aside doctrinal differences and political control in favour of personal piety, seeking to avoid heavy-handed leadership and to emphasise scriptural teaching and a Christian lifestyle. Even when he faced Prokhanov in the crisis of control over the remnant Pashkovites, he stayed true to his pietistic perspective and showed restraint in a time of conflict (Nichols 2007:86-87).

Indeed, it was not easy to get along with Prokhanov, a man capable of patting himself on the back with such pronouncements as, “My extraordinary mental development and erudition is a simple constatation of a fact” (Prokhanov 1993:39), or “I am making an amazing prophesy” (Prokhanov 1993:81). It is difficult to imagine Kargel writing or saying something similar about himself. Unfortunately, the leading St. Petersburg “brothers” (Prokhanov, Kargel, and Fetler) had quite a few disagreements with each other although they were very close in doctrinal matters (Grachev 1997:92).

5.1.6 Late Years

The author does not possess much information about Kargel’s life during the First World War (1914-1918) or the years following the Bolshevik Revolution. During wartime Russia’s ethnic Germans (and Kargel was half-German) were among groups suspected of disloyalty and a lack of patriotism toward the state (Ivanov 2002:26) and had very hard time. Supposedly, Kargel stayed in Petrograd. No specific information concerning Kargel’s whereabouts is found until 1920. Then, at some point during the great famine of 1919-1921, Kargel left Petrograd. Without a permanent place to stay, he had to move from one town to another in Russia and Ukraine. This is how Kahle describes the initial stage of those wanderings:

In der Hungerjahren Petrograds, 1919-1921, übersiedelte Kargel auf das Land; er folgte einer Einladung der Fürstin Gagarin auf ein Landgut. Später, als auch hier, im Gouvernement Tula, die Lebensbedingungen immer schwieriger wurden, wurde Kargel Prediger einer Gemeinde von Evangeliumschrten im Gouvernement Kursk. Auch das war nicht die letzte Station des über Siebzigjährigen. Er half in anderen Gemeinden aus, schließlich noch in Sumy; unter diesen Gemeinden waren auch baptistische (Kahle 1978:83).

A similar story is told by Klippenstein and Miller, that after World War I, during the turmoil of the Civil War, Kargel accepted an invitation to the estate of Prince Gagarin (Klippenstein 1992:47; Miller 2009:87). Karetnikova considers it absurd to think that anybody could find refuge at an aristocratic estate after the Revolution (Karetnikova 2009:46). However, the fact that around this time Kargel served (even as a pastor) in the Evangelical church in Tula is mentioned by Kahle, Miller, and Karetnikova herself (Kahle 1978:83; Miller 2009:87; Karetnikova 2009:49). The author does not suggest that the Gagarins continued living in their mansion house in Tul'skaya gubernia as if no Revolution had taken place. However, not all aristocrats fled Soviet Russia immediately after the Revolution; some continued to live in villages close to their former estates (Lieven 1967:97).

Kargel's movements and activity in 1920 cause just as much confusion. According to Karetnikova, it was in 1920 that he pastored churches in Tula and Kursk (Karetnikova 2009:49). Kursk as the next place after Tula where Kargel served in the Evangelical church is also mentioned by Miller and Kahle (Miller 2009:87; Kahle 1978:83). Turchaninov skips Tula and starts right with Kursk where Kargel moved his family due to the great famine in Petrograd. According to Turchaninov, while they were headed for Kursk they stayed for some time in Staryy Oskol. Then Prokhanov wrote a letter to believers in Nikolaevka (Sumskaya oblast) asking them to help an elderly minister. In August 1920 brother Zakharchenko moved Kargel's family to Nikolaevka village (now Bol'shoy Oktyabr') (Turchaninov 2009:67).

Skopina also does not mention Tula and follows Turchaninov's story with a few variations:

In the beginning of the 1920s a severe drought in many areas of Russia caused famine, and Kargel with his daughters had to leave Petrograd and settle first in Kursk area. In August 1920, as a result of a request from the Sumy area to establish preachers' courses there, Kargel moved to Nikolaevka (Bol'shoy Oktyabr') village, 40 km away from Sumy where in winter two-month annual Bible courses were organized. Kargel taught Doctrines, Homiletics, Revelation, and the Second Coming of Christ. Every year they had fifty to sixty students present (Skopina 2002:697).

Karetnikova also mentions a request from Sumy to the Union to organize two-month winter courses for preachers, after which Prokhanov sent Kargel there, asking brothers from Nikolaevka to take care of him; all of this took place in 1920 (Karetnikova 2009:45). The fact that in 1920 Kargel held courses in

Nikolaevka is mentioned in the “official” AUCECB history, except the length of the courses is different, i.e., a month and a half instead of two months (AUCECB 1989:215).

According to Turchaninov and Skopina, who seem to be the best informed about Kargel’s life in Ukraine, Kargel and his daughters first stayed at Zakharchenko’s flat until a house was built on the grounds belonging to Ternovenko, a local pastor. Under Kargel the congregation grew quickly. By winter Kargel had suggested organizing six-week courses for preachers. His daughter Elena was holding classes for the illiterate but later she returned to Leningrad. Elizaveta preached at meetings, held “talks” for the church ladies, taught at the Bible courses, and helped her father copy his works, sometimes translating from German into Russian (for Kargel it was still easier to write in German). Maria was mostly keeping house. Kargel taught not only in Nikolaevka and surrounding locations, but also travelled back to Leningrad to teach at the Bible school there (Turchaninov 2009:68; Skopina 2002:697).

While Kargel was in Leningrad for three months in 1922, Ternovenko, who was jealous of Kargel’s popularity, sold his house. After that Kargel decided to move away because he did not want to cause a split in the local congregation. Kargel’s belongings were taken to Tokari-Berezhki village, seven kilometres from Lebedino (Turchaninov 2009:77; Skopina 2002:698). Tokari became Kargel’s main residence for about fifteen years (basically for the rest of his life) where he received numerous visitors daily, even from abroad (Skopina 2002:699). According to Mitskevich, Kargel lived in Tokari for only ten years, from 1926 to 1936 (Mitskevich 1946:22-24); this leaves a four-year gap, from 1922 to 1926.

In any case, in 1923 Kargel again organized two-month courses in Nikolaevka, with fifty-five people attending from the whole area. Classes taught included Homiletics, Doctrines, Last events, and Revelation (AUCECB 1989:215; Turchaninov 2009:70).

The elderly Kargel visited Petrograd-Leningrad during the 1920s only to lecture at Bible courses, to take part in congresses³²⁴, or for other specific occasions. For a time Kargel served as a member of the Council of the Union of

Evangelical Christians which had formed under the leadership of Prokhanov in 1909 (Klippenstein 1992:47). According to Kahle, “Zeitweilig führte ihn sein Weg nach Leningrad zurück. Dort wirkte er in den biblischen Kursen für die Ausbildung der Prediger des Bundes der Evangeliumschrsten als Exeget“ (Kahle 1978:83). Although Miller points out that Kargel taught at “the evangelical seminary” (Miller 2009:87), the author tends to believe that the classes offered were more like the Bible courses Kargel had attended at Oncken’s missionary school.

In 1923-1924 Kargel taught at nine-month Bible courses held for Baptists and Evangelical Christians in *Dom Spaseniya* (the main evangelical church in Petrograd) located in Bol’shaya Konyushennaya Street.³²⁵ In 1925³²⁶ when regular year-long Bible courses started functioning in Leningrad (Malaya Konyushennaya Street) Kargel taught there as well (Karetnikova 2009:59). He lectured in Doctrines, Interpretation of the Book of Revelation, and the Teaching about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (AUCECB 1989:215). Karetnikova also lists Apologetics among Kargel’s classes (Karetnikova 2002:687). Those were the well-known one-year annual courses, which produced about four hundred graduates (Karetnikova 2002:686).

It was then that Kargel’s second major theological work based on forty-three lectures was being shaped. The book, “Interpretation of the Revelation of Saint John”, though not published during his lifetime, was circulated in many manuscripts (dated 1924 and 1928) and finally published in 1991 by the Orthodox (Karetnikova 2002:686). However, two of Kargel’s writings saw the light during that period. In 1926, “Christ is our sanctification” was published in the *Khristianin* [Christian]. In 1928, his autobiography *Zwischen den Enden der Erde* was published in Wernigerode, Germany.

In spite of advanced age Kargel continued to travel, visiting big congregations of Evangelical Christians, ordaining ministers, and serving as a honorary chairman at the Ninth congress of Evangelical Christians (Kovalenko

³²⁴ At the eighth congress of the Evangelical Christians in 1921 the first serious disagreement between Kargel and the leaders of both Unions took place over the issue of political involvement (Karetnikova 2009:58).

³²⁵ Savinsky 1999:351; AUCECB 1989:215; Karetnikova 2009:59.

³²⁶ According to Kovalenko, Kargel regularly taught at the Bible courses in Leningrad from 1923 to 1928; and in Sumy – in 1920 and 1924 (Kovalenko 1996:52).

1996:52). In 1924 and 1925 he visited Kiev and worked there for two weeks each time (Kargel 1925:18). In 1926 and 1927 he visited churches in Kharkov (AUCECB 1989:491; Karetnikova 2009:49). In 1926 at the Tenth Congress of Evangelical Christians he gave explanations on the difficult issue of military service (Kovalenko 1996:52). According to *Bratskiy Vestnik*, Kargel basically supported Prokhanov's position, arguing in favour of military service for Christian men.

Actually, in the 1920s Kargel became seriously worried about the spiritual condition of the evangelical churches. In the magazine *Khristianin* [The Christian] № 3 (1926) he wrote, "A lot is being left out among newly saved people and that is unforgivable. . . for many believers poor faith life is becoming the norm, freshness of spirit is being lost every year, and worldliness is getting greater and deeper rooted both in individuals and entire congregations" (Yarygin 2004:69). It was in 1928 that, according to Kahle, Kargel was betrayed by one of his Evangelical Christian "brothers": „Ein bild, das den Rat des Bundes der Evangeliumschrsten 1928 darstellt, zeigt auch ihn unter den Anwesenden" (Kahle 1978:83), but no names or details are mentioned.

In 1929 during one of his lectures at the Bible Courses in Leningrad, Kargel was arrested and sent out of the city (Karetnikova 2009:49; Miller 2009:87). "The appearance of an armed officer in the lecture room one day in 1929 marked the beginning of the end of all public evangelical activities in the Soviet Union for some years to come" (Klippenstein 1992:47). As Kargel was leaving Leningrad,³²⁷ a crowd of young men accompanied him to the station. Karev approached him with a request: "Write in my book a word that will guide my path!" The old man took the pencil and wrote only two words: *Poznay ego!* [Know him!] (Brandenburg 1977:132; Miller 2009:86). After being banished from Leningrad Kargel moved again to Ukraine (Karetnikova 2009:49).

At the end of the 1920s, after Prokhanov went abroad never to return, Kargel, according to Kovalenko, saw that the leaders of the Evangelical Christian Union started compromising with atheistic authorities. He dissociated himself from them, left Leningrad, and went first to Nizhniy Oskol (the Urals) and later to Lebedino (Sumy area, Ukraine). It was from there that in 1931 at

the age of 82 he wrote his denunciatory letter to J. I. Zhidkov and to the council of Leningrad evangelical congregation refusing financial help, which was conditioned by filling a specific questionnaire required by the authorities concerning one's social background (Kovalenko 1996:53).

Kargel explained that this was even worse than what the authorities had demanded at the Ninth and Tenth Congresses. He was determined that church membership not be conditioned by the authorities' attitude to anybody on the grounds of social background, not to mention that the information gathered through such questionnaires was going to be used against the very people who had answered them. Signing the questionnaire sent to Kargel went against his conscience and his understanding of Scripture. He decided to trust God alone to take care of him and his daughters: "My God who has led me for eighty-two years will continue to help me for the rest of my life" (Kargel 1991:266). One must remember that Kargel was a *lishenets*, a person deprived of voting rights, hence, all other rights including food cards (Karetnikova 2002:686). Though the early 1930s were characterised by an unprecedented artificial famine in Ukraine, Kargel and his daughters survived with the help of believers (Kovalenko 1996:53).

Living in Ukraine, Kargel continued teaching and writing. When the Evangelical Christian Bible school was shut down, Kargel went on ministering among the Mennonite Brethren and Baptists. In 1932 Kargel taught Interpretation of the Revelation in the Mennonite school in Sumy until it was closed (Karetnikova 2009:49).

In 1936 a man named Morgunov from the Kiev Union of Evangelical Christians visited a number of congregations and compiled lists of all active Christian workers and delivered them to the authorities. Soon after he left, many believers got arrested in Tokari-Berezhki, Lebedino, and other places. The arrests usually took place at night after a search. In August 1936, Kargel's daughters Elizaveta and Maria were also arrested; his daughter Elena was in Leningrad at the time. On 27 April 1937 from Vasil'tsov's home in Lebedino, Kargel wrote to friends about an illness that lasted three and a half months with no hope of getting well, making it physically difficult for him to sit, walk, or even

³²⁷ Karetnikova dated Kargel's final departure from Leningrad to the beginning of the 1930's (Karetnikova 2002:686). The author tends to think that Kargel had to leave Leningrad

write (Kargel 2002:676). In another letter written around the same time Kargel mentioned his weak heart and heart attacks in March and April of 1936 (Kargel 2002:678-679). On 15 September 1937, Kargel's daughters were sentenced to five years in Siberian labour camps; they actually spent the rests of their lives in Siberia (Skopina 2002:700; Turchaninov 2009:77-78).³²⁸

Kargel was now completely alone, elderly and ill. Because his friends knew they could be arrested for sheltering him, they sent him to live in the home of an old unbeliever in Lebedino. There, on 5 August 1937, eighty-eight-year-old Kargel was arrested (Turchaninov 2009:78-79). During the search the authorities confiscated eight boxes of "sect literature", including a manuscript of his recently completed commentary on Romans (Skopina 2002:701). Kargel was thrown into an old Sumy prison built in 1650, where he spent seventeen days and was released (Kovalenko 1996:53).

Vasil'tsova, the Christian lady who was looking after Kargel after the arrest of Maria and Elizaveta, wrote to Kargel's eldest daughter Elena in Leningrad asking her to come (Skopina 2002:701). Elena did go to take care of her father, but she had to hide at her friends' because the authorities were hunting for her. Shortly after Kargel's release from prison Elena tried to return to Leningrad, but she was followed and caught on the road (Turchaninov 2009:79). Elena was arrested on 5 December 1937 (while Kargel was still alive, according to other sources) and on 9 December 1937 a so-called *troika* [the three] of the Ukrainian People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs charged her with contra-revolutionary agitation and sentenced her to death by firing squad. She was executed in Sumy at midnight on 16 January 1938 (Skopina 2002:701; Turchaninov 2009:79-80).

Kargel died through the night of 21-22 November 1937 at home (Mitskevich 1946:22-24). He was buried in Lebedino. In 1947 after ten years in Siberian labour camps, Elizaveta visited Lebedino. Maria remained in the camps for three more years (Turchaninov 2009:80). After being released they both lived in Kemerovo, Siberia, until their deaths (Turchaninov 2009:80-81).

earlier, in 1929.

³²⁸ They died in exile in Kemerovskaya area, Elizaveta in 1957, Maria in 1966 (Skopina 2002:700).



5.1.7 Conclusion

Thus one can see that Kargel played a very important role in the development of the early Russian Evangelical movement, not only in St. Petersburg but also in the rest of Russia. The question remains as to why Kargel and his writings, rather than someone else's, serve as a basis for restoring theological hermeneutics of the early Russian Evangelicals? A number of reasons can be listed.

First, Kargel was one of the first leaders in both the Evangelical and Baptist movements actively involved in ministry when both unions were being formed. Being held in high esteem by both sides whose relationships were not always smooth, he served as a bridge between the two movements (later unions) to the point that his confession of faith was adopted as the official creed by the united body of Russian Evangelicals and Baptists more than half a century after it was written.

Second, Kargel remained a key figure in both Baptist and Evangelical circles throughout his long life. Extremely energetic, he travelled extensively helping to organize churches, visiting existing congregations, taking part in many congresses, preaching, teaching, ordaining ministers, etc.

Third, Kargel pastored the Pashkovite congregation in St. Petersburg after the exile of its first leaders. This congregation in many ways became the foundation of the first Evangelical churches in Russia.

Fourth, Kargel was one of the most respected teachers at the Bible courses in St. Petersburg and in a number of other places from their very beginning to the very end where he taught major theological disciplines. These courses gave Russia most of her Evangelical and Baptist preachers and leaders for the twentieth century.

Fifth, having experienced a lot of different influences from the German Baptists and Mennonite Brethren, English Open Brethren, Caucasian Molokans, and Russian Orthodox, Kargel developed original and unique theological views for which he stood strongly. Though not ethnically Russian, he became known and accepted as "the greatest Russian Evangelical theologian".³²⁹

Sixth, Kargel was a prolific writer. Due to the respect he enjoyed among Baptist and Evangelical believers, his works (unlike those of many others) were

³²⁹ Karetnikova. Online. September 2004.

not lost in searches and confiscations during the years of Soviet persecutions. His works were carefully copied (often by hand) and faithfully preserved.

Seventh, he remained faithful to his principles to the very end in the turmoil of the Soviet persecutions of 1930s.

Eighth, Kargel and his writings are still highly respected in Evangelical Christian Baptist churches and even among Pentecostal believers. His works were published over decades in the leading Evangelical-Baptist periodicals following the World War II and are still published by Christian publishing houses, including the Orthodox.

Ninth, Kargel's biography somewhat mirrors the range of the Russian evangelical movement: he grew up in Molokan-populated Tiflis, studied at Oncken's Baptist school in Hamburg, ministered among Mennonite Brethren, considered Pashkov (a faithful follower of Open Brethren Lord Radstock) his "spiritual father", married a Pashkovite girl, served as an interpreter for another Open Brethren Dr. Baedeker, was funded by members of the Victorian Holiness movement . . . Having become a key person among Russian evangelicals, Kargel actually embodied many features of these movements long before they united historically. Taking all this into consideration permits one to use Kargel's written legacy as a source for determining Russian evangelical hermeneutical principles.

5.2 Brief Review of Kargel's Written Theological Heritage

Kargel was probably the most productive writer of the Russian evangelical movement of the period. Unfortunately, not all of his works have been preserved and printed. Some of his writings are still being discovered and published. The author's purpose in this section is to list the known works, to classify them, and to present a short description of the content and some theological tendencies. This section will serve as a literary context for further study of the chosen sections of Kargel's written heritage from a hermeneutical point of view. Thankfully, having a number of theological writings where he inevitably applied his hermeneutical principles and from time to time directly stated what he believed about the interpretation of Scripture allows one to articulate his position as well as to compare what he stated and actually did in the field of Scriptural interpretation.

5.2.1 Confession of faith

In 1913 Kargel wrote *Kratkoe izlozhenie veroucheniya Evangel'skikh Khristian* [A Short Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians], published by Petersburg's Second Evangelical congregation. In the confession Kargel emphasised consistent revelation of God to man in three Persons: God the Father, holy, just, and righteous; God the Son in whom love and goodness were revealed; and God the Holy Spirit who glorifies the Son, convicts people of sin, and regenerates man (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:1-2).

The portion of his confession which deals with Scripture is rather short. This paragraph titled "On the Word of God" comes second after the doctrine of God:

We believe that all canonical books of the Old and the New Testament, compose jointly the Bible or the Holy Scriptures (excluding the apocryphal books), by the inspiration of the Spirit of God (2 Pet 1:21), and given by the Lord (Ps 148:8-9) as indispensable and unique (Pr 30:6; Mr 7:13), and completely sufficient source for knowing God, for our salvation (Heb 1:1-2; Jn 5:39; Jn 20:31), and for knowing His will concerning our faith (Phlp 1:27) and our life (Ac 20:32; 2 Tm 3:15-17) (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:2).

This part of the confession is especially important for the present research because Kargel did not write specifically about his hermeneutical principles.

In general Kargel's confession falls within the lines of evangelical theology. For example, regarding sin it says, "Through the sin of one man all have been poisoned (Rom 5:12-19), and became children of wrath (Eph 2:3) and were inflicted as a punishment for sin, death" (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:2-3). Among the Russian Evangelical confessions Kargel's is the only one that speaks of "spiritual, physical and eternal, or the second death, that is the death after physical death" (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:3). Of salvation it says the following:

The only salvation is accomplished by God Himself – Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; II Cor 5:18, 19; I Tim 2:5, 6) by the means of Christ's death for all men (Matt 20:28, Heb 2:9, I Pet 1:18-19; I Jn 2:2), the Lord offers mercifulness (Rom 3:25), reconciliation (II Cor 5:19-20; Col 1:20), forgiveness of all sins (Col 1:14; Col 2:13-14; Heb 9:22), justification (Rom 3:24; Rom 4:5; II Cor 5:21), and eternal life (Rom 6:23; Jn 3:16; Jn 5:24; I Jn 5:11-12). This salvation is accomplished by God for man, but it remains without effect for him, if the work of God is not accomplished in man. The first part has already been completed by Christ without our cooperation (Rom 5:6-8), the second part is being accomplished by the Holy Spirit with the harmony of man (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:3-4).

Kargel provided a definition of the universal Church, which is composed of “the saved ones (Acts 2:47), believers (Acts 4:4; Acts 5:14; Acts 6:7), called ones, saints (Rom 1:7; I Cor 1:2; II Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1, etc.), being in this world and those saved ones who are already with the Lord (Heb 12:22-23). The one and the other compose one body whose head is Christ” (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:5). Kargel’s confession differs from others in his views on apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. He believes that Jesus Christ continues to provide these offices to the church up to the present time (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:6).

Regarding future events, Kargel differentiates Christ’s coming to take His Church (Rapture), which will remain unseen by the world, and Christ’s coming with His own and the angels which will be seen by all:

Christ will come back after His own not seen by this world (Acts 1:10-11; I Cor 15:51-57), as a thief in the night (Matt 24:42-44; I Thes 5:2), but those who await Him will not be overtaken unexpectedly (I Thes 5:4, 5, 9, 10), and the ones ready to enter with Him in glory (Matt 25:10); those who will not be ready will remain with the unrighteous for great tribulation (Matt 24:40-41; Lk 12:45-46; Matt 25:11-13). Coming for His own, He will resurrect the dead, and both will ascend with Him (I Thes 4:16-17), in order to be always with the Lord.

But Christ will come thereupon, with His own and all the heavenly angels (Jude 14; Rev 19:11-14; Matt 16:27, 25:31) visible to all eyes (Rev 1:7; Jn 19:37; Matt 24:30). Then will begin the judgement, but only for all those living upon earth (Matt 25:32-46; Rev 19:15-19), from among the unjust none will be resurrected (Rev 20:5) until the thousand years pass of Christ’s rule with His own (Rev 20:4). After the thousand years there will be a short interval of empoisoning of the nations by Satan (Rev 20:7-10); then there will be the resurrection of the unjust (Rev 20:13) and the final judgement (Rev 20:11, 12, 13, 15) (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:10-11).

Strangely enough, Kargel does not mention sanctification in the confession, even though it was one of his favourite topics (Savinsky 1999:314-329).

As mentioned above, much later, in 1966, Kargel’s confession without changes was adopted as the official creed of the United Evangelical Christian and Baptist churches in Russia at the All-Russia Congress. His confession was approved by the Congress mainly because Kargel was equally respected in both Baptist and Evangelical Unions. Besides, the contents of his confession suited both sides.

Although Kargel wrote this 1913 Confession and on occasion quoted from the Short Catechism (Kargel 2002:116), it is interesting that later in his life Kargel spoke not very favourably about the idea of writing confessions or creeds, which he saw as something that could become an obstacle to the development of understanding of God and Scripture. Kargel believed that making the Scripture available to people was the main contribution of the Reformation. However, according to Kargel, the Reformers did not go much farther than developing the doctrine of justification by faith and cancelling some Catholic rituals. Then, according to Kargel, they collected and wrote down truths about faith in the form of confessions of faith, which became the foundation and cornerstone of the reformed church. This is where, according to Kargel, it stands until this day, “blocking itself the way to develop further”. Kargel concluded by saying that a confession of faith can become dangerous, “faith in a container”, whereas “children of God must every day grow in their understanding and knowledge of the Lord” (Kargel 2002:501).

5.2.2 Theological works

Kargel’s theological works are going to be reviewed in chronological order. Although most dates of writing are approximate, and some are still unidentified, the research allowed finding out at least the sequence of Kargel’s books.

5.2.2.1 *Svet iz teni budushchikh blag* [The Reflection of Glories to Come]

This “biggest and the most fundamental theological treatise from those we have written in Russian” (Karetnikova 2002:684) was written by Kargel during his stay in Lieven’s palace. The literal translation of the title is “The Light from Shadows of Future Blessings or Thirty Two Discourses about the Tabernacle, Animal Sacrifices, and Priesthood”. The title itself reveals that this book deals mostly with the Old Testament typology, especially that of the tabernacle and priesthood. Kargel strongly believed in the Christological interpretation of the Bible, as had Luther and other Reformers. For Kargel, the Old Testament was a concealed New Testament. His goal in writing this book was to show what the Old Testament images stood for and how they pointed to Christ.

The book is over four hundred pages long, making it Kargel’s lengthiest monograph. It is basically a detailed commentary on the portion of the

Pentateuch that covers Exodus 25 through Leviticus 8. Kargel touches on a variety of themes, all showing how the Old and New Testaments relate to each other, and how the Old Testament points beyond itself and foreshadows the reality of the New Testament. However, unlike most commentaries, Kargel's material is organized by topics, such as "The Tabernacle in general", "The courtyard and its curtains", "The gates, door, and curtain", "The brass altar", etc., thirty-two "talks" altogether.

According to Kargel's introduction, the book came about as a result of many years of studying this part of the Bible which presents "the shadows of Him who was to come" (Kargel 1908). The book was born out of lectures given during winter months to various groups of fellow believers, while summer months were spent mostly travelling and preaching, as well as gathering material for the "talks". It was first published in 1896 by the German publishing house *Svet na Vostoke* (Karetnikova 2009:34). In 1908 it was published by Mansfeld's publishing house in St. Petersburg; in 1909, it was published by the Mennonite Brethren publishing house in Halbstadt. In 1994 it was reprinted in St. Petersburg by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* [The Bible for everyone].

When the book first came out, a German magazine *Der Freiwillige* highly recommended these "excellent discourses" which introduce the reader to the glorious significance of Old Testament worship. It was said that Kargel had not omitted any detail of the tabernacle and the sacrificial system of the people of Israel as he searched out deep typological meaning in the Old Testament's "coal" for sparkles of the New Testament's "diamonds". Kargel found "an ocean of light in the shadows" of the Old Testament sanctuary because he saw Jesus, the light of the world (Kargel 1908:158).

This book will be a major source for my study of the topic of Kargel's typological approach to interpretation.

5.2.2.2 *Vetkhozavetnye proobrazy [Old Testament types]*

This relatively long book presents another example of Kargel's typological approach to the Old Testament. It consists of a number of articles, each discussing an Old Testament character: Abel, Enoch, Lot, Moses, Naaman, Gehazi, Isaiah, Daniel, and Ruth the Moabitess. This list includes both positive and negative characters, some to be emulated, others to serve as a warning to believers.

The part dedicated to Ruth is the lengthiest, divided into chapters, basically a commentary on this book of the Bible. Kargel's typological approach comes through quite clearly. For instance Boaz is interpreted by Kargel as a type of Christ, our heavenly Boaz (Kargel 2002:345). Ruth is viewed as a type of the Church, the Bride of Christ (Kargel 2002:372).

In general the book is devotional and reminds one of a series of sermons. It is unclear when the book was written.

5.2.2.3 V kakom ty otnoshenii k Dukhu Svyatomu? [Where do you stand in your relationship to the Holy Spirit?]

This book was written as a response to the rising Pentecostal movement. It was not intended to resolve doctrinal questions, but rather to point out the blessings available to Christians. Kargel explained that the reason he was not going to touch on doctrinal issues was that there were "enough outstanding compositions" regarding those things (Kargel 2002:114). In this way Kargel immediately states that this book is devotional in nature.

In the foreword Kargel states that his main goal was to show "directly from the Word of God and also from the experience of the Scriptural personages the great blessings which can be shared by a disciple of the Lord who has the right relationship to the Holy Spirit and because of His fullness" (Kargel 2002:114). Kargel's desire was to see the Holy Spirit having unconditional and full rights over the souls of those saved by the blood of Christ and to make them thirst for the fullness of the Spirit and not to stop until they have it (Kargel 2002:114).

Actually, the role of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life was one of Kargel's favourite topics (Skopina 2002:696). According to Kargel, the Holy Spirit is crucial for both salvation and sanctification: "Saving faith is impossible without the Holy Spirit" (Kargel 2002:116). In this he was following Radstock, Pashkov, and other representatives of the Holiness movement.

In this book Kargel discusses the following topics: receiving the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Spirit, anointing by the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, the Old Testament promises concerning the Holy Spirit, etc.

Most likely this book was published in St. Petersburg in 1912. Although the copy possessed by the public library in St. Petersburg (published by *Tovarishchestvo Andersona i Loytsyanskago*) does not indicate a year of

publication, the library assigned the text to 1913. However, Karetnikova dates it as written in 1926 (Karetnikova 2009:43). In 1945 it was published in Chicago by *Russkaya i Vostochno-Evropeyskaya Missiya* [Russian and Eastern-European Mission].

5.2.2.4 Gde, po Pisaniyu, nakhodyatsya mertvye [Where are the dead according to the Scripture]

This book was written as a result of reading “Where are the dead?”, J. Edgar’s booklet in German. Kargel’s response to Edgar’s views sheds a little more light upon Kargel’s own exegesis than his other works in which he usually does not reveal the process of his encounter with the text but presents his readers only with the results and conclusions.

Commenting on Edgar’s introduction, Kargel expressed his approval of Edgar’s declared attitude towards Scripture, saying that one would tend to trust a man who states the following:

We have the Word of God and this is sufficient... Whence can we expect to receive revelation? Let us lift up our eyes to God, waiting for His answer through the Bible, and not through visions or some extra revelations... If we approach the Bible in the spirit of truth, not out of curiosity and not in the spirit of pride and prejudice, but in humility, with respect, prayer, and a desire to find out what God wants to tell us, not imposing upon the Bible our ideas and presuppositions, sooner or later we will find the truth... We cannot be wiser than the Bible; no matter how much we respect our teachers and parents, we cannot put their words higher than the infallible authority of the Bible (Kargel 2002:181).

It seems that Kargel fully agrees with these statements concerning the Bible. However, in his book he disagrees with most of Edgar’s conclusions concerning the dead and points out that it is one thing to declare biblical authority, but quite another to live out what has been declared. “It is one thing to refer to the Bible, and it is a completely different thing to let the Bible say what it has to say, and what God says through it” (Kargel 2002:182). Kargel says that especially when it comes to the Bible, people “often see only what they want to see and they close their eyes to the things they do not like” (Kargel 2002:187). Kargel calls his readers to come closer “not to human fabrications, but to the infallible Word of God and to judge for themselves what the words of Dr. Edgar with all his references to the Scripture are worth” (Kargel 2002:197).

The date of writing this apologetic work can be calculated from its text. Kargel mentions his more than fifty years of being “in faith” (Kargel 2002:192). If

1869 is the year when Kargel was converted and baptised, then the book must have been written somewhere around 1920.

5.2.2.5 *Khristos osvyashchenie nashe* [Christ is our sanctification]

This book more than any other reflects the influence of the pietistic ideas of English evangelicalism upon Kargel. The Open Brethren and the Holiness movement representatives had not laboured in vain. The believer's sanctification came to be viewed as one of the main goals of the Christian life among Russian evangelicals, in large part due to Kargel's efforts. Sanctification, along with typology and future events, was one of Kargel's favourite and best-developed themes.

"Christ is our sanctification" was written by Kargel as an answer to what he saw as an urgent problem, that is, the lack of attention to the doctrine of sanctification. Regarding the sanctification of believers, "an often neglected doctrine", Kargel writes that "some close their Bibles after the sixth or even the fifth chapter of Romans" (Kargel 2002:49).

Kargel goes on to discuss the meaning, goal, and means of sanctification. He saw sanctification as closely connected to the work of the Holy Spirit, just as justification is connected to the work of Christ. Kargel calls his readers "to give freedom to the Holy Spirit to lead us into an understanding of every truth concerning sanctification" (Kargel 2002:49). This statement, as many other similar ones, shows the importance that Kargel attached to the Holy Spirit not only in the work of sanctification in a believer's life, but also in illuminating Scriptural truths.

In the book Kargel quotes from "dear" Spurgeon's work, *By grace you are saved through faith*, as well as from the "great preacher" Moody. It seems that he held both men in high esteem and his theological views were similar to theirs. Both preachers lived at a time when rationalism was coming to the forefront. Both called not to focus on reason and on man so much, but to believe in the Bible. Like them, Kargel accepted the Bible as the Word of God and argued from a conservative exegetical tradition.

Although Kargel does not mention other authors who were writing on this subject, he may have been familiar with Brethren literature, since this topic was emphasised in their circles. He was well acquainted with Mackintosh's

commentary on the Pentateuch, so may have also come across his book *Sanctification: what is it?*

Actually, Kargel's views on sanctification seem closer to the Open Brethren teaching than to the Darbyites. Open Brethren trends, such as defining sanctification as "separation to God", designating all believers as "saints", seeing justification as the gateway to the Christian life and sanctification as a process of growth in holiness, teaching both the positional and practical meanings of sanctification (Rowdon 1990:99-100) – all these emphases can be found in Kargel as well, which will become more evident in the analysis of the text.

This book was written in 1912 (Karetnikova 2009:43); in 1926 it was published as a series of magazine articles in *Khristianin* [The Christian] № 1-9, the main periodical of the Evangelical churches at the time. Now it is available in its entirety in Kargel's "Collection of writings" published by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* in 2002.

This book plays an important role in restoring Kargel's hermeneutics because it contains a portion on the Scripture (as one of the means of sanctification), in which Kargel expounds some of his views on interpretation.

5.2.2.6 "Se, gryadu skoro..." ["Lo, I am coming soon..."]

End time events were among Kargel's favourite topics in both writing and lecturing at the Bible courses. In this book his dispensational approach comes through rather clearly. He argues for the pre-tribulation rapture of the church and Christ's second coming to inaugurate a literal millennial kingdom. However, he is not rigid when it comes to the boundaries between dispensations. He actually sees a lot of continuity between the testaments and does not look at historical periods as disconnected "boxes".

Kargel's views of future events seem to be rooted in the Darbyist understanding, which Kargel inherited indirectly from Radstock through Pashkov and the Pashkovites and then directly from Dr. Baedeker.

The date of writing can be calculated from the text of the book. Kargel mentions that nine years prior to the writing of this book an important event took place: "in 1919 Palestine found itself under the power of England". This puts the date of writing in 1928. However, Karetnikova dates it to 1909 (Karetnikova 2009:42).

5.2.2.7 *Grekh kak zlo vsekh zol v etom mire* [Sin as the greatest evil in the world]

This is a concise (only forty-four pages) and purely theological treatise written by Kargel on various aspects of sin. It is not clear when it was written and first published. An article called “Sin” was published in the USA in 1948, which included an introduction and the first chapter of the book (Makarenko, 2006). It should be mentioned that Kargel had lectured on the doctrine of sin at Bible courses in the 1920s, so this treatise may have been the result of those lectures. The treatise was included in the collection of Kargel’s writings published by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* in St. Petersburg in 2002.

The content of the booklet is reflected in its outline: sin is rebellion and an insult against holy God; sin is a deadly spiritual illness; sin is a moral defilement; sin is a gained habit; sin is a despotic power; sin is a law reigning in man; sin is a source of the most terrible consequences. Although Kargel approaches the topic of sin in a rather systematic manner operating under the above mentioned headings, this piece of writing resembles an essay far more than a monograph on a chosen topic. Kargel does not aim to present an exhaustive list of different aspects of sin and related issues. His goal is to give attention to a few characteristics of sin as he finds them presented in the Bible.

Kargel believes that most false teachings come out of a limited or mistaken understanding of what sin is (Kargel 2002:5). He writes, “Let us look at sin from God’s point of view, which is presented in the Scripture. The Bible talks about sin more than any other book. From the first to the last page it reveals the beginning, progression, and culmination of sin” (Kargel 2002:7). The only source of truth for Kargel is the Bible, which presents “God’s point of view”. Besides, what is important in the Bible (it talks a lot about sin “from the first to the last page”) automatically becomes important to Kargel as well. Then Kargel moves to soteriology, saying that, “the good news, that fills precious pages of the Bible from the beginning to the end, is salvation in Jesus Christ” (Kargel 2002:7).

Thus Kargel in his theology attaches great importance to the doctrine of sin and depravity, which in turn leads to an appreciation of the greatness of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ and finally to the importance of sanctification by the Holy Spirit. In his hamartiology and soteriology, Kargel closely follows the typical protestant line to make his case. His book contains

citations from Hopkins, Carpenter, Martens' "Christian Ethics", which gives some idea of the scope of Kargel's theological reading.

5.2.2.8 *Izliyanie Dukha Svyatogo i pyatidesyatnicheskoe dvizhenie* [The outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the Pentecostal movement]

This treatise concerns a division with Pentecostals that took place in 1923. Supposedly it is a chapter from Kargel's book "Where do you stand in your relationship with the Holy Spirit" that was missing or intentionally removed (Karetnikova 2004:5). However, the treatise under consideration must have been written after 1928, since in the text Kargel referred to an *Evangelist* magazine dated that year.

In this treatise Kargel discusses the following topics: believers' spiritual condition at the time the Pentecostal movement was spreading; the lack of believers' knowledge of God's work; what actually happened when the Holy Spirit descended to believers; and the origins of the Pentecostal movement.

Because of his prophecies and healings Kargel was considered the most "Pentecostal" preacher among other evangelical leaders in Russia (Karetnikova 2004:5), yet he speaks of the Pentecostalism growing in Russia as "a sad and wrong development" (Kargel 2004:11). Kargel considered Pentecostalism a caricature and distortion of the Holiness movement (Kargel 2004:36). In the dispute with Pentecostals, Kargel urges his readers to go to the authority of the Holy Scripture, which alone can settle "who is right and who is wrong" (Kargel 2004:15).

The book confirms the author's opinion that Kargel was quite strong on the point of continuity of the Testaments, which is important for understanding his hermeneutics. When writing of what the day of Pentecost brought to the believers, he wrote:

No, it was not regeneration that was revealed to the Church of Christ on the day of Pentecost . . . This used to happen and had to happen in the Old Testament through the Holy Spirit as well . . . Those who were converted in the Old Testament had the Holy Spirit indeed, otherwise God would not point to them as the heroes of faith... Wasn't Moses in the closest connection with the Holy Spirit? (Kargel 2004:24).

Besides, most probably, when referring to *brat K* [brother K] Kargel was talking about himself. If this guess is right, the book contains some new data about his life and ministry. Among other things Kargel mentioned that twenty

three years ago “K” lived in Estland (Estonia) (Kargel 2004:45), which would have been after 1905.

Another interesting portion of the book concerns the Holiness movement in England, although Kargel does not use the term when describing it. He talks about the 1870s as the time of a great revival among believers (Kargel 2004:33) in a way that shows his awareness of what was going on:

The Lord suddenly sent a spiritual movement of sanctification ... It began in England among seminary theologians and students with an American preacher. Those were great days for England! This movement spread in many countries and mission fields. Then, in the following years it passed to Germany, Switzerland, and all Protestant countries.

The holiness of life – this was a message of the redeemed ... it was not like it is now. Now, when they speak about sanctification they put believers under the law or personal effort. [Back then] they pointed to the power of God . . .

And they learnt that it was possible to live daily in close connection with the Lord.

For that movement it was natural to study the Word. The Word of God became the delight for tens of thousands of believers. It was not enough to hear the Word of God only on Sunday, everyone personally came to the Source of life, and the consequences were the following: a whole lot of the lost truths were brought to light again, and not only for the mind, but also for life And another truth was learnt by all: all of us were facing the Coming of the Lord . . . such wonderful, clear, and sober literature appeared . . . and for the first time in fifteen hundred years believers began paying attention to the Holy Spirit.

Great gatherings started to be held with up to eight thousand souls participating. Those were meetings about deepening of faith, about Christ’s coming, about holiness, and they lasted for weeks! Thus, the Holy Spirit gained His rights ...

In 1905 the Lord allowed one brother to be in England for three months, and he was surprised to see crowds of the children of God filled with the Holy Spirit (Kargel 2004:33-35).

Kargel did not miss the main emphasis of the evangelical revival: the Holy Spirit, the advent teaching, and the call back to the Bible. “An American preacher” who initiated the “movement of sanctification” in England must have been Moody, whom Kargel highly regarded. According to Bebbington, Moody and Sankey “greatly assisted the arrival of holiness teaching in Britain”, carrying the gospel message around the country between June 1873 and August 1875. Besides, Moody had spoken at Mildmay in 1872 and twenty years later at Keswick (Bebbington 1989:162-164). From the 1870s the Salvation Army was another “vigorous holiness organisation” (Bebbington 1989:165).

This treatise provides additional evidence that Kargel was quite taken by the Holiness movement and in full agreement with its theology and practice. It is also clear that in the late 1920s Kargel had not lost the broad-minded approach to theology that he inherited from Pashkov decades earlier. Neither was he naïve about the tendencies that were felt within Russian evangelical movement, that is, tendencies towards legalism and a shift towards human efforts in Christian living.

Bebbington points out that it was in this wartime atmosphere that Pentecostalism was born. The way had been prepared by talk of “the baptism of the Holy Ghost” in the holiness movement (Bebbington 1989:196). Russian evangelicals could not remain unaffected by this novelty, though for the most part they did not embrace Pentecostalism. And Kargel played a considerable part in this.

5.2.3 Commentaries

5.2.3.1 *Tolkovatel’ Otkroveniya svyatogo Ioanna Bogoslova* [Interpretation of the Revelation of St. John]

Like Brethren writers,³³⁰ Kargel showed much interest in prophecy, evidenced by his extensive treatment of Daniel (in his lectures) and Revelation. In this commentary Kargel continues to argue for the pre-tribulation Rapture of the Church and Christ’s second coming with his church to establish the millennium kingdom. Kargel sees the book of Revelation mainly as a prophetic one. He interprets the letters to the seven churches as being written to historical churches in Asia Minor as well as representing different periods in church history. However, Kargel does not insert strict boundaries between those periods and allows a great deal of overlapping between them (for instance, according to Kargel, the four last church types coexist).

³³⁰ For instance, Edward Irving, a revivalist preacher, was an “ardent preacher of the Second Coming . . . For him, the last days would be accompanied by a restoration of the Church and the apostles as described in the New Testament” including the gifts of the Spirit (Darby 1972:131). His thoughts, somewhat similar to those of J. N. Darby, might have influenced Radstock and possibly Kargel. According to Leskov, Radstock did not approve of Irving’s followers but held Irving’s views concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and expected it any moment (Leskov 1877:131). Kargel also expected the Rapture at any moment.

Although Kargel started writing this commentary before World War I, more than seventy years went by before it was published. At the end of Kargel's book *V kakom ty otnoshenii k Dukhu Svyatomu* [Where do you stand in your relationship to the Holy Spirit] published in 1913, an announcement states that the first part of *Otkrovenie Sv. Ioanna* [The Revelation of St. John] (chapters 1 –14) was to be published in early 1913, while the second part might be ready by the end of the same year or in the beginning of the following year (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:160). Obviously, these plans were not realized as the situation changed before and during World War I.

In the second half of the 1920s Kargel taught at the annual Bible courses in Leningrad. Among his subjects were Revelation and the Second Coming of Christ. It was then that his second major theological work was being shaped. Circulating manuscripts were dated 1924 and 1928. Unfortunately, as already mentioned, the book "Interpretation of the Revelation of Saint John," was not published during Kargel's lifetime. It was first published in Toronto in 1986 (Kovalenko 1996:53), then in Russia in 1991 by the Orthodox publishing house. The final version of the book is based on forty-three lectures by Kargel to ministers of the Word from among the Evangelical Christians and Baptists in the early 1930s in Leningrad (Kargel 1991:3).

5.2.3.2 *Zakon Dukha zhizni: Tolkovanie glav 5,6,7,8 Poslaniya svyatogo apostola Pavla k Rimlyanam* [The law of the Spirit of life: Commentary of the chapters 5,6,7,8 of the Epistle of Saint Apostle Paul to the Romans]

This commentary on Romans, written shortly before Kargel's death, should certainly be regarded as one of the most mature fruits of his exegetical work. It was finished by 1937 when the Soviet authorities seized Kargel's archive, which supposedly contained the manuscript of the commentary. For a long time the manuscript was considered lost. It was restored due to the efforts of Ukrainian believers who copied its chapters by hand and carefully preserved them (Kargel 2003:3). The chapters were published as a separate book in 2003 in St. Petersburg by *Bibliya dlya vsekh*.

Indeed, the Epistle to the Romans has a long history of interpretation. It was a favourite of St. Augustine and Martin Luther. Luther, Calvin, and Melanchthon wrote commentaries on it. Nevertheless, Kargel chose this Epistle as an object of his close attention and wrote his own commentary on it, holding

strongly to the protestant tradition of interpretation of the Epistle. He sees justification as a free gift from God, not of works. Kargel stresses God's side, His love and His grace, in salvation (Kargel 2003:17).

Kargel deals with the Epistle to Romans verse-by-verse, clause-by-clause, constantly referring to parallel passages. He is very aware of the Bible context as a whole, especially of the New Testament context, although, as in the rest of his writings, he does not reveal his exegetical process in detail.

In his commentary Kargel quotes a number of other authors: Dr. David Brawn (Kargel 2003:14, 26, 46, 49, 82), Dr. Godel (Kargel 2003:34), Woltersdorf (Kargel 2003:202), Hopkins (Kargel 2003:131, 137, 141), A. Murray³³¹ (Kargel 2003:206), and O. Stockmayer (Kargel 2003:179, 188). These references indicate the scope of his theological reading and interests, and at least were the authors whose books Kargel had on hand during his last years of life in Ukraine.

5.2.4 Lectures

A course of lectures compiled in Leningrad in 1926 was published by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* only in 2006. It is Kargel's attempt to look at universal history from a Scriptural point of view. In Kargel's words, the Bible was written in order to reveal the past, the present, and the future (Kargel 2006:7).

These lectures³³² consist of twelve sections starting from "Creation and its fall" and ending with "Heaven and the new earth". Then there are three sketches added: "Universal history from the book of Daniel 2:1-45", "History of Israel in seventy weeks", and "History of the church", based on John's letters to the seven churches in Revelation.

Kargel's section titles are of particular interest because they make it possible to compare his position with that of the dispensationalists. The whole course of lectures revolves around four "ways" or "lines" which go through the Scripture: the first has to do with the development of the humankind in general; the second deals with the destiny of the chosen people, ethnic Israel; the third

³³¹ A reformed South African writer, Andrew Murray was mentioned above in connection with Jessie-Penn Lewis.

³³² In these lectures Kargel refers a couple of times to the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible, as well as to other translations (Kargel 2006:58, 112, 123).

concerns the church; the fourth considers the spiritual and moral condition of all people from the beginning of universal history to the very end (Kargel 2006:20-21).

In “Creation and its fall” Kargel states, that the earth in its original state presented the Kingdom of God designed for a sinless man (Kargel 2006:11). When created, Adam was “perfect, but not perfected”, “clean, but not glorified” (Kargel 2006:14). After the fall “the world became the ruins of the original creation . . . The whole history of humankind took a different direction” (Kargel 2006:18).

The second section, “The way of man”, discusses the mainstream history of humanity, the majority of people who took the “broad road” (Kargel 2006:20). Kargel talks about the major world civilisations: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (Kargel 2006:28-32).

In the third section, “The way of God: An attempt to restore the Kingdom of God with Israel”, Kargel attempts to trace what the Lord was doing through believers during all this time. Since people had lost the ability to perceive God’s revelations, God chose one nation – the people of Israel – in order to communicate with the rest of the world (Kargel 2006:35). Kargel concentrates on Abraham and Moses, and on Israel’s wanderings in the desert. Other subtitles include: “The time of judges or theocracy”, “The time of kings”, “The second rejection of the King by Israel” (that is, the rejection of Jesus Christ), and “The third rejection of the King, and rejection of Israel” (that is, rejection of the disciples’ message after Pentecost and God’s rejection of Israel as a nation). Kargel argues that God’s kingdom was offered to the Jews, but because they rejected it, it was put off for a time, until the millennial kingdom (Kargel 2006:57).

In sections four and five titled “The Way of God. The Church” and “The Rapture” respectively, Kargel deals with the church. According to Kargel, after Israel was temporarily rejected, “we observe an appearance of a new, never seen before, building of God. The Church of Christ appeared. It is not, as many think, the continuation of building of the Kingdom of God started by Israel. This is something new and higher” (Kargel 2006:57, 58). Although the prophets knew about the coming of the Lord as a sacrificial lamb to save the world, they could not see what would be taking place between the first coming and Christ’s claiming the throne of David (Kargel 2006:59).

According to Kargel, all periods of church history, as well as all congregations and local churches, have their prototypes in the seven churches of the first three chapters of Revelation (Kargel 2006:119). After that Kargel does not find the church mentioned again, concluding that the church will be raptured and will be with Christ, not on earth, during God's great judgements of the world (Kargel 2006:121). The Rapture of believers will be a mystery for the world; the world will not even notice it (Kargel 2006:75). At the Rapture only those found ready will be taken up, while the rest will experience the terrible times of the Great Tribulation and Antichrist's reign (Kargel 2006:97).

Section six is titled "Gathering and restoration of Israel". After the Rapture God will turn to Israel and His line will continue. In 1926 Kargel was certain that Jews would be gathering in Palestine even before the Rapture and establish an independent state there (Kargel 2006:88).

Sections seven and eight deal with Antichrist. "Sin is progressing . . . until it reaches its highest expression in Antichrist" (Kargel 2006:17). The whole world will come under the total power of the devil who will be reigning through Antichrist for three and one-half years (Kargel 2006:99, 115).

Section nine is dedicated to God's judgements over the people living on the earth. The righteous and the unrighteous will get what was coming to them. The earth will be cleansed and prepared for the millennial reign of the Lord. Israel will accept her Messiah (Kargel 2006:135).

Section ten is titled "Millennial kingdom of Christ". This peaceful period will last one thousand literal years (Kargel 2006:141).

Section eleven is titled "The last revolt of the devil and the judgement over the dead. The final judgement". According to Kargel, at the end of the millennium kingdom Satan will be released to tempt the living (Kargel 2006:155). This will have tragic consequences: nations will follow Satan and make war against Israel. However, this second attempt to conquer Israel (the first one took place just before the Millennial kingdom) is doomed. The devil will be thrown into the lake of fire (Kargel 2006:156-158). Then the last and final judgement will take place. All dead will be resurrected for this judgement (Kargel 2006:158-159). Although it is believed by some that the earth will be completely destroyed, Kargel insists that the earth will be cleansed and renewed (Kargel 2006:158).

The last section is titled “Heaven and new earth. The third world – eternity”. This new earth, according to Kargel, is earth without sin and evil (Kargel 2006:161). The description of New Jerusalem based on Revelation 21 is understood quite literally by Kargel (Kargel 2006:162-163).

The wording and content of Kargel’s lectures point to the connection of Kargel’s work to that of Darby and the Brethren. However, the idea of dividing biblical history into epochs preceded Darby. Kargel’s list of main periods drastically differs from Darby’s or Scofield’s dispensations. As a matter of fact, Kargel distinguishes only three main periods in human history, which he calls “three worlds”: the first world was destroyed by the flood; the second world will be destroyed by fire; and the third beautiful world, the new heaven and new earth, will last for eternity (Kargel 2006:22). Although Kargel’s scheme has a number of subdivisions, one cannot find blind repetitions of dispensations such as “innocence”, “conscience”, “law”, or “grace”. Nowhere does Kargel refer specifically to Darby or Scofield, suggesting nothing more than indirect influence by the Brethren.

Nevertheless, Kargel’s approach to scriptural interpretation can be classified as dispensational. Besides dividing the Bible into historical ages characterized by different economies, Kargel held a number of typically dispensational views. For example, he was premillennialist and pretribulationist, he expected Daniel’s seventieth week to take place in the future, he made a distinction between Israel and the church, and he believed in the future salvation and restoration of the nation of Israel. It should be pointed out that in spite of his “dispensationalism”, Kargel held to a great degree of continuity between the Testaments, as will be shown below in detailed studies of some excerpts from his books. However, the contradiction is illusory. As a matter of fact, Kargel’s second epoch includes time from the flood to the judgement by fire; hence he does not make any major divisions in the salvific history between the Old and the New Testament.

5.2.5 Sermons and discourses

The list of Kargel’s sermons and articles will probably never be complete, as more and more of them are being found in hand-copied notebooks. Overall, Kargel’s sermons are devotional in character; theologically they present a condensed and popularised version of his books. For example, *Neuznanny*

voskresshiy Gospod' [Unrecognized resurrected Lord]³³³ is a simple sermon about how the disciples on a number of occasions did not recognize the resurrected Christ and had to learn to recognize Him in spirit. Kargel's application: the same way present day believers are so overwhelmed by everyday troubles that they forget that He is not far and cares for them, "He still asks if we have any food, and He knows that we have nothing, but He is ready to feed us. Unfortunately, while 'fishing' we tend to forget that He has a meal ready for us".

A few of Kargel's sermons were published in *Khristianin* [The Christian], the major periodical of the Evangelical Christians. Among them are *Kto zhazhdet* [Who is thirsty] (1906) and *Kak dostich' zhelannoy pristani* [How to reach the desired harbour] (1907).

A number of Kargel's sermons were published in the Christian magazine *Vera i zhizn'* [Faith and life]. One of them is called *Gospod' vpered* [The Lord is ahead] (1980). Another article, *Ispolnyaytes' Dukhom* [Be filled with the Spirit] (1981), suggests that a believer gets filled with the Spirit more than once, that a person is filled by the Spirit in order to serve others, and that the Holy Spirit should not be separated from Christ.³³⁴ One more sermon, *Chto Bog думаet obo mne?* [What does God think of me?] in *Vera i zhizn'*, is signed with the initials I.K. and should probably also be attributed to Kargel.³³⁵

Makarenko mentions a sermon *Grekh* [Sin] published in 1948 in New York, NY by the publishing house "Put' Very", a body the Russian evangelical movement (Makarenko, 2006).

Almost fifty of Kargel's discourses were published in 2006 by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* (Kargel 2006:189-355). The author is not going to discuss them in detail, but some titles speak for themselves:

Beseda o tselomudrii [A discourse about chastity];

Zhizn' po ploti [Life according to flesh];

Put' k zhizni v Boge [The way to life in God];

Ispolnenie Dukhom [Filling by the Spirit];

Izbavlenie ot vlasti grekha [Deliverance from the power of sin];

Osnovnoy zakon kresta [The main law of the cross];

³³³ Kargel. Online. 26 November 2004.

³³⁴ Kargel 1981.

Pokoy v kreste [Peace in the cross];
Chtoby ne vpast' v iskusshenie [Not to fall into temptation];
Nashe edinenie so Khristom [Our union with Christ];
Zhizn' s izbytkom [Life with abundance];
Zapechatleny Dukhom Svyatym [Sealed by the Holy Spirit];
Proshchenie i ochishchenie [Forgiveness and cleansing];
Ne unyvay [Do not get discouraged];
Molitvennaya zhizn' [The life of prayer];
Vosstanavlivayushchaya blagodat' [Restoring grace], etc

Among these, one discourse stands out as especially important to this research: *Chtenie Biblii s blagosloveniem* [Reading of the Bible with blessing], in which Kargel suggests an answer to the question as to when believers get blessings from Scripture reading. He lists six points. First, it happens when believers get answers to their urgent questions from reading the Bible. Second, it happens when believers read the Bible not only seeking something for themselves but thinking of God's plans and desires. Third, it happens when the Word creates a firm spiritual foundation in believers. Fourth, it happens when the Word is fulfilled in the lives of believers. Fifth, it happens when Christ, the Eternal Word, speaks to believers through the written Word. Sixth, it happens when believers dedicate the first half hour of every day to reading the Word (Kargel 2006:316-317).

Some ideas from Kargel's discourse sound like suggestions from the Pashkovite *Kratkoe rukovodstvo k chteniyu Novogo Zaveta* [Short guide to the reading of the New Testament] (1882). For example, Kargel writes, "Some are mistaken thinking that they have to understand the whole chapter that they have read. It is not necessary. It is sufficient to get from the chapter what is needed for this day. And for this end sometimes one verse or even one word is enough" (Kargel 2006:316).

5.2.6 Letters

Over the years Kargel carried out extensive personal written correspondence. For instance, in a letter to brothers in Kiev (1925) he

³³⁵ Kargel. Online. 26 November 2004.

mentioned that this was his twenty-seventh letter since the last congress (Kargel 1925:19), not to mention that this particular letter was thirty-two printed pages long.

This letter deserves special attention. It was published under the title *Nuzhna li subbota? Pis'mo I. V. Kargelya Sovetu Kievskogo Oblastnogo Souza Ev. Khristian* [Do we need Sabbath? I. V. Kargel's letter to the Council of Kiev Regional Union of the Evangelical Christians]. The letter was written at the request of the Council of Kiev Regional Union of the Evangelical Christians. Evidently the Council was experiencing some problems with the Adventists that Kargel addressed in his letter.

Furthermore, the text of the letter is another evidence of Kargel's dispensational approach to interpreting the Old and the New Testaments. He stated that "there is a clear difference between the people of Israel and the Church of Christ; they should never be confused" (Kargel 1925:20). As for the future of the people of Israel, they "are being kept for the earthly Kingdom of God during the millennium" (Kargel 1925:20), whereas "the Church is heavenly people . . . their kingdom is not of this world" (Kargel 1925:20). Kargel does not find any references to "the children of God of the New Covenant" after the end of the seventh chapter of Revelation, when "the last atoned by Christ from all tribes and peoples and tongues enter the glory (Rev. 7, 9) . . . The rest of the book deals with Israel and nobody else" (Kargel 1925:31). These views are in perfect harmony with Brethren dispensationalism for which "a distinction between Israel and the church is the essential distinguishing factor" (Blaising 1988:273). Today Kargel would be labelled as "pretrib" and "premil".

Another important feature of the letter is Kargel's reference to the original text of the New Testament when answering the questions of the Kiev brothers (Kargel 1925:30), indicating that he may have been able to read Greek after all.

Another letter that deserves special attention is Kargel's letter to Zhidkov³³⁶ written when Kargel was eighty-two years old. It was his answer to the AUCECB, a response "to the first menacing strike of antichrist against the Churches of Christ – to the suggestion to approve collaboration of the church with the state, that is, to approve the state's attempt to interfere in the life of the

³³⁶ This letter can be found in the Appendix to Kargel's *Tolkovatel' Otkroveniia* (Kargel 1991:262-266), as well as in *Lektsii, besedy, pis'ma* (Kargel 2006:359-364).

Church” (Kargel 1991:262). In order to receive some financial support from the AUCECB Kargel was required to answer two questionnaires which he refused to do for several reasons.

The first questionnaire inferred that Kargel was supposedly continuing his ministry; since he was feeling rather weak he thought that signing it would be a lie (Kargel 1991:262-263). The second questionnaire included questions concerning his attitude towards the Ninth and the Tenth Congresses of the Evangelical Christians. In his letter Kargel states that he had spoken openly at both Congresses on the military issue, and did so in the presence of the authorities (Kargel 1991:263), therefore he did not see any need to repeat what he had already said. Furthermore, he objected to questions about one’s social origin:

The whole questionnaire “breezes the spirit of this age. It aims to reveal who you were, my dear, prior to your spiritual rebirth, and who your parents were, you, miserable member of the evangelical congregation. If your father happened to be a merchant or you are a merchant yourself, then your membership loses any value, no matter how dedicated to the Lord you are now; and woe to you, son, if your father was an officer in the former troops, and on the contrary, you are blessed if your father happened to serve in the Red Army. And woe to you forever if your parents or you were landowners. This is an unforgivable sin . . . With horror I see the Leningrad congregation that come together to perform the breaking of bread with membership cards received after signing these questionnaires (Kargel 1991:264-265).

Along with his letter Kargel sent back a prepayment (Kargel 1991:266).

Some of Kargel’s last letters *Iz pisem Kargelya* [From Kargel’s letters] were added to the Collection of his writings. These and a number of newly found letters were published in 2006 in St. Petersburg (Kargel 2006:357-410). These are mainly the letters written from Ukraine to his friends Yuliya Yakovlevna and Avgust Mikhaylovich.

A letter dated 31 August 1933 was written in Tokari-Berezhki. In this letter he mentions *grustnyy paralich* “sad paralysis”, meaning the spiritual depression he had experienced. He encourages his correspondent to restore the union with the Lord, and reminds him about the believer’s unchanging position in Christ (Kargel 2002:671).

In a letter dated 3 March 1934, also written from Tokari-Berezhki, Kargel thanks his friends for a parcel and encourages them stay close to the Lord.

The letter dated 27 April 1937 was written from Vasil'tsov's home in Lebedino. In this letter Kargel mentions his illness and discusses the reality of Colossians 1:26-29, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Kargel 2002:676-678).

In the last letter included in the "Collection of writings", probably written in early 1937, Kargel mentions the heart problems he had been having for a few years. Because of the heart attacks he could not write for seven months. The whole letter is permeated with Kargel's hopeful waiting for the Lord to take him (Kargel 2002:678-679).

5.2.7 Conclusion

Compared to other Russian Evangelical or Baptist writers, the corpus of Kargel's writing is quite extensive, probably the largest. It is one of the reasons why Kargel is considered a major Russian Evangelical theologian. His writings raise traditional protestant themes, such as human depravity, salvation provided by God, and the sanctification of believers. However, his favourite topics came from the areas of pneumatology, typology, prophecy, and eschatology.

The style of Kargel's dealing with biblical text is more "systematic" than "biblical". Kargel was well acquainted with the Bible text as a whole and he normally worked within the entire biblical context. In his arguments he referred to the passages dealing with an issue throughout the whole Bible, from the beginning to the end. At the same time, he did not concentrate much on the immediate context of the passage. Seeing the Bible as God's Word and the Holy Spirit as its divine author, Kargel treated the biblical text as a monolith. He placed the whole process of exegesis (reading, understanding, and applying Scripture to one's life) under the power of the Holy Spirit

The goal of most of Kargel's works was not the solving of theoretical problems in theology, but the edification of believers. This made his works rather devotional in nature. Unfortunately, Kargel did not have anything written specifically on his hermeneutical approach, although he could not help applying certain principles of interpretation when dealing with Scripture. As a result, one often has to read between the lines to discover Kargel's hermeneutics.

When reading Kargel's works in chronological order, it is hard to find any major changes in his theological views that might have taken place over the years. Perhaps this is because Kargel published his first known theological treatise in his late fifties, well settled in his views, beliefs, and approaches to

Scripture, and finished his last commentary to Romans not long before his death at age 82.

Finally, it should be mentioned that although Kargel's books are mostly devotional, they are not easy to read. The difficulty may be the result of average (rather than excellent) translations into Russian from his original German. With few exceptions, only translations have been published; unfortunately, the author could not find any traces of the German originals.

5.3 Inductive study of Kargel's hermeneutics

It has been suggested that in some sense the history of the church can be viewed as a history of differences in the interpretation of Scripture, especially since the Reformation.³³⁷ This approach is not surprising if one takes into account the large value the Reformers attached to Scripture. The way it was interpreted and understood was to govern the life of individual Christians and the church in the whole, hence to determine the development of the church history. Thus, church history is closely connected to the history of scriptural interpretation. For those who reject tradition and rely only on Scripture to determine their theology, hermeneutics³³⁸ makes all the difference in the world. "Barth was always clear that every theology stands or falls as a hermeneutic and every hermeneutic stands or falls as a theology" (Woodbridge & Balmer 1983:325). The Russian evangelicals were also dedicated to the *Sola Scriptura* principle. The question is: how did they interpret the Scripture?

In order to answer this question the author is going to take a closer look at Kargel's hermeneutical position. His place in the Russian Evangelical movement is assumed. Besides, Kargel serves an excellent reflection of the early stage of the Russian Evangelical movement because he embraced, embodied, and then expressed in his writings the influences that shaped the movement itself. In a way he personified the movement and captured it in his writings. However, Kargel's theological position was not a mechanical sub-total of Brethren-Baptist-Mennonite influences. His position was his own, one he arrived at as a result of lifelong Scripture reading, church ministry, interaction with a variety of people, thinking, preaching, and writing . . .

Therefore before attempting to compare Kargel's position to that of other people and movements, the author should let Kargel speak for himself and

³³⁷ Ebeling G., *Kirchengeschichte als Geschichte der Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift*, 1947, in Braaten 1968:150; Dyck 1984:29.

³³⁸ The term is used widely and can refer to almost anything these days. It "has become increasingly popular in recent decades. As a result it has been pulled and stretched every which way. With so many writers using the word, it seems to behave as a moving target" (Kaiser & Silva 1994:15). In order to avoid ambiguity when discussing "hermeneutics" the author is going to stick to the definition of hermeneutics as the discipline that deals with "methodological rules to be applied in exegesis" (Braaten 1968:151).

determine what views he actually held before his position gets lost in a crowd of “influences”.

According to Kargel's own statements, he held canonical Scripture as the only source of theological truth (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913). So, the same question comes up. How did he interpret Scripture? Nowhere does Kargel explicitly state the principles of his theological hermeneutics, his theory of understanding and dealing with Scripture. However, without addressing the issue of hermeneutics in particular (the term "hermeneutical principles" would sound very alien in Kargel's mouth), throughout his works Kargel refers to what can be called his hermeneutical presuppositions. Most importantly, he must have had a theory in mind when interpreting Scripture. Therefore it must be possible to cull his hermeneutical principles from his writings. Then, by comparing these stated principles and the hermeneutics implied in his way of doing exegesis, one may judge how coherent was his hermeneutical methodology.

Now, what is the author's methodology of reconstructing Kargel's hermeneutics? In most general terms, the author is going to have a close look at Kargel's theological writings and make observations concerning any hermeneutical rules that might have governed Kargel's interpretation of the Bible. Then the author will attempt to synthesize the results of such primary analysis into a summary which will, to some extent, represent Kargel's theory of understanding the Bible.

Any analysis presupposes using some kind of quest applied to the original data, in our case, the body of Kargel's writings. This quest is always artificial and external to the original data; it cannot follow from the data. And with it one must remember that not all questions are equally useful. Yoder made this valuable statement concerning the studies in the hermeneutics of the sixteenth century Anabaptists:

We hope to get immediate light from the sixteenth century on the questions referred to today as 'the hermeneutical problem,' we are asking the wrong question of the sixteenth century. We can get light, but must do it indirectly and without any prior assumption that the answers defined there will be immediately applicable. We cannot ask what their answers were; at the most we can observe how they went about asking their questions (Yoder 1984:16).

Keeping this in mind, the author does not expect Kargel to supply articulate answers to the hermeneutical problems of the present time. Nor will

the author approach Kargel with a convenient set of questions derived from the modern hermeneutical debate. Even if the author tried to do so, the answers would not be there. The material itself will suggest the questions to be asked. In this way the author proposes evaluating Kargel's hermeneutics within the framework of his own theological methodology, letting him set his own stage, so to speak. So, the questions the author asks will be revolving around possible assumptions and notions in Kargel's mind that caused him to interpret Scripture one way or the other.

In the corpus of Kargel's writings presently available to the author, there are parts where Kargel specifically deals with the Scripture. These parts will be arbitrarily chosen by the author for further analysis as most representative of his exegesis, his treatment of various biblical genres (prophecy, epistles, history, apocalypse), and his views on biblical trustworthiness and authoritativeness. Working with bigger sections will do greater justice to Kargel's text than making some general statements *a priori* and then using his text as a framework for quotations.

From here on the author will be working with chosen pieces of Kargel's text in detail, offering a parallel translation from Russian into English and adding the author's immediate observations. All this work will be organized in the tables available in the Appendix. Each table will contain a separate portion from one of Kargel's books. The author will be referring to the tables in the following way. "T" stands for table; the first number is a particular table number, the second is the number of a particular paragraph within the table. For example, T 1.1 means the first paragraph from the first table. Underlining in the text within the tables is mine.

The result will be an unordered mass of immediate observations with overlaps. The next stage is to systematise this intermediate set of data into some structure. The procedure consists of applying some artificial logical algorithm (a number of operations) with a goal of finding and excluding repetitions, determining which points hold the greatest importance for Kargel, and determining connections and subordination of these points. This procedure will hopefully lead to formulating the final summary of Kargel's hermeneutical principles.

The whole process of moving from the original data (Kargel's theological writings) to the organized hermeneutical system that was supposedly implied by

Kargel is by nature an inductive process. However, the author fully realises that the results obtained through this research strongly depend on the method of analysis and synthesis being applied to the original and intermediate accumulation of data.

Only then will the author proceed to the second goal: to discover some theological and historical roots of Kargel's hermeneutics, and to demonstrate how he related to different traditions of Bible interpretation. The author fully understands that Kargel did not labour in a theological vacuum; he encountered a number of theologians and movements as discussed above. Comparing Kargel's point of view with those of others can help to gain further insight into the distinctives of Kargel's methodology. Besides, the subject of Kargel's indebtedness to earlier sources and traditions has not been sufficiently explored.

The review of Kargel's background suggested that he had been exposed to the influences of Mennonite, Baptist, Brethren, and Orthodox views. Hence the author would expect to find certain issues addressed by Kargel: teaching on holiness, an emphasis on eschatology, dispensationalism, a typological interpretation of the Old Testament, believer's baptism, church membership and discipline, and the Lord's Supper.

Finally, the author also realizes that the obtained results will be open-ended and open to criticism, and that vulnerability cannot be evaded.

5.3.1 Case study 1. Based on a section from the book, "Where do you stand in your relationship to the Holy Spirit"

In this case study the author is going to examine Kargel's hermeneutical principles applied to his treatment of a portion of Old Testament prophecy, that is, Kargel's hermeneutics at work in a chosen area.

This book of sixty-six pages contains nine chapters. Kargel discusses the following topics: receiving the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Spirit, anointment by the Spirit, fruit of the Spirit, the Old Testament promises concerning the Holy Spirit, etc. A brief review of the chapters will provide some context for the piece chosen for closer examination.

Chapter one, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?", is based on Acts 19:1-2. Kargel attempts to answer two main questions: "How is this serious

question concerning the Holy Spirit applicable to the present time?" and "How can we know that we have received the Holy Spirit?"

An exposition on "the power from above" follows in chapter two. The main questions here are: "What is meant by this power from above?" and "What was meant by the promise of the power from above?" The main frame of reference here is passages from the Gospel of John and the Acts of Apostles.

Chapter three focuses on the call to be filled with the Spirit, based on Ephesians 5:18. Chapter four concentrates on Christ's example of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The subject of chapter five is the Spirit's anointing. Beginning with 1 John 2:20, 27, Kargel explains what anointing is, what it produces, how it works, and finally how a person can receive it. Chapter six deals with the fruit of the spirit. The main passage here is Galatians 5:22-23; the rest of the quotations also come mainly from the Epistles.

Chapter seven is about the Old Testament promise of the Holy Spirit and the present day believers. This chapter will be used for a case study with the purpose of determining Kargel's hermeneutics and it will be examined in detail (see Table 1).

Chapter eight discusses how believers can be filled by the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of the Pentecost. This Spirit was on Christ and He promised Him to His disciples. The Spirit can be given only to believers, and receiving the Holy Spirit puts the end to spiritual drought.

Chapter nine also deals with the Old Testament. In this chapter Kargel works with two examples from Second Kings, those of Elijah and Elisha, and ends up showing what believers can learn from those examples in order to obtain the same kind of Spirit. According to Kargel, the Holy Spirit is crucial for both salvation and sanctification: "Saving faith is impossible without the Holy Spirit" (Kargel 2002:116).

The following are a few principles that follow from of the examined portion of Kargel's text.

5.3.1.1 Biblical pattern of promise and fulfilment

When dealing with the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecy found in the book of Joel, Kargel examines what Joel's prophesy actually promised, compares it to the events of Pentecost when Peter quoted Joel speaking about

the outpouring of God's Spirit "upon all flesh", and comes to the conclusion that when taken literally the prophecy was not completely fulfilled in the first century (T 1.2, T 1.4, T 1.6, T 1.7). Hence, Kargel resorts to the theory of partial fulfilment of prophecy and seems to hold it strongly.

Kargel also seems to believe that people can delay or speed up the fulfilment of God's plans depending on their spiritual condition and consequent actions (T 1.5). It is notable that in Kargel's exposition of the text of Acts 2:16-21 he develops some trains of thought that one can find in Bruce's commentary written more than half a century later: "Certainly the outpouring of the Spirit on a hundred and twenty Jews could not in itself fulfil the prediction of such outpouring 'upon all flesh'; but it was the beginning of the fulfilment" (Bruce 1977:68).

Kistemaker also points out the absence of any indication that at Pentecost God fulfilled Joel's prediction of signs and wonders. Furthermore, on none of the occasions described by Luke as outpourings of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, Samaria, Caesarea, and Ephesus "did the people see signs in nature as Joel predicted them" (Kistemaker 1990:90). Thus the fact that the signs and wonders as Joel predicted them were not recorded around the days of Pentecost is generally recognised by commentators. Kargel goes further and suggests that since they did not happen then, they are still awaiting fulfilment (T 1.5, T. 1.7).

5.3.1.2 *Apocalyptic approach*

Kargel states that Joel's prophecy concerns his [Kargel's] time. He strongly believed that he was actually living during the "the last days" (T. 1.5, T 1.12). Kargel was certainly not alone in the succession of theologians and lay believers who have thought they were living in the last days.

According to Coad, at Plymouth "the tenor of the teaching was strongly apocalyptic" (Coad 1968:67). Coad points out that "much of the teaching and testimony of the church was based upon prophetic interpretation, and upon the apocalyptic expectations of apostasy and judgement which this study generated" (Coad 1968:68). J. N. Darby, whose views could have influenced Kargel, was not the only one whose "doctrine of Church was built up under expectation of the imminent Christ's return, which he dated on one occasion to 1842" (Coad 1968:121). Actually, many Christians through the centuries "have

been unable to maintain the tension of the possibility of the return of Christ in their time and have felt compelled to set the date for the Second Coming” (Clouse 1977:27).

Around 1839 Darby wrote words that could be easily mistaken for Kargel’s:

For me, the near coming of the Saviour, the gathering together of His own, and the sanctification and joy of those who are manifested are always the thought predominant in my soul. There is every appearance that the Lord is hastening the time.³³⁹

The connection Darby makes between the nearness of the Lord’s return and sanctification of His own was very typical of Kargel as well (T. 1.7).

Kargel’s main argument for the Second Advent being near at hand is the number of certain signs of the last days (T 1.5). It seems that Kargel understands the expression “the last days” as “the days just before the end” (T 1.5) which is “the real focus of meaning” (Newman & Nida 1972:43). Among those signs of the last days Kargel mentions the decline of the Christian Church, war rumours and the invention of new deadly weapons, the activity of the “red dragon”, the national awakening and aspirations of the Jews, powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and great awakenings among Christians in different parts of the world (T 1.5).

These arguments were not new either. In 1816, Lewis Way, an Anglican clergyman, stressed in his “Letters” the importance of the return of the Jews to Palestine that was supposed to take place before Jesus Christ’s return:

This new stress on the Jews carried with it another and more literalistic interpretation of some of the Old Testament prophecies referring to Israel. When the prophets spoke predictively of Israel they meant Israel and not the church. Thus one of the most important planks of premillennialism was nailed down . . . In the immediate post-Napoleonic era, events took place that appeared to confirm the premillennial view for a number of British Christians . . . between 1815 and 1830 – they saw a number of signs that indicated the nearness of the Second Coming. And it appeared as if these signs were being fulfilled before their very eyes. One sign was the conversion of Jews . . . Another sign of the nearness of the Second Advent was the preaching of the gospel throughout the world (Rennie 1977:45-46).

Then, according to Rennie, there appeared a political opportunity for the return of the Jews. “In addition, there were signs of apostasy in much of the church

³³⁹ Letters, Vol. I, pp. 31-32 (letter of November 22), 1839, in Coad 1968:113.

[due to Rationalism] and thus the end was near” (Rennie 1977:47). Besides, there was “a sense of upheaval and chaos in society as a whole. The fabric of British life was being strained” (Rennie 1977:48).

Kargel was writing his book after the first Russian revolution of 1905-1907 and two years before World War I broke out. The political situation in Russia was reminiscent of Great Britain a century earlier; the fabric of Russian life was also being strained. The opportunity for Jews to return to Palestine was becoming more possible. Rationalism was stronger and more widespread. The preaching of the gospel was extending even farther in the world.

Indeed, Kargel’s apocalyptic expectations were closely connected with his pessimistic view on the condition of Christendom. However, Kargel’s “decline of the Christian Church” (T 1.1) does not sound as bad as Darby’s “ruin of the Church” proclaimed almost a century earlier (Coad 1968:121). So, Kargel did expect the day of the Lord to take place any time (T 1.5, T 1.12) and was quite certain that his days were the last days. However, he never went so far as to predict the exact year of Christ’s advent.

5.3.1.3 “Latter rain” expectations

As far as the future of the church was concerned, Kargel was more optimistic than Darby and actually expected another Pentecost (T 1.1). This follows out of his literalistic interpretation of Joel’s prophecy (T 1.6, T 1.7), as well as out of the theory of partial fulfilment of the prophecy (T 1.2, T 1.4, T 1.6). The expectation of a great outpouring of the Spirit before “the end” (T 1.5) did not originate with Kargel either. Almost a century earlier premillennialists expected “a special ministry of the Holy Spirit in at least part of the church just prior to the Lord’s return – a ‘latter rain’ – and that this would be accompanied by charismatic activity” (Rennie 1977:48). It was an exciting time:

When news of the expression of the charismatic gifts reached London from Scotland in the early summer of 1830, prophetic anticipation reached a new high in certain circles. . . . Around 1830 many of the premillennialists looked for such outpouring of the Holy Spirit prior to the Second Advent (Rennie 1977:52).

It is hard to say how exactly these Brethren ideas reached Kargel. Did they come through the Darby-Radstock-Pashkov channel, through Baedeker, Müller, or one of those Keswick speakers who visited St. Petersburg, or, perhaps, from reading literature? It is not clear. Considering Kargel’s

connections a number of possibilities exist, especially since such views had been extant for almost a century. It is doubtful that Kargel developed his views concerning the signs of the last days completely on his own, independent from outside influences, with just a Bible in his hands.

In connection with this it is interesting to note Kargel's frequent usage of hidden quotations from the Bible (T 1.7, T 1.11). He seems to employ and accommodate the language of the Bible to the point of doing it subconsciously. His treatment of this hidden quotation about the "dead bones" deserves special attention:

What will it be like, what should it be like, when the Lord literally fulfils this promise and comes down upon thousands of assemblies all over the world, and from them the spirit of life will blow over the 'dead bones'? (T 1.11).

Obviously Kargel expected a great awakening in the midst of thousands of lifeless Christian churches that would affect even the "dead bones", that is, Israel.

5.3.1.4 Importance of application

Having discussed Joel's prophecy, Kargel moved to its application: if the prophecy is going to be completely fulfilled, what is expected of believers in order to become its recipients (T 1.2, T 1.4, T 1.5, T 1.7). Kargel is much more interested in what the prophecy actually means for contemporary believers than what it meant to the first century Christians or to Joel's original audience. It is not surprising that his application is longer than his exegesis.

Kargel uses the historical account of the events surrounding Pentecost to develop a pattern for modern Christians' behaviour (T 1.4, T.1.5). In Kargel's view the things that the Apostles did (for example, they called for repentance) were not only historically true but also set an example or pattern for other believers to follow. This approach was typical for the nineteenth century that witnessed

the growing concern among some Christians for the rediscovery of New Testament patterns of church life . . . This phenomenon is well-described by some historians as the Restorationist Movement. In Britain it found its expression primarily in Plymouth Brethrenism and the Catholic Apostolic Church (Rennie 1977:47).

This tendency for following biblical patterns is connected with what can be called Kargel's hermeneutics of obedience, which is discussed fuller under case study 2 based on Kargel's book "Christ is our sanctification".

Kargel's goal in writing is to edify his readers, not to feed their curiosity or intellect (T 1.9). Kaiser and Silva see this devotional method of studying the Bible as rooted in a strong desire to find in the Scripture solid applications for everyday life:

Such study is not motivated by intellectual, historical, or critical curiosities; instead, it involves a strong commitment to seeing changes in one's own attitudes, values, and actions . . . The major goal in the exercise of the devotional reading of scripture is not the mastery of God but God's mastery of the reader, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit . . . It correctly presumes that the words of Scripture are clear enough to be understood in their basic message . . . The reader is dependent on the Holy Spirit for the work of illuminating those Scriptures used in a devotional study . . . Central to the devotional method is the act of meditating on the Word of God (Kaiser & Silva 1994:164, 162).

Kargel's way of analysing the Bible clearly falls under this definition and can be called a devotional study.

5.3.1.5 View of the Scripture and its study

Kargel appears to hold a very high view of Scripture (T 1.1). He most often refers to it as the Word of God (T 1.5). He calls the passage he is working with "coming from God's mouth" (T 1.1) and "the direct word of God" (T 1.5). The entire Bible is absolutely trustworthy for Kargel. The authority of the Scripture was a subject that needed no special address (T 1.1, T 1.3).

In the matter of inspiration Kargel does not see any difference between the Old and the New Testament (T 1.3). When he deals with a historical account he believes that events described actually did take place in history (T 1.4). When he deals with prophecy he expects its literal fulfilment (T 1.7).

Kargel's repeated calls to study, penetrate, examine and re-examine the text, to obtain the "precise meaning" show that he does not expect the message from Scripture to reach the heads and hearts of believers in some mystical way; he wants to approach Scripture with an open mind (T 1.2). He is willing to give up a previously held opinion if proven wrong by the Scriptures (T 1.2). Concerning the interpretation of difficult passages (T 1.2), Kargel would certainly agree with the Brethren missionary Groves who wrote about things in the Scripture that are hard to understand:

We come to the consideration of them with hearts pre-occupied by ready-made decisions . . . And, against all this overwhelming influence, there is but one remedy, to read the word of God with a single view to know His will, by whom it was inspired.³⁴⁰

Kargel's search for the precise (hence one?) meaning of the text (T 1.2, T 1.3) reminds one of Luther's position, who accepted "no more than one simplest meaning"³⁴¹, or Tyndale's position, for whom "Scripture hath but one sense, which is the literal sense . . . which thou must seek out diligently"³⁴², or Menno Simon's position who, in spite of Anabaptist literalism, "insisted that it was the sense which was the important thing" (Poettcker 1984:74).

Kargel attempts to take up anew the study of the text and is not afraid to question a traditional interpretation of the passage. The traditional interpretation (at least for Kargel) was that the promises found in Joel had been fulfilled at Pentecost (T 1.2). Kargel examines the content of the prophecy and comes to the conclusion that not all those things were completely fulfilled during the time of the apostles (T 1.2). Believing that all of the Bible's promises have to be fulfilled sooner or later (one of his basic premises), he suggests their partial fulfilment in the days of Pentecost and full completion just before the day of the Lord (T 1.4, T 1.5).

Kargel's exegesis starts from the study of contents of the passage (T 1.3). Second, he encourages using one's imagination to place oneself into the original setting (T 1.4). Third, he uses various translations to get a better grasp of the text's meaning (T 1.9). Fourth, he starts from the literal sense as a foundation for developing the spiritual sense (T 1.4). Finally, working from the premise that Scripture is to be obeyed, he develops the application, usually his lengthiest part (T 1.5, T 1.7, T 1.12).

At all times Kargel keeps in mind the context of the whole Bible, which is his main frame of reference. He seems to hold to the principle that Scripture is its own interpreter and that clearer passages can explain more difficult ones. His tendency is to clarify the Old Testament passages with New Testament

³⁴⁰ Memoir, pp. 10-11, in Coad 1968:104.

³⁴¹ Frederic W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, Bampton Lectures, 1885 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961), p. 329, in Kaiser 1994:225.

³⁴² William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, in Kaiser & Silva 1994:225.

ones (T 1.3), in the tradition of Reformers Luther³⁴³ and Calvin, who held to the principle of “*Scripture scripturae interpres*” because they believed that “Scriptures are the products of a single divine mind” (Packer 1983:350).

That Kargel’s exegesis seems to be characterized by some measure of literalism (T 1.6) becomes evident from his interpretation of Joel’s prophecy. Kargel actually expects the literal fulfilment of all details mentioned (T 1.7). For him “all” is all and “everybody” is everybody (T 1.6). In this particular portion of Kargel’s text one does not find the emphasis on the Spirit’s illumination in order to gain the correct understanding of the biblical text. What one finds is that on occasion Kargel resorted to a syllogism (T 1.3) and argued from common sense (T 1.7). It also seems that one of Kargel’s epistemological presuppositions is that the more passages speak on a subject the stronger is the case (T 1.5).

A critical approach to the Bible is unacceptable to Kargel (T 1.7). In this matter he was of one mind with premillennialists, who “were stalwart opponents of liberalism. There are undoubtedly various reasons for this, but one certainly would be their literal approach to biblical interpretation” (Rennie 1977:55). As Rennie rightly pointed out, literalism accorded well with premillennialism (Rennie 1977:52). As mentioned already, Kargel maintains the historicity of biblical revelation. Like the Pietists, Kargel simply avoided questions of historical and “higher” criticism, particularly those of the authenticity of the text which he took for granted.

5.3.1.6 Immediacy of the scriptural message

Kargel presses for the relevance of the interpreted passage for his contemporaries (T 1.1, T 1.4, T 1.5, T 1.7). This corresponds well with his sense of immediacy of the scriptural message for his time. For Kargel what Scripture says here and now to us is much more important than what it said there and then to them. Some might accuse Kargel of skipping “the first step” of working with the text, that is, a form of textual interpretation (critical study of the linguistic, textual, and historical aspects of Acts, etc.). Whether he was familiar with these techniques or not, he does not leave traces of that kind of work in his book. The important thing is that Kargel’s goal was never to hear the voice of Luke, but the voice of God.

³⁴³ Kargel spoke highly of Luther as a “living Christian” and “a man of God” and quotes from the Small Catechism (Kargel 2002:116).

One can, of course, focus on differences of culture and mindset that separate the contemporary setting from apostolic times. Kargel instead focuses on the things that unite people of all times – spiritual and ethical issues. Besides, he regards the Holy Spirit as the ultimate author of the Scriptures, who had it written in a way that would be understandable for people of all ages and all generations.

This is how Kargel might have thought: it is true that the apostle Peter had to speak up when addressing the crowd because he had no loud speakers and he was certainly dressed differently from a modern orator; nevertheless, the content of his message and subsequent call to repentance transcends time and culture. (I hope I am not reading too much into Kargel’s text.) Kargel tends to spiritualise the words of biblical writers making them timeless, instead of attributing these words to an ancient culture and thus rendering them irrelevant to his time.

Thiselton points out that it was not atypical for “certain individualist strands within religious or Christian pietism” to use “innocent subjective reading in *traditions of pietism*” (Thiselton 1992:530). However, he warns of certain dangers in such an approach:

Very often in religious groups an individual is encouraged . . . to ‘read’ the text as ‘what the text *means to me*’. . . But without any principle of *suspicion*, in Gadamer’s terminology a *premature* fusion of horizons will take place *before* readers have listened in openness with respect for the tension between the horizons of the text and the horizon of the reader. The textual horizon has collapsed into that of the reader’s narrative biography, and is unable to do more than to speak back his or her own values and desires (Thiselton 1992:530-531).

To what extent this might be the case with Kargel is difficult to ascertain. To answer this question the author needs to study more of his text. It is clear, however, that Kargel’s interest in the study of this passage goes far beyond academic speculation. He does not ask the question, “What did it mean to them?” His question is, “What does it mean to us?” and, most importantly, “What is expected of us as a result of the acquired meaning?”

Overall Kargel’s writing style is devotional and edifying. His main goal was the spiritual benefit of common people, hence one cannot expect his writings to sound scholarly. In the portion under investigation Kargel comes forward not as much as an exegete but as a commentator and a preacher. Kargel’s emotional attachment to the Book also comes through quite clearly.

It is believed that the book was written as a reaction against the rising Pentecostal movement, but the author did not find anything that would fight Pentecostalism in Kargel's text. The important point is that for Kargel the Holy Spirit's activity is not limited to tongues, gifts, visions and prophecy, but first and foremost it is about the holy conduct of believers (T 1.8). The behaviour of a person filled with the Spirit is characterised by bearing a testimony for Christ, praying, praising God, devotion, etc. These emphases harmonise well with the holiness movements in Europe, with which Kargel was familiar. The emphasis on sanctification was also characteristic of Pietism (the term speaks for itself). This point will be discussed further under case study 2.

5.3.2 Case study 2. Based on the book “Christ is our sanctification”

This book serves as an example of Kargel's systematic approach to the Christian doctrines of sanctification. In addition, the chosen portion of Kargel's text (see Table 2 in the Appendix) includes a number of explicit statements made by Kargel concerning the Scripture and scriptural interpretation.

Kargel starts this book with listing seven scriptural reasons why believers should be holy. Chapter one presents the essence of sanctification as Kargel finds it in Scripture. The chapter is divided into two sections: the first one discusses the biblical meaning of the word “sanctification”; the second attempts to discover the essence of sanctification from the way God sanctifies people.

Chapter two concentrates on the goal of sanctification. Here Kargel attempts to show from Scripture that the goal of sanctification is “real and practical liberation from sin”, “becoming God's possession”, being indwelled by Christ, and finally becoming likened to the Lord.

Chapter three deals with the means of sanctification. They include believer's knowledge of and relationship with Christ, constant abiding in Christ, complete surrender to the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, faith, prayer, fellowship with other believers, and sufferings.

Kargel's text in Table 2 is quoted from the *Bratskiy Vestnik* [The Brotherly Herald]. Parts of Kargel's text in brackets [...] are quoted from a later (and fuller) edition of the book published by *Bibliya dlya vsekh* in 2002. Bold highlighting in Table 2 is mine. The following is the result of the author's study of Kargel's text.

5.3.2.1 *Scripture as the Word of God*

Now, proceeding to discuss Kargel's treatment of the Scripture more specifically the author will start with Kargel's view of the scriptural authority. A number of times Kargel explicitly identifies the Word of God with the Bible thus taking Bible authority for granted (T 2.2, T 2.3, T 2.4, T 2.5, T 2.62, T 2.68, T 2.69, T 2.83). Kargel states that the Word **is** the Word of God (not to be mistaken with "becoming the Word of God", or being found in the Bible under the leadership of the Spirit).

Although it is easy to assume that the notion of accepting the Scripture as the Word of God naturally follows from holding the doctrine of verbal inspiration so typical for Protestant orthodoxy (Braaten 1968:138), Kargel does not use terms like "inerrancy" or "verbal inspiration." In this approach Kargel is closer to the Anabaptists, most of whom also "identified the Scriptures and God's Word" (Klaassen 1984:5) and by whom "the Bible is simply equated with the Word of God" (Kraus 1984:140), than to Luther, who "spoke of Scripture as being the verbally inspired Word of God" (Ollenburger 1984:46). The Anabaptists were not "primarily concerned with correct theories of inspiration which would guarantee the Bible's rational authority" (Kraus 1984:135). One does not find such theories in Kargel either.

Kargel does not build any hierarchy of revelation. The written Word (Scripture) is no less true and trustworthy than the living Word (Jesus) (T 2.71).

It is common in both the Anabaptist-Mennonite confessions and in Kargel's 1913 Confession to assume the Scripture's authority and then to concentrate on seeking to understand and apply it. For the Anabaptists, the Scripture "was an authority to be obeyed rather than defined" (Kraus 1984:135). The Bible records are viewed "as a rule of faith and conduct" (Kraus 1984:136; Kargel 1913). However, such an approach contains some dangers. First, "this preoccupation with rules of conduct produced many examples of quaint proof-texting and the finding of direct guidance from the pages of the Bible" (Kraus 1984:139). Second,

there is a kind of artless freedom under the guidance of the spirit to use the Scriptures for admonishing the brotherhood. They were not challenged to defend the Bible against attacks upon its authority. When they wrote about it, they magnified and praised it, but they simply assumed its divine origin and validity. Therefore to read a theory of verbal inerrancy into their writings is anachronistic (Kraus 1984:139).

It would be anachronistic to read such a theory into Kargel's writings as well.

5.3.2.2 The role of the Holy Spirit and studying the text

When it comes to the Scripture, Kargel strongly emphasises the role of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the ultimate author of Scripture (T 2.16, T 2.19, T 2.20). He spoke through the mouths of the apostles (T 2.83). He leads into the depth of knowledge of scriptural truths (T 2.4). He brings scriptural truths, encouragements, commands, etc., to believers' attention (T 2.65). He helps to accomplish God's goal (T 2.26). Thus, Kargel places the whole process of exegesis (reading the Scripture, understanding, and application in life) under the power of the Holy Spirit. Kargel recognizes the double authorship of Scripture but puts the emphasis on the Spirit (T 2.16, T 2.20); somehow Paul or any other human writer said exactly what the Lord wanted them to say (T 2.83). However, Kargel never speculates on the process itself, never tells how exactly this might have happened.

With all the importance that Kargel attributes to the Spirit, the Spirit does not pass the knowledge of the Scripture to a believer in some mystical way without studying the text (T 2.75). Similar ideas were expressed by Spener who "insisted that the Word does not become effective mechanically like a medicine but must be brought to life in the soul by the Spirit of God" (Stoeffler 1965:240). Kargel was opposed to a mechanical reading of Scripture or even memorising large portions if the motives were not right (T 2.75). Even the divine origin and intrinsic power of the book would do no good unless a reader did the work of searching the Scriptures.

There are other conditions brought up by Kargel that make the Word effective, including being a new creature in Christ (T 2.84), having a desire to obey the discovered will of God (T 2.47, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.76, T 2.79), searching the Scripture for one's own spiritual benefit (T 2.48, T 2.80) before using it as a frame of reference for a sermon addressed to others, etc. This last point was also shared with Spener (Stoeffler 1965:240).

It is believed that in the history of interpretation "Calvin emerges fully as the theologian of the Holy Spirit" because in Calvin's exegetical principles "there is special stress on the place of the Holy Spirit in the whole process of understanding and interpretation" (Floor 1982:182).

Calvin carefully stressed that the understanding of the Scriptures is effected through the Holy Spirit, and that the Spirit does it through the

Word . . . The Word first has to be heard acoustically before the Spirit can transmit it from the ear to the heart (Floor 1982:185).

Kargel, with his unceasing attention to the Holy Spirit, seems to play a similar role of a theologian of the Holy Spirit in the Russian Evangelical movement.

Speaking of the Spirit's role in unfolding scriptural knowledge, Kargel makes the following statements: "Let's give freedom to the Holy Spirit to guide us into the depth of knowledge of truth" (T 2.4), "The Holy Spirit must make the Word alive" (T 2.83), and "The Holy Spirit can reveal us the Bible from a new side" (T 2.82). What did Kargel mean by these and similar statements? Did he mean that we should open ourselves to what God has to say? Did Kargel refer to the Holy Spirit's action in exegesis?

It seems that the answers can be found in the position of Kargel's predecessors. The guidance of the Spirit was actively taught by the Pietists. Pietistic biblicism insisted that God's law and promises, revealed in the Bible, "must be rationally applied to man's condition under the guidance of the Spirit" (Stoeffler 1965:80). The approach when "in reading the Bible the pious person now looked for divine truth, which the Spirit of God would directly impress upon his soul" was classified by Stoeffler as "intuitional Biblicism" (Stoeffler 1965:80).

The talk about the Word becoming "alive" did not originate with Kargel either. For instance, for Menno Simons "the Word is not a neutral fact, but a living reality, it opens itself to the believer and closes itself to the evildoer" (Poettcker 1984:65). Calvin held that "because God Himself is actively speaking to us in and through Scripture, Scripture is the *living* Word of God" (Floor 1982:158). Calvin believed that "the Spirit guides us in the truth of Scripture so that we can discern and understand *what* God is saying to us in the teaching of Scripture" (Floor 1982:170). The Anabaptists held that "a biblical text without the penetration and testing of personal appropriation is a dead letter" (Yoder 1984:18). Nicolai, a Lutheran Pietist, taught that "the Spirit of God takes God's revelation in nature and in Scripture and impresses it upon the heart of man . . . Unless this is the case Scripture is no more than a dead letter" (Stoeffler 1965:201). Menno Simon believed that "the Spirit is active through the Word and thus prevents the text from becoming a dead letter" (Ollenburger 1984:51). Kargel also contrasted "dead knowledge" of the Scripture with the "living knowledge" (T 2.44). In Kargel's view "a dead letter" becomes "alive" through the active involvement of the Holy Spirit.

“The constant reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit” was “the mitigating hermeneutical factor” in Anabaptism (Dyck 1984:35). For instance, Rothmann wrote, “I will never achieve the power of the knowledge of God unless God’s Spirit drives me with power, teaches me, and leads me into the Scriptures”.³⁴⁴ The Anabaptists believed that “through the Spirit the Word became powerful, alive, and immediate” (Dyck 1984:37).

When speaking of the Spirit at work giving insights into the divine Word by telling us what “God would have us to do at our particular time in history”, Cullmann employs the useful verb “actualise” (Dorman 1983:250). And this is what the author thinks Kargel meant: the Spirit actualises the words of Scripture and they become “living knowledge” (T 2.44). Considering the role that the Spirit plays in the process of interpretation for Kargel, one can talk about pneumatic epistemology where a person can come to the true knowledge of the Scripture relying only on the guidance of the Spirit in the process of interpretation.

5.3.2.3 Scripture and doctrinal matters

Discussing the doctrines of justification and sanctification Kargel goes to the Scripture as to the only authority in doctrinal matters (T 2.2, T 2.4, T 2.15, T 2.49). He uses Scripture to define the term of sanctification (T 2.18, T 2.21, T 2.22), to find its essence (T 2.12, T 2.41, T 2.46), and to discover the conditions and goal of sanctification (T 2.14, T 2.16, T 2.22). Kargel begins with a statement that “the Word of God gives us very resolute and positive answer” to the question of sanctification (T 2.2), thereby making Scripture the final court of appeal.

In the doctrine of justification Kargel stands on the classical position of the Reformers (T 2.5). Nevertheless, he thinks that while the Reformers had done a great job in developing the doctrine of justification, they had underestimated the doctrine of sanctification (T 2.2, T 2.64). Kargel sees justification as a foundation and condition for further sanctification (T 2.4, T 2.7). He also sees justification as an event (T 2.11, T 2.13) while sanctification is a lifelong process (T 2.10, T 2.11, T 2.12, T 2.13).

Kargel’s emphasis on sanctification and his worries about the lack of attention to holiness among Christians were not new. Similar concerns were

³⁴⁴ Restitution, 1534, 221, in Dyck 1984:36.

expressed long before Kargel by the Pietists who “sincerely believed . . . that the Protestant reformation had stopped short of becoming the kind of a moral reformation which the Christian faith demands” (Stoeffler 1965:21). “Luther himself, insisted Spener, knew this and regretted the fact that the reformation of doctrine did not proceed to become a reformation of life” (Stoeffler 1965:235). Actually, Luther himself made justification by faith “the central principle of his hermeneutic, throwing the shadow of work righteousness over every effort at holiness” (Dyck 1984:38). Lodensteyn, a pietistic writer, stated that “a reformation of doctrine indeed has taken place . . . But, alas, the Reformed church has stopped with such a reformation. ‘There we stand now’, he laments. ‘There is no Spirit in the doctrine’”.³⁴⁵

Pietism preached piety by definition. Quotes from Stoeffler demonstrate how similar Kargel’s insights concerning the whole holiness issue were to the Pietists in general and to Spener in particular. In their preaching the Pietists constantly repeated that “without conversion and sanctification the individual’s Christianity is hollow and his religious profession mere sham”. He goes on to say that

they did not, as the heresy hunters alleged, attempt to substitute conversion and sanctification for justification. What they did wish to stress was the fact that justification is meaningless from the point of view of the individual who needs salvation unless it is personally appropriated in a fiducial commitment. Justification must be more than a forensic act on the part of God. It must enter into human experience. This it does in the divinely wrought miracle of conversion and in the divinely initiated and supported strivings for sanctification. . . . To right belief must be added the piety which God expects in a new creature according to his revelation . . . to the Pietists it was Biblical Christianity (Stoeffler 1965:17).

As for Spener, who departed from orthodoxy on this very point of sanctification, this doctrine carried a great importance.

While . . . his opponents paid lip service to this doctrine it was not organically related to their system . . . Spener, on the other hand, believed uncompromisingly that Christ came not only to justify men but to sanctify them as well. Sanctification, he held, is not merely a test of true faith, it is a divine intention and hence a valid religious end. Nor is it something done by God alone. God initiates the action, to be sure. He provides the initial impulse and the strength the Christian needs from day to day to live in holiness. But the individual must respond to God’s grace

³⁴⁵ Geestelyke Opwekker, 1740, pp. 117-120, in Stoeffler 1965:146-147.

and bend his will toward the continuous amendment of life (Stoeffler 1965:241).

The emphasis on sanctification had been quite strong in British Evangelicalism as well for a few decades prior to Kargel's writing of the book. The author will only briefly repeat that British Evangelicalism in general was deeply influenced by a new holiness movement from the 1870s onwards (Bebbington 1989:150-152). The Brethren insisted "upon high standards of personal conduct" (Coad 1976:104) in view of the Lord's imminent return. The Keswick movement stressed "holiness by faith" and "promoted practical holiness" (Randall 1999:14, 23). Thus, Kargel stood "on the shoulders" of those pietists and evangelicals who before him had emphasised the doctrine of sanctification.

Kargel in his book attempts to restore what he sees as a healthy and biblical balance of justification and sanctification. "Holiness unto the Lord" is what the book is about. When discussing sanctification Kargel recognizes two levels of spiritual reality found in the New Testament: ontological and ethical. He points out the tension between the positional and practical, the ontological status and ethical condition of a believer throughout the New Testament (T 2.18, T 2.28, T 2.29). Like the Brethren, Kargel mentions the anticipation of the Lord's imminent return in connection with sanctification (T 2.56). In the light of this expectancy he calls believers to be ready, that is, blameless.

At times it seems that while Kargel might not pay a lot of attention to the immediate literal context he is always aware of the larger context of the whole Bible (T 2.8, T 2.19, T 2.20, T 2.22, T 2.60). It is his frame of reference. Behind this approach lies the belief that the whole of Scripture is essential to the interpretation of the parts. Actually, Luther was one of those who insisted on each passage being interpreted in the light of the Biblical message as a whole (Ollenburger 1984:47). Both Luther and Menno Simon dealt with difficult passages by comparing them with the whole Bible (Ollenburger 1984:8).

Kargel's presentation of a theological issue usually goes through several steps. First, he presents a proposition (T 2.2). Then he brings up Scriptural evidence, starting with more abstract sounding passages, then providing examples from Scripture (T 2.10, T 2.30). At times he uses syllogisms (T 2.34). Using devices of formal logic such as syllogisms was another Reformed hermeneutic principle appropriated by Kargel. "While the Reformers maintained

that logical deductions drawn from the Bible had equal authority with the Bible itself, Menno Simon insisted that this was not permissible – this was mere philosophizing and rationalizing” (Poettcker 1984:75).

It seems that, according to Kargel, the more passages address the point the stronger the point is (T 2.16, T 2.57, T 2.58). Old Testament commands which are repeated in the New Testament are considered especially important by Kargel (T 2.16). Finally he draws an application of the scriptural truth for contemporary believers (T 2.23, T 2.32). Kargel’s constant emphasis is on the relevance of Scripture for today (T 2.27). Kargel, like Reformed Pietist Jean de Taffin, constantly endeavoured to make Scripture his guide (T 2.92); for Kargel the Scriptures also were the “objective frame of reference by truth of which he meant to support every statement made. What we have here again, then, is the intuitive Biblicism” (Stoeffler 1965:124).

Thus, although Kargel does not refer to all those above mentioned theologians and movements, his position on the doctrine of sanctification is strongly reminiscent of the Anabaptists, Pietists, Brethren, and adherents of the Holiness movement. Basically, Kargel was continuing a tradition which Stoeffler accurately labelled as intuitive Biblicism.

The theologians that Kargel referred to by name are his famous contemporaries, Spurgeon and Moody. He quotes from “dear” Spurgeon and from “great preacher” Moody in his book (T 2.57, T 2.77). It seems that he holds both men in great respect and shares their theological views. Both preached at the time when rationalism was coming to the front. Both called to not focus so much on reason and man, but to believe in the Bible. Kargel likewise argued from a conservative exegetical tradition and accepted the Bible as the Word of God.

5.3.2.4 Personal searching of the Scriptures

Kargel attributes great importance to Scripture reading (T 2.68, T 2.70). He makes a very strong point for personal and regular reading of the Bible (T 2.68, T 2.77, T 2.81), meditating, making it one’s own, consuming it like food essential for one’s spiritual well being (T 2.73, T 2.79, T 2.81, T 2.83, T 2.86), and not relying on others “to feed” you (T 2.77, T 2.79). The Word is as essential for believers as milk for babies (T 2.68). This kind of attitude was typical for evangelicals in general. It is characterized by a particular regard for

the Bible and devotion to the personal searching of the Scriptures (Bebbington 1989:3). Janzen traces this kind of attitude to the Reformation showing both its strong and weak points:

The Reformation's concern for the Word placed the Bible into the center of Protestant life, but this very attempt to make it 'food for every day' led to its fragmented distribution and consumption: detailed exegesis of a short sermon text; meditation on a brief passage for daily devotions (Janzen 1984:180-181).

The Brethren insisted upon "the direct appeal to the Scriptures over the head of all existing authority" (Coad 1968:104). Kargel also insisted on free access to the Scripture for all people (T 2.81), something that was essential in the Brethren witness (Coad 1968:285). In Kargel's view, one should personally study Scripture. Relying upon the Holy Spirit, Kargel (like Pashkov before him) was not afraid that "private interpretation" would do more harm than good. Kargel hardly ever refers to traditional, accepted or "officially prescribed" interpretations. Whereas the Anabaptists emphasised corporate interpretation of Scripture by the congregation, Kargel called for starting with the individual studying of Scripture. No books, commentaries, or sermons would substitute for personal search of the Scriptures (T 2.79).

It is true that all Reformers including the Anabaptists proclaimed *sola scriptura* as one of their main principles. However, the implications for hermeneutics were not the same for everyone. All Protestant camps recognized Scripture as normative for faith. All recognized the lay people's right to "read it with profit". Luther believed that the Holy Spirit was necessary for correct understanding of the Gospel (Dyck 1984:38). Yet Luther "paradoxically, feared Anabaptist reliance upon the Spirit and their literal, lay interpretation" (Dyck 1984:38). It seems that in this matter (literal, lay interpretation under the guidance of the Spirit), Kargel stood closer to the Anabaptists than to Luther. And not only did Kargel, for this was the favourite principle of Russian Stundism.

In Kargel's view searching and understanding the Scripture must be accompanied by prayer (T 2.48). Here Kargel is of the same mind with the Reformers. According to Luther, "The Bible cannot be mastered by study and

talent, but rather by prayer and inspiration”.³⁴⁶ Calvin also emphasised prayer for the understanding of the Scriptures; for him the true interpretation of the Bible was a gift from God that had to be asked for (Floor 1982:190). Therefore, one should pray “with a deep awareness of our poverty and our blindness, with confession of our guilt” (Floor 1982:190).

As for an awareness of one’s “poverty and blindness”, Kargel warned his readers against spiritual pride. Some people who “know a little” about the Scripture harden their hearts and become “the hardest kind of soil” (T 2.85). By this, Kargel is saying basically the following: Do not think you know it all because those who know a little may be worse than those who know nothing. That “little” puffs them up and blocks the way for further understanding (T 2.85). Similar thoughts were expressed by the Anabaptists, who believed that

if someone comes to the Scriptures with an honest and searching heart, the Spirit of God will illumine the mind and remove hindrances to understanding. Thus only one who comes with the right disposition, which is mainly humility, a readiness to be instructed, will truly understand the Word. No scholarship is of any avail if the humble spirit is lacking (Klaassen 1984:5).

Overall, Kargel presses the importance of one’s attitude. He invites his reader to search the Scriptures personally for oneself, not in order to prove a point or to teach others (T 2.77). Kargel feels sorry for those who never study the Scripture for themselves and find out its truths only through others. In regards to this he reminds the words of Moody who once said that many believers “eat” only when being fed “from the church spoon” (Kargel 2002:93). Kargel writes,

We must use this dear book *for ourselves* and apply it *to ourselves*... For years I used it as a collection of texts: I looked for the texts for others, appropriate texts in order to be able to say something to other. How often the Lord did not give me anything. Then other books, commentaries had to help me. With many tears I begged the Lord not to leave me in poverty. In His love He did not leave me without an answer. His last answer was, ‘I am ready to give something to *you*, specifically to *you*, but in reality you are not looking for something for yourself and are surprised that my Word is closed for you (Kargel 2002:93).

³⁴⁶ E. H. Harbison, *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation* (New York, 1956), pp. 106, 111, in Poettcker 1984:66.

Kargel encourages his readers to keep an open mind and reading Scripture every day as if for the first time (T 2.83). Being able to maintain a fresh look at the Scripture seems very important to Kargel (T 2.83, T 2.84, T 2.86). Having sincere and humble heart is, according to Kargel, a condition of gaining better understanding of the Scripture (T 2.86).

5.3.2.5 Obedience as a prerequisite for understanding

Although for Kargel the Scripture is the final court of appeal, it seems that in his understanding of *sola scriptura* principle he stood closer to the Anabaptists than to other Protestant groups. In the examined portion of Kargel's text he starts from placing a strong emphasis on studying the Scripture (head knowledge) but never stops there. The goal is "heart knowledge" – loving Scripture, following and obeying it (T 2.75, T 2.78, T 2.81, T 2.82, T 2.86, T 2.91). Furthermore, Kargel viewed obedience to the Scripture as a condition for its further understanding (T 2.16, T 2.47, T 2.61, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.76, T 2.79).

There is "a close connection in Anabaptism between understanding the Scriptures and obedience to what they demand . . . The readiness to obey Christ's words is prerequisite to understanding them" (Klaassen 1984:5-6). The Anabaptists believed that "only he who is committed to the direction of obedience can read the truth so as to interpret it in the line with the direction of God's purposes. 'If a man will to do the will of my father, he shall know of the doctrine'" (Yoder 1984:27). It is stated that for Menno Simon the prerequisite of understanding the Scripture was in the attitude of the person coming to the Scripture:

Very briefly this attitude must be marked by obedience . . . a willingness to be instructed . . . and a personal application in seeing the truths as they apply to everyday life . . . Wrongdoing . . . blinds people so that they do not understand.³⁴⁷

It is generally assumed that although the Anabaptists were "of one mind with Luther in his locating of final authority in the *sola scriptura* affirmation", a careful reading of their record reveals that there was actually "considerable difference in what these two traditions understood to mean in practice" (Dyck 1984:30). The Anabaptists came to the Scripture with a presupposition of

³⁴⁷ Henry Poettcker, Menno Simons' Encounter with the Bible, MQR 40 (1966), 115, in Ollenburger 1984:49.

obedience and “its implication for biblical understanding” (Dyck 1984:30). A similar point is made by Kraus: “In contrast to the Protestantism, who defined faith as assent to doctrine . . . the Anabaptists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries defined it essentially as obedience to Scripture” (Kraus 1984:135). Poettcker also points out that “while all the Reformers began with the same formal principle, *sola scriptura*, it was obvious immediately that their interpretation varied considerably. The reason lay in their different conception of understanding” (Poettcker 1984:63).

Actually, this concept, while not strongly emphasised, was not completely foreign for the Reformers. “The most basic of these presuppositions, as far as Calvin’s hermeneutics as a *Reformer* is concerned, is to be found in his explicit commitment to obey Holy Scripture as the one and only norm for true Christian faith and religion” (Floor 1982:151). Obedience was a Pietistic emphasis as well: “the children of God not only understand the Scriptures, but will do them, which is after all the important thing” (Stoeffler 1965:120).

Here we are talking about the hermeneutics of obedience – a trademark of the Anabaptists (Klaassen 1984:5-6; Yoder 1984:27; Ollenburger 1984:49-50) and of Kargel. It is not surprising to find a similar approach in Kargel when considering the significant Mennonite input into the Russian Evangelical movement. Kargel constantly encourages his readers to take their understanding of Scripture to the next level – application and fulfilment (T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.87, T 2.80, T 2.83). Serious study of Scripture must be followed by learning from positive examples and obedience to its commands (T 2.83, T 2.88, T 2.30, T 2.29). For Kargel the imperative in Scripture is more than a certain grammatical construction, it is a command to follow. Knowing the will of God surely meant doing it. He taught that the truths which believers learn from Scripture must become the reality of their lives.

Kargel takes it past this point, saying that faithfulness and obedience to the learnt truths are actually the conditions for finding more (T 2.47). For Kargel obedience to the Scripture is a prerequisite for further understanding (T 2.16, T 2.45, T 2.47). Hence it can be argued that Kargel held the epistemology of obedience, so typical for the Anabaptists whose “apprehension of new truths of faith was related directly to their actual faithfulness in discipleship” (Dyck 1984:30).

Finally, obedience to the Scripture leads to the goal of “receiving spiritual blessing” (T 2.86), being brought to the Lord, and finding light and life in Him (T 2.91). These are Kargel’s objectives of understanding the Scripture. It has been noticed that in the post-Reformation period “the individualist strands” emerged within pietism as reactions against theological controversy. “There emerged a type of believer whose only interest in the Bible is what he gets out of it for himself and his own comfort”.³⁴⁸ Indeed, such preoccupation with “self” could lead to excessive individualism. However, Kargel encourages believers to share the blessings find in the Word.

It is also true that the “hermeneutics of obedience” can easily lead to legalism. It is “generally recognised” that “the early Swiss Brethren had a biblicism bordering on legalism” (Klassen 1984:85). Menno Simon himself held that “what the scripture does not positively teach and command is forbidden” (Klassen 1984:85). However, it must be noted that no matter how Kargel presses obedience to the Scripture he warns against legalism (T 2.23). He believes that obedience cannot be forced on others (T 2.24). His attitude is similar to that of Spener who “was more interested in practical piety . . . and unlike the Pietists in the Netherlands and in England he consciously endeavoured not to be overly legalistic” (Stoeffler 1965:238).

Closely connected to obedience is the notion of the believers’ discipleship (T 2.44, T 2.52, T 2.62). For Kargel each believer is Christ’s disciple. It was another Anabaptist pre-understanding that “Jesus was to be followed” (Ollenburger 1984:49). Epistemological implications here would be similar to the case with obedience. Hans Denk believed that, “no man can know Christ unless he follows after him in life” – this is “a condensation of the Anabaptist concern for discipleship and obedience” (Yoder 1984:27). “The concept of discipleship among the Anabaptists . . . has epistemological importance in connection with right thinking and is thus more than a question of piety and ethics”.³⁴⁹

Kargel’s attitude toward the Scripture is not only obedience, but also love. The author wants to point out the language of endearment that Kargel accommodated. For example, phrases such as “precious Scripture” and

³⁴⁸ Stuart Allen, *The interpretation of Scripture*, 1967, p.18, in Thiselton 1992:193.

“beloved Christ” were very typical (T 2.62, T 2.67, T 2.68, T 2.79, T 2.82, T 2.67). This was characteristic for the Pietist, as for all mystics, who “often used terms of endearment in his references to God” (Stoeffler 1965:15-16).

5.3.2.6 Continuity between the Testaments

In the issue of continuity and discontinuity of the Testaments there is a significant difference between the Reformers on the one hand and Anabaptists and Brethren on the other. The classical Reformed position “maintained the unity of God’s dealing with mankind” (Coad 1968:132). Darby, on the contrary, “was building a completely new structure of Biblical interpretation” (Coad 1968:132). Where was Kargel? What was Kargel’s position concerning the Old Testament? Considering two influences – the Mennonite (who stressed the discontinuity between the two covenants) and Brethren (dispensationalists) – it is quite interesting to note that Kargel found a good degree of continuity between the testaments (T 2.9, T 2.25, T 2.37, T 2.43, T 2.82).

Kargel follows prominent theological themes throughout both testaments. He points out that David was justified just like Christians are (T 2.9). In Kargel’s view God’s promises made to Israel apply to Christians. For example, God’s words to Israel, “I’m the Lord who makes you holy”, are the grounds to expect God to make modern believers holy as well (T 2.25). Kargel uses the Old Testament implications of cleansing and consecration as normative for Christians (T 2.22, T 2.37).

Calvin’s position was that “salvation which the faithful shared *before* the incarnation is the same salvation that the faithful received, and still receive, *after* the incarnation” (Floor 1982:177). In contrast, the majority of Anabaptists emphasised the New Testament over the Old (Poettcker 1984:69). In general they reduced “the force of the Old Testament, making the New normative over the Old” (Ollenburger 1984:59). In the issue of the continuity between the Testaments Kargel is closer to Luther and Calvin than to the Anabaptists for whom “to call Abraham a Christian and to consider normative for the Christian the standards of the Old Testament was one of the greatest insults to the Incarnation of Christ” (Klassen [2] 1984:100). So far it appears that Kargel holds

³⁴⁹ Irvin B. Horst 1966 proposition V of the supplementary Thesis appended to his dissertation “Anabaptism and the English Reformation to 1558”, in Yoder 1984:27.

one of the hermeneutical principles of the Reformers, where “Old and New Testaments are of equal validity and authority in debate” (Klaassen 1984:108).

Kargel’s exegesis, however, is reminiscent of the Anabaptists. The way Kargel applied Biblical stories to his own time is similar to how it was done by the Anabaptists and is still done by some modern evangelicals. Menno Simon, for instance, “made much of the devotional use of the Old Testament . . . How comforting it was to observe that God had been with His people, leading them through the severest vicissitudes. Their examples of trust were to be followed” (Poettcker 1984:70). Packer also points out that

the principle of universality in application follows from the unchangeable consistency of God . . . Since He does not change, devilish self-aggrandizement such as called forth His judicial hatred against Tyre (Ezek. 27-28) and Jerusalem (Isa. 1-5) and Rome (Rev. 17-18) will always and everywhere evoke the same hostility. Since the incarnate Son does not change (cf. Heb. 13:8), the compassion shown to the penitent thief (Luke 23:43) and the Galilean prostitute (Luke 7:36ff.) and doubting Thomas (John 20:27ff.) continues to be there for all who know their need of it. . . . Watching how God dealt with people in Bible times, we learn how we may expect Him to deal with us (Packer 1983:351).

Kargel uses the Old Testament for illustrations and object lessons (T 2.37, T 2.38, T 2.90); from the Old Testament he draws examples to be followed (T 2.37). Behind this usage lies the assumption that God is consistent in His dealing with people throughout the Scriptures. Kargel starts from the premise that the Bible is the Word of God. It is applicable to all generations. God is a spiritual being. His Word is also spiritual. There is therefore a spiritual meaning – “the timeless truth inherent in a passage of Scripture as it is applied to the preacher’s day and its spiritual needs” (Lasor 1978:267) – implicit in the Word. On other occasions Kargel resorts to typology (T 2.59). For example, Kargel sees Moses as a type of Jesus (T 2.27). For the verification of his typological approach Kargel goes to the book of Hebrews (T 2.27). Kargel’s typology will be dealt with in detail in case study 4 based on his book “The Reflection of Glories to Come.”

Like Reformers in general, Kargel urges his reader to look for and find Christ in the Scripture because “this Guidebook” leads and points to Christ (T 2.92). This approach was similar to that of Luther, Menno, and Calvin, who searched the Old Testament in order to find Christ. Luther, for whom “the central hermeneutical point” was Christ, “never swerved from his insistence that

Christ is the center of Scripture and that the Spirit is the essential guide to correct interpretation” (Ollenburger 1984:47). For Menno Simon, “all the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testament, on every hand point us to Christ Jesus” (Ollenburger 1984:51-52). He read the Scripture “devotionally, finding Christ throughout the Old Testament. And he read it as a guide to life, with little or no concern for historical setting” (Ollenburger 1984:52). Calvin also read the Scriptures with the purpose of finding Christ in them (Floor 1982:189). “The law and the prophets have no other goal than Jesus Christ. Christ is the *scopus* and the *summa* of the entire Scripture”.³⁵⁰

So far it can be concluded that Kargel did not see differences between the Testaments to the extent the Anabaptists saw them. Hence he accepted the idea of military service for believers and did not act harshly towards those in the congregation who had been baptized only as infants. However, Kargel’s love and loyalty to the devotional approach to Scripture made his exegesis somewhat similar to that of Anabaptists.

5.3.2.7 Extra scriptural revelations

Kargel’s statement about extra scriptural revelations or direct revelations from the Spirit is rather puzzling. It seems to be much more in agreement with Anabaptist hermeneutics than with Calvin’s. As a matter of fact, “many Anabaptists believed that the Word of God was broader than the Bible . . . The Word of God can also come directly to the believer in the heart” (Klaassen 1984:6). Calvin, on the contrary, maintained the unity of the Word and the Spirit against the Roman Church and the Baptist Movement. Calvin believed that “the opinion of the Holy Spirit is revealed in the Scriptures. And the Holy Spirit is not communicated through any means other than the Scriptures” (Floor 1982:184-185).

However, it seems that these extra scriptural “revelations” remained for Kargel a hypothetical thing. Nowhere does Kargel argue from such “revelations” or even mention that he happened to receive them. Besides, Kargel made such revelations a subject to the testing of the Scripture (T 2.74).

In all fairness it must be stated that for the Anabaptists “the only court of appeal is the text of Scripture. No congregation and no prophet may claim with

³⁵⁰ CR 45, 486; 47, 125. Cf. CR 48, 569; Inst. li, 11, 1; CR 52, 52, in Floor 1982:160.

any authority to have heard the Spirit, unless in the testing of that Spirit Scripture can be appealed to” (Yoder 1984:19). Although a number of leading Anabaptists such as Menno Simon, Marpeck, Rideman, and the Swiss Brethren held that “the Bible was the Word of God, but the Word of God was not limited to the Bible. Nevertheless, all revelation remained subject to the biblical norm” (Dyck 1984:32).

5.3.2.8 Conclusion

Summarising, the author must say that Kargel goes to the Scripture and searches it because he considers it true and beneficial. Kargel shares the Pietists’ emphasis on a “special sense of the very words of scripture, open to those who read them devoutly and through the Spirit, rather than with the eyes either of a preconditioned orthodox system or of rational philosophy” (Frei 1974:158). Similar ideas are stressed by Kargel repeatedly (T 2.47, 2.79) and allow one to argue that Kargel’s approach should be classified as intuitive biblicism. His bottom line is that Scripture can be correctly understood by those who search it diligently and sincerely.

As far as Kargel is concerned, the Holy Spirit’s role, the believer’s obedience, and discipleship are closely connected in the work of arriving at a right understanding of Scripture. Kargel presents it as requiring a divine-human partnership for deep apprehension of scriptural truth to take place. Obedience to the already understood truths is met by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It looks like a circle: willingness to obey is followed by receiving a better understanding of the revelations from the Scripture, which, in turn, requires obedience.

Kargel’s kind of Bible study is classified as devotional. Tenney defines it “not as much a technique as a spirit of humility, which listens to the voice of God; it is the spirit of adventure which pursues earnestly the will of God; it is the spirit of adoration which rests in the presence of God”.³⁵¹ For Kargel Scripture contains much more than propositions: Scripture commands, encourages, reasons, condemns, etc. The active role of a reader is to believe the teaching, to accept rebuking, to be corrected, and receive training in righteousness (T 2.61, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.73, T 2.75, T 2.80, T 2.83, T 2.85).

³⁵¹ Tenney, *Galatians: Charter of Christian Liberty*, 1950, pp.207-8, in Kaiser & Silva 1994:164.

5.3.3 Case study 3. Based on “Sin as the greatest evil in this world”

The present case study aims to show how Kargel was using Scripture in order to gain an understanding of another important Christian doctrine – the doctrine of sin.

First, Kargel sees the Bible-the Scriptures-the Word of God as the only valid source of information about sin. According to Kargel, no other religious book speaks about sin as much as the Bible does (T 3.1). And whatever those “other” books have to say about sin, Kargel is not interested. He goes to the Bible looking for the origin of sin, its definition, characteristics, and consequences. For Kargel the different books of the Bible are of equal importance and truthfulness concerning the issue of sin. This attitude points to his canonical approach to the Bible. Kargel pays special attention to the things that are emphasised in the Bible. If the Bible emphasises something and mentions it repeatedly, then for Kargel it means that this topic is especially important (T 3.1, T 3.17, T 3.37, T 3.38, T 3.47, T 3.48).

Second, Kargel seeks to look at sin from God’s perspective. It is God’s view of sin that defines its nature as it is stated in the Bible (no philosophical or abstract definition of sin is mentioned). As everywhere else in his writings Kargel assumes that the Bible is the reflection of God’s position (T 3.1, T 3.7, T 3.37, T 3.38). Kargel plainly states that “the Bible is the divine revelation” (T 3.5). For Kargel it is sufficient that God of the Bible hates and despises sin and will certainly punish it. It is God’s attitude towards sin that makes sin the sin.

Third, Kargel demonstrates a typically protestant approach: sin is extremely evil; all people have sinned; all deserve death (T 3.7, T 3.43, T 3.44, T 3.45, T 3.46, T 3.47). Following Augustinian teaching Kargel insists that since the fall in the garden men are thoroughly corrupted. Although Kargel writes a lot about sin being “spiritual illness” he does not seem to hold semi-pelagianism. He simply follows biblical metaphors of sin-sickness and doctor-Saviour. He clearly states that the consequence of sin is death for body, soul, and spirit. People can do nothing to save themselves. The only way to salvation is through Jesus Christ.

Fourth, Kargel approaches the issue of sin in biblical-historical progression going from the Old Testament to the New Testament (T 3.8). However, he constantly quotes from a number of his favourite books: Genesis,

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, Zachariah, Gospels, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Peter, and Revelation.

Fifth, in his exegesis Kargel makes use of other translations, Luther's in particular (T 3.16).

Sixth, Kargel sometimes argues from logic. For example, one of his syllogisms is: If Christ had to go to the cross in order to pay for people's sins, then sin must be a really awful thing (T 3.9).

Seventh, an observation can be made concerning Kargel's use of metaphors and his understanding of the term. Kargel insists that sin is called sickness not in a figurative but in the literal sense. However, further on Kargel transfers this "sickness" into the spiritual realm, that is, he actually treats it as a metaphor. It seems that in this case he interprets the text correctly, except that he mixes up the terms "literal" and "figurative". It appears that in Kargel's understanding, "literal" means "in a very serious way" (T 3.11, T 3.12, T 3.14, T 3.30).

Eighth, it appears that Kargel takes the analogy of sin-illness a little too far and interprets some passages from Scripture quite arbitrarily. For example, he understands Psalm 90 as descriptive of sin. It is doubtful that this meaning was implied in the original context. Another example of his arbitrary interpretation is his usage of the imperative not to despise the deaf. He interprets it as a commandment not to despise sinners (T 3.15, T 3.33). This is another one of his syllogisms: (1) sin is spiritual deafness, (2) the Bible says not to despise the deaf. Hence: we should not despise the sinner.

Ninth, for Kargel biblical truth is not a number of abstract propositions, but a call for action (T 3.31).

Tenth, at times it seems that Kargel was so permeated with biblical language and imagery that he starts using it as his own.

Eleventh, Kargel stresses the awfulness of sin. He builds his case on passages speaking of sin's wickedness and corruption, and presents a number of examples.

5.3.4 Case study 4. Based on "The Reflection of Glories to Come"

It is the author's intention here to look at Kargel's position on the interpretation of the Old Testament. His perspective on the problem of the relation of the Old and the New Testaments is most clearly seen in his book

Svet iz teni budushchikh blag [The Reflection of Glories to Come] or “32 discourses about tabernacle and priesthood”. Both the title and the main idea of the book are derived from Hebrews 10:1, “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers there unto perfect”. A literal translation of the title could read: “The light out of a shadow of good things to come”.

According to Lasor, “spiritual meaning may be drawn in different ways: by twisting or accommodating the text, by allegorizing, by the use of typology, or by strict application of the grammatical-historical method” (Lasor 1978:267). Kargel seems to choose typology.

Regarding his sources, Kargel mentions that he used the opinions of other authors who dealt with the same subject, mainly in English. He points out that in order to avoid citations and multiple references to the same names he mentions them once in his introduction. The main sources listed by Kargel in the introduction are Rogers, Mackintosh³⁵² and Soltau (Kargel 1908). These three, listed by Ehlert as Brethren writers, are Charles Henry Mackintosh (1820-1896), Ebenezer William Rogers, and Henry William Soltau (1805-1875) (Ehlert 1957:49-80). Kargel must have accessed their books in the personal libraries of Lieven, Pashkov, and the Kruezer sisters while he was living in St. Petersburg (Karetnikova 2004:684).

According to Rowdon, C. H. Mackintosh was a “remarkably successful popularizer” of Darby. His writings circulated widely, not only among the Open Brethren but beyond them (Rowdon 1990:92). Mackintosh was a popular writer among Exclusive Brethren (Coad 1968:55). “The easy-to-read devotional classic, ‘Notes on the Pentateuch’, by C. H. Mackintosh, is a good example of this kind of Darby theology in popular form” (MacLeod 1996:155-78). Mackintosh’s commentary on the Pentateuch was even translated into Russian and is well known in the Evangelical circles in Russia.

Mackintosh was an Irish schoolmaster who preached extensively in the revival movement. According to Coad, the initials “C H. M.” became familiar in many pious evangelical homes during the later Victorian and Edwardian years.

³⁵² Along with Darby Mackintosh was one of the leading figures among the early Brethren (MacLeod 1996:160).

Not a critical scholar, Mackintosh nevertheless had the gift of simple Biblical exposition, and his works on the Pentateuch had “an enormous vogue as simple aids to devotional interpretation of the first five books of the Bible” (Coad 1968:210). Besides, Mackintosh provided an example of “one who sought the meaning of a Bible passage through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.” (Fuller 1978:190).

Regarding the typological interpretation of the details of the tabernacle, in his commentary on the book of Exodus Mackintosh wrote

Nature can do nothing here, reason is blind... The most gigantic intellect, instead of being able to interpret the sacred symbols, appears like a bat in the sunshine, blindly dashing itself against the objects which it is utterly unable to discern... God the Holy Spirit is the One Who can... expound to our souls the true meaning of all that meets our view... The One who furnished the beautiful symbols [of the tabernacle] can alone interpret them (Mackintosh 1862:263).

According to Fuller, “The problem with this understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in biblical interpretation is that the words of the text can play no essential role in conveying its intended meaning even though it is these very words which the writers were inspired to use in translating God’s message to men” (Fuller 1978:190). In table 4 the author will compare portions of Mackintosh’ commentary to similar passages in Kargel’s work in order to arrive at a better understanding of Kargel’s use of Brethren sources.

As for Henry Soltau, Ehlert lists his treatment of the Tabernacle among the most significant in Brethren circles (Ehlert 1957:49-80). Among other books, Soltau wrote “The Tabernacle, the Priesthood and Offerings” and “The Holy Vessels and Furniture of the Tabernacle”. Soltau became a prominent Bible teacher and an elder in the growing Plymouth assembly. W. H. Cole described hearing him teach:

Mr. Soltau was the first, I think, who taught the meaning of the types and sacrifices of the Old Testament, and as he unfolded the teaching of those symbols concerning the manifold perfection of the person and work of the Son of God, a peculiar awe brooded over the assembly, impelling to the silent worship of Him of whom he discoursed... He was withal a great preacher of righteousness.³⁵³

Soltau’s books were intended to open up the biblical teaching of the tabernacle in the wilderness, the priesthood, and the Levitical offerings; most

³⁵³ Bjorlie. Online. 29 March 2008.

books on the subject published in the twentieth century are heavily indebted to him.³⁵⁴ According Coad, Soltau's works on the Tabernacle together with Juke's writings were "in no small degree responsible for the typology which later became second nature to them", that is Plymouth Brethren (Coad 1968:80). It looks as if typology became "second nature" to Kargel as well.

Kargel occasionally refers to a few other writers who were not necessarily Brethren: Gustav Knack (Kargel 1908:23), Martin Luther (Kargel 1908:48), Zinzendorf (Kargel 1908:186), Woltersdorf (Kargel 1908:223), and Ber (Kargel 1908:228). As for Zinzendorf, he was a Pietist and close friend of Spener and Francke, whose

importance lies in the creation of a missionary, service-oriented, ecumenical free church based upon a common experience of salvation and mutual love, and the emphasis upon deep, emotional religious expression (especially in his hymns, prayers, poems, and "daily watch words") which infused new life into Protestant orthodoxy" (Pierard 1978:1071).

This pietistic outlook seems to be very characteristic of Kargel as well. Below are the reflections after careful studying of a portion of Kargel's book "The reflection of glories to come" (see Table 4) and comparing Kargel's writings with those of Mackintosh. Underlining in the table is mine.

5.3.4.1 Christological approach

According to Goppelt, "the fundamental question that divides the various schools of thought is about the relationship of the Old Testament to Jesus Christ" (Goppelt 1982:1). Kargel adopted a Christological approach to the Old Testament (T 4.0, T 4.2) and especially to the Pentateuch, following the Reformers and the Brethren. Kargel's goal is to find Christ, only Christ, and everywhere Christ in Exodus and Leviticus. The question is how he was going to accomplish his task.

Concerning the Anabaptist hermeneutics, Klassen wrote:

Perhaps the most serious hermeneutical problem with respect to the Old Testament is the question of allegory or typology. How does one extract the contents of the Bible from its imagery using methods which have certain built-in safeguards within them? Luther arrived at the standard was *Christum treibet*... The problem is that with this criterion it soon becomes the major task of the exegete to find Christ everywhere in the Old Testament (Klassen 1984:100).

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

Kargel's main instrument for finding Christ in the Old Testament seems to be typology. Both Kargel and Mackintosh consider typology a legitimate approach to the Old Testament. In the recent (and the only one known to the author) Master's dissertation on Kargel's hermeneutics, Makarenko points out that Kargel always looks for spiritual meaning and Christological aspect in every text and detail (Makarenko 2006:19). This appears to be true.

However, Kargel anticipated criticism. His book contains this apologetical statement regarding "too much" Christology in his interpretation:

But if this is Christ and Christ again whom we see in every different object, would not it be too much? Does not it seem to you that a legitimate question comes up, 'What are so many types for? Why to multiply them?' The answer is not difficult, and we will not have to look for it for too long. It is obvious that every separate object, no matter how many sides it has, can show our soul only one main characteristic of the personality of the Lord and may be some other secondary ones. Therefore, in order to let us grasp Christ as fully as possible, as much as we can contain, the Lord had to draw a number of types before us that had to do with Him (Kargel 1908:133).

Kargel recognizes that the truths about Christ in the Old Testament are hidden in the form of pictures and are more difficult to interpret and understand than direct statements by Jesus and the apostles (T 4.0). Kargel points to the importance of diligent and careful study of the text (T 4.0) and to the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the process of illumination of the meaning of the text (T 4.0). He also emphasises that a serious Christian reader and interpreter must believe in the divine origin of the text in order to understand the importance of every word in the Scripture (T 4.1), and receive the Lord's in order to understand the message correctly (T 4.2). This Christological approach to the Old Testament plus close attention to the details of sacred objects resulted in looking for Christ's characteristics in all these details for both Kargel and Mackintosh (T 4.4, T 4.5, T 4.6). Both commentators regard the main colours of the tabernacle as important, symbolic, and speaking of Christ (T 4.1).

5.3.4.2 Continuing Brethren tradition of the interpretation of Pentateuch

Comparing the texts of Kargel and Mackintosh reveals how extensively Kargel relied on the latter, particularly in his exposition of the tabernacle colours (T 4.4, T 4.5, T 4.6, T 4.11, T 4.19). Although one does not find direct quotations from Brethren writer Mackintosh in Kargel's book, there are oblique

ones. Both Kargel and Mackintosh are searching for Christ; both find great significance in the details of objects of the tabernacle; both pursue devotional goals; both seem quite sure that their interpretation is correct; both consider a critical approach to Scripture unacceptable.

For example, one can compare statements from both commentators, beginning with Mackintosh:

The tabernacle was divided into three distinct parts, namely, 'the holy of holies,' 'the holy place,' and 'the court of the tabernacle'. The entrance into each of these was of the same materials, 'blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen.' (Compare chapters xxvi. 31, 36; xxvii. 16.) The interpretation of which is simply this: Christ forms the only doorway into the varied fields of glory which are yet to be displayed, whether on earth, in heaven, or in the heaven of heavens. 'Every family, in heaven and earth,' will be ranged under His headship, as all will be brought into everlasting felicity and glory, on the ground of His accomplished atonement. This is plain enough, and needs no stretch of the imagination to grasp it. We know it to be true: and when we know the truth which is shadowed forth, the shadow is easily understood. If only our hearts be filled with Christ, we shall not go far astray in our interpretation of the tabernacle and its furniture. It is not a head full of learned criticism that will avail us much here, but a heart full of affection for Jesus, and a conscience at rest in the blood of His cross (Mackintosh 1862:288-289).

Compare this to Kargel:

...we should point out that besides the gates leading into the court... there was also a door leading into the holy place, then in the holy place there was a curtain dividing it from the holy of holies. All three were made from the same material of the same size and decorated by the same colours. This is already enough to make it clear that the same truths apply to all three entrances. They are preaching us Christ as the door through which we get to God. Besides, three different doors do not mean three different Christs but represent one and the same Christ as the entrance into different positions before God (Kargel 1908:18).

Makarenko views Kargel's book as a one-sided interpretation of the Old Testament texts, types, and symbols (Makarenko 2006:19). He also blames Kargel for a lack of cultural-historical reconstruction and contextual analysis. From his point of view Kargel's book lacks unity, wideness, and all-biblical look at the text in consideration. Makarenko's conclusion is that the book is an "example of typological interpretation of the Old Testament texts" (Makarenko 2006:20). However, Makarenko does not see that Kargel's commentary was simply written in a typically Brethren tradition. It was meant as a piece of devotional literature, not an arena in which to fight or argue. Besides, Kargel in his exposition works consistently within his stated presuppositions.

5.3.4.3 *The usage of typology*

Is Kargel's work on the tabernacle typological in nature? In order to answer this question one must first define typology and differentiate between typology and allegory.

Braaten follows Gerhard von Rad, stating that "the typological way of thinking seeks to discover a relation of correspondence between certain types in the Old Testament, such as persons, institutions, or events, which foreshadow similar realities, or antitypes, in the New Testament".³⁵⁵ According to Frei, "a typological (not spiritual) reading had been the main stream of practical Protestant interpretation. Indeed, a basic typological pattern of interpretation had furnished the scheme for the crucial claim that the Bible, particularly both testaments, form a unity" (Frei 1974:252). Goppelt also points out that "typology is the method of biblical interpretation that is characteristic of the New Testament... Typology and the typological method have been part of the church's exegesis and hermeneutics from the very beginning" (Goppelt 1982:4).

According to Virkler,

a type is a preordained representative representation which certain persons, events, and institutions bear to corresponding persons, events, and institutions occurring at a later time in salvation history... Typology is based on the assumption that there is a pattern in God's work throughout salvation history... in the Old Testament there are shadows of things which shall be more fully revealed in the New (Virkler 1981:184).

However, typology must be distinguished from allegory. "Typology is the search for linkage between historical events, persons, or things within salvation history; allegorism is the search for secondary and hidden meanings underlying the primary and obvious meaning of a historical narrative" (Virkler 1981:185). In addition, "in order for a figure to be a type there must be (1) some notable resemblance or analogy between the type and its antitype; (2) some evidence that the type was appointed by God to represent the thing typified; and (3) some future corresponding antitype" (Virkler 1981:187).

Similar ideas are expressed by Goppelt, who maintains:

Allegorical interpretation... is not concerned with the truthfulness or factuality of the things described. For typological interpretation, however, the reality of the things described is indispensable. The typical meaning

³⁵⁵ Von Rad, *Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament*, in Braaten 1968:125.

is not really a different or higher meaning, but a different or higher use of the same meaning that is comprehended in type and antitype (Goppelt 1982:13).

Besides, “allegory goes its own way regardless of the literal interpretation, while the typological use of Scripture begins with literal meaning” (Goppelt 1982:16).

In the words of Goppelt:

The concept of typology with which we begin may be defined and distinguished from other methods of interpretation as follows: Only historical facts – persons, actions, events and institutions – are material for typological interpretation: words and narratives can be utilized only insofar as they deal with such matters (Goppelt 1982:17-18).

Feinberg defines the dispensational position on typology: “(1) a type must have meaning in its own context; (2) the meaning of the type in its own context is essential for a type/antitype relationship (otherwise we have an example of a parable or perhaps an allegory, but not an example of typology); and (3) ignoring items 1 and 2 threatens the very integrity of the Old Testament”.³⁵⁶

However (and this is very important), “typology must not become involved in details... The types can be objects, institutions (priesthood and sacrifices) or events”.³⁵⁷ A cautious attitude towards interpretation of detail is mentioned by a number of scholars, including Virkler:

As in any other kind of comparison, every incidental detail of the type and antitype was not intended by the author to be a point of correspondence. Some commentators, for example, have divined from the fact that the serpent was made of brass (a metal inferior to gold or silver) that this was a type of the outward plainness of the Savior’s appearance. Other commentators have found in the acacia wood and gold of the tabernacle a type of the humanity and deity of Christ, and other types and symbols have been found in the boards, the sockets of silver, the heights of the doors, the linens, the colouring or lack of colouring of the draperies, etc. Such practices seem dangerously akin to the allegorism of the Middle Ages, imputing meaning to the text which is highly unlikely to have been intended by the biblical author (Virkler 1981:190).

For instance, Von Rad was “mindful that a renewal of typology might draw the interpreter’s attention to a host of insignificant details that can be made

³⁵⁶ John S. Feinberg, *Salvation in the Old Testament*, p.47, in Blaising 1988:254-280.

³⁵⁷ Tholuck, *Das Alte Testament im Neuen Testament*, 2nd ed., pp. 17, 42, 13, in

Goppelt 1982:10.

to correspond in the two Testaments”, therefore he gives it “a clear Christological focus” (Braaten 1968:36).

Consequently, biblical scholars loudly warn against getting carried away with applying typological method to minor details of the sacred objects of the Old Testament. However, where to draw the line is not always clear. There seems to be no problem applying the typological method to major details. For instance, Lasor argues that “since the tabernacle was a symbol that was later replaced by the reality it symbolized, it is entirely proper to speak of the tabernacle as a type of Christ” (Lasor 1978:269-270). Further on he continues:

This use of the word “type” is clearly to be distinguished from allegory. An allegorical interpretation of the tabernacle goes into fanciful explanation of every colour, every type of material, every piece of furniture... It is certainly true that some of the items used in the tabernacle cultus were in themselves symbolic of spiritual truth, and even types of realities to come. The sacrifices of bulls and goats... were typical of the sacrifice of Christ... As long as we begin with the reality that is symbolized in the text and proceed to the reality that replaces the symbol, we have controllable interpretation of the text. It avoids the criticism leveled against allegorizing the text, often deserved, and yields the spiritual meaning of the scriptural passage (Lasor 1978:270).

According to the definitions above, Kargel’s work can be classified as typological bordering with allegorical. It is true that Kargel starts with real objects, institutions, and persons described in Exodus and Leviticus and does not diminish their historical importance for the past. He looks for the correspondence of major themes found in both Testaments, for instance, the office of high priest, which “continued until all shadows vanished and the reality was revealed in Christ” (Kargel 1908:286). Another example is slavery to sin and redemption: “For those living in Egypt, that is for sinners, who live in the world and sin, there is no God and Christ abiding with them” (Kargel 1908:10). Mackintosh also compares slavery in Egypt to the slavery of sin (Mackintosh 1962:73). Nevertheless, Kargel, like Mackintosh, pays very close attention to details (colours, material, etc.) and treats them as types. Every small detail becomes a type, exactly the kind of typology scholars Virkler and Lasor consider allegorism.

Overall, in his interpretation of the Pentateuch Kargel was clearly following the Brethren, for whom “the sacrificial piety of the Old Testament is the object of much meditation on the part of the Darbyite Brethren, and . . . they interpret it in a typological sense. For example, all the details of the construction

of the Tabernacle (Ex 25-30) find their meaning in the various aspects of the person and office of Christ” (Darby 1972:135).

5.3.4.4 Conclusion

This book deals mostly with the Old Testament typology of the tabernacle and priesthood. Generally speaking, Kargel interpreted Exodus and Leviticus on the basis of Hebrews. However, this case study has once again shown Kargel’s strong links with the Brethren school of biblical interpretation, in that he follows their typological approach to the point of finding type-antitype correspondence in the details of the sacred objects.

The fact that three main sources cited by Kargel are Brethren highlights Kargel’s close relation with Brethren theology. A comparison of excerpts from the texts of Kargel and Mackintosh confirms that impression. It is true that Kargel’s general approach to interpreting Exodus and Leviticus is similar to Mackintosh’s, and on occasion Kargel directly borrows some thoughts from Mackintosh’s “Notes”. Besides (perhaps, due to the devotional nature of his book), he never indicates any disagreements with the sources that he consulted.

However, a deeper look into both Kargel’s and Mackintosh’s texts reveals certain differences. Kargel does not extend his search of types as far as Mackintosh does. For instance, Kargel does not see Moses as a type of Christ, whereas Mackintosh develops this idea to the point of seeing Moses and his wife Zipporah as types of Christ and his Church (Mackintosh 1862:65-68). Mackintosh wrote that “the Church of God collectively, as prefigured by Zipporah, and the members thereof individually, as seen in Zipporah’s sons, are presented as occupying the most intimate relationship with the deliverer” (Mackintosh 1862:224). His typology seems to border on allegorizing much more than Kargel’s. So, the influence of Brethren approach was strong but one can still consider Kargel a quite independent writer and thinker.

Like Luther and other Reformers, Kargel strongly believed in a Christological interpretation of the Bible. For him the Old Testament was a concealed New Testament. His goal in writing this book was to show what the Old Testament images stood for, particularly, to point out Christ. Finding Christ in the Old Testament helped make it relevant for New Testament believers.

5.4 Theological Presuppositions in Kargel's Hermeneutics

5.4.1 Scripture and the Holy Spirit

5.4.1.1 Inspiration and Inerrancy

The Holy Scripture and the Word of God are terms that Kargel uses interchangeably with both meaning the Bible (T 1.1, T 1.5, T 2.2, T 2.3, T 2.4, T 2.5, T 2.62, T 2.68, T 2.69, T 2.83). The terms themselves indicate Kargel's high view of Scripture being Holy and originating from God. Speaking about the Scripture, the Word of God, or the Bible Kargel means only the canonical books (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:2). Thus he works with the closed canon.

Inspiration in Kargel's writings is usually connected to the Holy Spirit, (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:2) although one can find it linked to God in general, to God the Father, and to the Lord. On some occasions, Jesus Christ is called the divine Author, "The first and the last, who was dead and is alive" – amazing features that the 'divine Author' signs his message with" (Kargel 2002:473). All three persons of the Trinity, according to Kargel, were somehow involved in the process of composing the Scriptures. He writes, for instance, "The revelation of Jesus Christ comes from God the Father and is given to the Son" (Kargel 2002:450). However, the Holy Spirit is mentioned in connection with Scripture is far more often than God the Father or God the Son.

Kargel believes that the Holy Spirit is truly God and a gift to those who were justified in Christ (Kargel 2003:17). According to Kargel, without the Holy Spirit's work in the human heart no one would come to God the Father or to the Son, and no one would even have the desire to come (Kargel 2003:18). As a matter of fact, Kargel was known for his special emphasis on the Holy Spirit in Russian Evangelical theology just as Calvin was in the Reformed theology.³⁵⁸ The Russian Evangelicals should be thankful to Kargel for drawing their attention to the Holy Spirit's work in various areas, including sanctification, inspiration, and illumination.

For Kargel the Bible is the book of the Spirit, who both authored it and continues to speak through it. In his confession of faith Kargel declared the

³⁵⁸ "We must say that the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is the gift from Calvin to the Church" (Warfield 1956:485).

Bible to be the only necessary and sufficient source for knowing God and for salvation, the foundation of our faith and guidance in all matters of life (Kratkoe izlozhenie 1913:2). This kind of declaration requires a theological presupposition concerning the relationship between the Book and the Spirit. The Scripture is authoritative only due to its divine origin (the Spirit was actively involved in composing the biblical documents – inspiration) (T 1.3, T 2.16, T 2.19, T 2.20, T 2.83) and the Spirit's active role in speaking and working through the Scripture in bringing people to understand these documents (illumination) (T 2.4, T 2.65).

In the matters of dual (divine and human) authorship of the Scripture Kargel emphasises the divine aspect (T 2.16, 2.20, 2.83). For example, when writing of God's demand for holiness, Kargel makes an important statement showing that he believed that the Holy Spirit was the divine author of the Scripture: "the Holy Spirit carried this command into the New Testament and directed it to us with the same seriousness (1 Pet 1:15-16, Thes 4:3)" as He had to the Old Testament believers (Kargel 2002:52). Kargel writes as if there were no Peter or Paul penning the epistles but the Holy Spirit alone deciding what should or should not be "carried into the New Testament".

On another occasion, regarding God's patience, Kargel wrote, "the Holy Spirit did not leave us in ignorance concerning His patience. He left us the whole chapter on patience – 2 Pet 3" (Kargel 2002:498). Discussing the passage I Corinthians 15:50-57, Kargel says that it was the Holy Spirit who allowed Apostle Paul to make an additional comment about the sting of death and the power of sin (Kargel 2002:416). There are many more instances when Kargel calls the Holy Spirit the author of the Bible without mentioning human writers, for instance, "the Holy Spirit had nothing worthy of writing down on the pages of this Holy Book about people who surrounded Enoch" (Kargel 2002:265).

However, human component of scriptural authorship sometimes comes through. For instance, Kargel points out the Thessalonians' lack of knowledge that made the Apostle clarify the issue of the Lord's coming: "He [Apostle Paul] had two reasons to write to them: their deep sorrow about the dead and their lack of understanding about the reason why a child of God should die in sufferings" (Kargel 2002:420-421). Although Kargel often refers to the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture, he claims the book of Proverbs was written by

Solomon when he was backsliding (Kargel 2002:199-200). Frequently, Kargel quotes or refers to a passage using the formula, “the Apostle [prophet, etc.] speaking by the Holy Spirit” (Kargel 2002:230).

Although he never mentions the term, Kargel at times seems to advocate the verbal inspiration of Scripture. According to Grenz’s definition,

verbal inspiration... declares that the activity of the Holy Spirit extends to the very words of Scripture. We must be careful, however, not to equate the idea with the theory of divine dictation. Rather than asserting that God dictated every word, we ought to understand verbal inspiration as only claiming that the Spirit superintended the process of word selection and word order to the extent that they are capable of communicating the intended meaning of the text (Grenz 1994:518-519).

Kargel does not explain how the process of inspiration took place, but a few scattered statements in his works allow one to deduce his views. For instance, speaking of Moses as one of the Old Testament types, Kargel says that it was the Holy Spirit who had chosen particular words (Kargel 2002:280).

The idea of verbal inspiration even to the point of divine dictation is especially strong in connection to the book of Revelation. Kargel holds that the book of Revelation is not the revelation of John, because “John was like a secretary who wrote down what he saw and heard. The first verse of the book says that this is the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Kargel 2002:449). However, this approach does not necessarily apply to other books of the Bible. At least, Kargel does not make a general statement that would allow assuming that he viewed all human authors of the Bible as “mere secretaries”. It can be concluded that Kargel allowed for various ways of inspiration taking place: compiling from dictation (in the case of Apostle John writing Revelation), writing from a sense of urgency (Apostle Paul writing to Thessalonians), or from wisdom (Solomon writing the book of Proverbs). However, as a result people possess a unique Book which is the Word of God – this is the truth that Kargel never doubts.

The term that Kargel himself often uses speaking about the Bible is “*nepogreshimoe*” (Kargel 2002:197), best translated as “infallible” or “inerrant”. By this theologians normally mean “not liable to deceive”, that is, since “the Spirit moved in the lives of the authors, the product can be trusted. The writers do not intend to lead their readers astray” (Grenz 1994:519). Indeed, Kargel perceives “the product” as presenting God’s point of view. For example, at the

beginning of the book “Sin as the greatest evil”, Kargel wrote, “Let us look at the sin from God’s point of view, which is revealed in the Scripture” (Kargel 2002:5).

Finally, according to Kargel God’s revelation of truth is basically limited to the Bible. However, Kargel does not rule out the possibility of having direct revelations from the Holy Spirit even in the present day unless they contradict scripture. “It is true that the Holy Spirit even now reveals the will of God directly to His children, but these revelations must be without doubt in accordance with the written Word” (Kargel 2002:92). In this case Kargel seems to differ from the Reformers, especially Calvin, who restricted the operation of the Holy Spirit to scripture.

In this Kargel is closer to the Anabaptists’ point of view that exalted the teaching office of the Holy Spirit and allowed for the possibility of extra biblical revelation coming directly from the Holy Spirit (Klaassen 1984:6). Like the Anabaptists, Kargel did not make correct doctrine of scriptural inspiration fundamental to the rest of doctrine. Neither did he make any attempt to spell out the nature of inspiration or its theological implications. He simply accepted Scripture as a trustworthy guide and the instrument that God had provided for the disclosure of His will (Kraus 1984:135).

5.4.1.2 Illumination by the Holy Spirit

The necessity of illumination of the Holy Spirit in interpreting Scripture follows naturally out of Kargel’s view of inspiration. The Spirit’s work that brought Scripture into existence did not end in the distant past. The Spirit continued to speak to people through the Bible. Seeing the Scripture as inspired by the Holy Spirit makes the role of the Spirit in the process of interpretation crucial and decisive. Who but the author can help readers to gain the true meaning of the text? In Kargel’s view, the Holy Spirit plays the central role in scriptural interpretation (T 2.4, T 2.44, T 2.65, T 2.82, T 2.83). The Spirit is not only the ultimate Author of the Scripture but also a vital agent who sheds light upon it and helps to understand the truth. The following phrase is not atypical for Kargel: “I can learn something today if the Holy Spirit, the author of this chapter, will shed His light upon it” (Kargel 2002:264).

Kargel does not fully explain the way in which the Holy Spirit’s illumination works. However, one can find a few essential hints concerning Kargel’s understanding of illumination in a number of his works. According to

Kargel, it is the Holy Spirit who at the right time would present every “serious soul with more new truths mostly needed by the soul and would also interpret them” (Kargel 2002:94). So Kargel sees the Holy Spirit not only drawing one’s attention to new truths but also interpreting them. Writing about Moses as an Old Testament type, Kargel goes into more detail about the process of illumination:

The Holy Spirit takes one or more features from the walk of faith of an Old Testament saint, places them before us, lights them up by His divine light, and the beauty and attractiveness of the image of the person draws us and makes us follow his faith and life (Kargel 2002:280).

Basically, Kargel is saying that the Holy Spirit makes the Bible “come alive”.

Another important point made by Kargel is that in order to be a good interpreter of the Scripture one must be born again. This view is similar to that of the Reformers, especially Calvin (Rossouw 1982:172), and the Pietists of the 1600s and 1700s (Grenz 1994:507). According to Kargel, an unregenerate person cannot fully understand Scripture: “There is nothing in this book for those who are not God’s servants; there is nothing they can look for. Therefore it is closed for unregenerate interpreters, because it is not for them” (Kargel 2002:450). No matter how much knowledge of the Scripture an unbeliever has, scripture will remain misunderstood by that person. “The best theologian, who is not converted, has no hope” (Kargel 2002:378).

Kargel believes that the Scripture can be either “open” or “closed” to a reader, even to a believer, depending on his/her motives; it is God who has the power to “open” the Scripture to those who seek to find its truths and apply them to themselves (Kargel 2002:93). Speaking of Christ’s abundant richness, Kargel makes the following statement: “Although it is proclaimed on every page of the New Testament, we can still remain blind to it (Eph 3:5). Even when we see Christ, the Holy Spirit must prepare us so that we can embrace Him (Eph 3:8-9)” (Kargel 2002:88). Hence, it takes the Holy Spirit to “open” one’s eyes to the truths that are already in the text.

Kargel points out that quietness and solitude are two important factors for “letting God to speak to us whether through our dwelling upon His precious Word or directly through the Holy Spirit” (Kargel 2002:113). First, Kargel distinguishes between merely getting information from the text and letting “God speak to us” through the Word. In other words, anyone can read the Scripture but not always and not everybody can hear the voice of God through it. Second,

as it was mentioned above, Kargel does not limit God's special revelation to Scripture but leaves some room for direct revelation from the Holy Spirit to a person.

The motives of those who study the Scripture are also very important. In order to gain spiritually from reading Scripture a reader must be willing to search the truth for himself/herself (T 2.68, T 2.70, T 2.77, T 2.81), as well as be ready to put the revealed truths into practice (T 1.5, T 1.7, T 1.12, T 2.16, T 2.47, T 2.61, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.76, T 2.79). The attitude of the reader is a factor which can either facilitate or impede the Holy Spirit in revealing biblical truths. In "Old Testament types" Kargel asks,

Do you come to the Word of God as spiritually poor and having nothing? Those who once they hear a passage think they already know what is going to be said rarely receive anything from the Holy Spirit . . . It is the Lord's Spirit that we have to listen to, not a man . . . There is no other way: we must be truly empty in order to be filled up (Kargel 2002:341).

Further Kargel points out how important it is to keep an open mind toward familiar passages and to continue reading them. Otherwise, "you cut the way for the Holy Spirit to add new revelations to the ones you already have" (Kargel 2002:94). He continues:

May we come to the Word with a heart likened to a clean sheet of paper... with desire to find out His will. Then, without a doubt, the Lord will write on it something precious! It is highly important to always wait for something great, something precious from the Lord. May we come for real food and for real drink, for nourishment for our souls, and when we get something, let us stay at the 'table' as long as the Holy Spirit is keeping us there (Kargel 2002:95).

It is the Holy Spirit who, according to Kargel, judges the readiness of a reader to embrace new truths from the Word. "If we are ready to perceive, the Holy Spirit has to show us many more truths. Yes, He can suddenly make this precious Book absolutely fresh for us" (Kargel 2002:93). Kargel calls his readers "to give freedom to the Holy Spirit to lead us into understanding of every truth" (Kargel 2002:49).

Thus, on one hand, there are conditions to be met before the Spirit's illumination can take place. According to Kargel, the illumination does not take place automatically, but the Holy Spirit reveals scriptural truths only to those who believe, who approach the Word seriously and with good motives, who can quietly listen, who are open-minded, who are ready to embrace new truths and are thirsty for them, and who are willing to put those truths into practice. The

Holy Spirit does not illuminate the minds and hearts of those who study the Word only out of curiosity, mechanically, or for the sake of gaining mere cognitive knowledge (T 1.9, T 2.75).

On the other hand, Kargel places an important role upon constant reading, searching, and studying the whole Scripture (T 2.68, T 2.70, T 2.77, T 2.81). An understanding of the text does not come only through some mystical encounter with the Holy Spirit, but also requires work and effort from the reader. Before any truth can be revealed to us, “we should be well acquainted with the Word” (Kargel 2002:92). Kargel refers to the passage in John 14:26, “The Holy Spirit... will teach you and remind you all that I have told you”. Kargel reasonably points out that “one can be reminded only of those things that he already knows or used to know, therefore our knowledge of the Word is a condition of getting instructed in every truth” (Kargel 2002:92). Exegesis is therefore the work of a believer who is open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, Kargel brings together the doctrines of inspiration and illumination saying that, “if we neglect the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will cease giving us His direct revelations, because the Word from the beginning to the end is His revelation, which first of all requires our whole attention” (Kargel 2002:92).

5.4.1.3 Scriptural Authority

First, Kargel affirms biblical authority on the foundation of the Bible’s inspiration. Seeing the Scripture as inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is only logical and natural that Kargel never doubts its trustworthiness and authority. Indeed, if it is not true, “why take the Bible into our hands? For what is all the revelation of God in the Bible then?” (Kargel 2002:233). Kargel calls the Word of God “truly the word of truth” (Kargel 2002:248) and speaks of “the pure and true Word of God” (Kargel 2002:249).

Second, the Scripture is a unique Book because the Spirit presently uses it to reveal and interpret truth. So, for Kargel the Scripture is authoritative for two main reasons: the Spirit originally inspired it, and it is the instrument through which the Spirit speaks. Kargel argues from this basic presupposition. He accepts biblical authority by faith, not as something to be proven by the arguments of reason: “It is through the anointment by the Holy Spirit that we

know for certain that being obedient to the Word we are in agreement with God Himself” (Kargel 2002:142).

Another important reason for Kargel’s high view of Scripture is Christ’s attitude towards it:

Where does He stand in the connection to the Word? Was not He the incarnate Word himself? Did not the Father speak through Him during His whole earthly life (Heb 1:2), and does not the Father even now continue to speak from the place of the glory through the Son (Heb 12:25)? However, when the Lord Jesus came to this earth, He was born according to the Word, lived, suffered, died, and rose up from the dead according to the Word. And we hear again and again, ‘may Scripture be fulfilled’. His whole incarnate existence among us was the continuing fulfilment of the Word of God, so the written Word and the incarnate Word were one (Kargel 2002:92).

The written Word holds the highest authority for Kargel, higher than any human authority or even “direct” revelations from the Spirit (Kargel 2002:92). Kargel regrets that some people “can be convinced by words, opinions, and authority of other people instead of trusting the Word of God” (Kargel 2002:497). Indeed, how can anybody argue with God? Kargel speaks of God sitting on the throne, who said, “these words are true”, therefore, “how can we argue with Him who has written these words and many similar ones into His book” (Kargel 2002:250). In theological argument nothing can be qualified as “truth” for Kargel unless it is found in the Bible: “If there is not a single passage in Scripture speaking of this matter then proclaiming such matter falls under apostolic anathema” (Kargel 2002:230).

Kargel’s high view of the Scripture brings him to the next step, that is, confessing the Scripture as “the only necessary and completely sufficient source for knowing God, for our salvation, and for knowing His will in all matters of our faith and practice” (Confession 1913), which is a traditional Baptist assertion (Grenz 1994:525). Kargel’s acknowledgment of the Bible’s authority “in all matters of our faith and practice” means placing all aspects of a believer’s life, attitudes, and worldview under biblical authority. This does not mean that the Bible should be used as a scientific textbook, but that having a biblical worldview would influence one’s thinking and actions in every facet of life. As a rule, Kargel concentrates on the significance of the text for faith and Christian living and does not get into “academic” discussions concerning difficulties presented by the text. Those do not seem to bother or interest Kargel.

In Kargel's view scriptural authority requires direct practical application. It calls for action and obedience (T 2.75, T 2.78, T 2.81, T 2.82, T 2.86, T 2.91). For him, an imperative in the Bible is imperative, a command for action. In dealing with the passages requiring holiness, Kargel reckons that "if we believe like children that God says what He thinks, then from the passages mentioned above and from many others we must conclude that God's goal for us in our redemption was the complete break with sin" (Kargel 2002:69). A few points can be made from this statement. First, Kargel takes the Scripture seriously the way it is written. Second, scriptural imperatives are obligatory for believers. Third, believers should approach Scripture with simple faith like little children, as something to be obeyed not questioned.

5.5 Pietism as the main "root" of Kargel's hermeneutical strategy

5.5.1 Is it legitimate to call Russian evangelicals Pietists?

It has been suggested a number of times throughout the paper that striving for *blagochestie*, that is, pietism, was the unifying factor of the various Russian evangelical groups. Pietism was the movement that affected Evangelical origins in Russia in the nineteenth century, just as it had affected British Evangelicalism (Bebbington 1989:39). Discussing the origin of the Mennonite Brethren in Russia in the 1860s, Kuiper points out that "the pietistic influence within the Mennonite churches . . . in Russia . . . had probably been even deeper than in Holland" (Kuiper 1984:126).

Speaking of pietistic influence in Russia brings to mind Stundism with its "*Stunde*" traced right back to Spener; the "pietistic movements in Russia's German colonies which spread among neighbouring Slavic peasants" (Elliott & Deyneka 1999:197); and the Pashkovites who "had always enjoyed the pietistic freedom of expression" (Nichols 1991:74-75). "The significant influence of German Pietism" was felt even among early Russian and Ukrainian Baptists in their "egalitarian governance of early congregations" (Corrado 2007:9). For decades pietism remained a feature for which "Russian Baptists had gained a reputation abroad", as Karev, a Baptist-Evangelical leader of the post World War II period, pointed out (Sawatsky 1976:232).

Nichols persistently writes about “the Pietistic ideas of Radstock, Pashkov, and Kargel” that were “echoed by some congregations and individuals who rejected Prokhanov’s attempts to organize them into a denomination and remained independent” (Nichols 2007:87). Now the question is: what were those “pietistic ideas” and how did they affect the method of interpreting Scripture?

Collins insists that “the term Pietism properly refers to a rather well-defined movement which surfaced in the seventeenth century and ran its course by the end of the eighteenth” (Collins1992:77). Stoeffler, however, does not see Pietism as “restricted to a movement within the Lutheran churches in Germany” (Stoeffler 1965:6). According to Stoeffler, Pietism “should be seen as a major reform movement . . . during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and remained an important source of whatever religious dynamic was developed by Protestants around the world since that time” (Stoeffler 1965:23).

Stoeffler holds a broad concept of Pietism. For him, pietism is “a spirit”, and as such it transcends time, geographical locations, and denominational affiliations. “Whether it occurs in England, in Scotland, in Wales, in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia or North America, whether it is linked with Calvinistic, Lutheran, or Arminian theology, its main features are always the same” (Stoeffler 1965:7).³⁵⁹ When understood this broadly it can easily embrace movements like the Mennonite Brethren, Stundism, or Pashkovism.

5.5.2 Four features of Pietism

According to Ferguson, “Pietism, in its post-Puritan expression, had a number of distinctive features. It was a quest for personal holiness and, conversely, a resistance to compromise with the world” (Ferguson 1984:234). For the purposes of our discussion it is necessary to look briefly into some of the features of Pietism. The author is going to rely upon Stoeffler’s insights into

³⁵⁹ Though Hindmarsh points out that “Stoeffler’s argument . . . cuts a swath a little too wide to be finally definitive, leaving out, as it does, ideological factors” (Hindmarsh 1993:49), the author will be using Stoeffler’s characteristics while keeping in mind “ideological” emphases, such as “the New Birth and the priesthood of all believers, teachings that were translated into actuality by itinerant preaching and the *collegia pietatis*, or class meetings” (Hempton 1993:57). Radstock and Baedeker serve as prime examples of such itinerant preaching.

pietism – this “one of the least understood movements in the history of Christianity” (Stoeffler 1965:1). Stoeffler names and discusses four basic characteristics of Pietism; they can all be discerned in the Russian Evangelical movement in general and in Kargel’s writings specifically.

Experientialism is the first general characteristic of Pietism and basically refers to the emphasis on a personal encounter with God.

From the days of the apostles we find running through the history of the Church what we might call an experiential tradition. During the Middle Ages it has expressed itself in a mystical approach to the Christian life . . . In the turbulent days of the Reformation . . . [it] exerted itself with perfectly tremendous force. Neither Luther, nor Calvin were free from its grip . . . The major representatives of sane and responsible Anabaptism [moved in this track] Grebel, Hübmaier, Marpeck, Menno Simon . . . They all, without exception, felt and taught that their theology was the result of the Word which they had inwardly experienced . . . During the seventeenth century this experiential line asserted itself throughout Protestantism in the Pietistic movement (Stoeffler 1965:6-7).

The idea of experiencing the Word inwardly was closely connected with the idea of being indwelt by Christ.

Like all masters of the devotional life in the history of Christianity, beginning with the apostles and coming down through Augustine, the mystics, and the Reformers, Pietists had the further insight that the kind of authority which alone makes Christian faith individually significant is always experiential. Such authority . . . comes to be exclusively in the ‘I-Thou’ relationship (Stoeffler 1965:14).

This sounds almost like medieval mysticism, yet unlike mystics the Pietists emphasised “the new relationship with God which is based upon faith” whether they spoke “of being filled with the Spirit within the individual” or “the indwelling Christ” (Stoeffler 1965:15). Whether they spoke about “Inner identification with God” which was “the universal emphasis of Pietism”, or “the indwelling Christ”, they attempted to point out “the possibility, necessity, and privilege of a Christian’s experiential oneness with God” (Stoeffler 1965:15).

They often used “terms of endearment” in their reference to God (Stoeffler 1965:16). Traditionally Pietists were accused of being primarily concerned with “feeling and hence the emotional enjoyment of religion” (Stoeffler 1965:10). However, “the leading Pietists were sober men who were considerably more concerned about cross bearing and the moral reformation of the person than about pleasurable feeling states” (Stoeffler 1965:10).

There is no doubt that Kargel's writings are characterized by experientialism. Kargel consistently emphasises a personal encounter with God and His Word and being filled with the Spirit (Kargel 2006:249-250, 293-294; T 1.7). Even those "terms of endearment" are not absent in his writings (T 2.62, T 2.67, T 2.68). The emphasis upon the indwelling Christ – "Christ in you" – is one of Kargel's favourite topics (T 2.34, T 2.39, T 2.44, T 2.45, T 2.60). He emphasises "personal" knowledge of Christ (T 2.67).

The second characteristic is defined as religious idealism, which finds its expression in the Pietists' desire to be "entirely Christian" (Stoeffler 1965:16). The Pietists "emphasised a total break with the old life, a total commitment to the new life in Christ, a total acceptance of all of the implications of this new life as they saw them" (Stoeffler 1965:17). They constantly preached that "without conversion and sanctification the individual Christianity is hollow and his religious profession mere sham" (Stoeffler 1965:17). Actually this was one of the reasons for rising of the Pietistic movement.

Those men and women . . . wanted more than baptism, confirmation, and a learned sermon on some disputed point of theology. The result was a Pietistic sermon, practical, deeply ethical rather than theological, fervent, urgent, Biblical and sometimes legalistic . . . in which its implications for daily life became focal points for mutual exhortation (Stoeffler 1965:19-20).

The second characteristic can also be clearly traced in Kargel's writings. His overall emphasis on devotion and commitment to God cannot be missed (T 1.7, T 2.61, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.73). Conversion and sanctification are prominent themes (T 2.10, T 2.11, T 2.12, T 2.14, T 2.84). His style of writing is definitely more ethical than theological. His goal is to edify, not to educate (T 1.9, T 2.3).

The third basic characteristic of Pietism is its Biblicism. Pietistic theology "was wholly centred in the written Word . . . having to be inwardly appropriated through the Spirit" (Stoeffler 1965:10). "Reason was still given a prominent place in the interpretation of Scripture but it was reason in subjection to the intuited authority of the divine Spirit" (Stoeffler 1965:82). A typical pietistic notion was that the most important thing in life was to do the will of God as revealed in the Bible. Adherents wanted more than to simply pay lip service to the authority of the Bible; they "insisted upon the kind of interpretation which was relatively free from a narrow confessional perspective" (Stoeffler 1965:183-185).

The Pietists were dominantly concerned with the question, “How are the insights of the Bible to be applied to the problems of daily life?” (Stoeffler 1965:20). Importantly, “men and women who professed to be Christians were to remember that their bodies are in truth a temple of God” (Stoeffler 1965:21). The Pietists “emphasised the necessary connection of a living faith with Christian conduct . . . a life of devotion, and of self-denial, a life lived according to the New Testament pattern as they saw that pattern” (Stoeffler 1965:11). However Stoeffler admits that “at times the Pietistic interpretation became legalistic and most of the time it was austere” (Stoeffler 1965:21).

John Arndt (1555-1621), known as the father of Lutheran pietism (Stoeffler 1965:202) and an effective Pietistic preacher, whose “chief objective was to edify and confirm the heart rather than to inform the head” was convinced “that a preacher must first ‘take heed to himself’, before he undertakes to feed the flock” (Stoeffler 1965:204). Arndt’s chief means to that end was “the daily and prayerful study of the Scriptures” (Stoeffler 1965:204). Pietism was focused on “deepening and strengthening the devotional life of people rather than upon correctness of theological definition or liturgical form” (Stoeffler 1965:2). “Pietism’s productiveness in edificatory literature is indicative of its constant preoccupation with the devotional aspects of the Christian life” (Stoeffler 1965:18). An overall tendency was to let the Bible criticize its interpreters, and not the other way around, as articulated here by Stoeffler:

Pietism from the beginning and through the eighteenth century was strongly committed to Biblical norms of thought and life and became increasingly distrustful of reason . . . It was this implicit, somewhat naïve, trust in the Word, rather than in man’s words about the Word . . . The theory was, of course, that the Spirit of God is able to commend the truth of the Bible to men’s minds and hearts without the tortured interpretations of the professionals (Stoeffler 1965:21).

It is the Pietism that made the Bible “the Book of the masses” (Stoeffler 1965:5) in a very real and practical sense.

[Pietists] trusted the religious opinions of theologically untrained laymen . . . laymen were permitted to testify, to exhort, an even to preach . . . The only requirement was that lay testimony must be Biblically based and supported in him who testifies by a life which exhibits the New Testament ethics (Stoeffler 1965:21-22).

An interpreter’s right attitude was seen as a precondition for the correct interpretation of the text. For example, A. H. Franke (1663-1727) laid down as

one of his hermeneutical principles that “to the extent that you are crucified to the world, you will be able to grasp what the holy scriptures are saying” (Fuller 1978:198).

This kind of pietistic Biblicism sounds very similar to Kargel’s position in general and even in details. The following are but a few points of correspondence. Kargel also proclaimed the Bible the centre not only of his theology but also of his whole life. He viewed the Holy Spirit working to actualize the Bible’s words (T 2.82, T 2.83). Reason was supposed to play only a secondary role (T 1.7). Scripture had to be applied and obeyed (T 2.16, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.76, T 2.79). It is quite obvious that Kargel and the Pietists shared a common epistemological model. The Spirit and obedience to the Word were viewed as decisive factors for further and better understanding (T 2.4, T 2.47, T 2.63, T 2.72, T 2.76, T 2.79). Preachers must first “preach” to themselves. It was important for every believer to study and search the Word for him/herself regardless of his/her theological training (Kargel 2006:316-317; T 1.6, T 2.77, T 2.79). The emphasis on daily and prayerful Scripture reading was strong in Kargel’s writings and is still present in the Russian Evangelical circles even today.

The fourth characteristic of Pietism is its opposite character. Stoeffler insists that the term Pietism can be used only when the kind of piety described above “stands over against prevailing norms of faith and life . . . in opposition to the conception of Christian belief and practice which generally prevailed within the Establishment” (Stoeffler 1965:22). With this definition in mind, continental Anabaptists in the sixteenth century, Puritan Pietists in the seventeenth century England, English Brethren in the nineteenth century England would qualify as Pietists in a broad sense of the word.

Russian Evangelicals of the late nineteenth – early twentieth century were indeed in opposition to the Establishment. It was the kind of opposition that brought them to prisons and exiles, and often cost them their lives. Kargel’s biography provides a vivid example of this opposition, discussed above in the historical part of the dissertation. Another commonality of the early European Pietists, Russian Stundists, and the Pashkovites was that they usually did not initiate the break with the Establishment. “Where the possibility existed to remain within the territorial churches the early Pietists were content to do so,

where separation became necessary they accepted willingly the inevitable loss of status or persecution” (Stoeffler 1965:23).

Summarising, it can be concluded that Kargel’s theological profile fits well in the pietistic paradigm as defined by Stoeffler. The next question concerns Kargel’s hermeneutics. How can one qualify it?

5.5.3 Kargel’s hermeneutics of Pietism

One must remember that Kargel lived during the era of classical hermeneutics, which stood on the platform that “there is one intended, literal, proper sense to any given passage of Scripture” (Montgomery 1995:16). That era was in line with Schleiermacher’s tradition with its emphasis on a grammatical-historical approach. However it would be wrong to try to place Kargel within this tradition. For better or for worse, Kargel seemed to avoid the paradigm of a “Cartesian, Newtonian, Baconian” approach to the interpretation of text performed “in a pure, laboratory-clean manner” (Miller II 1995:215). One will search in vain when trying to find in Kargel an inductive approach to the text, reading it “objectively” and “neutrally,” or an attempt to get rid of presuppositions. It is also important to remember (if one wants to avoid asking the wrong questions) that Kargel lived before “the shift towards hermeneutics under the influence of M. Heidegger and R. Bultmann” (Dockery 1994:46).

D. Dockery names a third alternative – the pietistic approach to the interpretation of the text. He points out that “the modern era has generally continued in one of three directions: the Reformation, the Pietistic, or historical-critical approach” (Dockery 1994:43). As far as Kargel’s hermeneutics is concerned the historical-critical approach is ruled out immediately. It is quite obvious that Kargel had nothing to do with the nineteenth-century liberal interpretation of the Bible. Was Kargel aware of liberal hermeneutics, which sought to do away with the supernatural Christ of the New Testament in favour of a “historical Jesus” who was primarily a teacher of ethics, and the attacks against the inspiration and authority of the Bible? Considering his frequent travels around Europe he could have been well aware of the modern trends.

It is hard to tell how well-read Kargel was in German liberal theology, but he must have at least been aware of Lev Tolstoy, the great Russian novelist who accepted only the ethical teachings of the New Testament. Taking into consideration that the liberal camp developed a “special distaste towards

miraculous and eschatological in the Bible” (Dorman 1983:7-8), Kargel occupied the opposite end of the spectrum – he was known for his love for all things eschatological in the Bible. However, unlike fundamentalists, he never engaged in a battle with rigid historicism, which sought to exclude the supernatural element; Kargel probably considered such battles a waste of time.

Under the “Reformation direction” Dockery means the priority of the literal sense, “the emphasis on the grammatical-historical method as the foundation for developing the spiritual message” and “stress on a fuller sense found in the Christological meaning of Scriptures” (Dockery 1994:42-43). Frei points out what served as a common starting point for both the Pietistic and “orthodox” traditions, that is, the acceptance of the truthfulness of Scripture:

[The Pietists] followed the Reformers and a large consensus of Western Christendom from earliest times in their interpretation of biblical narratives. To them all, literal and historical readings of these narratives were in effect the same thing . . . If a biblical text was obviously literal rather than allegorical or topical, and if it was a narrative, then it was historical. Moreover, neither Luther nor Calvin saw any contradiction between a literal reading and the claim that the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments, preached Christ (Frei 1974:40).

Similar ideas are expressed by Stoeffler: “Early Pietism had its roots in the Protestant Reformation, adhered faithfully to its basic doctrinal norms, and tried to keep alive its spiritual dynamic” (Stoeffler 1965:23). However, the Pietists, although sharing the Reformers’ doctrines, did not stop there.

According to Kaiser & Silva,

pietism was a protest against the doctrinal dogmatism and institutionalism that exhibited an absence of personal faith and pious Christian practice in one’s life-style. In addition to such leaders in the movement as Philipp Jacob Spener and August Hermann Franke, the most valuable contributions to interpretation were made by John Albert Bengel . . . [who] stuck close to the natural meaning of the text (Kaiser & Silva 1994:226).

The Pietists endeavoured “to correct the then current dry-to-dust orthodoxy in favour of the Christianity of the Reformers, which was a living, vital and hence effectively satisfying faith” (Stoeffler 1965:11).

The question is where exactly does Kargel stand in relation to these main directions? If Kargel’s way of doing theology is to be compartmentalised it seems to fit in the category of pietistic hermeneutics. Although Kargel never identified himself with Pietism explicitly (while holding Luther in great regard!), his thoughts, feelings, emphases, expressions, and goals make one look in the

direction of pietistic tradition or rather somewhere between the pietistic and “the Reformation” traditions.

Pietism influenced Kargel indirectly via the Mennonites, Brethren, Stundists, Baptists, and British Evangelicals. The great degree of similarities between these movements makes it difficult to distinguish which particular (if any) influence is responsible for this or that view, position, or thought found in Kargel’s writings. Besides, these movements interacted with each other, which resulted in a significant amount of influence upon each other. For instance, the religious concerns of the evangelical Anabaptists and continental Pietists had been similar (Stoeffler 1965:20).

According to Klassen, the Anabaptists claimed to base their “total position upon biblical revelation” and approached the Bible “earnestly and naively” (Klassen 1984:78). The same can be said regarding the Pietists per se, English Brethren, German (Oncken’s) Baptists, and even native Russian Molokans. They all shared some, if not all, characteristics and emphases of Pietism as described by Stoeffler. Therefore instead of arguing that Kargel inherited one idea from the Mennonite Brethren and another from the Brethren (such statements would be defenceless, ambiguous, and prone to error), it would be much safer and more correct to say that Kargel held the same pietistic approach as the Mennonites, Brethren, and Baptists, unless some of his specific views are recognisably Baptist, Brethren or Mennonite.

Here is an example. In the matter of apocalyptic expectations Kargel seems closer to Darby and the Exclusive Brethren who were “making eschatological views the central point of their system” (Coad 1968:129), than to Baedeker (an Open Brethren) in whose teaching “the intense apocalyptic note was almost entirely absent” (Coad 1968:156). And this is despite the fact that Kargel was much more in touch with Baedeker than with the Exclusive Brethren. Then, apocalyptic expectations were also strong in “nondenominational” Moody and among British Evangelicals in general. The point is that it would be wrong to attribute this specific influence to a particular person or movement.

Here is another example. Like all the early Brethren leaders who “regarded the Scriptures as the final court of appeal in doctrinal matters, and in practical matters of Christian living” (Coad 1968:254), Kargel made a similar statement in his 1913 Confession of Faith. This position can be traced through

his writings. There is no doubt that he believed in the Bible as the infallible and sufficient guide. He took this for granted. This was one of his major presuppositions. It is, however, a common conservative evangelical approach, by no means exclusive to the Brethren. The notion of free and direct appeal to the Scripture accessible to all people was emphasised by the Reformers, Pietists, Brethren, Anabaptists . . . You name it!

Speaking of the “practical matters of Christian living”, the Brethren insisted upon a high standard of personal conduct (Coad 1968:104). And so did the Anabaptists! The author’s point is that the main root of Kargel’s hermeneutical strategy was Pietism in general which he inherited indirectly through all the above mentioned evangelistic movements.

5.5.4 Critique of pietistic hermeneutics

It must be admitted that the Pietistic way of interpreting Scripture draws quite a bit of criticism. The author will turn to a few points in Frei’s critique of pietistic hermeneutics. (The order of the points is mine). First, he points out that the Pietist tradition subjects its hermeneutics to dogmatic theology (Frei 1974:38). Second, he blames the Pietists for exercising a “spiritual” interpretation or “reading,” which results in “double meaning in the interpretation of scripture” (Frei 1974:86, 55, 252). Third, he blames the Pietists for an approach to the Scripture that claims “to rest on the direct influence of the Holy Spirit on the reader, in lieu of settling for its plain meaning” (Frei 1974:55). Fourth, he blames the Pietists for holding to “verbal literalism” (Frei 1974:176). Fifth, he points out their “emphasis on self-positioning,” under which he means “a direct and religious relation to the religious ‘objects’ of the Bible” (Jesus, His blood atonement, His love, and the divine Spirit directly speaking to our hearts from the pages of the Bible, etc.) (Frei 1974:200).

Where does Kargel stand in relation to these accusations? The author is going to look briefly at each one of them in the same order.

First of all, it cannot be concluded that dogma came first in Kargel’s treatment of the Scripture and always predetermined his exegesis. He endeavoured to keep an open mind and admonished his readers to do the same.

Second, it is true that Kargel was looking for the “deeper meaning” of scriptural texts and he seemed to spiritualize text, which was quite

understandable when bearing in mind his presupposition that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate author of the Scripture. Packer pointed out that “there is no such thing as an exhaustive exegesis of any passage. The Holy Spirit is constantly showing Christian men facets of revealed truth not seen before” (Packer 1983:330). Those are the “facets” that Kargel is looking for.

In regard to the third point, which is actually closely linked to the second, Kargel really expects the Spirit to assist the process of interpretation in such a way that the divine task, for which the text was written, will be accomplished. The Spirits’ function in the process of interpretation is another of Kargel’s presuppositions.

Fourth, as far as “verbal literalism” is concerned, it appears that at times Kargel did build the case on a specific word or phrase. Whatever the case, he approaches the words of the Bible seriously.

Finally, it is true that Kargel closely related to “the objects” of the Bible because he believed that this was exactly the reason those objects were put in there. Thus, Kargel worked in accordance with his basic beliefs concerning the Scripture.

As the methodology of interpretation, hermeneutics in some sense serves as an interpretive filter. If someone’s basic presupposition is unbelief in anything supernatural, then in the process of interpretation it would be only natural to disregard all miracles or label them as myths. Kargel, like the Pietists in general, chose to believe everything that he read in Scripture no matter how unrealistic it might sound. It seems that in this point (as well as in many others) Kargel shared the Pietistic hermeneutical strategy.

5.5.5 Common ground for understanding: A word in defence of Kargel’s hermeneutical approach

Schleiermacher who “more than anybody else deserves to be called the father of modern philosophical as well as theological hermeneutics . . . turned to the deeper question: How is it possible to understand another human being?” (Janzen 1984:182). His precondition for understanding was “common psychological constitution” (Janzen 1984:182-183). In other words, “if ancient writers had been beings essentially different from us, understanding would be as inconceivable as it is now between animals and people” (Janzen 1984:185). As if answering Schleiermacher’s question Dorman points out that, “the link

between the biblical writers and modern Christians lies in their common experience of encounter with that about which the Bible speaks” (Dorman 1983:284). He continues his thought saying that, “The biblical message is relevant because we live within the flow of the same salvation history experienced by the biblical writers” (Dorman 1983:312).

Bender makes an interesting point concerning the Anabaptist understanding of the Scripture.

The key to the integrity of their approach to the Scriptures lay in the context, in which they studied the Scriptures and the mindset they brought to the task. It did not lay in their intellectual superiority or in their technical skills of exegesis . . . they, for the most part like Jesus’ original disciples were common folk. What distinguished them in their study of the Bible was their openness to hear God’s word of address and their readiness to respond in obedience and faith (Bender 1984:295).

The same could be said about the Russian evangelicals.

Given Schleiermacher’s precondition of understanding it is very tempting to conclude that “fishermen” of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries³⁶⁰ had good chances for understanding fishermen of the first century. Actually there were more things in common that could assist the correct communication between the ancient biblical text and the Russian evangelical audience of Kargel’s time than just simplicity of origin and profession. It seems that the more the author and the interpreter have in common, the better. In that case the Russian evangelicals stood good chances to become good hermeneutists of the Scripture. Who can relate to poor better than poor, unscholarly and simple better than unscholarly and simple, persecuted better than persecuted, and believers in Christ in all sincerity better than those who believe likewise? The question is an oversimplification but the author hopes that the point is clear.

Speaking of persecutions, the history of common persecution and hostility on behalf of the “world” made it easier for the Russian evangelicals in general and for Kargel in particular to identify with and to understand Jesus and His apostles. It seems that it would be legitimate to talk about such hermeneutics as the hermeneutics of the persecuted. It is obvious that all these

³⁶⁰ Although the author put a great emphasis on Russian nobility within the Russian evangelical movement numerically there were many more simple folks among the ranks of Russian evangelicals.

“commonalities” would not render the correct understanding by themselves. However they might assist in arriving at a better understanding of the text.

It is true that Kargel’s writings were unscholarly, but he definitely shared some “common psychological constitution” with the human writers of the Scripture and their original audience.

In the conclusion the author would like to quote K. Barth’s words that he once said to commend Calvin for great exegesis, which makes “the walls which separate the sixteenth century from the first century transparent! Paul speaks, and the man of the sixteenth century hears” (Barth 1933:7). In Kargel’s case his goal was to reach the point (if the paraphrase would be allowed) when, “God speaks, and the man of the twentieth century hears”.

5.5.6 Conclusion

Kargel’s view of Scripture is well summarised in his own words:

The Bible is not, as many think, a collection of moral laws, regulations and decrees. The Bible is the living word of ever living God, through which He desires to reveal His will to believers, as well as the past, the present, and the future of this world (Kargel 2006:7).

Hints about Kargel’s hermeneutics have been scattered throughout this chapter. Now the author will try to pick up the threads and move to a conclusion. As a result of careful study of excerpts from Kargel’s books examined in the context of the whole body of his theological writing, the author can infer the following:

In general Kargel uses a standard evangelical approach to the interpretation of the biblical text. His overall theological method is rooted in the Augustinian tradition, which accepts Scripture in faith, and then seeks further understanding through a regenerated mind relying on the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Just as Augustine and the Reformers, Kargel strongly believes as “what Scripture says God says”.³⁶¹ One thing is absolutely certain about Kargel’s hermeneutics – his exalted view of the Scriptures.

Kargel considers the Bible fully inspired, generally understandable, and in every part absolutely authoritative in matters of faith and practice. On the one hand Kargel does not delve into apologetics regarding the divine origin or

³⁶¹ Augustine, *Confessions*, CIII.29, in Woodbridge & Balmer 1983:335.

infallible nature of Scripture—he simply does not concern himself with biblical criticism. On the other hand he does not go to Scripture looking for precise scientific data on geography, geology, astronomy, or other natural science. This was never a reason for his Bible reading and study.

By faith Kargel accepts the Bible as trustworthy; he does not question it or try to come up with neat definitions of its inspiration. His rhetorical question speaks for itself: “If the Bible does not tell us the truth in everything it addresses, why do we bother to take it into our hands in the first place?” The obvious answer for Kargel is that the Bible does tell the truth. The logical outcome of this proposition is Kargel’s emphasis on individual submission to its authority in commitment and obedience.

Kargel’s presupposition is that the Bible is God’s revelation, of truly divine origin – the very Word of God. Thus, it is a unique book and should be treated respectfully. An important prerequisite for an accurate understanding of the Bible is to know its Author personally, enjoying a relationship with Him and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Only those who believe and trust God can obtain a proper understanding of what He has spoken in His Word. In other words, Kargel trusts the illuminating help of the Holy Spirit to help him to reach correct theological understanding. For this reason Kargel maintains that those who do not believe in God cannot truly understand the biblical text.

Another condition for gaining deeper understanding of the Bible is one’s willingness to submit to the text and obey what is already clear. In Kargel’s opinion, one’s attitude towards Scripture is more important than formal training or a good command of the content. This hermeneutics of obedience makes Kargel a kindred spirit to Pietists in general and the Anabaptists in particular. An interpreter must love the message that he/she attempts to understand. Kargel’s treatment of the Scripture is emotionally charged in the best traditions of the holiness movement. Language of endearment is an added feature that Kargel shares with Pietists.

Kargel uses the Bible primarily as sustenance for spiritual formation in the Christian life, as a source of understanding the truth in the whole spectrum of theological questions, as the guidebook for human life, and only then as a text for preaching or teaching. Kargel’s (like the Pietists’) main emphasis is not theory, but practice; his objective is edification, the transformation of one’s worldview and lifestyle. He maintains that believers should read the Bible,

meditate on its words, trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and apply its teaching to real life situations. Thus, Kargel's method applied to the Bible is predominantly devotional.

Kargel might not be exactly famous for using the grammatical-historical techniques. He might generally show little concern as to what the text meant to its original audience. However, he does not lack the willingness to obey its teaching in the present. Kargel's aim was to make the Scriptures freshly alive in the context of his day, to inspire enthusiasm and expressions of commitment to Christ "here and now".

Diligent study of the Scripture immediately moved to the personal level; the Holy Spirit's assistance and obedience to revealed truths played a role in basic epistemological factors for Kargel. If those factors were lacking the exegete would be ineffective in his job. In this approach Kargel stands closer to the Anabaptists and the Pietists than to the Reformers. He differs from the Anabaptists, however, in not making the congregation a judge of interpretation.

Kargel further differs from the Anabaptists by not making a sharp distinction between the Testaments; in this he seems closer to the Reformers. There are other points of correspondence with the Reformers. Kargel held that the text was to be understood in its obvious literal sense (when it was obvious to him); the clearer passages (the ones that were clearer to him) were to be used to shed light on more difficult ones. In addition, Kargel's interpretation is Christocentric, which puts him in the same camp with a long line of Reformers.

Kargel's use of typology, however, rests heavily on Mackintosh and other Brethren. At times his typological interpretation borders on allegorical, as he attempts to interpret all the Tabernacle details and the Old Testament sacrificial system as pointing prophetically to Christ. His interpretation of prophecy (Daniel and Revelation) is also close to Darby and dispensationalism. Although he does not recognise the same periods as Darby, Walter Scott, or Scofield, he sees human history as divided into three distinctive epochs. In his teaching of future events, Kargel is clearly pretribulational and premillennial.

The apocalyptic atmosphere of ongoing wars and revolutions in his day encouraged prophetic studies. It is not surprising that the book of Revelation was interpreted pessimistically. What is surprising is that Kargel does not expect total destruction of the earth in the end: for him, the new earth is a renewed earth.

Kargel uses the Bible extensively. He often bases his exposition on a particular passage and then goes far and wide through the Scripture searching for relevant subject matter. At times, though, he takes verses out of their immediate context, but still keeping in mind the general context of the whole Bible. By appealing to the larger context of the Bible, Kargel practises what is called “the ‘theological’ or ‘canonical’ type of exegesis that was practised more or less skilfully from the patristic period . . . [it] accepts responsibility for identifying and applying the truth about the living God that Scripture yields. Thus it resolves into preaching, and rightly so” (Packer 1983:351).

Kargel’s hallmarks are simple biblical exposition and a devotional interpretation of Scripture. He always goes to the Bible for his own and his readers’ inspiration and guidance. This approach, however, has some weak points. Coad’s analysis of the Brethren movement discusses certain misuses of Scripture “which can easily spring up within any movement which owes so much to the Bible” (Coad 1968:260). Those discussed below seem to apply to Russian evangelicals in general and to Kargel in particular. Coad further describes Open Brethren preaching in a way that might be also applied to Kargel: “a general shallowness of preaching and teaching (despite a wide popular knowledge of the Bible), which marks the absence of the scholar’s understanding” (Coad 1968:221). Besides, Coad mentions

a liberal use of references to bear only most indirectly on the subject in hand. One other danger is that of an over-mystical allegorizing of the Bible . . . its ludicrous medieval developments would have discredited it once for all, if the border between illustrative use of Biblical material and improper allegorization had not been so difficult to recognize (Coad 1968:260-261).

The chief flaws of Kargel’s hermeneutical method, as some might classify it, were his use of verses out of context and the absence of historical critical approach. In this last point Kargel was also in line with the Anabaptists and Pietists. Besides, a critical approach to the Bible would contradict Kargel’s basic presuppositions.

Now, was Kargel a “biblicist”? “Usually the term ‘biblicism’ is reserved for someone who assumes that the Bible is self-explanatory, that it needs only to be memorised and repeated to be effective” (Klassen 1984:80). In this sense Kargel could not be considered a biblicist even though he used the Bible extensively. However, there is more than one form of biblicism. “Biblicists will

declare that the basis of their concept is a personal encounter with the biblical message and, as a fruit of this, an inward experience of illumination by God” (Kuiper 1984:116). In this sense Kargel would be considered a biblicist.

Furthermore, Kargel shared the Anabaptist-Mennonite conviction that the Bible was clear rather than difficult for understanding God’s will. He obviously trusts every believer with the task of reading and interpreting the Scripture regardless of his/her education and experience. Kargel sees significance not only in the biblical text as a whole, but also in individual words and even in word order. He uses Scripture as a frame of reference for almost every statement he makes. Such an approach is appropriately labelled intuitive Biblicism by Stoeffler.