

Baptistic Theologies

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Editorial

Does the world of academic theological publishing need a new Journal? This is a question many involved in theological reflection might ask. For the editorial team the answer is a resounding ‘yes’. For ten years now we have been publishing the *Journal of European Baptist Studies (JEBS)* which has been a platform for baptistic scholars, especially younger ones in Europe, to make their mark in the world of theological reflection and dialogue. These scholars have submitted papers around most of the major themes of theological discourse, from Biblical studies, through theological reflection, history, ethics and missiology, to philosophy and pastoral theology. It is clearly serving its purpose as we have subscribers in every continent and no shortage of people submitting papers to us for publication, not least because of the demands of institutions and governments that scholars do not simply teach, but do research and publish that research in English and in an international context.

However, the agenda of such a publication is driven by what authors wish to write about for the advancement of their own research interests. This is where *Baptistic Theologies* ventures out in a new way. With this new journal we remove the focus upon a geographical area, Europe, to an ecclesial grouping, baptistic. Here we want to emphasise we are following the approach pioneered by the late Lesslie Newbigin, who drew a distinction of greater Christian families referring to the orthodox family, the catholic family and the protestant family, but then adding what he called the ‘pneumatic’ family.¹ This has been further nuanced by the late Jim McClendon who used the word ‘baptist’ with a small ‘b’,² now further developed into a particular understanding of ecclesial communities as baptistic gathering, convictional, intentional communities, bearing marks of the Kingdom vision.³

¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (New York: Friendship Press, 1954), p. 88.

² See J.W. McClendon Jr, *Systematic Theology: Volume One, Ethics* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), pp. 27-35.

³ See for instance Keith G. Jones, *A Believing Church: Learning from some Contemporary Anabaptist and Baptist Perspectives* (Didcot: Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1998); Keith G. Jones ‘Towards a Model of Mission for Gathering, Intentional, Convictional Koinonia’ in *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, Volume Four, No. 2, January 2004, pp 5-13; and, more recently, Parush R. Parushev, *Christianity in Europe: The way we are now*, with response from Vija Herefoss, in the Crowther Centre Monographs Series, Edition 7 (Oxford: Church Missionary Society, 2009); and Parush R. Parushev, ‘Doing Theology in a Baptist Way’, an open lecture at the Free University of Amsterdam, 16th April 2009, forthcoming.

These baptistic communities are engaged in primary theology.⁴ We are convinced their voice is not sufficiently heard within the current pantheon of theological journals and so *Baptistic Theologies* is designed to strengthen the contribution of the ‘baptist’ communities to and within the world of theological publishing and to ensure such an important stream of theological reflection and dialogue is more fully exposed to the wider world. This journal will be published twice a year in spring and autumn (fall). Our intention is that it should be thematic and we already see themes emerging to cover the first few years.

In this first edition of volume one we take seriously the notion that baptistic communities are formed in their worship – reading the Bible together and reflecting on the Word, singing, submersion of believers and celebrating around the table – and inevitably disciples are dismissed into the world to engage in the mission of God. So, we explore the common reality in such communities that the gathering of believers comes frequently through times of revival, or awakening. Renowned international Baptist historian, Professor David W. Bebbington, sets the scene and then we explore the marks of renewal, revival and advance in mission in various baptistic contexts in greater Europe.

We dare to believe that *Baptistic Theologies* will be an essential resource in understanding baptistic gathering communities and our primary theology, both for those within this tradition and those seeking to understand it.

Keith G. Jones
For the Editorial Board

⁴ On primary theology see Parush R. Parushev, ‘Theology for the Church: A Convictional Perspective on a Community’s Theological Discourse’, a paper delivered during a conference on *The Dynamics of Primary and Secondary Theologies in Baptist Communities* in 2004 which we intend to publish in due course.

1

Revivals, Revivalism and the Baptists

David W. Bebbington

Revivals were once defined in the nineteenth century as ‘those outpourings of the Spirit, which result in the quickening of the church and the conversion of sinners’.¹ They were events in which there was normally a twofold effect, with the stirring of believers accompanying the turning of unbelievers to Christ. Revival, it was sometimes pointed out, implied an earlier period of vitality and so could not strictly apply to non-Christians at all. The synonym of ‘awakening’ carried a similar implication. Those asleep in their Christian profession were roused to new vigilance. Careful characterisations therefore included not only the mass conversions with which revival is normally associated but also the lifting of churches from an earlier time of declension. They were usually outbursts of fresh vigour that stirred whole congregations or even larger bodies of Christians. The phenomenon of revival exerted a major influence on the life of many Evangelical denominations including the Baptists.

It will be useful initially to distinguish different ways in which the term has been employed. In the first place, it has sometimes been applied to individuals. In that sense it describes a personal quickening, often a restoration after backsliding. Thus Thomas Cooper, originally an English Wesleyan Methodist, became an advocate of freethought during the 1840s and 1850s but then, in 1857, returned to Christian faith, being baptised as a General Baptist two years later.² Revival can also, secondly, mean a planned event in a congregation or town. Such events can be carefully organised and advertised in the manner of Billy Graham’s crusades of the later twentieth century. Thirdly, an awakening can be a spontaneous event in a congregation. It is usually marked by anxiety about sins, a widespread desire to turn to righteousness and a large number of conversions. There were many cases of such revivals, for instance, among the Baptists of Nova Scotia during the nineteenth century.³ Equally, however, and fourthly, a revival may be a spontaneous event affecting a larger area than a single congregation. A revival on the Mizoram field of the Baptist Missionary

¹ *Christian Advocate* [American Methodist periodical], quoted by *Wesley Banner* (London), February 1849.

² Timothy Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt: Honest Faith in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), chap. 4.

³ George Rawlyk, *The Canada Fire: Radical Evangelicalism in British North America, 1775-1812* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994).

Society in north-east India in 1919, the most spectacular instance of church growth in the society's twentieth-century history, is a good example of an occurrence of this type that drastically affected the course of life in a whole region.⁴ An awakening, fifthly, may even be a development in a culture at large, usually being both wider and longer than other episodes of this kind. The eighteenth-century movement called the Great Awakening in America or the Evangelical Revival in the British Isles, in reality a single transatlantic phenomenon, illustrates this type. So revivals have taken a variety of forms. Here the smallest and the largest types will be left aside, and the analysis will concentrate on those awakenings that consisted of events: the second, third and fourth of the categories that have been listed.

What, then, have been the characteristics of the revivals in towns or regions, whether planned or spontaneous? What different styles have there been? It can be suggested that awakenings can be analysed in terms of a number of models. Much of the material will refer to Christian bodies other than the Baptists, because members of the denomination were rarely innovators in this field. Rather, Baptists usually copied and were influenced by other denominations. These patterns are no more than approximations to the reality they describe, ideal types in the terminology of Max Weber. Not all the specified characteristics were present in every given instance. But the various traditions do give a sense of the trajectory of revivalism over time, illuminating the context in which Baptist revivals have taken place.

One is the Presbyterian model. The revival in the modern sense was a Scottish discovery of the seventeenth century. There had been innumerable earlier movements of renewal: in fifteenth-century Italy, for example, Franciscan preachers practised something close to later revivalism.⁵ A recognisable tradition of revivals, however, began only after the Reformation. The Presbyterian pattern had a number of specific features. It was firmly controlled by the parish minister, who called in elders of the parish and other ministers to help, and so was carefully supervised. Because of this high degree of discipline, the Presbyterian revival was orderly. It was undemonstrative, or, if it contained elements of excitement, they were restrained. The doctrine preached was Calvinistic. Consequently there was an awareness that the Almighty is sovereign in giving revival; and in association with an awakening, either before, during or afterwards, there was normally teaching about the principles of the faith. Conversion was commonly expected to be gradual, with persistent distress

⁴ Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), p. 275.

⁵ Gary Dickson, 'Revivalism and Populism in the Franciscan Observance of the Late Quattrocento', in Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (eds), *Revival and Resurgence in Christian History* (Studies in Church History, Vol. 44), pp. 62-76.

before a person discovered the certainty of faith. There was often less firmness about the teaching of assurance than in other traditions. It was sometimes considered to be an actual advantage to be uncertain about one's acceptance with God, because then one would persist in seeking until the goal was definitely reached. And the Lord's supper was frequently a stimulus to revival. Among Presbyterians, the sacrament was a rare event, usually twice a year, and so it turned into a major occasion, a communion season. Many thronged to the parish where it was taking place, creating what the poet Robert Burns called a 'holy fair'.⁶ There were services of preparation from Thursday onwards, the actual reception of the elements on Sunday and a thanksgiving service on the Monday afterwards. At the final thanksgiving in particular there were often signs of anxiety as those who were uncertain of their entitlement to receive communion became concerned about the state of their souls. The minister might well decide to hold further meetings, and a revival might break out. The result of all these characteristics was a distinctive Presbyterian style of awakening.

The tradition emerged as part of the development of radical Presbyterianism in the early seventeenth century. The attempts of James VI of Scotland and I of England to assimilate Scottish religion into English patterns generated stout resistance and heightened spirituality among the more convinced Presbyterians. In 1625 revival broke out at Stewarton and Irvine in Ayrshire. Five years later, on the Monday after a communion season at Kirk O'Shotts, Lanarkshire, John Livingston preached for two and a half hours, many of his hearers fell to the ground as though dead and nearly five hundred were said to have been converted.⁷ The tradition became deep-seated and continued into the next century. At Cambuslang near Glasgow in August 1742, more than thirty thousand people were present at probably the most famous Presbyterian revival of all.⁸ Revival became specially strongly rooted in the Highlands of Scotland during the nineteenth century. Nor was it confined to Scotland, for it spread wherever Scots moved. Thus in 1857 in Moore County, North Carolina, a Presbyterian church sprang to life with a series of meetings begun on the Monday thanksgiving service at the end of a communion season.⁹ The Presbyterian tradition of revival fell into decay, however, as the communion season itself faded away during the later nineteenth century. Because the Presbyterian style of awakening was so closely bound up with

⁶ Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 3. This book, an exemplary account of the Presbyterian tradition of revival, is the chief source for its analysis here.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁸ Arthur Fawcett, *The Cambuslang Revival: The Scottish Evangelical Revival of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1971).

⁹ Daniel McGilvary to editor, *North Carolina Presbyterian*, 8 January 1858, p. 1.

the communion season, which Baptists did not observe, its distinctive characteristics exerted little influence over Baptists. When Baptists experienced revival, it rarely followed the Presbyterian formula.

A further type of awakening, and one with greater repercussions on the Baptists, was the Congregational model. It was similar to the Presbyterian pattern: the minister was in charge, there was tight discipline, the theology was Calvinist and originally the expectation was gradual conversion. The Congregationalists, however, did not hold communion seasons, and so their revivals were normally stimulated by other preaching services. Revival among Congregationalists developed not in England, where they first appeared, but in New England, to which they migrated in the seventeenth century to escape the ecclesiastical tyranny of Charles I. There they established gathered churches, congregations that were supposed to consist of converted believers only. Yet the Congregational churches, supported by the taxes of the inhabitants, were the only places of worship in their respective townships. After a short while a problem therefore arose. Members of the second generation of immigrants were not necessarily converted, but wanted to participate in church life, especially by having their infants baptised. From the 1650s a solution was found in the 'half-way covenant'. Parents could have their babies baptised if, without professing faith, they 'owned the covenant'. Such individuals were sometimes, as at Northampton, Massachusetts, under the ministry of Solomon Stoddard, permitted to receive communion. Consequently the churches became peopled by many unconverted characters, forming a natural mission field. Preaching for conversions of a stirring kind became customary, and it led to awakenings. There were many movements of this kind in New England during the 1710s and 1720s.¹⁰ The greatest exponent of this Congregational approach was Jonathan Edwards, the grandson and successor of Solomon Stoddard at Northampton. In 1734 Edwards preached a powerful sermon on justification to his parishioners that precipitated a revival. His report of the events, *A Faithful Narrative* (1737), is the classic account of a Congregational revival.¹¹

The movement in Northampton was one of the first expressions of the Great Awakening that was to sweep America over coming decades. It was a general revival in the colonies, persisting down to the American Revolution, with George Whitefield, though himself an Anglican, as its

¹⁰ Thomas S. Kidd, "'Prayer for a Saving Issue': Evangelical Development in New England before the Great Awakening", in Michael G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart (eds), *The Emergence of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), pp. 128-45.

¹¹ Jonathan Edwards, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (London: for John Oswald, 1737).

leading figure.¹² At first it was shunned by most of the Baptists. They saw Whitefield as an 'enthusiast', a fanatical preacher who ignored the church order that Baptists prized. As the Great Awakening developed, however, it remoulded Baptist life in America. Many Congregationalists who were drawn in could no longer tolerate the half-way covenant. To allow the unconverted church privileges was a breach of a fundamental principle of the gospel. Consequently Edwards tried to terminate the half-way covenant at Northampton, but was dismissed by the congregation as a result. Other awakened Christians experienced similar difficulties with the Congregational parish churches and so started to worship apart as 'Separate Congregationalists'. As some of them examined scripture to discover how church affairs should be regulated, they rejected infant baptism. This section of opinion turned into the Separate Baptists with Isaac Backus at their head. They grew rapidly, outpacing the Regular Baptists. The Separate Baptists soon spread to the South, establishing the Sandy Creek Church, North Carolina, in 1755, the centre for the denomination's evangelism in the region. In the excitement of the Great Awakening, the revival traits inherited from the Congregationalists were modified. The tight control of events by the ministers relaxed, with greater scope for emotion, visions and physical prostrations. The new body was still Calvinist, but more often than in the past there was an expectation of immediate conversion. The Baptists of the American South turned into excitable revivalists, a characteristic that endured in most places long into the nineteenth century and beyond.

A third model of revival was associated with the Methodists. The Evangelical Revival in England that was closely bound up with the Great Awakening had John Wesley as its central figure. Converted in 1738, Wesley was the founder of the movement that came to be called Methodism. The features of Methodist revival largely contrasted with those of the Presbyterian and Congregational varieties. For one thing, lay leadership was normal. Wesley's preachers were usually laymen, though over time they turned into ministers. Nevertheless laypeople continued to conduct the great majority of Methodist services. Meanwhile class leaders led the small groups whose purpose was to foster conversions. When revivals arose, the chief role was commonly played by these layfolk. Partly because ministers did not keep a tight grip, there was less imposition of order and decorum. People expressed their emotions, as in the American Great Awakening, with tears, shouting and outlandish behaviour. At a Primitive Methodist revival in County Durham, England, in 1824, for

¹² Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

example, we are told that ‘a pentecostal shower came down while singing... They began to fall over on all sides, crying, “Glory! – Glory! – Glory!”...To some it appeared nothing but confusion; as some were praying with mourners, others rejoicing with believers, and others were singing.’¹³ The theology of the Methodist revivals was not Calvinist but Arminian. Wesley’s followers adopted his teaching that all could be saved if they trusted in Christ. They also maintained his belief about the defectibility of faith, denying the principle that those who were saved were always saved. It was expected that converts would fall away and then return to faith in a subsequent revival. In addition Methodists upheld the doctrine of entire sanctification. Wesley contended that believers can be made entirely holy so that sin is extinguished in their lives while they are still on earth. It followed that in revivals there were not just conversions, for they were also times at which Christians experienced the crisis of becoming wholly sanctified. Conversion itself was normally expected to be sudden rather than gradual. A person might be in quest of salvation for a long time, but eventually a turning point would be reached that was specific, with a known time. That was because Wesley taught that true faith necessarily includes assurance, the ‘witness of the Spirit’. Only when that experience dawned at a particular moment did a person become a Christian. Revivals, furthermore, were often associated amongst Methodists with ‘protracted meetings’. Services might continue for a long time, perhaps from early evening to four or five in the morning, so as to allow people to wrestle through to salvation. Camp meetings were invented around 1800 on the American frontier to permit such extended meetings to be repeated on successive days. When, in 1807, they were imitated by earnest souls in England, the Methodist authorities condemned them: ‘even supposing such meetings to be allowable in America, they are highly improper in England’.¹⁴ The Primitive Methodists, rejecting this ruling, separated from the main Wesleyan Methodist body in order to keep up the revivalist momentum.

This style of revival – lay-led, excitable, Arminian, looking for instant conversions and holding long meetings – was an effective formula for church growth. By the mid-nineteenth century, the British Methodists enjoyed the support of 19% of the worshippers in their nation and the American Methodists claimed as many as 34% of theirs.¹⁵ The movement spread across the world, the most expansive Christian body of the

¹³ *Primitive Methodist Magazine* (London), August 1825, p. 271.

¹⁴ *Minutes of the Methodist Conference, 1807*, quoted in Rupert Davies et al. (eds), *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, Vol. 4 (London: Epworth Press, 1988), p. 320.

¹⁵ D. M. Thompson, *Nonconformity in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 153. Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), p. 55.

nineteenth century. The prestige of success made the Methodists the examples for other denominations to imitate. Baptists in particular moved in a Methodist direction during the century. They gave more scope to lay leadership and permitted more displays of emotion. Their theology became more Arminian, they expected conversion to be sudden and they sometimes held long services. Baptists increasingly found it easy to join in Methodist awakenings. Thus at Moonta Mines in South Australia in 1875, when revival broke out among the miners, mostly Methodists who had come originally from Cornwall, the local Baptist church gladly joined in the efforts.¹⁶ The Baptist approach to revival had in many places become little different from that of the Methodists.

The Baptist adoption of elements of the Methodist style was part of a larger process of synthesis. The traditions of revival interpenetrated, especially on the American frontier. Thus in 1801 at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, there was a Presbyterian communion season attended by Methodists and Baptists who participated fully. Its promoter, Barton W. Stone, moved to an undenominational position in 1804, founding a group to be called 'Christians Only' who evolved into the Disciples of Christ. Likewise in upper New York state, Charles Finney developed intensive revival methods in the 1820s. Although he was himself a Presbyterian, he used Methodist techniques. Finney encouraged physical prostrations, women speaking, protracted meetings and, from 1830, the use of the 'anxious seat', an isolated bench at the front of a meeting where a penitent would sit in full view of all to be the target for the whole congregation's prayers. These 'new measures' were codified in Finney's enormously popular *Lectures on Revivals* (1835).

What was the nature of this model of revival that we can call synthetic? In the first place it was planned. Instead of urging prayer for God to bestow an awakening, Finney believed that the Almighty had so ordained that particular methods would infallibly bring one: 'a revival', he wrote, 'is not a miracle; it consists entirely in the right exercise of the powers of nature'.¹⁷ The natural world was governed by laws, and the spiritual world was no different. Revival, on this understanding, could be organised into existence. This style was also pragmatic. Its special measures represented an adaptation to the human psyche. Those who sat on the anxious seat, for example, felt a sense of isolation that made the transition to salvation seem more imperative. Whatever worked, Finney held, should be employed. Theological reconstruction was another feature.

¹⁶ *Truth and Progress* (Adelaide), July 1875, pp. 74-5.

¹⁷ Charles Finney quoted by William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 125.

Finney was prepared to abandon confessional Calvinism altogether. His thought was shaped by the broad assumptions of the Enlightenment, whose beliefs about a mechanistic universe underlay his premise that laws functioning by cause and effect operated in the spiritual universe.¹⁸ Others later in the century were to be swayed by intellectual currents flowing from the Romantic movement. Thus many of the Holiness revivalists, swayed by Phoebe Palmer, were to urge an immediate surrender to the Almighty on the pattern of the melodramatic moments of romantic literature.¹⁹ Indeed, immediacy was a hallmark of the synthetic school. Presbyterians, Congregationalists and even traditional Methodists had all held that there was a need to wait until the time of conversion came. According to the newer approach, however, there was no need to wait. Salvation could be appropriated straight away, without delaying until any particular sensation arose. Traditional denominational teaching could therefore be a hindrance, and so, as Barton W. Stone came to think, could denominational structures. The new revivalists therefore tended to ignore old boundaries, sometimes creating, like Stone, a new denomination in the process.

This synthetic style of revival triumphed during the nineteenth century. There emerged a largely homogeneous Evangelical approach to awakenings, adopted by many Baptists in America, Britain and elsewhere. Joseph Belcher, a prominent English Baptist who emigrated to the United States in 1844, for example, was an exponent of some of Finney's ideas in his periodical *The Revivalist* during the 1830s.²⁰ The new style, however, was most associated with the keenest of Evangelical bodies, the (so-called Plymouth) Brethren. This grouping became dedicated to revivalism. For them it was normally planned, pragmatic and neither Calvinist nor Arminian; they insisted on immediate conversion and denied that they were a denomination, claiming that they were merely 'gathering to the Lord'.²¹ Brethren carried this type of revivalism round the world. Lord Radstock, then identified with the Brethren, took it in 1874 to the fashionable salons of St Petersburg, creating an undenominational movement subsequently led

¹⁸ Finney's thought is best illuminated by David L. Weddle, *The Law Gospel: Revival and Reform in the Theology of Charles G. Finney* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1985), which stresses its subject's legal training.

¹⁹ John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), pp. 316-17.

²⁰ Richard Carwardine, 'The Evangelist System: Charles Roe, Thomas Pulford and the Baptist Home Missionary Society', *Baptist Quarterly* 28 (1980), p. 211.

²¹ N. T. R. Dickson, *Brethren in Scotland, 1838-2000: A Social Study of an Evangelical Movement* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), pp. 69-73.

by Vasilii Pashkov.²² The Pashkovites became a major tributary to the broad stream of Russian Baptist life.

During the later nineteenth century another type of revival emerged that can be called the modern style. Although related to the synthetic model, sharing many of its characteristics, it formed a distinctive response to the changing social conditions of the time. It was, in the first place, urban. There had already been a shift of Finneyite revivalism into the cities, but the new approach was actually moulded by the conditions of the urban civilisation that was coming into being around the middle of the nineteenth century. Revival leaders concentrated on large-scale efforts in industrial and commercial centres, holding meetings in vast halls and targeting, not particular congregations, but whole cities such as New York, Chicago, London and Glasgow. Local leadership was in the hands of businessmen. These figures were not just laymen who happened to play a prominent part in revivals, but members of the city's business elite who put up the money to pay for the event and expected to have a part in planning it. Thus they typically encouraged participation by the local Young Men's Christian Association, prompting their own junior employees to help with organisation. The theology purveyed in such modern revivals, though firmly Evangelical, was neither Calvinist nor Arminian because those responsible knew that they had to appeal to both parties in order to maximise support. Consequently the events were not so much undenominational as interdenominational, encouraging co-operation by a variety of bodies and respecting the views of all of them. There was a restrained tone so that no potential supporters or attenders should be alienated. The revival events were as respectable as their bourgeois promoters. They typically concluded with after-meetings, designed to provide counselling for the spiritually anxious, which were held in private so that the discussion of personal matters should not become a matter for public gaze. The professional approach extended to the individuals who led the revivals. Already there had been a tendency for individual ministers, such as the Irish-American Methodist James Caughey, to concentrate on leading revivals, but now there emerged a class of professional revivalists, credited with special expertise in conducting mass meetings. One, for example, was Henry Varley, an undenominational preacher who spanned the world with his travels. All these features were suited to the expectations of a modern commercial society.

²² Sharyl Corrado, 'The Gospel in Society: Pashkovite Social Outreach in Late Imperial Russia', in Sharyl Corrado and Toivo Pilli (eds), *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: International Baptist Theological Seminary, 2007), p. 53.

The archetypal episode in this category was the so-called 'Businessmen's Revival' of 1857-58. Starting in New York, it spread to other American cities. Although it was a more spontaneous awakening than later events of this kind, lacking a single professional preacher in any of the places where it took hold, it was definitely businesslike. Typically there was a noon prayer meeting timed to coincide with the commercial lunch break so that no trading hours would be lost. Gatherings were all carefully scheduled by the clock, never continuing beyond the stated hour.²³ This was the model adopted in the 1870s by Dwight L. Moody, the doyen of professional revivalists, though he added the attractions of song supplied by his colleague Ira D. Sankey. The tradition became cruder in the early years of the twentieth century as showmanship took over. Thus Billy Sunday, the leading American evangelist of his day, engaged in knockabout polemics on the platform. This was the phase of revivalism satirised in Sinclair Lewis's novel *Elmer Gantry* (1927). The tradition, however, was to be rehabilitated by Billy Graham from the 1940s. Graham's crusades were organised by his efficient team all over the world. The evangelist was a Southern Baptist, and many Baptists gave him their support, but his meetings were scrupulously interdenominational. His missions were also urban in focus, businesslike in method, restrained in atmosphere and professional in leadership. There was nothing spontaneous about these epitomes of the modern style of revival, but they represented the most obvious form of the phenomenon in the later twentieth century.

The years after 1900 were nevertheless marked by a wide range of revivals of varying kinds all over the world. The style commonly mingled elements of the synthetic and the modern, but often, too, there was a large element of the unplanned that drew on indigenous cultural influences. The epicentre for much of the global spread was the Welsh Revival of 1904-05, an occurrence that affected virtually the whole principality. The first revival stirrings occurred before the beginning of the career of Evan Roberts, but he was the central figure: a twenty-six-year-old ex-miner, just starting preparation for the Calvinistic Methodist ministry, a man with the disposition of a mystic. Roberts emphasised the need to confess Christ publicly, to obey the Holy Spirit's prompting, to confess known sin and to put away doubtful things – all themes that recurred in many subsequent awakenings. As Roberts carried his message round the chapels of Wales, many of the Baptists were stirred. Thus R. B. Jones of Porth, already known as an able preacher, travelled about to kindle the flame of revival

²³ Kathryn Teresa Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

almost as much as Evan Roberts.²⁴ Events were so dramatic that visitors came to witness them and take the atmosphere back to their congregations elsewhere. The excitement of the revival spread round the world, especially to lands where there were Welsh expatriates such as Pennsylvania, Madagascar and Patagonia.²⁵ Thus the spark ignited the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission in Mizoram, reinvigorating the Baptists on the adjacent mission field in 1907.²⁶ In many places the revival impulse coalesced with the novel phenomenon of Pentecostalism, marked by speaking in tongues. The Pentecostalists, in their early days, stressed that theirs was a revival movement. They looked for unprompted visitations by the Spirit, but before long they settled down to more organised ways.²⁷ The normal church planting technique in the inter-war years was the holding of a planned revival and the gathering of the converts into a congregation. Here was a vast global force in twentieth-century Christianity propagating revival.

There were many other regional revivals that made a profound mark during the twentieth century. A predominantly Baptist instance took place in 1921 in East Anglia, the easternmost counties of England. It was the result of a week of special services conducted in the fishing port of Lowestoft by Douglas Brown, a London Baptist minister. The news of many converts led to invitations to visit adjacent towns and villages, so that between March and June Brown preached no fewer than three hundred and seventy times.²⁸ The spiritual impulse was carried by returning fishermen to the north-east of Scotland, where a similar awakening broke out. Later awakenings were even larger in scope. The East African Revival began in 1933 in the Rwanda Mission of the Church Missionary Society. Emphasising 'walking in the light' through mutual confession of sins, the movement bound together its adherents in tight-knit fellowship and persisted over many years.²⁹ As early as 1935 its impact was felt by the Baptist Missionary Society stations on the River Congo.³⁰ Nor did remarkable awakenings die out in the later twentieth century. In Arnhem Land in northern Australia, for example, there was a powerful revival among Indigenous Australians in 1978-79. Beginning while the missionaries were away, it involved vivid dreams and, unusually in that

²⁴ Noel Gibbard, *Fire upon the Altar: A History and Evaluation of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival* (Bridgend: Bryntirion Press, 2005).

²⁵ Noel Gibbard, *On the Wings of the Dove* (Bridgend: Bryntirion Press, 2002).

²⁶ Stanley, *Baptist Missionary Society*, p. 273.

²⁷ Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), chap. 6.

²⁸ Stanley C. Griffin, *A Forgotten Revival: East Anglia and NE Scotland – 1921* (Bromley, Kent: Day One, n.d.), p. 17.

²⁹ Kevin Ward, 'The East African Revival of the Twentieth Century: The Search for an Evangelical African Christianity', in Cooper and Gregory (eds), *Revival and Resurgence*, pp. 365-87.

³⁰ Stanley, *Baptist Missionary Society*, p. 347.

culture, the transfer of leadership in the church from women to men.³¹ This awakening owed something to the charismatic renewal that had drastically affected many churches throughout the world from the 1960s. For many, it was the chief vehicle for revival in the late twentieth century. Its global reach is illustrated by its impact in the Baltic republic of Estonia when in the 1970s the country was still a part of the Soviet Union. During the Effataa Revival in a Tallinn Baptist church, a music group led healing services with charismatic signs that attracted visitors from other Soviet republics. So popular were the Russian-language meetings that they were suppressed in 1981 after pressure from the Soviet authorities.³² Charismatic renewal was drastically affecting certain Baptists even on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. It is an example of the way in which forms of revival were globalised during the twentieth century.

Overall, what can be concluded about the relationship of Baptists to revival? In the first place it is evident that Baptists have participated in revival events over the centuries. They contributed significantly to each of the categories considered at the start of this paper. The most obvious instance of a series of planned events was the sequence of crusades over six decades led by Billy Graham. Spontaneous happenings in particular congregations were common among the Separate Baptists of America in the eighteenth century. And the place of Baptists in spontaneous awakenings over whole regions is represented by the role of R. B. Jones in the Welsh revival of 1904-05. Baptists had no monopoly of any of these expressions of the revival tradition, for they participated alongside members of other denominations. But Baptists were prominent in them all.

It is also evident, secondly, that Baptists were not wedded exclusively to one style of revival. They did not espouse the Presbyterian model, since a communion season did not exist among them to precipitate an awakening. The Congregational style, however, in which a revival was a response to a minister's forceful preaching, was taken up by Baptists, who turned it into their predominant technique in the American South. The Methodist approach deeply influenced them too, for the revivals among Baptists became more like their Methodist equivalents as the nineteenth century progressed. Many Baptists, furthermore, adopted the synthetic model for planned revivals during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The modern style, with its mass urban missions, attracted much Baptist support, and its greatest exponent, Billy Graham, was a Baptist. With the phenomenon of revival becoming global during the twentieth century,

³¹ Stuart Piggin, *Firestorm of the Lord: The History of and Prospects for Revival in the church and the World* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), pp. 77-9.

³² Toivo Pilli, 'Towards a Revived Identity: Estonian Baptists, 1970-1985', in Corrado and Pilli (eds), *Eastern European Baptist History*, pp. 154-6.

Baptists played a full part, from the outworking of the Welsh revival to the spread of charismatic renewal. As approaches changed over the years, Baptists were willing to enter into different styles of revivalism.

The third comment, however, is that the subject is worthy of much closer attention than it has been given. George Rawlyk has examined certain Baptist revivalists of the Canadian Maritimes and their predecessors in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but not the particular congregations that were stirred under their preaching.³³ Ian Balfour has scrutinised Charlotte Baptist Chapel, Edinburgh, as closely as any congregation of the denomination in any country, and its 1905 revival is part of the story.³⁴ But the revival is only one incident in a long narrative, whose focus inevitably turns to many other issues. Others have written of revival episodes in their lands: Toivo Pilli, for example, has discussed the Effataa Revival of Estonia.³⁵ Yet there is scope for much more detailed analysis of revival events, examining the individuals involved, whether as revivalists or converts, the social context, in the local community as well as in the broader region, and the ideas that were current, both religious and secular. Such a holistic approach, encompassing the piety and culture of the participants in an awakening, promises to reveal more than we already know about the changing dynamics of revivalism.³⁶ It will be instructive to discover the ways in which Baptists experienced outpourings of the Spirit that brought quickening to their churches and conversion to sinners.

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³³ Rawlyk, *Canada Fire*.

³⁴ Ian L. S. Balfour, *Revival in Rose Street: Charlotte Baptist Chapel, Edinburgh, 1808-2008* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 2007).

³⁵ Pilli, 'Towards a Revived Identity', pp. 154-6.

³⁶ The approach can be illustrated, though for a Methodist case-study, by D. W. Bebbington, 'Culture and Piety in the Far West: Revival in Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole in 1849', in Cooper and Gregory (eds), *Revival and Resurgence*, pp. 225-50.

2

Revival and Baptist Beginnings in Russia

Johannes Dyck

In the Baptist historical tradition in Russia, revival and the Baptist movement are inseparable. The first usage of the term *revival* as applied to the evangelical movement in Russia dates back to 1862;¹ and in most recent publications² the term is still extensively used. This long time period has made the term a real Baptist one and filled it with specific confessional meaning. In the confessional historical literature, the term *revival* has two connotations: first, it means a new beginning, and second, renewal.

The second connotation of the term *revival* was created after the split within the Evangelical Christians-Baptists community in USSR in 1961. According to the historical paradigm of the Reform (or non-registered) Baptists, baptistic life was not in a good way and things did not improve until the 1961 revival. In a sense, 1961 became a new set of coordinates, and recently an attempt³ was made to put into this coordinate system the previous history of Baptists in Russia.

This study deals with the first connotation and focuses on the establishing of Baptist identity.

Nature of the Revival

In Russian Baptist historiography, two attributes to the term *revival* have been applied: spiritual and evangelical.

In the mind of Baptist historians, the attribute *spiritual* describes the nature of the revival. The first fruit of the revival, the peasant Onishchenko from the village of Osnova in the Odessa District of Kherson province, later shared his experience this way:⁴

¹ 'Süd-Rußland. Verfolgungen', *Missionsblatt der Gemeinde getaufter Christen*, 7 (1862), p. 107.

² S.N. Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov Ukrainy, Rossii, Belorussii (1867-1917)* [The History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Ukraine, Russia, Belorussia] (St. Petersburg: Bibliya dlya vsekh, 1999).

³ V. Khorev. Tserkov' dolzhna ostavat'sya tserkov'yu: neobratimye desyatiletiya 1917-1937 gg. V istorii evangel'skogo i baptistskogo dvizhenii [Church has to Remain a Church: irreversible decades 1917-1937 in the history of the Evangelical and Baptist movements], *Istoriko-analiticheskiĭ otdel MSTs EkKhB* [Department of History and Analytics of the International Union of Churches of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists], 2008.

⁴ Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya*, p. 97.

In former times I was like a pig: I have been a beast, and even worse... Once I have been praying, praying in the field, weeping and crying: o Lord, give me understanding, correct me! I do not know who, I haven't seen him, as if somebody took off my clothes, and I was relieved, became free and got to know God.

This testimony of the first convert is typical of Pietist revival, as confirmed by many sources about spiritual life in the German villages in Russia.⁵ First, a person is overcome by a deep sense of sinfulness and then a phase of highly emotional inner struggle follows. Finally, an inexpressible feeling of joy serves as an authentication of full forgiveness and personal salvation. The experience of personal salvation was totally new, not only for peasants in the South Russian backwoods but also for the Russian Orthodox Church on the whole. New horizons of spiritual life had been opened; this explained the attribute *spiritual*. Personal salvation was a very strong argument in a deeply religious country.

Independently from the village of Osnova, and at almost the same time, revival broke out in several other villages hundreds of kilometres away and even in the city of Odessa. In South Russia, all those converted had been in close contact with German colonists so they were given the name Stundists – a translation from German.

The second attribute of the term *revival* – evangelical – comes from the Russian *evangelie* meaning gospel. The simultaneous emergence of similar groups in different parts of the country had a cause – the start of the publication of the Russian New Testament with the imprimatur of the Holy Synod in 1862 after a long interval of almost forty years. The new faith had been directly derived from the divine source that could now be accessed by everyone who was able to read. Now, as Johann Wieler, the initiator of one of the first Stundist groups in Odessa in 1859-62, and later the organiser of independent Russian Baptist structures, exclaimed: ‘... the hour had come at last for the emancipation of millions of Russians who had been enslaved in both body and spirit for centuries’.⁶ From the very beginning, the *sola Scriptura* principle became the second main factor of the revival.

⁵ Examples: ‘Rußland. Über das christliche Gemeinschaftsleben um Odessa und Beßarabien’ *Missionsblatt der Gemeinde getaufter Christen*, 6 (1874), pp. 106-7; 7 (1874) pp. 126-7; P.M. Friesen, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Brüderschaft in Russland (1789-1910) im Rahmen der mennonitischen Gesamtgeschichte* (Halbstadt: Raduga, 1911, repr. Göttingen: Verein zur Erforschung und Pflege des Kulturerbes des russlanddeutschen Mennonitentums, 1991), p. 238; J. Pritzkau, *Geschichte der Baptisten im Süd-Rußland* (Odessa, 1914, repr. Lage: Logos, 1999, new pagination), p. 17.

⁶ J. Wieler, Einige kurze Mitteilungen über die Entstehung des Stundismus und Baptismus unter der russischen Bevölkerung im Süden Rußlands (Sevastopol, 7 Nov. 1884), Univ. of Birmingham, Special Collections Department, Pashkov Papers [Hereafter Pashkov Papers], 2/25/8, p. 7; Engl. trans.: L. Klippenstein (trans. and ed.), ‘Johann Wieler (1839-1889) Among Russian Evangelicals: A New Source of Mennonites and Evangelicalism in Imperial Russia’, *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 5 (1987), pp. 44-60, 48.

The active dissemination of the scriptures substantially increased the potential of the revival. However, the distribution of Scripture did not automatically mean an increase in Stundism. Under Russian conditions, the Bible was not self-explanatory as the case of Molokans shows. This group had been regarded as a rationalistic sect, separated from the Orthodox Church in the 1770s, and also following the *sola Scriptura* principle. Over three generations, before the Pietist revival, they organised their community life in accordance with the scriptures and faithfully studied them, but the results of their studies cardinally differed from the Pietist one. An inevitable conclusion comes to mind that the Pietists shared not only their previously unknown experience of new life but also a new hermeneutic that placed this same new life as a reference axis of biblical interpretation.

In general, in the 1860s and 1870s, the Molokans were a hard soil for the Pietist seed. Only a generation later did they open their minds to the central idea of the revival – the experience of personal salvation. This can be explained by the readiness of a new Molokan generation to follow a different hermeneutical approach.

Soon a third argument was added to the two main ones referred to. The life of the converted substantially changed revealing a power to overcome vices and evil. New rules of a new life, like full abstinence, were established. A new ethic was derived from the changing power of the Gospel, and it became the most important confirmation of the reality of a conversion because it was the most visible one.

In best Pietist tradition, the promoters of the revival were not only trained theologians but every able person. This greatly expanded the potential of the revival. In fact, the extension of German Pietism to the Russian population was done at a time when there were no prominent German Pietist pastors working in Russia. After the death of Pastor Wüst in 1858, the main Pietist impulses came from so-called lay people, and twenty years later, in the German settlements, hundreds of Pietist groups existed.⁷ At this time, the Pietist revival was the work of enthusiasts, not theologians.

The Russian revival occurred in the same manner. Here is a typical example. In 1875, in the settlement of Malovodyanaya in the Aleksandriya district, lived just one Stundist family. Nine years later, there were 118 people from twenty-two Stundist families, accounting for almost half of the

⁷ 'Rußland. Über das christliche Gemeinschaftsleben', p. 106.

village. All of this was the work of one person, the peasant Vasili Levchenko, a person not mentioned anywhere else in Baptist history.⁸

The potential of the Russian revival was tremendous. Twenty-five years after the first conversions, Stundism reached at least 350 geographical locations in South Russia and Transcaucasia.⁹ Even if the millions of Russians from Wieler's vision remained a dream, by 1917 the fruits of the revival numbered about 200,000 believers.¹⁰ This number more than tripled by 1929.¹¹ The main Pietist arguments – personal salvation, biblicism, a holy life – combined with the missionary zeal of ordinary people, continued to have its effect.

Unnoticed Diversity of Revival

In the traditional Russian Baptist historiography, revival is the central link in the triad *search for truth – revival – first baptisms*. From today's perspective, this approach is fully legitimate and means that the first baptisms were preceded by revival that in turn was preceded by a search for truth. From the viewpoint of a contemporary witness, however, revival did not necessarily lead to baptism. The non-Baptist branches engaged in the revival have usually been underexposed in confessional Baptist accounts.

The archives present a surprisingly multicoloured picture of the revival in Russia in the 1860s. Here are some important elements of it that were somewhat underexposed in the established scheme used by many Baptists or differently interpreted.

First, a strong Presbyterian presence existed. It began as early as 1837 with John Melville, who made Odessa a centre for the distribution of Russian New Testaments into South Russia at a time when Bible distribution was unwanted by the central government. He distributed books of the British and Foreign Bible Society although he avoided the status of being its regular agent.¹² Naturally, alongside sharing the New Testaments he set Presbyterian accents according to his own Christian tradition. The people who established a New Testament distribution system, also

⁸ 'Prigovor Nikolaevskogo (ono she Vodyanaya) sel'skogo skhoda Bashtanskoï volosti Aleksandriïnskogo uezda' [Sentence of the Nikolaev (also known as Vodyanaya) Village Gathering of the Bashtan Volost, Aleksandriya District], [Episkop] Aleksii, (ed.), *Materialy dlya istorii religiozno-ratsionalisticheskogo dvizheniya na yuge Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX-go stoletiya* [Materials for the History of the Religious Rationalist Movement in the South of Russia in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century] (Kazan', 1908) pp. 295-6, 295.

⁹ Aleksii, pp. 1-324, 557-83, 610-68.

¹⁰ Savinskiï, *Istoriya*, p. 168.

¹¹ Estimation by Savinski; more conservative estimations could be based on: P.V. Ivanov-Klÿshnikov, 'Trud i zadachi Baptistov v SSSR' [Work and Tasks of Baptists in USSR], *Baptist* 7 (1928), pp. 4-5.

¹² J. Urry, 'John Melville and the Mennonites: A British Evangelist in South Russia, 1837 – ca. 1875', *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 54 (1980), pp. 305-22, 311-12.

established an infrastructure of spreading the revival based on the *sola Scriptura* principle.

The next Presbyterian traces in the revival lead initially to Urmia in Persia where American Protestant missionaries began work with Nestorians in 1834 with the initial intent to improve the indigenous Assyrian Church.¹³ A generation later, in 1862, a graduate of their mission school, Kasha Yakub (Priest Yakub), began work among Nestorians in Tiflis, Transcaucasia.¹⁴ A year later, after learning some Russian, he began his work among Molokans and Orthodox Christians. He then relocated to Odessa from where, as a mobile trader, he travelled to Russian villages. Four years later he was in trouble with the police because of the seduction of Orthodox believers. In 1867, he started to work with Molokans.¹⁵ They were regarded as a sect and were allowed to change their faith more easily. Later, Kasha Yakub became a Baptist and entered into Russian Baptist history as the blessed Evangelist Yakov Delyakovich Delyakov.

Russian Baptist historiography paid little attention to the fact that Delyakov was not working alone. It was known that, in South Russia, other preachers with a Persian background and documents issued by a Presbyterian mission were at work.¹⁶ Seventeen years later, in 1884, he reported that there were about twenty congregations of Evangelical Molokans in nine provinces. Considering the difficulties of work with Molokans, it was a phenomenal result for one person!

On the other hand, the Pashkov Papers, available at IBTS¹⁷ and at the University of Birmingham, show that other people worked among Evangelical Molokans, such as the Armenian Ambartsum Ambartsumov or Avraam Amirkhanyants, a graduate of the Basel Mission and an admirer of Methodism.¹⁸

At this point, questions are appropriate. Who coordinated their work? The Basel Mission? Or the Presbyterian Mission? Or Melville? Or a joint committee? From where did the coordination come? From abroad or from inside the country? To what extent were the native Russians involved? Delyakov himself makes a casual mention of brethren who assigned new responsibilities for him. On the other hand, he accepts direct financial aid

¹³ M. Zirinsky, 'American Presbyterian Missionaries at Urmia During the Great War', p. 4, www.jaas.org/edocs/v12n1/zirinsky.pdf, accessed 1st Nov. 2008.

¹⁴ A.W. Wardin, Jr., *Evangelical Sectarianism in the Russian Empire and the USSR: A Bibliographic Guide* (ATLA Bibliographic Series, 36: Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1995), p. 150.

¹⁵ Ya.D. Delyakov, Letter to V.A. Pashkov, 7.2.1884, Pashkov Papers, 2/8/39.

¹⁶ Pritzkau, *Geschichte*, pp. 49-50.

¹⁷ IBTS Library. Catalogue access at www.ibts.eu.

¹⁸ Avr. Amirkhanyants, Letter to V.A. Pashkov, 4.12.188, Pashkov Papers, 2/2/404.

from Pashkov. Who were those brethren? These questions are still not answered but show the diversity of the revival.

Fortunately, the work with non-Orthodox did not attract much attention and remained unnoticed by the Orthodox experts. They usually regarded the fruits of Delyakov's and his colleagues' work with Molokans of the second Don persuasion. Only in 1899 were they mentioned under their proper name.¹⁹ As Molokans, they have usually been referred to in the Russian Baptist historiography. Savinskiĭ is a positive exception here.²⁰

The next important element that has been almost unnoticed by Russian Baptist historiography is the development of the Evangelical Alliance. A contribution to this topic has already been made in an earlier essay in 2005 by Ian Randall;²¹ here a short report on traces in Russian sources follows.

From the beginnings of the revival, the Evangelical Alliance took over the noble mission of defence of the persecuted Stundists. It seems that the first people to appeal to the Evangelical Alliance for help were the original German Baptists exiled from Russia in 1864. Their petition to the Evangelical Alliance was reprinted in the German 'Missionsblatt der Gemeine getaufter Christen'.²² We may conclude that an appeal to the Evangelical Alliance was regarded as far more effective than a publication and prayer request in the paper of the brethren in faith in Germany. Several years later, Johann Wieler chose the same route when he searched for protection for persecuted Russian believers.²³ Sometimes, the actions of the Evangelical Alliance or its members succeeded.

However, the Evangelical Alliance offered far more than just a defender's role. An important part of the Russian revival – the revival in St. Petersburg – has been considered as a model. This had already begun with the main evangelist in St. Petersburg – Lord Radstock who felt obligated to the principles of the Evangelical Alliance. This attitude was taken over by Colonel Pashkov, the revival leader, after Lord Radstock's departure from St. Petersburg.

From its beginning in 1874, the revival in St. Petersburg had no sharp confessional profile as had been developed with Baptists in South

¹⁹ *Missionerskoe obozrenie* [Missionary Review] (St. Petersburg, 1899), pp. 169-70; referenced in Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya*, p. 156.

²⁰ Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya*, pp. 155-8.

²¹ I.M. Randall, 'Eastern European Baptists and the Evangelical Alliance', S. Corrado, T. Pilli, eds., *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007), pp. 14-33.

²² 'Süd-Rußland. Neue Verfolgungen', *Missionsblatt der Gemeine getaufter Christen*, 6 (1865), pp. 92-4; 7 (1865), pp. 106-8, 107.

²³ Wieler, *Mitteilungen*, 2/25/8, p. 15.

Russia. Pashkov avoided the direct creation of new communities²⁴ and tried to stay as close as possible to the Orthodox Church even at a time when the Orthodox Church already advised against him.²⁵ On the other hand, the Baptist-minded southern wing of the revival was suspicious about the lack of obligatory baptism demands in St. Petersburg.

Nevertheless, Pashkov continued to follow his Evangelical Alliance line and even made solid financial contributions to Baptist work in the south.²⁶ The culmination of his Alliance activities was a conference from 1st – 6th April 1884. The Baptist sources refer to it as to ‘the congress in St. Petersburg’.²⁷ In truth, the conference had an organisational committee of five people belonging to different denominations; invitations to people from six different confessions were issued – from Baptists and Mennonites to Molokans and Dukhobors.²⁸

The conference did not achieve the preliminary goal – an agreement on an open participation in the Lord’s Supper – mainly because of Baptist reservations. Moreover, it became the cause for the expulsion of Pashkov from Russia. The time was not ripe for celebrating unity of faith in its diversity.

From Diversity to Baptist Identity

The revival in Russia followed the main Pietist pattern of fellowship and, as a consequence, created informal circles in addition to church. This phenomenon was totally new for Russia, and even the mighty Russian language did not have a term for this. The new term, *Stundist*, for converts to the new faith was a convenient translation.

For the Pietists, too, the regular fellowship was an important but still optional addendum to the main church life and structure. With small exceptions, the church remained their church, the Sunday morning service – the obligatory service, and the Pastor – even an unconverted one – still remained the true Pastor who baptised children and buried the dead. The Pietist fellowship had power but no regular inter-fellowship structures. The shaping of identity still remained a task of the church.

²⁴ Edmund Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy 1860-1900. Radstockism and Pashkovism* (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p. 43.

²⁵ Example: I. Yanyshv, *Religioznye mneniya g. Pashkova [Religious opinions of Mr Pashkov]*, *Tserkovnyi Vestnik* 11 (1880), p. 8.

²⁶ Example: Andrei A. Stoyalov, Letter to V.A. Pashkov, 21.11.1884. Pashkov Papers, 2/2/675.

²⁷ Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya*, pp. 196-9.

²⁸ M.M. Korff, *Am Zarenhof. Erinnerungen aus der geistlichen Erweckungsbewegung in Rußland von 1874-1884*, 2nd ed., trans. M. Kröker (Gießen: Brunnen, 1930), p. 69.

For Stundists, the situation was totally different. Their Church rejected and even persecuted them. The typical Pietist pattern of fellowship was not capable of shaping a new common identity that could become the basis for a stable existence.

In southern Russia, the consolidation of new converts was almost, from the beginnings of the revival, promoted by Mennonite Brethren; in Transcaucasia – by German Baptists. Persecution accelerated the process of consolidation and the shaping of a new confessional identity. In 1870, three Stundist groups scattered over southern Russia, and with the advise of Wieler, agreed to make a complete break with the Orthodox Church and sent a petition to the Tsar.²⁹ This petition was appended to a Confession of Faith, entitled ‘Rules of the confession of faith of the newly-converted Russian Brotherhood’.³⁰ This document defined in ten short articles the main principles of the new faith community. Interestingly, the name of the confessional group was omitted in the text!

Certainly, at this time, cohesion and solidarity were more important than confessional identity. In the next few years, however, important steps towards a Baptist identity were made. In 1873, Oncken’s Confession of Faith was translated into Russian.³¹ With this, the most important step towards a Baptist identity was made, and a bridge to Baptists in Transcaucasia was built. For the grass roots Stundist movement, the complicated and loaded-with-theological-terms document could present a reference point. In any case, this document showed to the government the proximity of Stundists to the established Baptist movement in the West.

The next important point came in 1879 when non-Russian Baptists were recognised as a *religio licita* by the government. At this time many revival groups already considered themselves as Baptists, although their names differed. A common identity supposed not only a common name but a common faith tradition. This took time.

The final steps from revival towards a common Baptist identity were made in 1882-84 under the leadership of Wieler, who managed to establish the first common structures of the national Baptist movement. He introduced annual conferences and an institute of itinerant preachers whose primary task was to establish regular church work in local congregations. In time, these ministers provided a harmonisation of worship, teaching and church-life principles between the manifold varieties of former Stundist groups.

²⁹ Wieler, *Mitteilungen*, p. 11.

³⁰ Text: ‘Pravila verosipovedaniya novoobrashchennogo Russgoko Bratstva’, Aleksii, pp. 477-82.

³¹ Savinskiĭ, *Istoriya*, p. 314.

The established Baptist organisation proved not only to have an exceptional viability during severe persecution but also outstanding capabilities in organising mission work. In this way, Baptist identity found its way into subsequent generations.

Conclusion

The Baptists in Russia consider themselves children of a revival which began in 1850, and gained full strength after 1870. The revival is commonly understood by them as a new beginning and in this sense it is applied to events that have taken place in succeeding eras.

The source of Baptist origins in Russia was a revival among the German colonists in Russia with typical Pietist patterns, the first one (pattern) as being a thorough conversion resulting in joy and peace as a sign of a completed personal salvation. The second pattern was fellowship of the converted in addition to regular church services. Further signs of the revival were the *sola Scriptura* principle and last but not least a new Christian ethic.

While Pietism among German settlers was tolerated by their dominant churches, the converted Russians were sharply rejected by the Russian Orthodox Church. When their informal meetings became structured after the Baptist pattern and they became well organised congregations, a confessional perspective was opened for the persecuted believers but it took time until the main parts of the revival developed a common Baptist identity in its Russian shape.

The beginnings of revival in Russia did not necessarily lead to believer's baptism. For a long time, there were parallel streams where other bodies have been at work. Presbyterian influence and especially the contribution of the Evangelical Alliance ideas are a good example of this.

Pastor Johannes Dyck, Germany.

3

Ivan Kargel and the Fulfilment of Revival: The fullness of salvation which leads to sanctification

Gregory Nichols

Revivalism in St. Petersburg, Pashkov

One of the most significant individuals to bring revivalistic ideals from Britain to St Petersburg was a member of the Brethren and the Evangelical Alliance.¹ Granville Augustus William Waldegrave, otherwise known as Lord Radstock, arrived in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1874 after receiving an invitation from several Russian noble families whom he had met in Paris the previous year. Radstock moved his meetings to the salons or drawing rooms of his friends among the Russian nobility. These luxurious residences gave stimulus to his activity. Within a short period of time these meetings were attended by an ‘enormous mass of listeners’.² Most of these listeners were Russian aristocrats, many of whom opened their residences to the British evangelist for the meetings. Several wealthy and influential figures became devout evangelicals, including Count Aleksei P. Bobrinskii (Russian Minister of Transportation), Count Modest M. Korff and Colonel Vasilii A. Pashkov.³ The immediate success to Lord Radstock’s ministry in Russia may be attributed to the fact that he was exclusively centred in scripture and had no hidden political or ecclesiological agendas. He was attempting to bring revival amongst the church goers and not to start a church.

In 1878, Radstock was banished from Russia. Vasilii Pashkov, with his vast wealth, continued the revivalistic work. He organised revival meetings, opened soup kitchens, provided scholarships for needy students, and used his influence to protect the evangelical group.

During this time, Ivan Kargel (Ivan Venyaminovich or Johann G.) was serving as pastor to the German Baptist congregation in St. Petersburg. This congregation had grown to thirty-four members in 1876 and, during

¹ John W. Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship, a Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World’s Evangelical Alliance* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1946) p. 140.

² Robert Sloan Latimer, *Under Three Tsars: Liberty of Conscience in Russia* (New York: F. H. Revell, 1909) p. 73.

³ Mrs Edward Trotter, *Lord Radstock, An Interpretation and a Record* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), pp. 188-200; J.H. Rushbrooke, *The Baptist Movement in the Continent of Europe* (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1923), pp. 138-139.

the German Baptist Union Conference that year, his work in Russia drew considerable attention and he was asked to make regular contributions regarding the work to *Missionsblatt*, the German Baptist Union's journal. In 1879, Kargel registered his congregation with the government, making it the first Baptist congregation to be officially registered in the Russian Empire.⁴

Very early in his St. Petersburg pastorate, Kargel came into contact with the Radstockists (later know as Pashkovites). Kargel described how, when he reached one of the Pashkovite meeting places, '...the people were gathering in the courtyard. A young man offered to take me upstairs. I asked if he loved Jesus and he answered yes with a beaming smile.' This young man described to Kargel a thrill at hearing God's word being explained in St. Petersburg in his mother tongue of Russian. He had been, he explained to Kargel, to the Baptist services, and although he did not understand any German he 'still felt God's presence as it was in his own life'.⁵ Kargel was captivated by the deeply personal relationship with Jesus which was being expressed in these meetings. This was to become a theme in his own later ministry. He wrote:

More of these believers gathered and each one introduced to me asked me if I loved Jesus Christ. When I said yes, they welcomed me heartily. After about 20 were gathered, we were sent to another room where the Count awaited us. After we all sat down, the Count stood up and said a wonderful prayer to begin our study. It was a thrilling feeling to hear a prayer of such a person of high standing, prayed in another language.⁶

In 1880, Ivan Kargel married Anna Aleksandrovna Semnoff, a close friend of the Pashkovite family, and moved to Bulgaria to answer a request for someone to come and baptise several Congregationalists who had been influenced by colporteurs concerning baptism. The group had been waiting four years before Ivan Kargel came and baptised them. The Kargel's left Bulgaria in 1884 and returned to St. Petersburg to assist Pashkov in the work there. While in Bulgaria, he read two brochures, written by A.B. Simpson which changed his life. He moved from the position of a credal Baptist to a non-creedal Baptist and 'was released from his spiritual narrowness'.⁷

Pashkov was exiled in 1884 and Ivan Kargel became an influential teacher among the house churches which were scattered throughout St. Petersburg and other areas of Russia which had resulted from the Radstock

⁴ It was a German Baptist congregation registered for the German people in St. Petersburg.

⁵ Johann G. Kargel, 'Nachrichten Von Br. Kargel', *Missionsblatt aus der Brüdergemeine* 36, 10 (1878).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Microfilm edition of the Pashkov Papers, fiche x/x, Letter 022, Library of the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague, Czech Republic.

revivals. Kargel continued Pashkov's attempts to realise the dream for an Evangelical Alliance in Russia. He spent considerable time with Dr Baedeker, travelling across the Russian empire visiting prisoners. He became a leader amongst the Evangelical Christian Union which later merged with the Baptist Union.

Ivan Kargel as a Baptist

Ivan Kargel graduated from the Hamburg School in 1874 and was ordained as a Baptist preacher upon graduation. He served as pastor to two German Baptist churches, first in the Volhynia region and then in St. Petersburg, Russia. During these pastorates he received financial support from the German Baptist Union and was in full agreement with the Hamburg Statement of Faith and was committed to spreading the Baptist faith. After his marriage to Anna Alexandra Semnoff and his move to Bulgaria, both in 1880, he began to move away from a commitment to certain denominational distinctives as the basis for church membership, to the thought that 'being in Christ' is what was crucial, with denominational distinctives being played down. He began to seek a broader unity outside of the German Baptist movement among the evangelical Christians in the Russian Empire.

Ivan Kargel as a Teacher

Kargel's overall influence of the Russian speaking baptistic church was carried out through his teaching at the Bible School in St. Petersburg with Prokhanov, as well as his writing. The preparation for ministry among the various evangelical works in Russia in the late nineteenth century was carried on by means of local Bible or Missionary courses which were taught in centrally located churches during slow seasons of the agricultural year. Between 1883 and 1905 Ivan Kargel travelled to various areas (Odessa, Samara, Kovno, Volhynia, Poland and Ruckenu) to teach month-long courses in pastoral preparation and missions. Beginning in 1905, the educational habits of the evangelical church began to develop a new phase when I.S. Prokhanov, the organiser of the Evangelical Christian Union, arranged a six-week course of residential study in the capital city of St. Petersburg on preaching and 'general educational knowledge and useful information from the experience of Christians from various nationalities'.⁸ The classes were designed to be practical in nature, to prepare the men for the sowing of God's word.⁹ The classes were attended by students from

⁸ *Istoriya Evngelskikh Khristian Baptistov SSSR (History of Evangelical Christian Baptists of USSR)* (Moscow: VSEHB, 1989), p. 167.

⁹ For a list of classes which were taught, see I.V. Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij* (St. Petersburg: Biblija dlja Bsekh, 2000). This publication is a collection of many of Kargel's published books, personal letters and

evangelical fellowships as well as Baptist fellowships until 1909.¹⁰ St. Petersburg was an ideal spot due to the various venues available to the programme (Dom Evangel and the Lieven Palace). There was also opportunity to speak and attend a multitude of smaller evangelical services where Kargel and the others preached. Kargel taught classes on sin and sanctification as well as a class on the book of Revelation.¹¹

By 1912, the Evangelical Christian Union had been formed with Ivan Kargel often serving as Vice President and Ivan Prokhanov as President. The leadership of the Union approved the start of a two-year Bible School in St. Petersburg. The school opened on 14th February 1913. On that day, Kargel addressed the students with the example of Ruth, the Moabite, challenging them to collect the kernels of truth they would gather here. He challenged them to return each night and sift them and reflect on them so as to store them up in the storehouses of the mind as well as the heart.¹² The students studied for one year but did not return after the summer break of 1914. The school was closed before the programme finished due to the outbreak of World War I.¹³

With the closure of this school, the political chaos of a World War, the overthrow of the Russian aristocracy, a Communist takeover, a famine and a Civil War, the training of ministers for the Evangelical Christian Union and Baptist Union was no longer accomplished in residential schools but returned to short term regional classes.¹⁴ The St. Petersburg Bible School continued to assert influence over the Evangelical Christian Union by sending their teachers into various regions. During these years, Kargel taught courses running from six to eight weeks in the regional Bible School in various villages in the Ukraine and Russia. He taught courses covering the topics of the Book of Revelation and the second coming of Christ, Doctrine and Homiletics.¹⁵

After the Russian Civil War ended in late 1922, the Evangelical Christian Union opened a nine-month training programme with the Russian Baptist Union in St. Petersburg (Petrograd). From 1923 to 1924 the school

articles referring to his life). Skopina's biography titled *From the Biography of I. V. Kargel and his Daughters*, ET from Russian, p. 696.

¹⁰ *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian Baptistov SSSR*, p. 167, states that the classes were held until 1909. In 1909, after Prokhanov founded the Evangelical Christian Union, Baptists began to use the Bible School in Lodz, Poland operated jointly by German and Russian Baptists. It was forcibly closed in 1911. At that time the Russian Baptist Union petitioned the Baptist World Alliance for financial aid to open a school in Moscow but it never materialised.

¹¹ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, in Karetnikova *Ivan Beniaminovich Kargel (1849-1937)*, p. 685.

¹² J.S. Grachev, *Bratski Vestnik*, The First Biblical Course of the Evangelical Christians– Baptists in Russia, 1971, no 3, p. 73.

¹³ *Istoriya Evangel'skikh Khristian Baptistov SSSR*, p. 169.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

took in fifty students and accepted students from the Evangelical Christian Union and the Baptist Union. Ivan Kargel and Ivan Prokhanov again were at the podium accompanied by V.I. Bykov and N.A. Kazakov. The St. Petersburg school continued to operate until 1929,¹⁶ training pastors and missionaries. Kargel taught Doctrine, The Book of Revelation and The Second Coming of Christ. This school received funding from the Baptist World Alliance in 1923. The programme produced good results and by 1929 there were nearly 400 graduates. Graduates of the school looked back on those days as adults with respect for the education they had received from these teachers.¹⁷

Ivan Kargel as a Writer

During his life, Ivan Kargel wrote seven books and was a regular contributor to *Khristianin*, the official journal of the Evangelical Christian Union. All of his books have been reprinted in the past fifteen years and are still widely read amongst Russian-speaking evangelicals. Kargel also wrote a confession of faith for the ‘Second St. Petersburg Community of Evangelical Christians’ which he served as pastor in 1913. When the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists adopted their own confession, they chose this statement¹⁸ written by Ivan Kargel over the statements of faith written by Oncken and Prokhanov¹⁹ and continued to use it until 1984. It is not slanted toward any systematic theology but is based in a biblical theology, articulating what is clear in scripture while remaining silent on extrapolations of those truths.

Ivan Kargel as an Influencer

Ivan Kargel died in 1937 at the age of 88. *Bratski Vestnik*, the official journal of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of the Soviet Union (AUCECB) continued to regularly print articles and sections of his books. Alexander Karev, General Secretary of the AUCECB, 1944-1971, credited Kargel as being a major influence in his theological training.²⁰ A.M. Bychkov, General Secretary of the AUCECB, 1971-1990,

¹⁶ This school was used by the Evangelical Christians and the Baptists until 1927 when the Russian Baptist Union started their own three-year Bible School in Moscow. The St. Petersburg Bible School continued to operate until 1929 when Ivan Kargel was arrested by the Police while he was lecturing. Following the arrest, he was banished from St. Petersburg and the school was closed. The previous year, Prokhanov travelled to Toronto to attend the Baptist World Alliance meetings in Toronto and defected to Canada. He remained president of the Evangelical Christian Union until his death in 1935.

¹⁷ *Bratski Vestnik*, 1979, No. 6 and Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, p. 686.

¹⁸ Referred to at the time as the ‘Short Summary of the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Christians’ (1913).

¹⁹ A.V. Karev, ‘Decision of the All-Union Congress of Evangelical Christians-Baptists on the Report of the Secretary General of the AUCECB, A.V. Karev on Life and Activity of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists and of the Financial Report’, *Bratski Vestnik*, 1966, No. 6, p. 48.

²⁰ A.V. Karev, ‘From my personal encounters with I.V. Kargel’, *Bratski Vestnik*, 1946, No. 3, pp. 19-20.

wrote that the writings of Kargel were some of the first spiritual works that he read and were foundational in his understanding of the Christian faith.²¹ Jacob Zhidkov, the President of the AUCECB, 1944-1966, wrote that it was a sermon preached by Ivan Kargel in 1902 which was his point of conversion. Karev, Zhidkov and Bychkov all attended the celebration of Kargel's eightieth birthday in St. Petersburg.²²

Kargel on the Need of Conversion

Conversionism refers to the belief that salvation occurs at a particular moment, often times in a dramatic way, during an experience with God. Conversionism has its origins in the revival movements which swept back and forth across the Atlantic among the English-speaking world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is opposed to the State Church idea that one is born into Christianity by being born on Christian soil or to a Christian family and by default made a member of the church.

Closely related to the ideas of conversionism are the ideas of holiness. Other terms that could be used are sanctification, filled with the Holy Spirit, or abiding in Christ. Each of these carry certain nuances but the result is the classification of Christians into three categories: nominal Christians were Christians in name only and considered to be 'unsaved'; 'carnal Christians' were those who had accepted, through a conversion experience, the message of the gospel personally but who had not yet fully surrendered to God; the third category, those living in the 'normal Christian life' under God's rule.²³ Church membership is not the mark of being a believer, while a tangible moment of repentance is. Ivan Kargel rejected church membership, even membership of an evangelical church, as a sign of true faith.

You can belong to one of the existing churches, be baptised and with purpose of heart, take part in the Lord's Supper, you can be present at every church service and religious assemblies, you can correctly gather in a household prayer circle, you can have great knowledge and praiseworthy experience. But if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, you are not His.²⁴

²¹ R.K., 'Newly Selected Secretary General of the All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists', *Bratski Vestnik*, 1972, No. 2, p. 67.

²² V.M. Kovalkov and M.P. Chernopyatov, 'Ivan Venyaminovich Kargel', *Bratski Vestnik*, 1979, No. 6, p. 49.

²³ I.M. Randall, *Evangelical Experiences, A Study of the Spirituality of English Evangelicalism 1918-1939* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster, 1999), p. 27, quoting *The Keswick Week* 1924, p. 219.

²⁴ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, p. 116.

Without a point of conversion, Kargel doubted true salvation. In his work on Moses, he notes that Moses had a clear point of conversion when he left his Egyptian lifestyle to embrace his Jewish roots. Kargel later writes that if a person states that they ‘always believed’ this is proof that they have never truly come to God, and that their relationship with Christ has never truly begun.²⁵ While staying in a guest house on a trip to the Volga region in 1884, Ivan Kargel wrote,

The brother, who was with me, sang a beautiful soprano and I sang bass, and so we sang the Gospel out of the Sankey songbooks. Soon the whole room was filled with Germans and Russians, and they all wanted to listen to the singing. After we had sung a bit, I began to speak to them about the joy of belonging to Christ.²⁶

Ivan Kargel believed that one had to be converted or revived from a life of sin by the Holy Spirit in order to understand the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. This conversion must bring a dramatic change to the life of the person, resulting in an ability to live in a new way.

Kargel on the Fullness of Salvation

The Oncken statement of faith, in which Kargel was schooled, contains an entire section on sanctification.²⁷ This creed was written prior to the nineteenth century Holiness Movement and may have been influential to many German Baptists who did not align themselves with the Holiness Movement. When the Holiness Movement came to Germany, it found the most receptive audience within the Pietistic wing of the Lutheran Church. The Holiness revivals that swept into Germany in 1875 left behind small holiness groups within the Lutheran Church. Lehmann, one of the senior teachers in the Hamburg Bible School, said the first error is sinless perfection; then comes antinomianism; then Darbyism.²⁸ Undoubtedly the movement impacted the German Baptists but there was little long-lasting effect.

Though Kargel’s statement of faith was written after his transition to a holiness oriented theology, he did not emphasise holiness teaching in the creed. He does not have a separate section on the Holy Spirit or a section

²⁵ Ibid., p. 281.

²⁶ J.G. Kargel to V.A. Pashkov, 29th November 1884, 2/23/1-109, (fiche No. 3), Pashkov Papers.

²⁷ J.G. Oncken, *Glaubensbekenntnis Und Verfassung Der Gemeinden Getaufter Christen (Gew ‘Baptisten’ Genannt); Mit Belegen Aus Der Heiligen Schrift, 8th* (Hamburg: Kassel). ‘A holy, child-like love for God and his commands is the most important thing in sanctification and this love, which is produced, maintained and nourished in the heart by the Holy Spirit, gradually recreates the person in the image of God. We hold that sanctification should continue throughout our whole life and that even in the case of the most holy life we still need the forgiving grace of God through the blood of Christ.’

²⁸ ‘Mission to the Germans’, *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, 1876, July, p. 270.

on sanctification. Despite all that Kargel could have said in a section on sanctification, he is silent on the issue except to say that, 'the Holy Spirit is accomplishing the sanctification of the newly born again ones'.²⁹

Kargel's understanding of sanctification parallels a Keswick understanding of holiness; that is: Premillennialist, Repressionism, internal sense of peace and rest, exultation of faith, element of crisis, the appeal of nature and romantic affinities.

Salvation's intended outcome is sanctification (It is a united process with no breaks)

For Kargel, sanctification was the intended outcome of salvation. He, at times, calls sanctification 'the fulfilment'³⁰ and at others 'full salvation'.³¹ Salvation and justification are the result of the work of Christ on the cross while sanctification is the result of 'emptying ourselves for the heavenly Dove so that He will find a quiet resting place for His feet'.³² The words of Acts 2:38 to 'repent, be baptised and receive the Holy Spirit' are the only command of the Lord to 'place them into a position to receive the Holy Spirit and His fullness'.³³ The same repentance which leads to salvation should be the same repentance that further leads to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Stating it another way, Kargel wrote that:

justification without sanctification would certainly not be a full salvation. It would be to declare the filthy pure and would leave him to die in his illness; it would forgive the rebel but would allow him to remain as the enemy of his Lord; it would take away consequences, but miss the purpose, and it would assign to us infinite and hopeless work.³⁴

Salvation was only the beginning of the conversion experience. In 1926, he wrote:

If we are engaged only in the justification, without sanctification, it is possible that some people will come to conversion, but they will never leave the carnal views of their mind: the Holy Spirit, from the very beginning, has removed those (carnal views) from the convert but the convert may again run back to them.³⁵

In 1925, Kargel explains the two-fold yet concurrent process of salvation and sanctification. Sanctification and salvation 'occur at the same

²⁹ Alexander de Chalanda, *The Christians in the USSR* (Chicago: Harper and Company, 1978), p. 61.

³⁰ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, in 'What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit', p. 158.

³¹ Ibid., in 'Christ our Sanctification', p. 69.

³² Ibid., in 'What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit', p. 158.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., in 'Christ our Sanctification', p. 69. In this context, Kargel is implying that the salvation is not a full salvation rather than making a dogmatic statement that they are not saved.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

point in time'.³⁶ They are two simultaneous actions, salvation 'concerns the glorious position of the believer ... in Christ',³⁷ whereas sanctification is 'continuous' and to be carried out through the ongoing 'behaviour and walk while here on earth'. In the first action, salvation is the action of Jesus and is finished and perfect. The second act is simultaneous with the first and sanctification is an unfinished (yet started) process which must be accomplished through the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the individual.³⁸ The Holy Spirit will not force the process of sanctification; it is a 'very tender' process of gently turning the believer and 'only possible with a yielding to the Holy Spirit in an ultimate and unconditional way.'³⁹

If the believer refuses to yield to the tender process of sanctification, they will be departing from the intended path. It may be due to ignorance that the believer ignores the Holy Spirit. In the beginning of his book, *What is Your Relationship to the Holy Spirit?*, Kargel writes, 'I would like to ask each of the readers a serious question. Did you accept the Holy Spirit when you believed?'⁴⁰ Later, he reflects on the biblical story of Acts 19 regarding the Ephesians who had been baptised with John's baptism. He stated, 'Maybe it was faith in the historic facts, the letters, intellectual faith, but it was not the faith of a regenerated heart.'⁴¹ Saving faith must be accompanied and motivated by the Holy Spirit; otherwise it is the type of faith which achieves nothing. According to Kargel, the only people who were saved without the Holy Spirit were the true followers of Christ before the Day of Pentecost. The followers of Christ, according to Kargel, already possessed justification and adoption by God but they were, nevertheless, required to remain in Jerusalem until they would be 'vested with by a Higher Power'.⁴²

Near the end of his book, *Sin, the Evil of All Evils*, Kargel provides an answer to the sin problem which reflects the Keswick holiness understanding of sanctification and the Holiness concept of a 'double cure'.

But, maybe you already belong to those that have accepted Christ's salvation, therefore, for that, let there be glory and praise to the Lord! Oh, but now watch out that this is not limited only to a satisfaction of escaping hell and the future wrath which you deserve, having received forgiveness for your sins. Sadly, many have stopped at this point, leading cold, indifferent, pitiful lives. You must have not only a forgiveness of

³⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

³⁹ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 143.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 115.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 116.

⁴² Ibid., p. 122.

your sins but an additional freedom from its power, to be saved from the effects of evil and all its hindrances in your daily life, even as deep as your thoughts and convictions. Unless you strive further in your salvation, it is a poor and altogether superficial attempt. If you do not expect and do not aspire to a deeper salvation on a broader scale, it is plain that your understanding is false.⁴³

Personal consecration is needed to move salvation to sanctification

For Kargel, sanctification was not a verbal claim made during a prayer of faith nor something that one simply took ownership of. It was a full surrender and dedication of obedience to submit to the demands of God made on His children. It involved human effort but not the kind that tries to sanctify through human effort **but that** which constantly seeks to cooperate and abide with Christ.

In 1925, Kargel clearly stated that sanctification was not the result of a peaceful rest in the Holy Spirit. ‘Sanctification does not happen at all without us, it can only take place in our own will and personal decision, if they are in the full authority with the will of God’.⁴⁴ ‘This truth (the full experience of a joyful and whole Christian life) will eventually be given to us upon absolute obedience to Him. Many Christians repeatedly say that they want to give themselves to Him [GN, Holy Spirit] but they do not do it.’⁴⁵

Stating the human responsibility of personal consecration within the process of sanctification, Kargel writes that the word justification is only used in reference to a lost person⁴⁶ and never a request to a Christian. The word sanctification on the other hand, is only used when dealing with the rescued or justified person.⁴⁷ ‘The scriptures never induce the sinner to live piously or to operate and walk in holiness, but only the righteous person’.⁴⁸ The first step is for a sinner to be justified. Once that occurs, they are a believer and then are given the responsibility of sanctification.

Full salvation is to be filled with the Holy Spirit

For Kargel, full salvation was to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This idea was modelled by Jesus at His baptism. Even though Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit and lived a sinless life, ‘God wanted this wonderful fact to rush

⁴³ Ibid., in *Sin, the Evil of All Evils*, p. 48.

⁴⁴ Ibid., in *Christ our Sanctification*, p. 58.

⁴⁵ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 146.

⁴⁶ Ibid., in *Christ our Sanctification*, p. 50.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

to the eyes of His children.⁴⁹ ‘The triune God beforehand predetermined this event (to be filled with the Holy Spirit) as a necessary essential and truly carried it out’.⁵⁰ Before being filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ was a ‘perfect, faultless person, carrying the image of God in a human body, glorifying God’.⁵¹ But, after filling Jesus Christ, ‘the Holy Spirit became the arms and creative force behind the new Person’.⁵² Kargel uses the anecdote of an artist who creates a masterpiece, perfect in every respect, no room for improvement. But the artist makes one final improvement by ‘uniting himself to his creation, by his own means, giving its own life, its own wisdom, all power and essence so that from this instant, the creator and creation merges completely’.⁵³

His book, *What is Your Relationship to the Holy Spirit?*, was originally written in 1913 and reprinted circa 1945. In the press release of the 1945 printing, N.J. Poysti recalls, from his childhood memories of Kargel, that ‘[Kargel] emphasized the necessity of being baptized in the Spirit’.⁵⁴ But, in actuality, the term ‘Baptism of/by the Holy Spirit’ was rarely used by Kargel in his writings. When Kargel used the term, it was limited to either the actual Day of Pentecost or to Jesus’ baptism. Kargel preferred to use the term of being filled with the Holy Spirit. He believed that being filled with the Holy Spirit is the only true baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵ These ideas precede, yet parallel, the thoughts of W. Graham Scroggie, a Keswick leader of the 1920s who believed that a person was baptised with the Holy Spirit when they were saved. Likewise, he believed that there were more biblical commands to be filled with the Holy Spirit rather than to be baptised by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁶

The idea of complete merger appears in Kargel’s thoughts about being filled with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means that Christians ‘should be filled with Him to such a degree as a vessel into which not another drop may enter, otherwise, the liquid would overflow’.⁵⁷ The Holy Spirit has filled the tabernacle and the temple in the Old Testament. ‘God does not speak: your body should be the temple of the Holy Spirit, but He states: it is the temple. And the temple of Holy Spirit should be filled with Him.’⁵⁸ Kargel makes a point to show that when God

⁴⁹ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 135.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 136.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p. 137.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 136.

⁵⁴ N.J. Poysti, ‘We Publish A Very Important Book’, *Gospel Call*, Ag (1945), p. 24.

⁵⁵ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 162.

⁵⁶ Randall, *Evangelical Experiences*, p.32.

⁵⁷ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 131.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

moved into the temple, there is no room for anything else. When God spoke to Moses, the bush was fully filled with fire.⁵⁹ For Kargel, sanctification was being filled fully by the Holy Spirit, fully yielding to his desires and giving God full power over our lives.

Salvation or sanctification cannot be accomplished by human will or strength

The idea of a full filling also means that there is no room for human effort. Kargel sees human wisdom and the flesh as enemies of the Spirit; they are in constant battle. Kargel does not present the power of the Holy Spirit as something that can eradicate the sinful nature, but it is a power to overcome the sinful nature. It is offered to all believers if they come humbly as a child and drink of the Spirit of Christ. In fact, for Kargel, a Christian can lead a moral life and be respected for their piety and yet ‘much of the activity and work which he calls “fruit” are not really that because it was not accomplished by Christ in him’.⁶⁰ If the fruit of one’s life is not rooted in abiding in Christ, it is false and not from God. It is from a carnal strength. Good intentions are not enough.

He [GN the Holy Spirit] never will take hold by force that which is not subordinated to Him or that which is kept from Him. He will never be revealed in our personal lifestyle, or our private path, or our wills, even if they are directed to the best intentions: they are flesh, they are not His sphere or an element. He cannot put on them a seal of the Anointment.⁶¹

The reason that human effort was not appropriate for the sanctification process rests, in Kargel’s view, that sin is a constant force which will conquer the carnal believer and the revived Christian which is not abiding in Christ. The believer can be blinded by the thoughts that ‘he can fulfill God’s will if only he will correctly understand it, or just desire it’.⁶² Human effort will never accomplish the process of sanctification,

only an abiding in Christ, connected to His death, destroys all authority of sin in all its forms. The power of the death of Christ, working in us, destroys the power of our old life, just as His death on the cross finished His life on earth.⁶³

Full salvation is to abide in Christ

The sanctification process begins at salvation when the Holy Spirit raises Jesus Christ as the perfect answer to the sin issue. When speaking of being

⁵⁹ Ibid., in *Christ our Sanctification*, p. 63.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 72.

⁶¹ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 146.

⁶² Ibid., in *Sin, the Evil of All Evils*, p. 33.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 34.

filled with the Holy Spirit, Kargel uses Jesus' baptism as proof that He was unlike anyone else in all creation. The dove at Jesus' baptism rested on Him because the Holy Spirit had finally found a resting place on earth which was 'truly pure and holy.'⁶⁴ Jesus was the access point into creation for God's spirit. To abide in Christ was to be filled with the Holy Spirit which was to be in the correct way of sanctification. The abiding with Christ was something that took effort, day by day effort. Kargel raises Enoch as an example of consistently abiding in Christ for one's entire life.

But this witness [GN, Enoch] is God's witness about whom nothing is told which is superfluous and nothing which is diminished. Think about it, three hundred long years, never hiding from God, never leaving His eyes, to live a continuous life with Him and in Him! It cannot be anything other, than the blessed life of a spiritual triumphant! It was something of what the apostle tasted when he exclaimed 'Thanks be to God who always gives us triumph in Christ' (2 Corinthians 2:14); and something of which our Lord thirsted for His disciples and with which he linked the fully joyful existence when He told them to: 'Abide in me, and I in you', 'he who abides in me, and I in them will bear much fruit' (John 15:4-5).⁶⁵

It is to abide in Christ, for Kargel, that victory is found. This abiding is linked to obedience to the Holy Spirit. 'The Holy Spirit would like to bring them into that estate of victory in the Christ, their Lord, always giving to them the triumph in Him, in a condition which they would have great pleasure when they encounter various tempting (James 1:2)'.⁶⁶

In his book, *Christ Our Sanctification*, he lists eight things that were necessary to comprehend if a person was to move on in sanctification. The first two points are related to Christ.⁶⁷ First, one must understand the deep riches that are in Jesus Christ.

You have not only some of the blessings and gifts from Christ and through Him, but have accepted Him (John 3:16; Colossians 2:6; John 1:12), embodied so deeply in your soul, that you have become a participator with Him (Hebrews 3:14), one Body with Him (Ephesians 3:6), a member of Him, who is the Head (Eph.1:22-23), one with Him, as the branch was one with the Vine (John 15:4-5).⁶⁸

His second point is that the Christian must abide in Christ.

⁶⁴ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 160.

⁶⁵ Ibid., in *Old Testament Prototypes*, p. 270.

⁶⁶ Ibid., in *What is your Relationship to the Holy Spirit*, p. 139.

⁶⁷ The third was to fully yield to the Holy Spirit. The fourth was to use the word of God. The fifth was to have true faith. The sixth was to pray. The seventh was to have fellowship with other believers. The eighth was to suffer.

⁶⁸ Ibid., in *Christ our Sanctification*, p. 78.

Christ in us, and we in Christ is the unique basis on which the purpose of God can be achieved, to keep us from sin and change us into the image of Christ; this is our unique hope of this present time and eternal glory (Col 1:27). There is no other way...⁶⁹

For Kargel, it was the recognition that all God's will is to be found in Christ. Christ and the abiding in Him was the central thought in much of Kargel's writings on sanctification.⁷⁰

Full salvation leads to suffering

For Kargel, revival ultimately will lead to suffering. This is a uniqueness of Kargel that I have found regarding his views of holiness which sets him apart within the Holiness Movement; it was suffering that united the believer with Christ. In the headings of his book, *Christ our Sanctification*, suffering is listed as one of the eight ways of sanctification, along with daily Bible reading and prayer, and it is the topic with which he concluded that work.⁷¹

For Kargel, suffering not only sympathetically identifies the believer with Christ and his sufferings but also removes sin and its temptation by showing that the Christian cannot hold on to anything as of right, nor safety, possessions or health. Suffering also confirms that the believer is in the true way of Christ and allows the believer to participate in His holiness; only through the way of suffering can holiness and patience be developed. For Kargel, the believer's identification with the cross of Christ should be a full death to sin.

If in us exists Christ which once and for all condemned to death sin and the law of sin on the cross (Romans 8:3) then the body will consider those evils to be disgraceful and cease to pay attention to their

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

⁷⁰ This poem is taken from *ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

'Only in Christ is there the freedom from sin (1 John 3:6; Romans 8:2-10);
 Only in HIM is the end of the old life and the old "I" (Galatians 2:19-20);
 Only in HIM is the end of the life within the world (Galatians 6:14-15);
 Only in HIM is there always victory (II Corinthians 2:14);
 Only in HIM is strength and a fortification (I Corinthians 1:24; Ephesians 6:10; Isaiah 45:24; Jeremiah 6: 19);
 Only in HIM are we enriched with all (I Corinthians 1:5-7, 29-30);
 Only in HIM are all the Divine promises "Yes" and "Amen" (II Corinthians 1:20);
 Only in HIM is there unity with all God's children (Ephesians, 4:16; John 17:21-23);
 Only in HIM is all new (II Corinthians 5:17);
 Only in HIM is it possible to reign in life (Romans 5:17, 21);
 Only in HIM is completeness (Colossians 2:10);
 Only in HIM can we pray and be heard (John 15:7).'

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 77-113. The other headings for sanctification are; considering the cost, abiding in Christ, yielding to the Holy Spirit, reading the Bible, faith, prayer and fellowship.

temptations. It is paralyzed, inactive in its relation to sin and must not and cannot serve sin as it did earlier, it is dead to sin.⁷²

The way of the cross was a mark for Kargel of the true Christian faith. 'So many would like to be saved, to become Christians, but faith and the offering up of sacrifices do not agree with their dogma, their faith does not cost them anything'.⁷³ The cross and suffering were the death of the 'old man'. Kargel saw the way of the cross as the normal Christian life. 'Suffering and grief', he wrote, 'were on the path of our Lord – that is what we just saw; and our path will be the same for there will be no other, it must not be any other'.⁷⁴

For Kargel, suffering also relates to the struggle against sin. The suffering that one feels should be welcomed as the fire which refines gold, pointing to the fact that the Holy Spirit is committed to us. Suffering is to be proof of 'perfect fidelity'; it is a 'test of obedience which should be accomplished all the more seriously and despite its difficulty'.⁷⁵ But, not all suffering produces the intended result. Kargel states that two incorrect results happen. Either one 'slides above it, (ignoring it) never thinking that it is of the Lord', or they 'despair under it' never looking to the Lord for strength and wisdom.⁷⁶

For Kargel, the purpose of suffering is not to produce grief or pain which in turn benefits the individual but to direct us to the will of the God the Father. He writes, 'Certainly, illness, sufferings, losses, hard blows or any grief in themselves do not make us better if we do not look through them to the Father and find what He wants to tell us through them. Yet, even if we allow them to speak to us and we understand the will of the Father, but we do not agree to go in His way, there will be no sanctification.'⁷⁷

Further, suffering confirms to the believers that they are in the true way and have, as with Christ, 'laid our life on the sacrificial altar'.⁷⁸ It confirms that we are on the true path of Christ as when He went to the cross and in harmony with the scriptures which Peter and Paul wrote telling the church that 'all must suffer'. Kargel clearly states that 'there is no other outcome. Suffering is necessary for us to enter the kingdom of God'.⁷⁹

⁷² I.V. Kargel, *Zakon Dykha Zhezin 5, 6, 7, 8 Glav Rimlinam* (St. Petersburg: Biblia dla Vsekh, 2003), p. 159.

⁷³ Kargel, *Sobranie Cochinenij*, in *Old Testament Prototypes*, p. 283.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, in *Christ our Sanctification*, p. 107.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.107.

Suffering is a means to sanctification because it reminds us that we are a child of God.

Finally, suffering allows a person to ‘take part in His holiness’.⁸⁰ It shows that God has not given up on making us into the image of His son. Suffering is used by God ‘only because in the ordinary way He did not manage to achieve obedience’.⁸¹ It ‘removes all the roughness’ from human nature and allows the ‘spiritual fruit to ripen’.⁸² Kargel wrote, ‘Only on a way of suffering can patience be birthed and allowed to achieve maturity and essentially only through patience will one achieve perfection’.⁸³ Yet Kargel is quick to point out that thousands upon thousands have not learned from suffering as he refers to biblical examples. ‘Sufferings will not release us from sin if we view them carnally’.⁸⁴ He states that they are lessons in school and if we don’t attend the lectures, we will never be able to pass the final exam.⁸⁵

Kargel’s influence in the Russian-speaking world

Ivan Kargel died in 1937 at the age of 88. *Bratski Vestnik*, the official journal of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of the Soviet Union, continued to print articles and sections of Kargel’s books. Nearly twenty-five per cent of all *Bratski Vestnik* journals published between 1945 and 1988 contained an article from or a reference to Kargel. In 1947, in *Bratski Vestnik*, in a charge given to young leaders of the AUCECB, they were told to study like great men such as Spurgeon, Moody, Torrey, Kargel and Prokhanov.⁸⁶ In 1954, preachers were told to use Kargel as an example in their preaching.⁸⁷ In 1966, the morning speaker, addressing the audience of the annual conference of the AUCECB, stated ‘I was at the congress in Leningrad in 1920, I heard brothers I.S. Prokhanov and I.V. Kargel, and I would like, that the God who was with them, would be with us’.⁸⁸ During the 100-year anniversary of Baptists in Russia, held in 1974, Kargel’s name was listed as one of six influential people in the history of the movement. In the midst of the cold war, Kargel’s reflections on the biblical character of Daniel and his balance of

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.110.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.111.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 111-112.

⁸³ Ibid., p.107.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.112.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ I. Motorin, *Bratski Vestnik*, ‘How to Study the Bible’, 1947, No. 1, p. 60.

⁸⁷ I. Motorin, *Bratski Vestnik*, ‘Service of the Preacher’, 1954, No. 1, p. 45.

⁸⁸ Morning Session on 5th October, *Bratski Vestnik*, 1966, No. 6, p. 43.

respect toward leadership with his trust in God were printed.⁸⁹ In 1979, a short biography of Kargel was printed. *Bratski Vestnik* reported in 1983 that Kargel's work was still being requested to be printed in their journal and they continued to print Kargel's works until 1988. In addition, the Pentecostal Union of Russia and Ukraine mentions the writings of Ivan Kargel as providing the influential ideas which gave rise to their stream of Christianity.⁹⁰

Some of the answers to the questions about the spirituality of Russian Baptists can be found in Kargel's views, that revival must lead to sanctification, that sanctification is the result of personal consecration, that the filling of the Holy Spirit is crucial to the process, that salvation and sanctification cannot be accomplished by human strength, that abiding in Christ is the ultimate result of revival and that revival will lead to suffering.

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⁸⁹ Ja.K. Dukhonchenko, 'The Word of God against Sanctification, Reaching the full Age of Christ and the Incorrect Teachings of Sanctification' (Abstract from I.K. Dukhonchenko, Read at the May Plenum of the AUCECB), *Bratski Vestnik*, 1978, No. 5, p. 34.

⁹⁰ I.V. Franchuk, *Ask the Lord for Rain*, as found on the EAAA CD No. 2, E:\files\books\book_02\f_008.html.

4

The Beginnings and Growth of Baptist Witness in Bicazu Ardelean, Romania, in the 1920s

Claudiu Handaric

The beginning of Baptist outreach in Bicazu Ardelean (then Bicaz), dating from the 1920s, was very fruitful. There was a great interest from the majority of the population concerning the message proclaimed by Baptists and there were a large number of converts. Thus the Baptist church grew from sixteen people in 1925 to 116 baptised persons in 1939,¹ and a building that could host more than 200 people was erected in 1930. The professor of Romanian Baptist History from the Seminary in Bucharest, Ioan Bunaciu, calls this ministry ‘the great spiritual awakening in Bicazu Ardelean’² (the name of the parish), and the first missionary, Gavril Dunca, entitles the work in this area as ‘the awakening in Bicaz’.³ Martyn Lloyd-Jones defines an awakening as a ‘period of unusual blessing and activity in the life of the Christian Church’.⁴ This church experienced unusual blessing, growing rapidly in a period of persecution, and it also experienced unusual activity. Its activity can be seen in the people’s involvement in building the church, helping the poor, and giving for the ministry.⁵

But which were the factors that contributed to this impact? Is it possible for this church to have the same influence again? These are the questions to which the present paper is trying to offer an answer. In order to do that it will analyse three factors and areas of influence: the context of Bicazu Ardelean at the beginning of the twentieth century, the activity of the first missionary, Gavril Dunca, and the behavioural traits of the people from the area. The conclusion will try to offer an answer to the questions enunciated. There are several primary sources on which to rely: the written memories of the first missionary, Gavril Dunca, the membership registrar from 1926 to 1975, a written memory from the inauguration of the church

¹ Biserica Crestina Baptista Bicazu Ardelean, *Registrul cu spesele: 1926-1975* (located in the archives of the Baptist Church in Bicazu Ardelean) records only 96 members in the church in 1939 but also refers to another 20 members who moved to Banat. Therefore it can be stated that the number of baptised people from the area was 116.

² Ioan Bunaciu, *Istoria Bisericii Baptiste din Romania* (Oradea: Editura Faclia, 2006), p. 86.

³ Gavril Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea* (unpublished typewritten script, 1978), p. 104.

⁴ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Trezirea* (Oradea: Editura Faclia, 2006, translated), p. 15.

⁵ Biserica Crestina Baptista Bicazu Ardelean, *Registrul cu spesele: 1926-1975* mentions that in 1929 there was a Women’s Society, there was the giving of the money for the poor, and there was help for ‘the starving brothers in Basarabia’.

building, and interviews of people who met the contemporaries of these early beginnings.

1. The context of Bicazu Ardelean at the beginning of the 20th century

Any movement is influenced by a wider context of which it is a part. People can relate to it consciously or unconsciously. It cannot be stated how much the people in the parish of Bicazu Ardelean were aware of the influence that the context played in their response to the evangelical movement but this influence can be seen when three domains are analysed: the situation in the parish, the activity of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the presence of two evangelical movements in the territory of Romania.

In the early twentieth century Bicazu Ardelean was a parish with 10,000 people on the Transylvanian side of the Eastern Carpathians in the county of Ciuc. Its common name was simply 'Bicaz' and it incorporated at that time the people and territories split today into Bicazu Ardelean, Bicaz Chei and Damuc.⁶ Before 1918 it was a frontier locality separating Romania from the Austro Hungarian Empire, itself being part of the Empire.⁷ If any of the events I am analysing had happened earlier people's openness to ideas from Bucharest would have been much less. Moreover if any of the events had happened later the situation would not have been the same. Thus in 1940, following the dictate from Vienna, the village became part of Hungary again, being united with Romania only at the end of the Second World War (1944). Furthermore in 1950 the new administrative system made this locality part of the administration of the Moldavian regions,⁸ not Transylvanian as it was before the war. The relationship with the authorities played an important role for the first mission here. Bicazu Ardelean was at the time of the analysed events a large, dynamic parish. This played an important role. Another aspect should be emphasised for further clarification: the main religion of the people from the area was Greek Catholic. This was a unique religion among the Romanians from Transylvania. It keeps the Byzantine rites as in the Orthodox Church but accepts, like the Catholic Church, the Pope in Rome as primate, the use of unleavened bread in Communion, the Purgation, and the Holy Spirit

⁶ Consiliul Popular al Comunei Bicazu Ardelean, *Monografia Comunei Bicazu Ardelean* (unpublished typewritten script, 1964), pp. 5-6.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

proceeding from both the Father and the Son (Filioque).⁹ At the time, the people from Bicazu Ardelean were divided amongst four Greek Catholic churches and one smaller Orthodox church.¹⁰

The activity of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Romanian territory influenced the people here also. The search of the people for something different from that which the traditional churches offered came as a result of Bible study. The first Baptist missionary was invited to preach by a group of people who were studying the Bible. While preaching he found the audience were following in their own Bibles the message read.¹¹ Part of his success was a consequence of his faithfulness to the biblical message – which the people could easily see. From these events an important conclusion arises: people had Bibles whose message they could understand. But what Bible translations were used? A believer from the church remembers that the translations of Nitulescu and Cornilescu circulated among the people.¹² Even today in an Orthodox family from Bicazu Ardelean there can be found a translation of the Bible by Cornilescu from 1931.¹³ Both the translations of Nitulescu and Cornilescu were printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society.¹⁴ Therefore it can be stated that the effort of this Society to put in the hands of common people an accessible Bible translation was one of the most important factors that contributed to the spiritual search of the people.

Another major factor was two movements in Romania: the Baptist and the evangelical movements led by Teodor Popescu and Dumitru Cornilescu. The Baptist influence will be analysed in the second section of this paper. A few explanations should be given about the other evangelical movement that arose from inside the Orthodox Church. This was influenced by Dumitru Cornilescu. While translating the Bible, he

⁹ Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii Romanesti si a vietii religioase a romanilor* (Iasi: Junimea, 2001), p. 326. The Greek Catholic Church appeared between 1698 and 1701, being formed from the previous Orthodox Churches and priests who were not recognised by the Austro Hungarian authorities. Thus they formed this new church that accepted four principles of unity with Rome (the Pope in Rome as primate, the use of unleavened bread in Communion, the Purgation, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from both the Father and the Son (Filioque). In return they received the guarantee of keeping the traditional rites, the celebration of the Orthodox holy days, the election of the bishops by the Synod, and the equality in rights with the priests and believers of the Catholic Church. In 1948 the communist authorities denied any rights to the Greek Catholic church but after the Revolution from December 1989 the Greek Catholic Church was again recognised officially by the State. Today they number over 190,000 people, most of them being Romanian and a small percentage Hungarian. Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, *Viata Religioasa din Romania* (Bucuresti: Editura Bizantina, 2005), pp. 38-40.

¹⁰ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 104.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-112.

¹² *Interview of Tepes Paleu Gheorghe* on 17th August 2008.

¹³ *Discussion with family Negustor David from Bicazu Ardelean* on 17th August 2008.

¹⁴ Alexa Popovici, *Traduceri moderne ale Bibliei*. Online: <http://www.crestinul.ro/traduc.htm>, cited on 18th August 2008.

understood, like Luther centuries before,¹⁵ that salvation is only through faith in Jesus Christ.¹⁶ He started proclaiming this message and among the converts was the Orthodox priest, Teodor Popescu, who was serving at the 'Cuibul cu barza' church in Bucharest. Together they started a movement inside the Church and proclaimed the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Popescu was proclaiming this message from his pulpit but they also started small Bible study groups.¹⁷ The movement had great success in Bucharest and spread to other cities also. These happenings became noticed by some priests and they enquired about the legitimacy of the message proclaimed. Popescu was judged by a high forum of the Orthodox Church and was excommunicated on 16th January 1924. The reasons of his excommunication seem to be obscure judging by the official declaration of the important Romanian priest and literature writer, Gala Galaction: 'Teodor Popescu was a...good preacher, devoted soul pastor, friend of the mourners and the poor. (...) Then why was he excommunicated from the Church? Read his sermon book *Jesus calls you*. There he never mentions the Orthodox Church...'.¹⁸

Despite his excommunication, Popescu continued his ministry. Today the movement started by him and by Dumitru Cornilescu is legally recognised by the State under the name of the Romanian Evangelical Church. They do not have any direct links abroad. They number about 20,000 people.¹⁹ Their doctrine is similar to that of the Reformed Church. They believe in salvation through faith in Jesus Christ but accept the baptism of babies.²⁰ Popescu visited Bicaz in person. He met the Baptist missionary and they preached in tandem three times. The events will be analysed in the next section of this paper.

Thus it can be stated that the awakening in Bicazu Ardelean did not happen in a vacuum. It was influenced by the bigger political and religious situation in Europe and Romania at that time. This specific context offered the channel for the propagation of ideas. The activity of the British and Foreign Bible Society offered an opportunity for people to meditate upon the Gospel message of salvation, and the evangelical movements offered options concerning the message the people understood from the Bible. But

¹⁵ John R. W. Stott, *Epistola lui Pavel catre Romani* (Cluj Napoca: Logos, 2000, translated), pp. 14-18, connects his experience with that of Augustine, Luther, John Wesley and Karl Barth who were directly influenced and transformed by the message of the Bible.

¹⁶ Dumitru Cornilescu, *Cum m-am intors la Dumnezeu* (Bucuresti: Biserica Evanghelica Romana, 1998), pp. 7-13.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-18.

¹⁸ Gala Galaction cited by Horia Azimioara, *Din viata si lucrarea lui Teodor Popescu* (Editura Emmanuel, 1988) p. 54.

¹⁹ Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, *Viata Religioasa din Romania*, p. 80.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

the awakening would never have happened if there had not been an influential leader and people with specific behavioural traits. These elements will be considered.

2. The activity of Gavril Dunca in Bicazu Ardelean

A movement with impact upon people's lives is often influenced by leaders. For Bicazu Ardelean this leader was the Baptist missionary Gavril Dunca. The presentation of his activity in the area will try to discover those features in his missionary strategy that made him so influential. But a leader with no authentic transformation cannot be influential; therefore some introductory remarks about his conversion should be made.

Gavril Dunca's conversion

Dunca was born in the village of Negrilesti in the region of Cluj on 15th November 1900.²¹ Together with his father and a brother, at the age of fourteen, he started work in the Old Kingdom of Romania in the city of Ploiesti. The family split up and Dunca remained alone in this big city trying to find a means to survive. The hardships and the health problems he suffered led him to become religious. He read the New Testament and some other religious books and believed this was all he had to do in order to be saved. At the end of the First World War, in 1919, he decided to return to his home village. On the way back he was interned in the hospital in Cluj. There he met John Todorut, a Baptist believer whose example of honesty, love and courage impressed Dunca. From him he learned the need to obey the Bible and heard about the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. He also found out about the gatherings of 'repenters', a general term describing evangelicals and other groups separated from the traditional churches. Dunca was convinced about the need to literally obey the biblical commands, a trait that would follow him for the rest of his life. With this attitude he returned to his home village. He contacted a group of people affirming the mortality of the soul, the physical future presence of Jesus' Kingdom on earth and the possibility of salvation after death, but decided their message was not biblical. Therefore he kept searching. He found a Baptist believer from the village who gave him a Bible, a song book and two pamphlets written by Baptist preachers. These writings convinced him to embrace Baptist beliefs which he considered to be biblical. Dunca asserts that the day of his conversion was 6th December 1919 and describes it as 'the day when I gave up the world with its

²¹ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 1.

pleasures and I started to wrestle with myself'.²² He was baptised on 20th August 1920.

Dunca never accepted without question a system of beliefs. Hence the reference he made to 'wrestling'. His searching spirit from childhood influenced him to read the Bible. Moreover he rejected the teachings of the first group of people he met in his village. The first Baptist he met did not immediately change his way of life but led him to study more. His conversion took place only at the moment when his beliefs, derived directly from personal Bible study, coincided with certain denominational teachings. This deliberate and thoughtful approach made him an influential leader and a passionate preacher. Furthermore his later experiences of rejection by a part of his family and people from the village, the cruel persecutions he endured,²³ and all attempts to quench his missionary zeal (all unsuccessful), made him a living example of honest faith.

Initial work in Bicaz

Gavril Dunca's initial work in Bicaz helps in discovering some specifics of his missionary strategy. The first was his missionary zeal. His first stay in Bicazu Ardelean on 23rd and 24th January 1925 was linked to his moving to Toplita for work. This town was 80 km from the village. By now Dunca had already been ordained as a missionary by the Baptist community from Oradea²⁴ and he had established several churches in different areas. Because of his passion for preaching he immediately started to do mission in Toplita and the surrounding areas, including, after some time, Bicaz. He was a worker in a factory at the same time. He made many converts and the news about him spread among the people.²⁵ His missionary zeal was the first component in his strategy.

In Bicazu Ardelean a group for Bible study was formed. While serving in the First World War²⁶ some people came into contact with evangelical ideas and when they returned to the village they started to study the Bible. One of them, Simion Dandu (Ciofleac), participated at a meeting in Bucharest and heard Teodor Popescu preaching. Thus the group meeting for Bible study decided to invite the priest in order for him to tell them about what they had to do to be saved. At the same time Gheorghe Botosan, one of Dunca's converts from a nearby locality, visited the village and told the people about the activity of Dunca. The people were enthusiastic to

²² Ibid., p. 15.

²³ He asserts that he cannot even remember how many times he was beaten by the gendarmes because of his preaching in different places. Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 32.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 121-132.

²⁶ *Interview of Ionut Handaric*, 17th August 2008.

hear him preaching so they invited Dunca to come.²⁷ Thus the missionary was informed about their wish.

However, instead of being in a hurry to go and preach, he did not give any answer. This was unusual because of his well known missionary zeal. But he explained his actions as his wish to know if this was the will of God.²⁸ He considered the second invitation which followed one month later as a sign that he should go. Still he had one more concern. It was about people's sincerity in inviting him to preach – so he had a test for them. He asked for an escort from their side. The people proved their sincerity in sending a chariot to pick him up from Corbu, the designed meeting place. Probably this was the second sign he was expecting because, from this moment on, he started having the same attitude in other places where he preached. For example, when he found out that the priest Teodor Popescu was invited to preach in the village at the same time with him he did not seem as worried as his mission companion, Grigore Braic, but said: 'we do not know what it is going to be next. We have to be prepared for anything.'²⁹

At the entrance to the village they discovered that Popescu was in police custody. Dunca said: 'Ahead! Let the will of God be done!'³⁰ It seemed to some that he had recovered his missionary zeal. Actually his attitude should be interpreted as being in line with his missionary strategy: his zeal was guided and motivated by the will of God. Later he spoke about another sign he asked from God to see if the mission in Bicz was according to the Lord's will. He wanted to see some people from the village participating at one church service in Toplita. This happened during the same year, and for the missionary it was a sign from God that he could start a church in Bicz.³¹ This expectancy of God's voice through signs that he asked from the Lord is the second component of Gavril Dunca's missionary strategy.

The third component is seen in the relationship with authorities. His attitude is similar to other Baptists from Europe who did not hold with the Separatist view of the Anabaptists but formulated a specific understanding³² similar to the practice of this missionary. When Dunca was hosted in Bicz the first thing he did was to prepare his certificate that gave

²⁷ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 106.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-7.

³² Ian Randall, *Module in European Baptist Origins and Development* (Prague: IBTS 2002), chapter 1, p. 7.

him legal rights to preach in the counties of Mures and Ciuc.³³ Bicaz, being part of the second county, meant he had a legal right to preach and he intended to use it. But cooperation with the State had its limitations. When the gendarmes (national police) came, Dunca did not respond to their announcement that he should go to the Police station. Instead he allowed them to take and analyse his certificate but warned them that he would go to the judge if they did not return the certificate. This attitude of limited cooperation with the State authorities shows a specific Baptist understanding which was common among Baptists, not only in Romania but also in wider Europe. It was a third part of Dunca's missionary strategy. Half an hour after this discussion the priest Teodor Popescu was also released; maybe the Baptist firmness in dealing with the State helped in the release of the priest also.

The first evangelical debate in Bicaz

The most important factor in Gavril Dunca's influence was his attitude towards the Bible. This was shaped by his conversion and it can be seen from three meetings when he talked to the people gathered to listen to him in Bicaz in the house of Toader Handaric. The first meeting was held on Saturday night, 23rd January 1925. The first to speak was the priest Teodor Popescu. He read from Acts 16:31, the history of the keeper of the prison in Philippi. He emphasised the need to believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved but did not mention anything about baptism, which the text mentions. Therefore when Dunca spoke he emphasised this aspect from the text.³⁴ In this way he clearly presented his vision of the Bible: the need to literally obey all of its commandments. This component gave people confidence that the message proclaimed was literally following the biblical pattern. It had been the reason they started the Bible study group and they invited the two preachers so they could discover what the Bible says is needed for someone to be saved. Dunca's attitude convinced them.

The same thing happened at another meeting, held on Sunday night. The priest read from John 3:1-13 but, because he already had a different opinion concerning the baptism of believers from that of the Baptist missionary, he misquoted verse 5 from the text. Instead of saying: 'If anyone is not born from the water and from the Spirit (...)' he said: 'if anyone is not born from the Word and from the Spirit'.³⁵ Those people, who were following the text in their own Bibles, started to say to each other, using picture language: 'the priest went to the other side of the

³³ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 108.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

road'.³⁶ On the contrary, when Dunca spoke he presented again the exact biblical text. Dunca's determination to quote and emphasise the exact words of the Bible was the most important fact that helped in his success. He himself acknowledges this element.

At a meeting that was held on Sunday morning the people were impressed by another aspect: the spirit of prayer. Even though Dunca preached about conversion and baptism again, what remained in the memory of people was the beginning of the sermon: how it included prayer.³⁷ They did not pray on the occasion of the first meeting and Teodor Popescu skipped this step at the second meeting. Dunca considered that in order to speak from God's word, they needed to worship God. So he knelt and prayed. Most of the people had the same humble attitude.

These three meetings in Bicaz in January 1925 had a continuing influence among the people. Immediately after the third meeting Popescu split from Dunca and they never preached in tandem again. Even though Teodor Popescu stayed for one more day and preached again in the locality, the only convert he had was Simion Dandu. There was never a Romanian Evangelical Church in Bicaz or in the immediate surrounding areas. Even Simion Dandu participated in and worshipped with the Baptist Church in Bicazu Ardelean, though he was never baptised as an adult³⁸ but continued to sympathise for the rest of his life with the gatherings of Teodor Popescu from Bucharest.³⁹

The first presence of Gavril Dunca in the village of Bicaz underlines specific elements of his missionary strategy. He was motivated by a strong missionary zeal but his zeal was always waiting for the confirmation of God's will. He knew the will of God through signs that he was boldly asking from the Lord. A third element in his strategy was limited cooperation with the authorities. Differently from the Anabaptist model of total separation from the State, he cooperated with the authorities but did not allow them to interfere too much and impose their point of view upon his ministry. The most important trait of his missionary work was his vision for the need to literally obey biblical commandments – which marked his continuing influence in this village. An important factor that marked his strategy was the spirit of prayer. He considered prayer as having the same importance as the preaching of the Word of God. These elements marked his strategy and brought a continuing influence in the area.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *Interview of Tepes Paleu Gheorghe*; even though he was not a contemporary of the event he knew about this prayer from the testimonies of the contemporaries who were deeply moved by this attitude.

³⁸ *Interview of Ionut Handaric*.

³⁹ Azimioara, *Din viata si lucrarea lui Teodor Popescu*, p. 70.

The first baptisms in Bicaz

Gavril Dunca did not limit his presence in Bicazu Ardelean only to preaching the Word of God but he considered the organising of the church as part of his ministry. This study considers a third important factor (together with his conversion and the specifics of his missionary strategy) that contributed to his influence: his organisational ability. After he was assured that it was God's will to organise the church in Bicaz he was involved in doing that. His organisational spirit is proved by three things that happened in the month of April 1925.

On 25th April 1925 he visited, for the second time, the people in Bicazu Ardelean. To his surprise he found there a small room arranged according to the example of the church the visitors from Bicaz had seen in Toplita. The people also had an authorisation from the prefect of the county who wanted to gain their elective support. The authorisation acknowledged their legal right to become Baptists. In this situation the only thing Dunca did was to organise the church. He held a meeting on Sunday, 26th April and gave the example of the practices of Baptist Churches. According to his statement the necessary elements were prayer time and a worship service.⁴⁰ This practice continued through the years and, in time, Bible study was introduced. During the prayer time that lasted for an hour all the people from the church were expected to pray, beginning with those in the first benches and finishing with those in the last. During the worship service they sang some songs and read Bible texts – and it was the explanation of these Bible texts that formed one or more sermons.⁴¹ This example, and the insistence that the church service should be held in a specific way, was part of Dunca's organisational spirit and helped the church to grow and develop.

The second thing that proved his power to organise the church happened before the first baptism. During his second visit to Bicazu Ardelean, a group of people expressed their wish to be baptised. Dunca analysed the situation and decided that the most important thing they needed was a leader. Even though they were not baptised yet they were asked to make an election. They chose Gheorghe Handaric (Clocea) and the only thing Dunca did was to confirm this person as the leader of the church.⁴² This election was unusual because the church was not yet formed and the people who were asked to vote were not baptised. Nevertheless the approach proved Dunca's discernment in giving the church a ministry that

⁴⁰ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, pp. 118-119.

⁴¹ *Interview of Tepes Paleu Gheorghe*.

⁴² Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 120.

would continue in his absence. The future successful development proves that the method was inspired.

The baptismal ceremony was a third aspect, illustrating his organisational spirit. In the night between 26th and 27th April 1925, at two o'clock, sixteen people were baptised in the Bicaz River.⁴³ Their names are recorded in the first register of the church.⁴⁴ The missionary did not baptise all of the twenty people who asked for baptism. He does not give any account of his reasons.⁴⁵ The holding of the baptism at two o'clock in the night, and his departure from the village immediately afterwards, should be interpreted in the light of persecution from the state and from people in the village. This shows that Dunca was not tied up by regulations. He had a free spirit. Indeed he organised the church services in a specific way but he felt free to organise a ceremony in the middle of the night. Dunca was an organised man and a free spirit at the same time.

The first baptism in Bicazu Ardelean, therefore, shows another important aspect of Dunca's power to influence: his organisational spirit. This was proved by his power to organise the church services in a specific way, his desire to let leaders be chosen by the congregation and his free spirit which could discern the proper moment to abandon any regulations.

The example of endurance in persecution

Gavril Dunca was an influential personality, with his influence stemming from and being seen in his authentic transformation, his missionary strategy and his organisational spirit. To all that a fourth trait should be added: the example he gave in enduring persecution. In the memory of local people he was a man of God who suffered for the cause of Jesus.⁴⁶ As already stated, he was beaten many times by the gendarmes. His success in Bicaz caused the creation of an organisation similar to that of the Inquisition. The members swore an oath of allegiance to the Greek Catholic Church and were enemies of the Baptist outreach. Under the influence of this organisation, Gavril Dunca was beaten and humiliated in Borsec, a locality thirty kilometres from Bicaz. After the beating his chest was pressed hard until he fainted. Because of this treatment he developed heart disease, which continued until the end of this life.⁴⁷ Not long after this he was

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Their names are the following: 1. Bleoju Petru, 2. Handaric Ghe. Clochia, 3. Handaric Toader Nita, 4. Handaric Toader a lui Gavril, 5. Tepes Bila Toader, 6. Pataca Toader, 7. Handaric Gavril Toader, 8. Daraban Gheorghe, 9. Handaric Valer, 10. Negustor Vasile, 11. Tepes Paleu Ion, 12. Tepes Paleu-Danila, 13. Bleoju Maria, 14. Handaric Ghe. Anuta, 15. Handaric Th. Anuta, 16. Handaric Toader Floarea. Biserica Crestina Baptista Bicazu Ardelean, Proces Verbal (Memoriu), nr. 25.4 in *Registrul cu spesele*.

⁴⁵ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 120.

⁴⁶ *Interview of Tepes Alexandru* on 17th August 2008.

⁴⁷ Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, pp. 122-6.

beaten in another police station and then pushed to the ground and received 25 strokes with a stick. Afterwards he was not able to eat any normal food for two weeks and was sick for several months.⁴⁸

These are just a few examples of the many episodes of the persecutions which Dunca endured. His example of self-sacrifice and willingness to suffer proved his sincerity in proclaiming the message and left a long-lasting imprint on people's hearts and minds. Therefore among the traits of his influence should be added this example of endurance in persecution. His authentic transformation had a powerful impact, his missionary strategy gave him the tools he needed to develop new ministries, his organisational spirit offered long-lasting ministries, but along with all of this his example of endurance in persecution created a great impression among people who knew him or heard about him. These four traits converged in making Gavril Dunca an influential leader for the growing Baptist ministry in Bicaz.

3. The behavioural traits of the people in Bicaz

I have argued that the great impact of the Baptist ministry in Bicaz was due to several factors. The territorial and cultural context of the village at that time offered the proper channel for the propagation of ideas. The influential personality of Gavril Dunca was crucial for Baptist growth. Nevertheless, in order to have a Christian spiritual awakening there must be people willing to be transformed by the message that they hear. These people were the first converts from Bicazu Ardelean who proved to have several behavioural traits that made the awakening possible. These traits will be briefly emphasised in the following section.

The first behavioural trait that the people proved was their searching spirit. The movement in Bicazu Ardelean can be compared with the beginnings of the Reformation and of the Anabaptist movement in Zürich from 1521 to 1525. In both places there were people searching the Bible in order to find the proper way to please God. In both cases there was a split concerning the issue of baptism – whether this was for believers only. The difference is in the way the events went further. In Zürich, as Estep argues, the Council of the city was convinced by the Reformed ideas that infant baptism was valid and so the Radicals had to leave.⁴⁹ On the other hand, in Bicaz the majority of members of the Bible study group were convinced by the baptistic perspective and the other representatives had to leave. The comparison does not have to do so much with who had to leave or who had

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 127-9.

⁴⁹ William Estep, *Istoria Anabaptistilor* (Oradea: Editura Cartea Crestina, 2006), p. 21.

not but proves that in order for there to be a fresh spiritual awakening searching spirits are needed. This was the case in Bicazu Ardelean in 1925 when the Baptist movement started and in Zürich in 1525 when the Reformed and Anabaptist movements began.

A second behavioural trait that was evident in Bicazu Ardelean was the wish to obey the Bible. A testimony coming from a secondary source asserts that at a moment in time before Dunca visited the village they were convinced that some practices from the traditional church were not according to the Bible. The first thing they did was to ask questions of their Greek Catholic priest, whose answer, for them, were unsatisfactory: 'What do you want me to do? Start a Reformation?'⁵⁰ This attitude convinced them more than ever that they had to find another way, a way that would not contradict what they understood from the Bible. The Bible was the starting point of the Reformation in Zürich and other parts of Europe. The Bible started the Radical Reformation also. It was the message of the Bible which transformed the people in Bicazu Ardelean, and Dunca's attitude toward the scriptures inspired them to accept the message proclaimed.

The people also proved able to take initiatives. As was emphasised before, the signs Dunca asked from God to see if the mission was in the Lord's will had to do with the people's initiative. The first one was their insistence in asking him to visit them. Another important sign he asked for was their visit to Toplita. People proved to have initiative in doing all of these things. This was also seen in their organising a chapel room shortly after they heard the Baptist message, and obtaining an authorisation to have the Baptist faith recognised in the village even though they were not yet baptised. The examples could continue. There was the purchase of the church's meeting place, which was inaugurated on 6th January 1931⁵¹ and exists today. The church building used to be a dance hall but in 1926 the people initiated the buying process⁵² and within five years they were able to have church meetings in a new building. Their initiative is remarkable and proves their interest in working for the Lord.

The buying and transformation of the church's building shows their example of sacrifice. The price of 60,000 lei⁵³ that they needed to buy the land was an enormous sum for that time. How did they pay for the building? The first entry in the register reveals an interesting fact. They classified the families into three categories according to their financial possibilities. The first eight families, being in the first category, donated

⁵⁰ *Interview of Ionut Handaric.*

⁵¹ *Memoriu 6 Ianuarie 1931* in Biserica Crestina Baptista Bicazu Ardelean, *Registrul cu spesele.*

⁵² Dunca, *Amintiri din viata mea*, p. 122.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

3000 lei, the next nine families donated 2000 lei and the last five families donated 1000 lei, a total of 47,000 lei.⁵⁴ The rest of the money was collected from other donations. Considering the fact that the period between 1929 and 1933 is known as one of 'economic crisis',⁵⁵ their sacrifice is more remarkable.

This analysis of the behavioural traits of the first Baptists from Bicazu Ardelean reveals a specific type of people in the area which contributed to the awakening which took place and to the growth of Baptist life. The traits are the following: a searching spirit, a decision to literally obey the Bible, initiative, and sacrifice. When these traits became the marks of a sufficient number of people then major change took place.

Conclusion

Analysing the factors which contributed to the impact the Baptist movement had in Bicaz at the beginning of the twentieth century, this paper has revealed that the spiritual awakening in the area was like a river. The cultural and territorial context of the village was the channel, the environment that was needed for the river to flow. Thus the administration of the village was open to specific influences, the activity of the British and Foreign Bible Society furnished the impulse for the people to study the Bible, and the evangelical movements from Romania offered options for the people to choose a specific message. The context was like the channel of a river but any river has a source. The source for this awakening was the activity of the Baptist missionary Gavril Dunca. His influence was due to the authenticity of his conversion, his missionary strategy, his organisational and innovative spirit and his example of endurance in the face of persecution. Gavril Dunca opened the source for the channel of the river to be filled with water. But the waters were the people who proved to have specific behavioural characteristics: a searching spirit, the decision to literally obey the Bible, initiative and sacrifice. As the people involved saw it, the influence of the Holy Spirit was at work in making them search the Bible, leading the way of the first missionary and helping people in their decisions. The Holy Spirit, from this perspective, was the real source of the river, but the first missionary and the first converts opened and allowed this source to flow through their lives

Pastor Claudiu Handaric, Romania.

⁵⁴ Biserica Crestina Baptista Bicazu Ardelean, *Registrul cu spesele*.

⁵⁵ Emil Constantin, *Istoric monetar*. Online:

http://www.leulgreu.ro/istoric_monetar/de_la_schimburile_intertribale_la_denominarea_leului_ultima_moneda_nationala, cited on 19th August 2008.

5

Revival among Hungarian Baptists in Transylvania in the period of the ‘peasant prophets’

Istvan Gergely

In 1892 the leaders of the large Austro-Hungarian Baptist Union noted that the number of Hungarian Baptists was doubling each year. Olivér Szebeni highlights this in his book on the Hungarian Baptist Mission.¹ The most significant growth during the previous decade had been among the Baptist churches in the Transylvania region, which had grown to seventy-five churches.² Growth continued to be significant in the 1890s.³ This study looks at the reasons for the growth within the Hungarian Baptist community in Transylvania – which today is part of Romania. The title of the study refers to the ‘peasant prophets’. These were a group of younger men who became outstanding evangelists from the 1870s onwards. Their work was not the only reason for Baptist advance, but they played a significant part in this advance in the later nineteenth century.

In this study I suggest that the growth which took place among Hungarian Baptists in Transylvania by the end of the nineteenth century was stimulated by a deep desire for an evangelical spirituality especially within the experience of those Hungarians who were members of the Protestant churches. Also I wish to emphasise that the spirituality the first Hungarian Baptists inherited was a spirituality based on the Bible. I will look at the role of Bible Society colporteurs. They prepared the way for the work of the peasant prophets. The acceptance of evangelical spirituality and the way in which it was lived out by the peasant prophets, by other leaders, and by the communities that they helped to form, contributed enormously to the development and growth of the Baptist mission in Transylvania.

¹ See Olivér Szebeni, *Magyar Baptista Misszió Történelem* [The History of the Hungarian Baptist Mission] (Budapest: A Baptista Teológiai Akadémia Jegyzete, 1990), p. 22.

² Géza Kovács, *A baptista istentisztelet kezdeti története Magyarországon* [The Beginnings of the History of Baptist Worship in Hungary] in Lajos Bereczki, ed., *Krisztusért Járván Követségben, Tanulmányok a Magyar baptista misszió 150 éves történetéből* [Walking as Ambassadors for Christ: Papers on the 150 years of the History of the Hungarian Baptist Mission] (Budapest: Baptista Kiadó, 1996), p. 68. See also: Szebeni, *Magyar Baptista Misszió Történelem*, p. 20.

³ László Kiss, *Erdélyi Magyar Baptista Missziótörténelem* [The history of Hungarian Baptist Mission in Transylvania], Manuscript (1995), pp. 22-23.

1. The search for an evangelical spirituality

In the second half of the nineteenth century in Transylvania, Protestant theological thinking and spiritual life were dominated by liberalism and rationalism. Religious orthodoxy was expressed in the teaching of doctrines and rules without an evident living out of an authentic spirituality. It was this lack which created a search for evangelical spiritual experience. The origins of evangelical spirituality have been thoroughly analysed by David Bebbington. He describes in his important work, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, how the decade beginning in 1734 ‘witnessed in the English-speaking world a more important development than any other, before or after, in the history of Protestant Christianity: the emergence of the movement that became Evangelicalism’.⁴ Bebbington has argued that evangelicalism is a movement comprising all those who stress the Bible, the cross, conversion and activism and has traced how this was evident in the movements that sprang out of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival.⁵ However, Bebbington does not look at the evangelical movement in Eastern Europe, where evangelical revival was also evident. This study is one attempt to extend the analysis.

Theological trends in Hungarian Protestantism

A liberal approach to theology, which influenced thinking among the Reformed churches (and in Protestantism more generally) in Hungary in the mid-nineteenth century, accentuated the superiority and priority of reason over the revelation of God in Scripture. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Protestant churches were deeply affected by this trend as the following examples from Mihály Márkus show. Most of the Protestant ministers on Good Friday would preach about ‘suffering for the truth’ rather than the atoning suffering of Christ. On Easter Day ministers preached about the victory of ideas rather than the victory of Christ over death. They also taught that Jesus of Nazareth was not the Christ nor the Son of God but a perfect man and a perfect moral example. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity was rejected as a polytheistic teaching that had nothing to do with Christianity. The teaching about the Second Coming of Christ was seen as absurd.⁶ Endre Tóth, in *The Hungarian Reformed Church by the turn of the Century*, (1951) describes the thinking of two leading theological teachers, Lajos Varga and Gusztáv Nagy. He suggests that they

⁴ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 20.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-17, for the four distinctives.

⁶ Mihály Márkus, *Liberalizmus és új Ortodoxia, Tanulmányok a Magyarországi Református Egyház Történetéből, 1867-1978* [Liberalism and the New Orthodoxy: Essays on the History of the Reformed Church in Hungary 1867-1978] (Budapest: Studia et Acta Ecclesiastica, 1983), p. 157.

considered the church to be a human association based on religious values, saw Christ as one among the prophets, and believed the resurrection was a dream of the disciples.⁷

Endre Tóth speaks about 62,000 Reformed Church members in Budapest in 1900, but about all the churches being empty. This may exaggerate the position, but clearly there was a serious crisis. In terms of spirituality, those who wanted to live a truly Christian life, to read the Bible, to sing Christian hymns and to pray or support Christian activities were mocked as pietistic.⁸ This situation helps to explain the attraction of Baptist life, with its commitment to personal spiritual experience. The situation was not identical in the Lutheran and Calvinist churches and the Catholic Church had its own tradition of spirituality. Kornél Győri remarked:

At the end of the last century [the nineteenth century], the Catholic Church... was able to tie to herself people who were longing for God. The Lutheran Church, although it had less decoration, still provided something for the eyes. But when from the white, Puritan looking, undecorated churches, the Calvinists with their new fashionable theological trend expelled the living Word of God from the church, because of lack of alternatives, the Protestant church lost her attraction...⁹

It is significant that it was from the Reformed or Calvinist churches that new Baptist communities emerged.¹⁰

The new theological orthodoxy

Within the Hungarian Reformed Church a new trend in spirituality appeared by the turn of the twentieth century as a reaction to theological liberalism. Márkus Mihály argues that ‘when Reformed preachers went so far as to deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ, a reaction set in, and out of this reaction a new orthodoxy began to make its presence felt in the life of the Hungarian Reformed Church’.¹¹ Two important representatives of this new evangelical theology were Imre Révész and Ferenc Balogh. Imre Révész was the first in this group to read the sermons of John Calvin. It was Révész who translated these sermons and published them in Hungarian. There was a close friendship between him and John Duncan,

⁷ Endre Tóth, *A Magyarországi református egyház a századforduló idején* [The Hungarian Reformed Church at the Turn of the Century] (Budapest: Református Egyház, 1951), p. 42.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁹ Kornél Győri: *A Baptista Parasztprófétákról* [About the Baptist Peasant Prophets], in *Theológiai Szemle* [Theological Review] 1967, pp. 154-155.

¹⁰ For Reformed beginnings in Hungary see Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 271-280.

¹¹ Márkus, *Liberalizmus és új Ortodoxia*, p. 158.

the leader of the Scottish Free Church mission in Budapest. The presence of the Scottish mission was important for Baptists as well as for the Reformed Church since the first Baptist who was active in Budapest, János Rottmayer, also had a close relationship with John Duncan for about a decade (1850-1860). Rottmayer had become a Baptist when in Hamburg.¹²

Ferenc Balogh, one of the disciples of Professor Révész, who taught in the Reformed College in Debrecen, effectively propagated this new evangelical trend in theology through his work as editor of the periodical *Evangéliumi Protestáns Lap* (Evangelical Protestant Paper). In this important periodical the teaching of liberal theology was combated. Nor was the paper confined to the propagation of the writings of those within the classical Reformed (Presbyterian) tradition. Messages by the influential nineteenth-century American evangelist D.L. Moody, as well as sermons by leading English Baptist preachers such as C.H. Spurgeon, were published in the periodical.

The new orthodoxy in the Reformed Church held that there were substantial grounds for believing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as an historical event. It also affirmed the experience of conversion. Because of such teaching a new spiritual renewal began in the Hungarian Reformed churches in both Hungary and Transylvania.¹³ This revival took place first of all in Debrecen, where scholars like Imre Révész, Lajos Filó and Ferenc Balogh were tutors of theology, and it continued in the Alföld (the Southern part of Hungary), supported by scholars such as József Szalay, Károly Rácz and Ferenc Kecskeméti. These people published local papers and periodicals that were useful tools in their endeavour to make known the new orthodoxy. Remarkably, the leaders in the Southern part of Hungary accepted the Baptists and were even ready to defend them from Protestant attacks. Kecskeméti gives a picture of Reformed Church life at that time and alludes to the Baptists: ‘...Yes the church is sick, it is in confusion like spoiled wine. There is no Christian life, no faith, no discipline’. He suggested that the Reformed Church could learn from Baptists in several respects.¹⁴ Imre Révész, a Reformed church historian, suggested that the Hungarian Baptist mission helped in promoting Reformed renewal.¹⁵

¹² Kálmán Mészáros, *A Baptista Misszió megjelenése* [The Emergence of Baptist Mission] in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 25.

¹³ Géza Kovács, *A Baptista Misszió Kibontakozása Magyarországon* [The development of Baptist Mission in Hungary], in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 54.

¹⁴ Jenő Szigeti, *A Békési paraszt-ecclesiolák világa és a baptista Gyülekezetek megalakulása 1890-1891* [The World of Peasant Ecclesiolas in Békés, and the Emergence of Baptist Churches, 1890-1891] in *Mert Isten ezt hagyta...* (Budapest: Tanulmányok a népi vallásosság köréből, 1987), p. 459. See also Anna-Maria Kool, *God Moves in a Mysterious Way: The Hungarian Protestant Foreign Mission Movement 1756-1951* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum B.V., 1993), p. 52.

¹⁵ Cited by Géza Kovács, *Evangéliumi ébredés az 1880-90 – es években* [Evangelical Revival between 1880 and 1890], in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 69.

The revival among the Protestant churches spread quickly and soon reached Budapest. An outstanding leader in Budapest was Aladár Szabó, who, with the help of his friends, brought together a new group of theologians and dedicated his life to renewing the Reformed congregations. This group proposed a whole set of ideas for the Reformed Church, several of which came – even if only partially – to be accepted. Some of these ideas included forming local mission organisations, using musical bands and choirs in the services, forming Sunday schools, creating foundations for social care, and helping women to be more involved in the church.¹⁶ However these missionary and renewal endeavours were strongly opposed by significant leaders in the Reformed Church. The idea of setting up a Missionary Association within the Reformed Church was rejected on the grounds that ‘pietism does not comply with Hungarian temperament’.¹⁷

In analysing this period, Jenő Szigeti concluded in his study, ‘The Origin of the Hungarian Free Churches and the Protestant Churches’, that there were three different trends in the Protestant churches: 1. The appearance of small gatherings for Bible study was regarded by some as the consequence of the foolishness and backwardness of people; 2. Others wanted to foster an ecumenical spirit, which could include new movements; 3. Still others actively supported the forming of ‘peasant ecclesiolas’, as Szigeti calls them, which were gatherings – functioning as churches within churches – of people who were eager to pray and get a better knowledge and understanding of the Word of God.¹⁸ Most of the people attending these meetings were peasants.¹⁹ It was this third attitude of some members of the Protestant churches that made possible the emergence and development of Hungarian Baptist Churches in Transylvania and the southern part of Hungary.

The formation of peasant ecclesiolas

There are a number of historical documents that speak about the existence of house gatherings organised in many of the Hungarian Reformed parishes by the end of the nineteenth century.²⁰ These groups of seekers formed the

¹⁶ Géza Kovács, *Magyarország a XX század végén* [Hungary at the turn of the twentieth century], in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 55.

¹⁷ Tóth, *A Magyarországi református*, p. 29.

¹⁸ Jenő Szigeti, *A Magyarországi Szabadegyházak Közösségek Keletkezése és a Protestáns Egyházak* [The Emergence of the Hungarian Free Churches and the Protestant Churches], *Theológiai Szemle*, 1976, pp. 71-73.

¹⁹ Jenő Szigeti, *És emlékezzél meg az útról, Tanulmányok a magyarországi szabadegyházak történetéből*, [Remembering the Way, Papers from the History of Free Churches in Hungary] (Budapest: Szabad Egyházak Tanácsa, 1981), p. 17.

²⁰ Articles written by Jenő Bányai, Attila Csopják, Jenő Szigeti, Kirner A. Bertalan, Kálmán Mészáros, Géza Kovács etc. Some of the mentioned articles were published in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben* in 1996; the other ones are kept and well preserved in the Hungarian Baptist archive in Budapest.

basis of the Baptist mission. Those who felt alienated from the Protestant Churches were often accepted and welcomed by those informal and warm communities, which stressed personal faith. In his research, Szigeti reached the conclusion that this was crucial for the building up of the Baptist mission in Transylvania. It seems that Antal Novák, a Hungarian Bible colporteur, was the one who first realised that these groups of people, coming from a Protestant background with a historic Puritan tradition, represented fields with ripe crops in which the Baptist harvest could begin.²¹

The first Baptist members in Transylvania were, therefore, recruited from among those groups of people who gathered together on Sundays in the Reformed Churches and on weekdays in different houses. Mere pulpit orations did not satisfy their spiritual hunger.²² They looked for a fresh direction. Yet most of them would not have been regarded as having much potential for leading a new movement in Transylvania since they were simple farmers, factory workers and tradesmen.²³ Tünde Tankó, in an article published in May 2001, concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century 44.7% of Hungarian Baptists were located in Transylvania.²⁴ There was clearly a renewed search going on among many in this region for a deeper knowledge of the Bible. The Baptist movement, which stressed the Bible – and obedience to its teaching – seemed to meet that need.²⁵

2. Evangelical Spirituality: the Word of God

In the life of Baptist churches, the Bible has played an important role. C.H. Spurgeon was typical as he spoke in 1879 about his experience of reading the Bible. He said:

He [Christ] leans over me, he puts his finger along the lines, I can see his pierced hand: I will read it as in his presence. I will read it, knowing that he is the substance of it – that he is the proof of this book as well as the writer of it; the sum of this Scripture as well as the author of it. That is the way for true students to become wise! You will get at the soul of Scripture when you can keep Jesus with you while you are reading.²⁶

²¹ Szigeti, *A Magyarországi Szabadegyházi Közösségek*, pp. 71-73.

²² Kovács, *A Baptista Misszió Kibontakozása Magyarországon*, in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 54.

²³ *Ibid.* pp. 53-56.

²⁴ *Békehírnök*, 17th May 2001, p. 174. The article presents statistics from the census of the year 1900.

²⁵ Szigeti reached his conclusion by analysing the life of the Reformed church in Békés, while Kardos looked at the history of the Lutheran (*Evangélikus*) church. They both arrived at the same conclusion.

²⁶ C.H. Spurgeon, 'How to Read the Bible', sermon on Matthew 12:3-7, delivered in 1879, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 25, No. 1503, p. 634. For more see I.M. Randall, *What a Friend we have in Jesus* (London: DLT, 2005), chapter 3.

In a similar way in the life of the first Hungarian Baptists in Transylvania the relationship of people to the Bible, as a living expression of God's revelation in Christ, was crucial.

The ministry of Bible colporteurs

Before the first Baptist churches were established in Transylvania the colporteurs of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) made an enormous impact by selling the Bible from house to house and talking to the people. Among the Baptist colporteurs was János Rottmayer, who, in a single year (after moving to Cluj), sold more than 10,000 Bibles.²⁷ Since the need that he saw was so great, Rottmayer asked for and received helpers from the BFBS, and they all had an effective ministry. A study could be made of the ministry that a number of these colporteurs undertook, but I will look at only one of them, Antal Novák, whose ministry was particularly significant for the emergence and growth of the Hungarian Baptist movement.

When analysing this period, Oliver Szebeni aptly spoke of 'Bibles, Bible circles and Baptists'.²⁸ In other words, in those places where colporteurs sold Bibles, Bible study groups were often formed, and out of this Baptist groups emerged. Those giving leadership were first of all British and Foreign Bible Society workers and later those people referred to as the Hungarian peasant prophets took over this work. Once the biblical teaching being offered was understood and put into practice, for example in relation to the practice of the baptism of believers only, new churches slowly emerged. Thus these Bible circles were the cradle and workshop of the Baptist movement in the second half of the nineteenth century.²⁹

Although János Rottmayer was the most important pioneer in terms of the wider Hungarian Baptist Mission, the Baptist movement in Transylvania advanced significantly through the ministry of Antal Novák, who was born on 17th January 1828 in Stajeroszág. Novák worked as a tailor in Budapest, and met Rottmayer who was working as a carpenter there. Soon they became good friends, helping each other in their small businesses. Rottmayer shared with Novák his new evangelical faith soon after they met. The result of this friendship and witness was the conversion of Novák and his wife. They then began to distribute Bibles, often selling those Bibles cheaper than the price at which they had purchased them. The

²⁷ Ioan Bunaciu, *Istoria Raspandirii Credintei Baptiste in Romania* [The History of the Expansion of the Baptist Faith] (Bucuresti: Editura Uniunii Comunitatilor Crestine Baptiste din R.S.R. Romania, 1981), p. 86.

²⁸ See Szebeni, *Magyar Baptista Misszió Történelem*.

²⁹ Mészáros, *A Baptista misszió megjelenése 1846-1873* [The Emergence of Baptist Mission 1846-1873], in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 21.

BFBS employed them both, although employing a woman as a colporteur was not their general practice. Thus they both became devoted colporteurs, starting their work with the BFBS on 26th May 1865.³⁰ At this point they were not yet Baptists.

Later that year, leaving their children behind in Budapest, the Nováks moved to Gyoma, in the south-east of Hungary. Seemingly this happened because the local Reformed Church minister asked for a colporteur for people in the region of Banat. The leader of the BFBS in Vienna, Edward Millard (who was also a leader of the Baptist community), proposed the Nováks for the job. They developed a good relationship with the Reformed minister there and from Gyoma they were able to visit other settlements such as Nagyszalonta, Békés and Berettyóújfalu, where several peasant Bible study groups had been established.³¹ These would form the basis of Baptist congregations. Five years later the Nováks travelled to Vienna (an expensive journey) in order to be baptised. The baptisms took place on 30th April 1870, and the service was led by Berzinger, a Baptist preacher in Vienna.³² Obedience to what they saw as the teaching of the Bible is an evident characteristic.

One of the strategies of Antal Novák in his mission was to keep returning to the places he had previously visited, in order to reinforce the Christian witness and to sell more Bibles. He often visited a group of people who were regularly gathering for prayer and Bible study in Nagyszalonta, a small town in the northern part of Transylvania. The group regularly met in the house of one of the members, János Lajos. These people came to the conviction that the local Reformed Church could not meet all their spiritual needs. Antal Novák first met with them in 1871, and as he got to know them during his subsequent visits he explained to them not only issues related to personal repentance but also believer's baptism. This might appear to be at odds with the BFBS's non-denominational rule, but the group was in fact asking questions about baptism.³³

The background was that Péter Balogh, the Reformed minister, in one of his sermons, explained to the congregation that in the first Christian churches only those people were baptised who had experienced conversion, and baptism was officiated by immersion in water. This sermon had a major impact. János Lajos and others had even asked the minister to baptise them – as had happened in the Bible. Naturally, he had refused to do that,

³⁰ Ibid., p. 33.

³¹ Kálmán Mészáros, *A magyarországi baptista misszió vázlatos története* [A sketch of the history of the Hungarian Baptist Mission] (Budapest: Teológiai Jegyzet, 1985), p. 32.

³² Mészáros: *A Baptista Misszió megjelenése*, p. 34.

³³ László Kiss : *Lajos János az első baptista zászlóhordozó* [Lajos János, The first Hungarian Baptist flag bearer], typewritten document in my personal library, pp. 1-5.

since for him that would have been re-baptism, but he had explained that in Germany there were people who practised adult baptism. When Antal Novák arrived in Nagyszalonta this group saw him as an answer to their prayers.³⁴ After a few people in the group expressed their desire to receive believer's baptism, Novák said he was ready to help. During a conference organised by the BFBS in 1875 he met Henrik Meyer, an ordained Baptist minister based in Vienna, and invited him to come to Nagyszalonta where, he reported, there were eight people willing to receive baptism according to the teaching of the New Testament. On 20th August 1875, Meyer – who was to become the major overseer of Hungarian Baptists – was able to come and he officiated at a baptism, at Békés Gyula, where eight people were baptised.³⁵ This was a very important moment in the history of the Hungarian Baptist mission, since this was the first group of native Hungarian people to receive baptism as believers, and they formed the first Hungarian Baptist Church in Transylvania. This Baptist congregation emerged from a Reformed Bible study group, and this was important for its subsequent spiritual ethos.

Throughout his life, Antal Novák remained a hard-working colporteur, operating in very difficult circumstances. In this period poverty and infectious disease affected many families in Transylvania. When Novák died in 1877, in Heltau, his death was probably a result of one of those infectious diseases.³⁶ His life illustrates the determined spiritual commitment to the Bible that helped to shape the early Baptist movement in Transylvania. Evaluating and summarising Antal Novák's life, this is how Attila Csopják, a Baptist writer and minister writes about his ministry:

Rottmayer introduced Novák in the knowledge of faith. The consequence of their conversations was the repentance of Novák, who as a believer took the Bible from city to city especially alongside the river Tisza. As the Bible was spread and people started to read it, in some of the cities protestant people started to meet in groups. Although Novák's task was primarily to sell the Bibles, he took those opportunities to testify to the Truth. Thus slowly life emerged in these gatherings.... Where Novák and his wife turned up, there spiritual renewal started. Thus, Novák became a salvation soldier in central Hungary.³⁷

Antal Novák's ministry was crucial in the history of Hungarian Baptist Mission in Transylvania for several reasons. He was the first to realise that the seeds of the emerging Baptist mission were those Protestant

³⁴ Mészáros: *A Baptista Misszió megjelenése*, p. 35.

³⁵ Bunaciu: *Istoria Raspandirii Credintei Baptiste in Romania*, pp. 88-89.

³⁶ Mészáros, *A Baptista Misszió Megjelenése*, p. 35.

³⁷ Attila Csopják, *Képek a magyarországi baptista misszió történetéből* [Pictures from the history of the Hungarian Baptist Mission] (Budapest: A Magyarországi Baptista Könyvkereskedése, 1928), pp. 10-11.

‘peasant ecclesiolas’. Secondly, although he was deeply interested in visiting and supporting the peasant ecclesiolas, he was able to maintain a good relationship with the ministers of the historic churches. This gave some protection to the emerging groups. Thirdly, his ministry was a bridge between the local ministry of János Rottmayer and the wider ministry of Henrik Meyer, who was supported by German Baptists. He was able to link Meyer’s German-orientated mission, which was built primarily on middle-class values, with popular Protestant groups among the Hungarian people. Finally, he had a long-term strategy. He was not simply a travelling evangelist. His method of returning to the groups already visited set a pattern for pastoral care, which was to prove crucial to Baptist growth.

3. Evangelical ‘peasant prophets’

The important place that the Bible occupied in the spirituality of Hungarian Baptists can also be seen when we consider the lives of the first leaders of the Baptist movement. Peasant prophets, of whom the best known were Mihály Kornya, Mihály Tóth and János Lajos, were diligent in reading and studying the Bible. Their devotion to preaching the gospel across Transylvania without considering the cost was seen as an example to follow by later generations. However, in their work it is possible to see that it was the way they used the Bible that was formative. They did not want to prove their great knowledge of the Bible but rather shared their own experiences and understanding of God’s Word.

It is important to note here that until the baptism of the first candidates in Nagyszalonta, the ministry of Henrik Meyer was directed toward and affected only German-speaking people. Once Kornya, Toth and others were baptised, the first Hungarian-speaking Baptist community was formed and developed. The church in Nagyszalonta soon became the centre of Hungarian Baptist mission in Transylvania. From there the Baptist message was spread over the whole territory of Hungary and Transylvania, not only among Hungarian-speaking people but among Romanians as well. In a few years the church in Nagyszalonta became a large church where the commitment to renewal and mission was evident for many decades. The secret of their growth was their devotion to the Word of God, as was the case in the Baptist movement generally, but a specific element was the presence and activity of the peasant prophets. They were a particularly gifted group, and through their ministry spiritual revival spread in many towns and villages, and new Baptist churches and mission centres were formed all over the country.

János Lajos - a committed church planter

János Lajos was born in 1833 in Nagyszalonta, into a devout Reformed family. He was trained as a mechanic, and moved to Budapest to work in a factory that produced weapons for the army. In his free time he liked reading, especially the Bible. Upon returning to Nagyszalonta in 1869 he was employed by a local battalion as a professional weapons mechanic.³⁸ János Lajos was asked by Antal Novák to lead the Bible study group in Nagyszalonta. When the Nováks were baptised in Vienna, Lajos also wanted to be baptised and he considered selling his house to pay for his travel to Vienna in order to receive baptism. It was Anton Novák who stopped him, explaining that even the price of his house would not be enough to travel to Vienna. Disappointed but not discouraged, he and his wife waited until the first group of believers could be baptised by Henrik Meyer in 1875 at Békés.³⁹ The determination of these early Baptists to put into practice what they believed to be right is crucial. The influence not only of Rottmayer and Novák, who worked through the BFBS, but also of those who might not have seemed to have the same opportunities, such as Lajos, is central to what took place among Hungarian Baptists.

After his baptism, János Lajos became a devoted church planter. It was his strategy to move to different locations in order to plant Baptist churches. He would buy a house in the area. When the church was planted, he sold his house and moved again. This happened about ten times during his life. His vision was determinedly evangelistic. Through this strategy Baptist congregations were planted in Borosjenő, Újvidék, Dömsöd, Dab, Pesterzsbet, Tauc, Lugazó Budapest and Körösbökény.⁴⁰

In 1883, for example, János Lajos moved to Dömsöd, where he opened a blacksmith's workshop. In a short time he made good friends, and a service of baptism took place at which Henrik Meyer and Mihály Kornya officiated. In October of that year severe persecution began. A group of people – who had been hired – attacked the church where János Lajos was preaching, destroyed the furniture and injuring several members of the church. They inflicted the most severe punishment on the leader and owner of the building – who was János Lajos himself. For weeks he could not walk and the trace of the wounds he received during this attack were seen until the end of his life.⁴¹ In spite of these persecutions Lajos remained committed to the work of church planting.

³⁸ Kiss, *Lajos János az első baptista zászlóhordozó*, pp. 1-5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁰ Géza Kovács, *A Baptista misszió kibontakozása Magyarországon, 1873-1894* [The development of Baptist Mission in Hungary], in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, p. 69.

⁴¹ László Kiss, *Az erdélyi magyar baptistaék története* [The History of the Hungarian Baptists in Transylvania], unpublished material in my personal library, p. 28.

The authorities, instead of protecting Lajos and others who were persecuted, often took the side of the hired groups of thugs. The police might become involved, but in many cases only to increase the pressure on the Baptists. Some Baptist parents were even forced to take their babies to the Reformed Church to be baptised.⁴² The robust spirituality that characterised the Baptist congregations meant that these attacks did not cause them to give up their convictions. At the same time, however, they did not have the kind of ‘martyr complex’ which sought persecution. Taking advice from Meyer, János Lajos moved to Budapest where there was more freedom and where he became involved in planting several new churches. On 22nd March 1885, however, he was ordained.⁴³ Previously, though he was an evangelist, he could not preside at the Lord’s Supper.

In 1893 Lajos moved for the last time, this time to Körösbökény, where he wanted to minister to Romanian-speaking people as well as Hungarians. Soon after he moved there he again opened a blacksmith’s workshop and Romanian people came to hear him preach. The impact of this last move was felt not only in the new churches that he planted, but in the formation and spiritual growth of Romanian Baptist leaders such as Todor Sida, Vasile Berbecar and Gheorgehe Branda. Later they became the most influential and successful leaders of the Romanian Baptist movement in the region.⁴⁴ Part of the success of the Baptist mission was through the way that leaders were involved in training younger leaders. János Lajos died on 8th February 1900. After his death, Mihály Kornya continued the work of pastoring the congregations. It is fair to conclude, with a Romanian Baptist minister and historian, Alexa Popovici, that ‘the Baptist movement among Romanians in Transylvania was a result of the ministry of János Lajos and Mihály Kornya’.⁴⁵ It was a revivalist ministry that shaped the congregations they founded and led.

Mihály Tóth - a heart for pastoral care

Mihály Tóth was also from Nagyszalonta and was one of the peasant prophets. He worked alongside János Lajos and Mihály Kornya. In fact it was Mihály Tóth who invited Kornya to the Bible study group in the house of János Lajos, to meet Antal Novák. Tóth was not yet ready to be baptised with the first group of those baptised in 1875 at Békés. He was baptised, with his wife, in May 1876, and after that Tóth became the best friend and

⁴² Olivér Szebeni, *A Baptista Misszió kezdete a Duna-Tisza közén* [The beginnings of Baptist Mission between the rivers Duna and Tisza], *Békehátrók*, 1963, No. 19, p. 6.

⁴³ Gusztáv Szabadi, *Az úttörő baptisták* [The Baptist pioneers], *Békehátrók*, 1963, p. 74.

⁴⁴ László Kiss, *Gyülekezetek keletkezése 1866-1930*, Baptista Levéltár, Nagyvárad, Kézirat [The origins of the Churches 1866-1930] (The Baptist Archive in Nagyvárad, Manuscript).

⁴⁵ Alexa Popovici, *Istoria baptistilor din Romania* [The History of Baptists in Romania] (Chicago: Editura Biserici Baptiste, 1975), Vol. I. pp. 62-63.

closest fellow-worker of Kornya. He was a rich farmer, with a good reputation in his neighbourhood, but after his conversion he was ready to leave everything for the sake of what he saw as the calling to serve God's Kingdom. Mihály Tóth was widely recognised as an excellent preacher and an outstanding teacher. Organising the churches, teaching, helping the new converts to grow, and giving pastoral care were some of his main objectives.⁴⁶ Between 1880 and 1890 he was imprisoned more than ten times simply because he was active in pastoring churches. Even in his home town he was beaten, so that other people could be warned not to follow the Baptist way.⁴⁷ However, this type of persecution appears to have been counter-productive. It made the Baptists even more determined.

Mihály Tóth was also fully involved in erecting the first Hungarian Baptist church building, in 1881, in Nagyszalonta.⁴⁸ He supported this work with his own hands, as one of the builders, and also with a considerable amount of money. Even today, this is one of the most beautiful church buildings to be found among the Hungarian Baptist churches in Transylvania. After being ordained as an elder in 1881, along with Kornya, he started to officiate at baptismal services throughout his 'circuit' and all over Transylvania.⁴⁹ Between 1881 and 1905 Tóth officiated at 179 baptisms and helped between 5,000 and 6,000 people to become Baptist believers – an average of thirty baptisms at each baptismal service.⁵⁰ The impact of these events, at which Tóth preached, was enormous, and these large numbers were a stimulus to and an evidence of significant Baptist growth.

Mihály Kornya – an original preacher and evangelist

Among the peasant prophets who emerged from the church in Nagyszalonta, Mihály Kornya became the most effective minister and evangelist in the history of the Hungarian Baptist movement. He was born in 1844, in Nagyszalonta, the son of a poor farming family. At a young age Mihály became the coachman of György Rozván, a famous lawyer of the region.⁵¹ Mihály Kornya was only twenty-two years old when he married Mária Pataki Zsigó, who was then eighteen years old. Altogether they had seven children, but unfortunately five of them predeceased him. His wife

⁴⁶ Bunaciu: *Istoria Rasparndirii Credintei Baptiste in Romania*, p. 90.

⁴⁷ Kovács, *A Baptista Misszió Kibontakozása Magyarországon*, in *Krisztusért Járván Követségben*, pp. 67-68.

⁴⁸ That was the very first Hungarian Baptist Church building in the whole of Hungary and Transylvania.

⁴⁹ From the beginning the term circuit was used by Baptist in Transylvania - meaning a number of churches that were visited by the same pastor. The term is used in Baptist circles today, having the same meaning.

⁵⁰ Kiss, *Az Erdélyi Magyar Baptista*, p. 33.

⁵¹ Kirner A. Bertalan, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztapostol krónikája* [The chronicles of Mihály Kornya, Baptist Pioneer and Peasant Apostle] (Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 1990), pp. 29-38.

also died in 1890 and he subsequently married Máté Zsuzsánna Tóth from Derecske, a widow who he had baptised eight years earlier.⁵² Like Lajos and Tóth, Kornya was from an ordinary background but his spiritual gifts developed in a remarkable way.

Kornya was not a rich man, but he was careful in his business dealings. He rented land for crops, reared pigs, cows and horses, and soon after his marriage was able to buy a house that the Baptist group later used as a church. Although his education was limited, after his conversion he was highly disciplined in his reading of the Bible, and this was to prove a great advantage in his preaching. Often when he went out to work on the land, he ended up doing nothing but reading the Bible. Here is an example: He was sent by his wife, who appears to have been a strong-minded person, to hoe the corn on their land, but he spent the time reading the Bible instead. In the evening his wife asked: 'are there thorns still on the field?'. He admitted that there were far too many.⁵³

Henrik Mayer soon recognised the spiritual gifts with which Kornya was endowed, and he organised an ordination service for Kornya which was held on 11th November 1877 in Nagyszalonta. Here, for the first time, two Hungarian Baptists, Kornya Mihály and Mihály Tóth, were ordained as deacons. Fritz Oncken and János Rottmayer attended the ordination ceremony, representing the wider Baptist movement. Kornya immediately started his mission and soon, as a result of that ministry, Henrik Meyer was invited to come and officiate at baptismal services in Biharugra, Berettyóújfalu, Darvas and Komádi.⁵⁴ On 9th July 1881, three years after the ordination of Kornya and Tóth as deacons, Henrik Meyer again visited the church in Nagyszalonta, and on this occasion Kornya and Tóth were ordained as elders or baptising ministers.⁵⁵

There were three main periods in Kornya's ministry. The first one was from 1881 to 1893. During this period, for most of the time Kornya was travelling from Nagyszalonta to a variety of places, preaching the Baptist message. It was a remarkable period of Baptist expansion. There were more than 100 localities where Kornya planted new Baptist churches, most of them in County Bihar and County Hajdu. The second period started in 1893, when Kornya moved first to Derecske then to Nagyvárad. That was the hardest period in his life because there were tensions and problems among the Baptist churches he planted and cared for in this region. The question of state recognition divided the churches. This was a very painful

⁵² Kovács: *A Magyar nyelvű Baptista misszió kibontakozása*, p. 65.

⁵³ Kirner, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztpostol krónikája*, p. 47.

⁵⁴ Kovács, *A Magyar nyelvű Baptista misszió kibontakozása*, p. 65.

⁵⁵ Kiss: *Az Erdélyi Magyar Baptisták Története*, p. 24.

and difficult issue for Kornya. The third period started in 1900, the year Kornya moved to Dioszeg. From there, Kornya started a new mission and planted many new Baptist churches in the area of County Bihar and County Szilágyság. This was a very fruitful period in his ministry. Until 1894 he was the only ordained Baptist pastor in Eastern Hungary and Transylvania. Later, after he helped others to become deacons and pastors, he officiated at baptisms only within his own area of ministry. As Bertalan A. Krinir affirms, over the whole course of his ministry Kornya single-handedly baptised more than 11,000 people.⁵⁶

Baptisms in this period were usually conducted out of doors, in rivers, since there were no church buildings and baptistries at the beginning of his ministry. When a baptism was organised and Kornya was invited, a large number of candidates, sometimes from different villages, got together in order to be baptised by Kornya.⁵⁷ He often officiated at baptisms numbering between thirty and fifty candidates. The largest known baptism was in Nagyfalú in 1912, when eighty-four candidates were baptised. What contributed to Kornya's effectiveness? He was an impressive speaker, who knew how to communicate with ordinary people. Sometimes he could be very harsh and condemnatory in his speech, but on the other hand he could express love and kindness in powerful ways. In his preaching he was able to make his listeners both laugh and cry. He was full of creative ideas, which were put into practice in difficult and sometimes seemingly impossible circumstances.⁵⁸ His presence and role in the history of the Hungarian Baptists were crucial, since he started Baptist mission in places where there had never before been any kind of evangelical preaching. Accounts of Kornya's work illustrate his wisdom in dealing with people and also dealing with the authorities in very complex situations.⁵⁹

Kornya was also creative in his methods of evangelism, seeking to find appropriate opportunities to give his testimony and to preach the evangelical message. There are many examples of the ways he approached new locations and people. In one of the villages the local authorities found out that Kornya was coming to preach. They wanted to prevent the meeting happening and they placed the local police at the entrance to the village. Kornya knew that the local authorities wanted to put him in prison and

⁵⁶ Kirner, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztafostol krónikája*, p. 195.

⁵⁷ Kirner counted the hours Kornya would have spent in water in baptising 11,000 people. The result was 366 hours, (15 days), lifting about 550,000 kg. in water. Regarding Kornya's travelling Kirner affirms that he would travel about 20 km per day most of the time walking or by cart. In 40 years he would have travelled 288,000 km, the equivalent of going around the world about six times. See Kirner, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztafostol krónikája*, p. 194.

⁵⁸ Attilla Csofják, *Képek a Magyarországi Baptista Misszió Történetéből* (Budapest: A Magyarországi Baptista Könyvkereskedése, 1928), pp. 14-15.

⁵⁹ Kirner, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztafostol krónikája*, pp. 138-144.

when he reached the village he saw the policemen and asked them: 'May I ask you kindly: Have you seen the man who is going to preach tonight?' They replied: 'No, we are here to stop him'. Kornya replied: 'But I would like to listen to him'. Having had this conversation, Kornya went through without the police suspecting him, delivered the sermon and as usual found that people responded. He left using a different way out of the village, and the police officials waited to no effect.⁶⁰

On another occasion, Kornya opened the door of one of the houses in a village and greeted the lady, who was well known in the village, telling her: 'I was a Reformed Church believer but a lost sinner. Now I am a Baptist who was saved. Would you let me talk about this to the people in the village?' The lady was interested but was, it seems, anxious about whether she would become a focus of unwelcome attention if she sympathised with Baptists. Kornya asked her if she had a small table and a white tablecloth. She did. With her permission, he put the table in the middle of the courtyard belonging to the house, with the tablecloth on top, and laid an open Bible there. The Word of God is going to invite people, he said, and opened the gate. After a short time about twenty people from the village gathered, asking in typical village fashion: why is the gate open and why is the Bible on the table? Then, with their interest aroused and with the lady having relaxed, Kornya opened the Bible and started to preach to the group of people, who gathered around the table.⁶¹ Although the spiritual approach had traditional evangelical elements, it was also creative in its out-working.

Conclusion

Analysing this period of Baptist life in Transylvania, it is clear that Baptist witness emerged largely within a Reformed context. The development of Bible study groups was crucial. The Reformed Church itself saw renewal, but many of the members were looking for a new form of church life. The work of colporteurs who were Baptist by conviction was essential to the establishment of Baptist life in the region. The tens of thousands of Bibles the colporteurs sold each year had a positive impact on the thinking and behaviour of many Hungarian people. The first Hungarian Baptists, like Baptists elsewhere, were firm in asserting, from the Bible, that to be a Christian involves personal faith, followed by baptism.⁶² The work of the first Baptist missionaries was clearly successful. Yet most of them were

⁶⁰ Bunaciu, *Istoria Rasparidrii Credintei Baptiste in Romania*, p. 92.

⁶¹ Kirner, *Kornya Mihály baptista úttörő parasztaapostol krónikája*, p. 84.

⁶² Nigel Wright, *Challenge to Change, A radical agenda for Baptists* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1991), p. 27.

simple people belonging to the lower or lower-middle class. Was this a help or a hindrance to be overcome? Certainly this approach was in contrast to that of the Reformed Church. Without higher qualifications or the kind of theological education that the Reformed Church regarded as essential in its ministers, the peasant prophets of the Hungarian Baptist mission engaged in a great deal of serious Bible study. It seems that a huge impact was created through their evident Bible knowledge, determined faith and spiritual vision. Their connection with the life of the people aided their work. It was their example that helped the conversion of many, and moulded the evangelical spirituality of the communities of Baptists that emerged.

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6

Relationships between Evangelicals and the Orthodox Church in Russia in the Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of Vasilii Pashkov and Konstantin Pobedonostsev

Anna Cheprasova

In 1862 the New Testament was translated into contemporary Russian. The Orthodox Holy Synod declared that ‘the translation into Russian... of the books of the New Testament... and other books of the Holy Scripture is necessary and helpful, but not for use in the church, for which the Slavic text has to remain sacred’.¹ Thousands of volumes of the Gospels were distributed. Having obtained access to the Bible, people started to read and study it, seeking the meaning of the Word of God. This resulted in people changing their lives according to what they had read.² Such movements took place among Orthodox, Molocans and Russian Germans. Gradually more people joined these groups of believers who engaged seriously with the Bible, who were asking uncomfortable questions, and who called others to transformation of individual, communal and religious life. As a result they were considered to be dangerous for the Orthodox Church, labelled as ‘sects’, and persecuted.

This is the background for the growth of the movements of Evangelical Christians in Russia in the later nineteenth century. In the twentieth century they merged with the Baptist movement. In this paper I want to describe the relationship between Evangelical Christians and the Orthodox Church using the example of one of the Evangelical movements which existed in Russia at that time – Pashkovism, and its leader, Vasilii Pashkov. The Orthodox Church will be represented by Konstantin Pobedonostsev – the General Procurator of the Holy Synod, one of the most influential figures in the political and religious life of the Russian Empire between 1880 and 1905. On his advice, both the Church and the State took a stand against evangelicals and Pashkov’s work was ultimately suppressed.

¹ *Istoriya Evangeliskih Hristian-Baptistov v SSSR* [History of Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the USSR], (Moscow: VSEHB, 1989), p. 44.

² The Bible in contemporary Russian was not the only reason for the spiritual renewal. There were other (political and social) factors, and I will refer to some later. I began with the Bible, though, because of my strong belief that this was the major contribution to the process. One of the proofs of my hypothesis would be two observations: Most of the evangelical groups sprang up after 1860; and most of the groups were formed around one or several educated leaders – people who could read the Scriptures.

Although Pashkov and Pobedonostsev appear almost as enemies, they had many things in common: both of them were patriots of Russia; they belonged to the Orthodox Church; and were trying to improve the Russian social and political order. Moreover, they were among the richest aristocrats in Russia, and possessed authority and power being among the closest friends of the Tsar. In this paper I would like to look at how much the relationship between the Orthodox Church in Russia and evangelical Christians depended on the relationships and personalities of very few people – and particularly, Pashkov and Pobedonostsev.

This study consists of three sections. In the first I will describe Russia and the Orthodox Church in the second half of the nineteenth century. This will help in understanding the background for the appearance of a movement such as Pashkovism and the reasons for Pashkov's and Pobedonostsev's confrontation. The second section will examine Pashkov's life, his convictions and ministry. The third chapter will turn to Pobedonostsev seeking an explanation for his actions towards nonconformist movements.

Russia in the second half of the Nineteenth Century

1850 – 1900 were years of intense development of the Russian culture. This period is known as the 'Russian Enlightenment'. Defeat in the Crimean War made it obvious that in order to maintain the status of a powerful state, Russia had to change socially and politically. This resulted in 'Great reforms' and the abolition of serfdom in 1861. Those reforms were considered as an attempt at the Europeanisation of Russia. Changes were made in education and public health, the financial system, army and censorship. However, as E. Heier argues, all those reforms 'though liberal and progressive... were not radical enough... and... reflected clearly the reluctance of the government to abandon its autocratic position or to grant full freedom of conscience and expression'.³

Seeking solutions to the questions and trying to change the existing order, people developed different ideas and several movements appeared. For example, the intelligentsia⁴ was very concerned about the 'total transformation of the Russian state and society' and its major interests were in seeking 'the rights and the good of the people and of the individual... not in the interest of its own class but in the interest of all people'.⁵

The *Populist movement* could serve as a good example of an attempt to transform society. The movement appeared among the intelligentsia in 1873

³ Edmund Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy 1860-1900. Padstockism and Pashkovism*, (Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1970), pp. 2-3.

⁴ Intelligentsia is a term still used in reference to the middle-class of Russian society, represented by teachers, doctors, musicians, etc.

⁵ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 4.

and 1874. The class of intelligentsia in Russia was 'numerically small' but their activities were 'a powerful force shaking the very foundation of Russian society'.⁶ Populists wanted to develop socialism in Russia by means of education among the masses. Thousands of people of different age, status and profession left their jobs and universities and went to rural parts of Russia 'in order to serve people'.⁷

This faith in people, coupled by atheism, which was very popular among the intelligentsia, and 'the cult to sacrifice and suffer for them, to live their life, enlighten them through books and lectures, and thus elevate them to a higher cultural level' has been called 'a unique phenomenon not only among emerging intelligentsia, but also among the aristocracy'.⁸ In the 1860s and 70s many aristocrats attempted to 'repair old wrongs' by preaching the importance of moral perfection. The notion of moral perfection and the liberation of people through education, in some ways resembles Wesleyan striving for holiness which had its roots in both the Enlightenment and Evangelicalism.⁹ Heier sees the 'primary source' of the Russian Populist movement in Evangelical Christianity.¹⁰

The spirit of change also came into the Orthodox Church. In the nineteenth century the Church experienced difficulties. Having received the Bible, as noted above, people started to ask different ethical, social and religious questions and needed answers. Being rigid in its following of (largely) medieval traditions, the Church rejected any possibility of reforms, leaving the spiritual needs of many people unsatisfied.

Different evangelical groups were a natural consequence. Heier wrote,

'...no matter what nature the various religious currents assume, whether it was that of Tolstoi, V. Solov'ev, Dostoevskij, or that of the Evangelical revival which advocated religious freedom with a personal relationship with a personal God, at the base of their origin was the general disillusionment of the age, and lack of faith in the direction taken by the state and the official Orthodox Church of Russia.'¹¹

Some of the 'sects', as they were called, appeared under the influence of European Protestants, particularly groups that were formed around the study of the Bible, which in the countryside were scornfully called 'Stundists'. Among the aristocracy the most prominent of these new groups was Radstockism, so-called after an English Evangelical who visited Russia, Lord Radstock.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁹ Cf. James Wm. McClendon Jr, *Systematic Theology: Witness* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), p. 23.

¹⁰ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 7.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

Whilst analysing Evangelical-Orthodox relationships in this period it is important to understand the reasons for the persecution of the Evangelicals. The belief that every Russian is (at least potentially) an Orthodox was one reason; thus accepting ‘different faiths’ (as other Christian confessions are called) was seen as a great crime.¹² Very close relationships between the Church and the Russian State was another reason to persecute non-Orthodox.¹³ To a certain degree the rigidity of the Orthodox Church was imposed on it by the State in order to ‘prevent the Church from regaining its pre-Petrine [pre-Peter the Great] strength’.¹⁴ This requires explanation. Peter the Great established the Governing Holy Synod having abolished ‘sobornost’¹⁵ or the autonomy of the Church. The Synod was under the Tsar’s authority and had greater power than the Patriarch or the Church Council. The State therefore, was supporting and protecting the Church. The Church in turn was supporting the State by teaching patriotism. Priests even had to inform the police about any political disloyalty of believers, even if this became known through the confessional. Patriarchs swore an oath of loyalty to the Emperor as ‘the head and supreme judge of the Governing Synod’.¹⁶

Pondering over the ‘desolate’ situation in the Orthodox Church at the end of the nineteenth century, A. Neidgart, administrator of the Moscow Synod Office in this period, pointed to the root of the problems. He wrote: ‘The Tsar is not a pastor of the Church. Yet, Peter the Great, seeking to destroy the opposition of some Bishops, along with their opposition, destroyed the Russian Orthodox Church itself, having deprived it of canonical leadership, its legal Saint Bishop and having abolished “sobornost”.’¹⁷ At the same time he argued that state government harmed the Church only because of the authority’s indifference to religion and misunderstanding of the Church’s goals, which he saw as being in fact inseparable from Russia’s goals.¹⁸

Unlike the intelligentsia whose dream was to bring about the transformation of society through the enlightenment of the masses, Russian aristocracy had different visions. They were divided between ‘those desiring a

¹² For more on the problem of proselytism in Russia see John Witte Jr. and Michael Bordeaux (eds.), *Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia: The New Wars for Souls* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1999).

¹³ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 17.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁵ In Russian Orthodox philosophy ‘sobornost’ was understood as ‘the soul of Orthodoxy’. See S. N. Bulgakov, *Pravoslavie: Ocherki Ucheniya Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi* [Orthodoxy: Essays about the Teachings of the Orthodox Church] (Moscow: TERRA, 1991), p.145.

¹⁶ Gleb Yakunin, *Podlinnii Lik Moskovskoi Patriarhii* [The Real Face of the Moscow Patriarchy] (Moscow: 1995) on line at <http://www.rusbaptist.stunda.org/>, accessed 11th March 2008.

¹⁷ M. Danilushkin (ed.), *Istoriya Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi. Novii Patriarshii Period. Tom 1. 1917-1970* [History of the Russian Orthodox Church. New Patriarch Period. Volume 1. 1917-1970] (St. Petersburg: Voskresenie, 1997), p. 745.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 749.

reform within the Orthodox Church, and those seeking salvation outside the bonds of the established creed'.¹⁹ Although many opinion-formers were indifferent to religion, there were many who were seeking the renewal of Russia primarily through the reformation of its religious or spiritual foundations. Those who wanted to work with the Orthodox Church 'were convinced that the religion of Incarnation calls men to freedom, and that membership in the Orthodox Church demands not mere passive obedience to its authority but the full exercise of man's creative and intellectual gifts'.²⁰

Pashkovism, which developed in the 1870s, is a good example of a worldview seeking spiritual renewal. It is worth noticing that the main feature of this movement was a concern 'not only for...personal salvation and for religious and moral problems, but also for the existing social order'.²¹ Pashkovites were Russian aristocrats who were not interested in religion at first but who began to look for solutions to their own spiritual aspirations and the problems that Russia had faced. It is important to see that they existed first of all as an evangelical movement within the Orthodox Church. They became separate only as a result of the persecutions they suffered because the official Church did not recognise their goal: 'the transformation of Russia on a religious and moral basis without adhering to any specific denomination'.²²

The changes that took place in Russian society in the 1860s created a fertile soil that made the appearance of different ways of thinking and of different religious and non-religious movements possible. This led to new movements in the Church, of which Pashkovism was one of the most significant examples. In the next section I will examine the personality of Pashkov, his teaching and his ministry.

Pashkov and Pashkovism

Colonel Vasili Pashkov was a significant figure in the history of the development of the Evangelical and Baptist movements in Russia. He symbolised the beginning of a new epoch in the religious life of Russia, in the later nineteenth century, with St. Petersburg as its centre. His work prepared the way for evangelical teaching and the appearance of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists as an organised movement and denomination.²³

Vasili Pashkov was born in 1831 into the family of a rich Master of Hounds, Alexander Pashkov, his father. His mother was Countess Ekaterina

¹⁹ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 26.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., p. 28.

²² Ibid., p. 29.

²³ M. Karetnikova, 'Pashkov ee Pashkovtsi' [Pashkov and Pashkovites], *Mirt*, N.1,32, (2002), <http://gazeta.mirt.ru/?1-->, accessed 16th October 2008.

Tolstaya. Vasilii received an excellent education and served as an Imperial Guard. By the age of 43 he retired from the rank of Colonel. Pashkov was one of the most educated and wealthiest people in Russia. Being a personal friend of Alexander II he planned to become a Minister of State and had a place in the Imperial Council.

As a young man Pashkov was indifferent to religion, although he was not against Orthodoxy. In one of his letters he wrote: 'Once I was without Christ, foreign to covenants and promises, did not have hope, and drew near to God with my lips only, but my heart was far away from him'.²⁴ This description could be applied to many Russian aristocrats of that time. Pashkov came to an evangelical experience under the influence of Lord Radstock, whose prayer and Bible study meetings became popular among the high society of St. Petersburg in the 1870s. Touched especially by the simple prayers of Radstock, Pashkov came to a point where he gave his life to God and believed that he had received forgiveness of sins:²⁵ 'It was as if a shaft from heaven pierced my chest. I rose up from my knees, ran to my room and gave myself to God.'²⁶ After his conversion Pashkov's life was markedly changed.

Pashkov continued the work started by Lord Radstock and became the leader of a new movement, which came to be named Pashkovism. He gained many followers, who mainly belonged to the aristocracy. The goal of Pashkovites was 'to convert to their faith all the population of Russia under the head of our pious Sovereign Emperor'.²⁷ Yet Pashkov continued to belong to the Orthodox Church and did not try to organise a separate sect. His aim was the moral and religious transformation of all Russia that should start from the Orthodox Church itself and would not be tied to any other denomination.²⁸

One of the most famous Russian writers of that time, N. Leskov, in his reflections on the situation in Russia, did not consider Radstockism (equal to Pashkovism) as a schism. 'Radstock himself does not found any separate doctrine and does not demand anything similar from his followers. ...If there might be, perhaps, one exception, there is no point to speak about that.'²⁹ Another writer, A. Leroy Beaulieu, wrote on the same issue: 'Pashkovites "are living evidence of great tolerance that can be used within ancient Orthodox

²⁴ Sharyl Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasilii Pashkov* (Russian Translation from the English original), (Saint-Peterbugr, Bibliya dlya Vseh, 2005), pp. 32-39.

²⁵ S.N. Savinskii, *Istoriya Russko-Ukrainskogo Baptisma [History of Russian-Ukranian Baptist Movement]* (Odessa: Bobomislie, 1995), <http://www.rusbaptist.stunda.org/>, accessed 10th March 2008.

²⁶ Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasilii Pashkov*, p. 42.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁸ H. Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905-1929* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), p. 17.

²⁹ Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasilii Pashkov*, p. 49.

borders”.³⁰ Pashkovites eventually became a separate movement from Orthodoxy as a result of being associated with and persecuted as Stundists after 1879.³¹

The teaching of Pashkov was marked by the desire to help people ‘to understand the love of Christ beyond our understanding’.³² Pashkov expressed the main points of his faith in a letter to the Rector of St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Archpriest I. Janishev, which was published in 1880 in an Orthodox magazine:

- Man sinned and became unable to receive justification and salvation by means of his deeds.
- Christ by death on the cross saved people and those who believe in Christ are saved.
- Everyone who believes in Christ receives forgiveness and inherits eternal life.
- Repentance is the only requirement for forgiveness.
- Everybody who believes in Christ has a gift of understanding, interpreting and proclaiming the Scripture.
- Good deeds are a necessary consequence of repentance as ‘fruits of faith’, but they do not save people as Christ alone did that.³³

Pashkovites had no official creed or dogma, but they sought the truth of the gospel in the Bible.³⁴ At their prayer meetings they informally celebrated the Eucharist, which was open to everyone. They recognised infant baptism and did not require people to be baptised as adults. However repentance, rebirth and belonging to the fellowship of the church were considered as necessary elements of salvation.³⁵

Proclamation of the Word of God was the main ministry of Pashkov. He opened his house for prayer and study where people of different classes and ages could come together and hear about salvation. Pashkov’s meetings were visited by people of different ethnic groups and denominations as this was not an issue for Pashkov. He was happy that people had an opportunity to follow Christ’s way while denominationally remaining where they were: Lutherans, Orthodox, Stundists, etc.³⁶

³⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

³¹ Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution*, p. 17.

³² Ibid., p. 49.

³³ I. Ianyshv, ‘Religioznie Mneniya g. Pashkova’ [Religious Opinions of Mr. Pashkov], *Tserkovnii Vestnik* [Church’s Messenger] N.13 (1880), reprinted in *Bratskii Vestnik* [Brother’s Messenger], N.2, (1948), p. 69.

³⁴ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 111.

³⁵ *Istoriya Evangeliskih Hristian-Baptistov v SSSR*, p. 87.

³⁶ See also I.M. Randall, ‘Eastern European Baptists and the Evangelical Alliance, 1846-1896’ in S. Corrado and T. Pilli, (eds.), *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007),

Prayer meetings consisted of meaningful prayer, hymns and a sermon, and all this was different from the Orthodox liturgy. People were attracted by prayers not taken from books but spoken from the heart. Hymns and songs were sung altogether, which never happened in Orthodox Churches. Sermons were delivered in plain Russian which everyone could understand. Sermons included reading from the Bible and explanation.³⁷ The meetings were so popular that the great halls of Pashkov's palace could not accommodate all the worshippers; sometimes there were more than 1,500 people gathered.³⁸

Similar meetings took place in more than forty houses of wealthy people in St. Petersburg. Also Pashkov and his followers organised prayer meetings in the poor districts of the city – for poor students, servants, factory workers and others. Some aristocrats (especially women) who were influenced by Pashkovism began to serve their own servants, thus preaching the Gospel to them. Pashkov himself was involved in ministry to the poor in the city and also began to travel further afield.³⁹ His approach was simple: he read the Bible and called on people to ask Christ for forgiveness and begin a new life. Apart from speaking in public, Pashkov spent a lot of time speaking to people personally, visiting hospitals and prisons.

Charity work was an important field in which the Pashkovites worked. Wealthy Pashkovites did not hold on to their money but would spend it for the benefit of those who were poor and in need. Special schools were opened for poor children and orphans, where pupils studied how to read and were trained in different professions, but could also learn about God. Pashkovites opened kitchens for the poor. Sewing groups were organised in order to give poor people a chance to earn money. The products of these sewing coteries were sold at annual bazaars in the house of Countess Liven. Pashkovites performed many other ministries including visitation of hospitals and prisons.⁴⁰ In all their ministries they combined material help with preaching the Gospel.

p. 26. Pashkov developed ecumenical thinking. Friendship, e.g. with Baptists, became possible through Pashkov's literature. Pashkov also supported Baptists financially. Pashkov organised several congresses where the representatives of different Evangelical and Baptist churches were invited. At the congress in April 1884 the participants were arrested and meetings were closed (P.D. Steves, *Russian Baptists 1917-1935. Evangelical Awakening in Russia*, Part 1 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilm International, 1980), pp. 20-21; see also G. Keith Parker, *Baptists in Europe: History and Confessions of Faith* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), p. 151.

³⁷ Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasiliy Pashkov*, pp. 75-82.

³⁸ Karetnikova, 'Pashkov ee Pashkovtsi', n.p.

³⁹ Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasiliy Pashkov*, p. 85.

⁴⁰ Such involvement of Pashkovites in various charity projects reflects their belonging to the Russian-Orthodox culture. Charity work was a necessary element of Orthodox theology. Poor people were considered as special people marked by God - whose poverty was a reflection of their personal unhappiness but not a result of unwillingness to work. Charity work in the Orthodox Church was considered as a symbol of personal contact with people marked by God. E.g. Adele Lindenmeyr, *Poverty Is Not a Vice: Charity, Society, and the State in Imperial Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 67-68.

In 1876 Pashkov and his followers received the consent of the Holy Synod to establish the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading, which published and distributed spiritual literature including Bibles, books for spiritual reading translated from English and German, and writings of some Orthodox authors. One of their most popular volumes was the magazine *Russian Workman* edited by M. Peuker. This magazine for workers existed from 1875 until 1886; its circulation reached 3,000 per month. *Russian Workman* was appreciated by many Orthodox priests, but in 1886 it was prohibited and publication ceased.⁴¹

It is clear that this movement was bringing positive results for Russian society. Moreover, it had many features which were culturally Orthodox. Crucially, Pashkov never planned to leave the Orthodox Church. The whole movement was supported by many Orthodox believers. The question that needs to be answered is – why was a good, obviously Christian movement doing much charity work, ultimately banned? There are several reasons, and as we will see, Konstantin Pobedonostsev himself was one of the major ones. However, he was not the only reason. The fate of Pashkovism, its rise and fall so to speak, was connected to the relationships between four people – Pashkov himself, Pobedonostsev, and two Tsars – Alexander II and Alexander III.

Here I look at the personality of Pashkov, as this will help to find the answer. Pashkov's social status and wealth, coupled with his love for God and Russia, gave him almost unlimited opportunities to preach the Gospel and develop different ministries. His plain sermons, full of personal experience, preached from the heart, were very attractive to people. The spirit of unity among people of different classes and denominations was appreciated by many who attended the prayer meetings. Moreover the generosity and honest desire to help those in need was appreciated. However, Pashkov's status and wealth also resulted in problems. He and his followers were familiar with the Western way of life, but they did not take into account others in the Orthodox Church for whom many things they said and did seemed to be strange. Some Orthodox believers were confused by literal translations of German and English evangelical books.

Pashkovites did not think about the results of their actions. For example, they were giving money to workers and peasants who came to their meetings instead of going to their workplaces. This caused resentment in the Orthodox Church and there was gossip about Pashkovites buying people.⁴²

⁴¹ In my account of Pashkov and his movement I limit myself to enumerating some of their ministries and the ways they were doing things. I do not pay much attention to the results of their work and to how, in my view, the Holy Spirit used those people for the work of the Kingdom. This theme is worth research on its own. Here it will suffice to say that Pashkovites were sincere Christians, who were ready to sacrifice their comfort for the sake of the Church of Christ.

⁴² Corrado, *The Philosophy of Ministry of Colonel Vasily Pashkov*, pp. 179-185.

Similarly, Pashkov did not pay serious attention to the growing opposition from the Orthodox Church. Reading and studying Scripture in a different (from Orthodox) way, Pashkov discovered that for salvation it was not necessary to celebrate the rites of the Orthodox Church. So they stopped attending Orthodox services and rejected icons. This caused misunderstanding amongst workers and servants, some of whom went to such extremes as burning Orthodox icons.

A very important element of the success and freedom that Pashkovites enjoyed depended on one thing. This was neither status nor wealth (although those counted) but was actually Pashkov's good relationships with Tsar Alexander II.⁴³ Gradually, as the Pashkovites began to drift away from the Orthodox Church, this was considered as unfaithfulness and even a threat to the State. As mentioned, the State was supported by the Church through the Church's teaching of patriotism. The result of the growing suspicions about whether the Pashkovites were loyal to the State was that in 1878 Pashkov's meetings were prohibited by the police and 'the church authorities ordered Pashkov and his followers to abandon their erroneous ways and to return to the Orthodox Church'.⁴⁴ In 1884 opposition reached its peak and Pashkov and some of his followers were sent into exile; although through his friends in Russia, Pashkov continued supporting and encouraging them. Later his ministry in St. Petersburg continued under the leadership of Ivan Kargel and then Ivan Prohanov.⁴⁵

The date when Pashkov was exiled was 1884, and this date is crucial to my argument. By this time Alexander III was Tsar of the Russian Empire, and his spiritual and legal teacher was Konstantin Pobedonostsev. In the next section I will look in detail at Pobedonostsev, who was one of the major opponents of Pashkov. Pobedonostsev, as Chair of the Holy Synod of Russia, wanted to suppress the activities of the sectarians, whom he saw as a threat to the Church and the State.⁴⁶

Konstantin Pobedonostsev

'His name for more than a quarter of a century held the attention of his contemporaries... some people praised and blessed him, seeing him as an

⁴³ Once again it is worth mentioning that looking at this relational aspect of the development of the movement, I do not reject the role of the Holy Spirit. Rather I want to point to the fact that some of the serious mistakes that Pashkov and his followers made were often a result of the power they possessed.

⁴⁴ Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy*, p. 112.

⁴⁵ Karetnikova, 'Pashkov ee Pashkovtsi', n.p.

⁴⁶ Parker, *Baptists in Europe*, p. 151.

angel-saviour of Russia, others cursed, thinking he was Russia's bad fairy. Nobody stayed indifferent to him.'⁴⁷

Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev was a famous Russian lawyer and politician. He worked in the Moscow Senate, and was a teacher of Law at Moscow University. He taught Law at the court of the Great Russian Princes and later, as one of the teachers of the Emperor Alexander III, he influenced the Tsar's politics significantly. In 1865 Pobedonostsev became a consultant of the Department of Justice; in 1868 a Senator; and in 1872 a member of the State Council. From 1880 Pobedonostsev held the post of General Procurator of the Holy Synod, through which he very actively participated in the administrative work of the Russian Empire at its highest level.⁴⁸ Pobedonostsev was a famous public speaker and writer, publishing multiple articles and documentaries on History and Jurisprudence.⁴⁹

Pobedonostsev is well-known as an initiator of counter-proposals to the Russian reforms of the 1860-70s. He argued against the adoption of Western economic, political and social models for the transformation of Russian social and political life. In a letter to A. Shahov, the chairman of the Moscow Court, he wrote:

I was protesting against the thoughtless adoption of some forms from the French Codex, which were alien for Russia... Since that time I have become convinced in the validity of my fears, and now it is absolutely clear for me that this is a strange cloth that was put on us and constrained us completely.⁵⁰

His negative reaction towards anything coming from the West could be explained by his belief in the superiority of the Russian Orthodox way. Pobedonostsev was a convinced Orthodox and a passionate patriot of Russia. His worldview is presented in his book *Moscow Album* written in 1896. He criticised Western-European culture for its rationalism and faith in the good nature of human beings. He believed that the factors produced led to grass-roots democracy – 'the great falsehood of our time'.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Those words were published in *Istoricheskii Vestnik* [Historical Messenger] – popular Russian historical scientific magazine of 1880-1917 – after Pobedonostsev's death. See A. Shikman, *Deyateli Otechestvennoi Istorii. Bibliographicheskii Spravochnik* [Doers of National History. Bibliographical guide] (Moscow, 1997), <http://www.hrono.info/>, accessed 20th March 2008.

⁴⁸ Pobedonoscev Konstantin, in *Enciklopedicheskii Slovar Brokgausa ee Evfrona* [Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Brokgaus and Evfrone] *Bibliotekar.ru*, <http://bibliotekar.ru/>, accessed 23rd March 2008.

⁴⁹ V. Fedorov, 'Pobedonoscev Konstantin Petrovich', *Hronos*, <http://www.hrono.info/>, accessed 20th March 2008.

⁵⁰ A. Soloviev, 'K.P. Pobedonostsev ee Politika Kontr-Reform' [K.P. Pobedonostsev and the Politics of Counter-Reforms], *Izvestiya Yralskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, N.25, (2003), <http://www.krotov.info/>, accessed 16th March 2008.

⁵¹ K. Pobedonostsev, 'Velikaya Lozh Nashego Vremeni' [The Great Falsehood of our Time] *Moskovskii Sbornik* [Moscow album] (Moscow: Synodal Typography, 1901), <http://www.wco.ru/biblio/books/pobedonoscev1/Main.htm>, accessed 20th March 2008.

Pobedonostsev was certain that the well-being of society was in some 'natural force of inertness' that is based on human feelings, perception and experience, but not on knowledge. This 'force' produces respect for 'old institutions', which have historical authority. This 'force' connects to faith and affirms the supremacy of the Church and its sacraments. Every nation has its own Church and sacraments. Churches differ, as their sacraments are different, and therefore, as different nations exist so will different Churches. There can be no unity of churches. Every man convinced in his faith, he insisted, 'deems it his duty not only to confess his teaching openly but also, in case of necessity, to impose it forcibly upon others'.⁵² With this reasoning parity between the different churches in a state was impossible. Moreover, from his point of view, the Church and the State could not exist in separation. Thus he considered the Russian context, with its merger of the Orthodox Church and the State, to be ideal.

Pobedonostsev's view of people and the relationship between ethics and faith is very interesting. It sheds light on why he totally rejected Pashkovism with its heavy emphasis on charity, education, and spiritual reform. Pobedonostsev characterised the Russian people as 'left on their own, uneducated... know nothing of faith, [are] full of superstitions, suffering from bad habits'.⁵³ He also saw that the clergy were 'rude, ignorant, inert',⁵⁴ which was the reason for widespread disappointment in the Orthodox Church. But all those negative characteristics Pobedonostsev considered as tolerable (and this is a very important observation) because in spite of them people kept their faith.⁵⁵ Pobedonostsev criticised materialism and positivism from the perspective of Orthodoxy and he thought that the Orthodox faith which Russians 'feel with their soul' contained the truth. Now this shows somehow a mystical understanding of faith, something like a special feeling, rather than a transformed life. And even today many Orthodox believers are not concerned with things that people call 'the evils of society'. This is not essential because people 'have faith'.

During his whole life, Pobedonostsev was fighting against all possible revolutionary movements. In this fight he proposed strengthening the Church by developing clerical education in Russia, and by persecuting nonconformists.⁵⁶ He used his authoritative position in politics and religious circles to achieve his goals. He was trying to destroy any form of nonconformity in Russia and religious nonconformity was one of his major

⁵² K. Pobedonostsev, *Moscow Album*, n.p.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ 'Pobedonoscev Konstantin', in *Enciklopedicheski Slovar Brokgausa ee Vyfrona*, n.p.

⁵⁶ A.Shikman, *Deyateli Otechestvennoi Istoryy. Bibliographicheskii Spravochnik*, n.p.

concerns.⁵⁷ He tried to define certain rules for sectarians and Old Believers and also he wanted to bring the dissidents back to the Orthodox Church through missionary work.⁵⁸

In his article, *Diseases of our Time*, Pobedonostsev addressed the problems of society, arguing that all people's mistakes are caused by a wrong perspective that people acquire, being charmed by something new:

Do not we see the same, for example, in the history of different sects, beginning from Gnostics or Arians, and finishing with Pashkovites... Tolstoy followers or Nihilists? The reason for it is in a person following the impression, accepting a wrong point of view, proving the point to him and thinking that the whole Universe is circling around him, and he seeks the truth about everything and everywhere, and he is indignant with everything and everybody, accuses everything [while] excluding himself [although] with the same sins and passions.... What an odd thing, what a fatal mistake!⁵⁹

Observing the work of different charity organisations and the Pashkovites in particular, Pobedonostsev accused them of being hypocrites who had forgotten love and compassion:

See a meeting where speeches are said... see – o, the top of social hypocrisy! – charity bazaars where [there is] some woman-seller who sacrifices nothing of her own, wearing a costume which costs sometimes not less than is gained from the total sale – and we call it the act of Christian love!..⁶⁰

He worked against the activities of the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading forbidding the publications of works translated from the West, written by Western authors, accusing Pashkovites of 'a lack of taste' and alienation from a Russian context:

What a funny and alien understanding, how artificial all those careless translations, how full of misprints, and tales imbued with affectations, using English names and forms artificially taken from the English way of life! Pity that such affairs are obviously handled by people who are in no way Russian, estranged from Russian life, and unfamiliar with the treasure of our native spiritual literature which people understand.⁶¹

With the spread of the Pashkovite movement in St. Petersburg and its provinces, Pobedonostsev saw a danger for the Russian Empire. He used the

⁵⁷ V. Fedorov, 'Pobedonoscev Konstantin Petrovich', n.p.

⁵⁸ Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution*, p. 21.

⁵⁹ K. Pobedonostsev, 'Bolesni Nashego Vremeni' [Diseases of Our Time], *Moskovskii Sbornik* [Moscow Album] (Moscow: Synodal Typography, 1901), at <http://www.patriotica.ru/>, accessed 21st March 2008.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ S. Corrado, 'The Gospel in Society: Pashkovite Social Outreach in Late Imperial Russia', in S. Corrado and T. Pilli (eds.), *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007), p. 68.

Orthodox Church and the government to fight against Pashkov. He worked in cooperation with local government officials who complained to the Ministry of Internal Affairs that Evangelical Christians challenged the spiritual and social orders of Russia and were a danger to its territorial integrity. Having direct access to the Tsar, Alexander III (on whom Pashkov had no influence!), Pobedonostsev wrote his 'reports' directly to him. In 1880 he wrote a special report to Alexander III where he described the danger of Pashkovism. He also organised special conferences training priests on how to fight against Pashkovites and other Evangelicals and Old Believers.⁶² After the death of Alexander III, Pobedonostsev lost most of his influence. He resigned from his position in 1905 when the new law allowing more freedom (including religious freedom) was introduced.

I have described some of the views of K. Pobedonostsev on state and religion, which does explain some of his actions towards evangelicals. Yet, despite his purely negative role in the history of the evangelical movement, it is clear that Pobedonostsev was a true Orthodox believer and a Russian patriot. Pobedonostsev wanted to improve Russia by means which he considered to be right, particularly, by strengthening the Orthodox Church and Monarchy. Certain positive features of Pashkovism were not positive from his perspective, as in this growing movement he saw a real threat to Orthodoxy and therefore to Russia. His social status, authority, and, most importantly his friendship with the Tsar, gave him multiple opportunities to exercise what he considered to be right. He succeeded in some areas: for example, the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading was closed down, and Pashkov was sent into exile. Yet this was Pobedonostsev's failure as well as his success. By trying to strengthen the State and the Church, he weakened it. The State lost many honest, patriotic and passionate people. As for the Church, it experienced no serious reforms, continuing to rely on State protection and support, thus eventually losing more people, many of whom later supported atheism and communism.

Conclusion

Two people, Pashkov and Pobedonostsev, have been examined in this paper to show the impact of their beliefs, their personalities and their personal relationships on the relationships between Evangelical Christians and the Orthodox Church in Russia in the latter part of the nineteenth century. I have sought to show that the rise and fall of Pashkovism was linked to the power Colonel Pashkov possessed. The Pashkovite movement was able to spread within the Orthodox Church due to the status and wealth that Pashkov and his friends had, and most importantly through Pashkov's close friendship with

⁶² Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution*, pp. 21-22.

Tsar Alexander II. This status and power were helpful in achieving the remarkable results that can be attributed to the Pashkovites. On the other hand, this same power meant that Pashkov and his associates were not always sensitive to those simple people to whom they tried to minister, thus having numerous accusations against him of introducing Western and anti-Orthodox ideas. Pobedonostsev used his power in a similar fashion. As soon as Russia had a new Tsar, Alexander III, who was influenced by Pobedonostsev, Pashkov was exiled.

In both cases we have people with strong convictions, people who acted, as it is said in Russia, 'without looking back', which means doing what they thought was right, and not questioning their actions. In both cases fascination with power and its use worked against a positive outcome. Pashkov's actions strengthened the already common perspective that Evangelicalism was something alien to Russia and Russians. Pobedonostsev, instead of strengthening the Orthodox Church through calling corrupt priests to be accountable for their actions, and through education and missionary work, weakened it by giving the state of affairs unconditional support and by driving out the Evangelicals. The effects of the divide between Evangelicals and the Orthodox Church are still being felt in Russia today.

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7

Between the Wars: Golden Years for Polish Baptists

Zbigniew Wierzychowski

The period between the First and the Second World Wars can be seen as a period of renewal and revival for Polish Baptists. Polish people as a whole found it hard to believe, after the First World War, that Poland had become a free country again. People expressed delight that the dream of freedom had come true, but at the same time there was enormous sadness because of the very large number of lives lost in the war. About 2,000 members of Polish Baptist churches had died.¹ Among Polish evangelicals generally, however, including Baptists, there were hopes for a new spiritual awakening in the country. The result of this was that evangelical churches, in the period after the First World War, made a significant impact on Polish society. Baptist churches were prominent among these, with their desire for mission being an inspiration and example for the other evangelical denominations.

Background

The greatest problem for the Second Polish Republic was integration. The whole of society – the population and the institutions of the three main regions – had to be moulded as far as possible into one nation. There were, in fact, four languages, three legal codes and eighteen registered political parties competing for power in five regions.² Everything had to be built up again from scratch. The task was enormous. Commenting on the issue of religion and ethnicity, Jerzy Kloczowski, in ‘A History of Polish Christianity’, writes: ‘One of the most important problems of the Second Republic, from its very beginning to the very end, was its multinational character: to a great extent nationalities were identified with denominations’.³

The correlation between the ethnic groups and the Christian confessions is striking. A census in 1931 showed the following linguistic

¹ William L. Wagner, *New Move Forward in Europe, Growth Patterns of German Speaking Baptists in Europe* (California: William Carey Library, 1978), p. 113

² Norman Davies, *God's Play Ground*, volume II (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 298.

³ Jerzy Kloczowski, *A History of Polish Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 269.

breakdown: those who spoke Polish formed 68.9 % of the total population, the Ukrainians formed 13.9 %, the Yiddish-speaking Jews 8.7%, the Belarussians 3.1 %, and the Germans 2.3%. Norman Davies notes ‘cultural sensitivities were sharpened by marked economic discrepancies’.⁴ This situation required specific regulation and, as Davies notes, legislation was passed that ‘guaranteed the legal equality and protection by the State of all citizens irrespective of “origin, nationality, language, race, or religion”’.⁵ In the first years of the Republic’s existence, the whole economic system had to be re-established. The Polish Constitution of 17th March 1921 decreed equality and religious freedom for all citizens, but the constitution fell short of the expectations of the minority faiths in the country.⁶ The most important constitutional article defining the status of the Church was article 114, which concerned the legal situation of the Roman Catholic Church and its particular role. It specifically stated that the Roman Catholic Church held the primary place among the legally equal religions and affirmed that it governed itself by its own laws.⁷

The constitutional position helped to maintain such catchphrases as ‘Catholic Poland’ and ‘the Catholic Pole’, which were in operation with varying degrees of intensity throughout the entire interwar period.⁸ The Roman Catholic Church’s influence was reinforced.⁹ Very often in Roman Catholic newspapers negative articles were published about ‘new sects’, with Baptists being portrayed as one of the greatest threats to the nation.¹⁰ Baptists were described as strange, immoral, friends of the Soviets, anti-papal and anti-Church. They were often seen as dangerous to church and state – holding the heretical ideas of the Arians and marked by the revolutionary spirit of the Anabaptists of Munster.¹¹

From time to time religious conflicts between Protestants and Catholics developed into almost full scale war. Germans profaned Catholic churches and stole religious artefacts. These acts of violence, not surprisingly, evoked aggressive feelings. There was a widespread aversion to ‘foreigners’, with people from Prussia and Russia shouted down as

⁴ Davies, *God’s Play Ground*, p. 300.

⁵ Davies, *God’s Play Ground*, p. 298.

⁶ Michał Staszewski, *Wolność Sumienia przed Trybunałem II Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1970).

⁷ ‘such canon law as may be in force at any time is thus recognized by the State in advance as the basis of Church autonomy and self-rule ... The laws of the Roman Catholic Church are recognized, under the terms of the Constitution itself, as laws pertaining to the domain of the State as well. Such is not the case with the laws by which other Churches and religious associations govern themselves.’ Jakub Sawicki, *Historia Stosunku Kościoła do Państwa* (Warszawa, PWN, 1951).

⁸ Adam Piekarski, *The Church in Poland* (Warszawa: Interpress, 1978), p. 62.

⁹ Davies, *God’s Play Ground*, p. 310.

¹⁰ Jerzy Juglarz, *Trochę cyfr*, *Gazeta Kościelna*, 1939, No. 22, pp. 338-339.

¹¹ Józef Dajczak, *Sekty chiljastyczno-judaistyczne*, *Gazeta Kościelna*, 1932, No. 4, p. 39.

infidels. Non-Catholics were seen as non-Polish and were treated as treacherous groups. The partitioning of Poland into Protestant and Orthodox parts only lent support to religious disunity.¹² There were over a dozen Protestant denominations in interwar Poland and in total these represented 'a substantial number of believers, Baptists among them'.¹³

Thus Poland was faced with very difficult challenges after the First World War. It had to establish the fundamental framework for a new socio-governmental system and had to unify a multi-ethnic society with its varied traditions and culture. The complexity of the situation was fuelled by the threat of outside geo-political interference, economic crises, the time that was required to raise the educational level in the country, and a shortage of social help. The socio-economic infrastructure was characterised by backwardness and underdevelopment. It was against this background that Baptists undertook their mission, seeking to play their part in renewal.

Baptist Renewal

The fact that Poland was now a free country had a huge impact on Baptist identity. One of the priorities for Baptist believers was to establish a genuinely Slavic but also multicultural Baptist community. This was greatly needed because of the multiculturalism of the Polish nation. The serious differences which existed between Poles, Russians, Germans and other Slavic minorities living on Polish soil could, Baptists believed, be overcome. But it was one thing to be aware of this challenge; it was another thing to find a solution. Baptists had to travel a long and often painfully sacrificial road. Yet it seems that this unfavourable situation helped to release the potential of members of the hundreds of Baptist churches scattered across the nation. This period of Polish history was in fact characterised by the rapid growth of the Slavic Baptist movement. Why was this?

A crucial factor was that Baptist churches reached out to the surrounding society and this helped in the development of Baptist life. Social help from the Baptist churches was a well-known feature of the period; this help was generally expressed by assistance to the poor, especially to those regions where war destruction had been greatest. Within this outreach, the role of education was significant. Education was used both for strengthening the churches and as a major tool for mission. The opposition that Baptists faced from the Catholic Church did not diminish

¹² Janusz Fałowski, *Protestantyzm na Kresach Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej 1921-1939*, *Myśl Protestacka*, no.2, 2001, pp. 86-87.

¹³ Kloczowski, *A History of Polish Christianity*, pp. 274-275.

the eagerness of the Baptists to play a part in the society around them. Indeed opposition could in fact be counted as another strengthening factor. They were stimulated to show that they could engage in relevant mission within Polish society.¹⁴

To be a member of a Baptist church was not a matter of cultural heritage or ideology; it had a personal effect in which a person's life was changed. Each person was invited to believe in Christ and be converted. It was necessary that a true change of life and of moral behaviour be clearly perceived. In particular there were certain elements seen as crucial when people wished to become members of a Baptist church: personal relationship with Christ, personal witness, including baptism, and a committed Christian lifestyle.

For Baptists the place of the Bible was also central. Scripture became not only a source of nourishment for Christians but also an instrument which Baptists used to extend their influence and to bring about changes in the lives of people outside the Baptist community. For Roman Catholics and for the Orthodox Church, the scriptures were surrounded by a special aura. The Bible was the book of the faith of the Church, read only by a priest or people chosen to do so. In the new era, in which there was talk of a more educated society, there was a fresh interest in reading the Bible. For those coming into contact with Baptists, the Bible became a book that offered life; it became their daily bread. People often called the Baptists 'people of the Bible'.¹⁵ The Word of God which they discovered changed their lives and through them it affected others.¹⁶

Baptists also emphasised the importance of fellowship. The churches practised what they termed 'the priesthood of all believers'. This priesthood applied equally to those who led the church and those who participated. All the members were responsible to serve the Lord and one another. Everyone was encouraged to pray aloud during the services. It was not only a minister who conducted the services; it was not a priest who could read the Bible, but all of them could read and interpret it. Nor were special buildings needed. In the village of Swiecice, for example, a report of 1927 describes how a barn was set aside for spiritual meetings. In the barn some Baptist brothers preached God's Word. There was also a choir, some of the members of which were not members of the Baptist community. In the report it is claimed that there were more people gathered in this barn than usually went to the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches.¹⁷ The

¹⁴ Krzysztof Bednarczyk, *paper on Baptists in Poland*, Archive of Warsaw Baptist Seminary, 1961.

¹⁵ Krzysztof Bednarczyk, *Historia Zborów Baptystów w Polsce do 1939 roku* (Warszawa: Misjodruk, 1997), p. 147.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Report, *Blessed those who are persecuted*, September, 1927, No. 9, p. 5.

fellowship was a powerful attraction. The Baptist churches at that time can best be termed as a 'movement', emphasising the role of the members rather than the idea of an institution.¹⁸

Mission Partnership

During World War I the organised mission work of Baptist churches suffered badly. It was not easy to see how mission could be put on a more organised footing, given the poverty of the people in the Baptists churches, the problem of the various language groups, and the minority status of Baptists.¹⁹ What proved crucial was the help of Baptists from the United States, many of whom showed an interest in mission in Europe, including Poland. Baptist Conventions from the United States were keen to help Polish Baptists by sending personnel and financial support, both of which were lacking in Poland at that time. The people they sent were carefully chosen. There were at least three requirements for a candidate to be appointed as a missionary of a Baptist church. These requirements were based on I Timothy 2:1-18. A candidate 'had to have a spirit of prayer for all people', he was to 'preach the Word of God', and he should 'have a testimony of his own deeds, which meant having clean hands'.²⁰ The emphasis was on spiritual sensitivity, ability and proven character.

Some who had left Poland for America returned to Poland to serve in the Baptist churches. One of these was Karol W. Strzelec, who was born in Russian Poland in 1869. Before going to the USA he led a Polish-Czech group of Baptists in the German Baptist Church in Łódź. They had their own choir, in which Poles and Czechs sang together.²¹ There were a number of Czechs in the small colonies scattered around Żelów near Łódź.²² Strzelec went to the USA in 1893 and from the Polish Baptist Mission in Buffalo, New York, he was recommended to Rochester Theological Seminary in 1894. After five years of study, Strzelec was ordained to the ministry by the First Polish Baptist Church of Buffalo, New York. The first five years of ministry were spent in Detroit, Michigan, and Pound, Wisconsin. During his career he organised four Baptist congregations, welcomed nearly 400 Polish converts into membership, and developed the Polish department of the National Baptist Seminary Theological School. He was also the first Polish Protestant writer on

¹⁸ Konstanty Wiazowski, *Interview*, Wyższe Seminarium Baptystyczne, Warszawa, 20th March 2002.

¹⁹ Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973, third ed.), p. 188.

²⁰ Letter of Waldemar Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, Geschichte Der Deutschen Baptisten in Poland von 1858 - 1945, Von Robert L. Klutting, Im Selbstverlag des Verfassers, translated by Siegmund Karczewski, p. 21.

²¹ Bohdan Jaroszewicz, *Zarys Dziejów Kościoła Baptystów w Polsce* (Warszawa, 1955), p. 107.

²² *Baptyści w Polsce*, Gazeta Kościelna, 1938, p. 813.

religious and social topics in the United States.²³ Strzelec returned to Poland in 1919 and was a pioneer of the Polish mission that was supported by the Northern Baptist Convention.²⁴

One of the American representatives of the Northern Baptist Convention who took an interest in Poland was Dr Lewis. By means of his financial support, a publishing house 'Kompas' (Compass) was set up.²⁵ Strzelec helped with the establishing of 'Kompas'. He was also, like Lewis, committed to social ministry, and helped to collect an amount of money each year that was given to farmers and poor students. His work resulted in 485 scholarships for students, 150 subsistence allowances, and clothes and shoes worth about 600,000 dollars. Baptist churches were able to help 3,874 families and 8,983 single people.²⁶ The Central Committee for Baptist Aid also assisted Baptists and Evangelical Christians with the construction and physical upkeep of buildings. With Strzelec's help one of these buildings was converted into an orphanage.²⁷ In addition, Strzelec, working through sponsorship from the Northern Convention, made it possible to start a Baptist publication, 'Nowe Drogi' (New Way). Strzelec was himself much involved with this newspaper.²⁸ All of these ventures were significant in extending Polish Baptist missional activity.

Another of those who returned to Poland was W. Peretiatko, who graduated in the United States and in 1925 came back to Poland, to Rawa Ruska, a small town in Galicja. He worked among Jewish, Ukrainian and Polish people, and as a result of his work many new churches were established in the eastern region – in Żółkiew, Lwów, Tarnopol and Śniatyń. In some of the villages and small towns notable changes occurred in social life: 'Vodka, stealing and blood sports disappeared and redundant Police offices were closed'.²⁹ Peretiatko was a person of great gentleness and patience, qualities necessary to be able to work with and among the Polish people. His mission was based on encouraging people and showing that each person in the congregation had their individual place in the service of God. He visited church members in their homes, and so came to know all their joys and sorrows. Based on that, he could give advice, teach, and comfort others. His whole life was seen in the wider community as an

²³ Karol W. Strzelec, *The Burning Bush-Trials and Hope of the Polish People* (Chicago: self-published, 1917), p. 34.

²⁴ Bendarczyk, *Historia Zborów Baptystów w Polsce do 1939 roku*, p. 148.

²⁵ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, p. 28.

²⁶ About nine students applied for that course (4 Poles, 2 Ukrainians and 3 Russians), Bendarczyk, *Historia Zborów Baptystów w Polsce do 1939 roku*, p. 153.

²⁷ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, p. 20.

²⁸ Von Robert L. Klutting, *Geschichte Der Deutschen Baptisten in Poland von 1858 - 1945*, Im Selbstverlag des Verfassers, translated by Siegmund Karczewski, pp. 1-21.

²⁹ Bednarczyk, *Prezbiter W. Peretianko*, p. 15.

example to follow, and when he died several thousand people came to his funeral – from different religious groups and from all levels of society, including municipal officials.³⁰ It was through such people that the Baptist churches had an impact.

Americans working in Poland sought to assist various denominational and ethnic groups. Waldemar Gutsche wrote of help given through the Northern Baptist Convention to both Polish Baptists and Evangelical Christian farmers whose business had been damaged during the war.³¹ In Lwow the Baptist mission started to bear fruit when A. Czaplik came from the United States to serve there. Previously Czaplik had been imprisoned, accused of cooperation with the Bolsheviks, and then had been set free following the intervention of an American delegate in Warsaw. After a time of opposition to his work in Lwow from the Roman Catholic Church,³² the Baptist community grew, and services took place in Polish and Ukrainian. However, one of the pastors who followed Czaplik, M. Luty, was accused of showing favouritism to Ukrainian church members. In 1934 the Baptist church in Lwow divided into two churches – Polish and Ukrainian – and a strong witness was weakened.³³ German Baptists in Poland also received help from the United States. A letter to the German Baptist Churches of North America written in 1930 says: ‘If it wasn’t for the help we receive from America, it would be impossible to carry on the work’.³⁴

Support from America was clearly beneficial, but it was also at times problematic. The help received from the USA led to the Baptist community being known in some quarters as ‘a church run by Americans’. Some Poles started to believe that the Baptist churches’ main aim was to receive money. One Roman Catholic newspaper ‘Gazeta Kościelna’ spoke in 1932 of a Baptist called Gitlin, who was described as a Jew from Ukraine, and a citizen of the United States, but who lived in Warsaw. His address was given as ‘Ogrodowa 53’.³⁵ The article, which had a strong anti-Jewish tone, went on to say that people were being shown ‘a few movies to hook them’ and at the end of meetings children were given ‘clothing and candies’.³⁶ An article ‘Baptists and their teaching’, which was written just after the Second World War, put forward a view adopted by many Polish commentators in the interwar period. The article portrayed Baptists as a very dangerous sect.

³⁰ Bednarczyk, *Prezbiter W. Peretianko*, pp 14-17.

³¹ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, p. 6.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁴ N. Donald Miller, *In The Midst Of Wolves* (Oregon: Multnomah Printing, 2000), p. 226.

³⁵ Józef Dajczak, *Sekty chiljastyczno-judaistyczne*, p. 39.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

The author informed the readers that Baptist groups aimed to weaken and ultimately destroy the unity of the nation. According to the article, Baptists were being backed by rich people and were sending their missionaries from America and England. In Poland their desire, allegedly, was to 'compete with the Catholic Church' and they were described as 'the largest sect in Poland'.³⁷ There were both advantages and disadvantages in receiving help from America.

Indigenous Mission

Although there was considerable support from America for Polish Baptists, there was also widespread mission activity which was not the result of American partnership. This was true for both Slavic and German Baptists. World War I ended first in the eastern part of the country, between Russia and Poland. This enabled many people to come back to their native lands in that region and seek to rebuild their lives. Numbers of people became evangelical believers during their deportation or while they were captives during the war. In many cases this happened through encountering Russian Baptists. When they came back, they tried to find congregations to join. They also started to proclaim the Gospel to other people. The hopelessness that many people had experienced meant that they started to look for answers in their lives. The evangelical message had a significant impact, especially on people in the eastern or Orthodox part of Poland.³⁸

Lukasz Dziekuc-Malej was one of those who was committed to encouraging mission on the part of Slavic Baptists in Poland. His background was Greek Orthodox and he embraced the evangelical faith in Bialystok.³⁹ He was sent to work in Brzesc, on the banks of the river Bug, where there was no Baptist church, and he started a youth club, a Christian bookstore and a school. In this region of Poland, called Polesie, people spoke generally in Russian, so it was revolutionary to start a Polish-speaking school. The emphasis was on connecting with society. Brzesc became something of a Baptist centre, and outreach took place in the villages around.⁴⁰ Those who began to attend services were very interested in the Bible but many of them could not read it. Thus the school that was opened offered not only a general education but taught people to read, specifically so that they could read the Bible. People would walk about thirty kilometers to attend a service in Brzesc. It was important for them to

³⁷ Stanisław Bajko, *Baptyści i Ich Nauka*, Poślaniec Serca Jezusowego, 1946, No. 5, p. 145.

³⁸ The reason for that situation can be understood: unlike the Roman Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church did not forbid their members to read the Bible.

³⁹ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, p. 28.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

be part of a fellowship of evangelical believers. In the new church, which was open to new ideas, leaders organised orchestras where members played mandolins, guitars and violins, and they sang in three languages: Russian, Ukrainian and Polish. They also emphasised open prayer, using their various languages in one congregation.⁴¹ As well as Polish literature there was Russian and Ukrainian literature. Russians printed their own monthly paper called 'Majak' (Lighthouse) while Ukrainians published 'Piśnianiec Prawdy'.⁴² Relationships were built across ethnic boundaries.

Through a variety of means small Baptist groups emerged in cities like Białystok, Grodno, Wilno and Równo, and in many small villages. In Galicia the new churches were usually the result of people coming back from deportation. There was also the influence of Austrian soldiers, who came mainly from Czech families. In many places Baptists witnessed in quiet ways.⁴³ In the small villages everybody knew everyone else and the lives of Baptists were observed. This witness in daily life attracted others. In 1924 no less than eighty-nine people were baptised in the little village of Rudka. This Baptist church became a refuge for 'the poor and the homeless'.⁴⁴ In Sochaczew, near Warsaw, Robert Klutting started a work among Jews, proclaiming Jesus Christ as the expected Messiah. The impact was so great, with up to one hundred people attending, that the Police terminated his meetings. Later Klutting became a missionary among Jews.⁴⁵

Revival meetings were also held. Often these revivals were led by travelling preachers. One of these described a typical event in 1925:

... it was dark when we arrived but our sisters and brothers were waiting for us. They welcomed us wholeheartedly. After supper we had been invited to a meeting in a large house. After sermons which I preached in both the Polish and Russian languages we were ready to answer questions asked by both Orthodox believers and Jews, but our time together had to stop because it was midnight. The next day the believers were asked to celebrate the Lord's Supper, which we did, returning to the train station in the afternoon.⁴⁶

Donald Miller wrote about another local revival: 'Not only did the members of the household open their hearts to God, but members of the community as well. Soon revival meetings were held in a nearby school,

⁴¹ Interview with Włodzimierz Jówko, Born in 1909, Nursing Home in Białystok, 06.02.2002.

⁴² *Baptyści w Polsce*, Gazeta Kościelna, 1938, p. 813.

⁴³ Aleksander Huryn, *Dzieje zboru i budowy w Rudce*, Słowo Prawdy, no.11, November 1990, p. 15.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁵ Robert Klutting's experiences among Jews are in Bednarczyk, *Historia Zborów Baptystycznych w Polsce do 1939 roku*, p. 327.

⁴⁶ *Trip Report*, Słowo Prawdy, September 1925, No. 9, p. 61.

and in a short time many people were converted.’⁴⁷ The visiting preachers usually had services in the villages in one of the member’s homes, and led the Sunday School for children.⁴⁸ During the time when the Slavic Baptist congregations in Poland were growing, the Germans also experienced growth. They had their own paper called ‘Der Hausfreund’, published in Łódź.⁴⁹

Donald Miller wrote about the German Baptists in Volhynia:

At that time the church began to grow again. In 1921-1922 they baptized eighty people. In 1923 when Gustav G. Alf’s son visited the area, they baptized another fifty-six. Later, they baptized ninety-five, then another eighty-two. Gradually things got better. One year they baptized 336 people. Membership in the nearby church of Kolowert also began to grow...By the mid-1920s the church in Lucinow had forty preaching stations and thirty-one regular stations.⁵⁰

An enormous contribution was made by women. In December 1922 Polish Baptist women bought a hospital in Łódź and then a house for deaconesses – ‘Tabea’. In 1923 they established the ‘Women’s Association’ and in 1930 the Nurses’ Association. They also edited a songbook in Polish to be used in Bible schools and at youth meetings.⁵¹ Among other social ventures was an Old People’s Home, established in 1918.⁵² A Baptist orphanage, named ‘Bethlehem’, had begun in 1908, and this later grew to accommodate thirty children. After World War I a new orphanage was opened in Brzesc, which remained in existence until World War II.⁵³ The pressing needs of the time meant that mission could not operate simply at the level of verbal proclamation.

Baptism

One powerful aspect of the witness of the Baptist churches was the celebration of the baptism of believers. Nothing else so puzzled the average Polish-Catholic as this specific celebration. Some people saw baptism by immersion as a strange and totally alien ceremony; others were drawn by the personal testimonies of the people who were baptised. A person who

⁴⁷ Miller, *In The Midst Of Wolves*, pp. 182-183.

⁴⁸ Krzysztof Kossarzecki, *Dzieje Baptystów Ostródzkich*, *Słowo Prawdy*, December 1998, No.12, p. 32-34.

⁴⁹ *Baptyści w Polsce*, *Gazeta Kościelna*, 1938, p. 813.

⁵⁰ Miller, *In The Midst Of Wolves*, p. 225.

⁵¹ E. Kupscha, *Geschichte der Baptisten in Polen 1852-1932*, pp. 463-464.

⁵² The Old Age People’s Home was open in Narewka and existed until September 1980 when the new ‘Nursing Home’ was opened in Białystok and people living in Narewka were moved to the new place. The other Old Age People’s Home was started in Łódź, but was smaller.

⁵³ The hospital existed until World War II. During the war the hospital was taken by the Nazis and was never recovered by Baptists.

wanted to be baptised needed to be accepted first by the elders of the local Baptist church and then by the congregation. It was obligatory for the catechumen, who was a teenager or an adult, to stand before the church and give testimony about a change of life.⁵⁴ The procedure regarding children born to families in the churches was that they were blessed, not baptised.⁵⁵ During this period of Baptist growth a contemporary historian wrote that Baptists ‘gathered together at the special meetings. The authorities agreed with them on the matter of conversion and their testimony of Christian living, but disagreed on the topic of baptism and church.’⁵⁶ Baptism was seen as an opportunity to give one’s testimony of faith.

Most of the baptisms took place in lakes and rivers. Sometimes, as Jan Petrasz explained in 1926, ‘we had to walk two kilometers in our bare feet to reach the river, through swamps and with mud reaching our knees’.⁵⁷ Not surprisingly, there were times when baptisms could not take place as planned because of unexpected problems.⁵⁸ The candidates for baptism were dressed in white clothes.⁵⁹ At the baptismal service there was a prayer, a sermon on the meaning of baptism and on receiving the Saviour, and then the baptism. Often during the baptismal service a choir would sing the hymn ‘O cudny dzień’ (Oh Wonderful Day).⁶⁰ After the baptisms, the elders laid hands on the new members of the church, asking for God’s blessings on their new lives.⁶¹ The Lord’s Supper was always observed after the baptisms. Those newly baptised were able to participate for the first time.⁶²

A report in 1925 gives an insight into how a baptismal service could have an impact in a neighbourhood. The report states that:

the next Sunday we were celebrating the baptism of 20 souls who testify that the Holy Spirit is living within them and that they are God’s children. After the morning service when we felt the Spirit of Christ, we went to the water which was about 3 kilometers from our town. On the banks of the river there were about 200 people – all outsiders. The Word of God was preached both in Polish and Russian. The catechumens were

⁵⁴ The last interview with Adam Piasecki, *Słowo Prawdy*, No. 4, 90, pp. 15-17.

⁵⁵ *Chrzest podług Pisma św*, *Słowo Prawdy*, March 1928, No. 3, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Ruta Maksin, *Podzwigniesz fundamenty poprzednich pokoleń*, *Słowo Prawdy*, 1967, No. 10, p. 8.

⁵⁷ Jan Petrasz, *Z pracy misyjnej w Małoposce: Radosne żniwo*, *Słowo Prawdy*, November 1926, No. 11, p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Uroczystość chrztu we wsi Pniówko po, Chełmskiego*, *Słowo Prawdy*, November 1926, No. 11, p. 4.

⁵⁹ *Uroczystość o uczuciach mieszanych*, *Słowo Prawdy*, September 1964, No. 9, pp. 9-12.

⁶⁰ *Uroczystość chrztu w Zbereżu*, *Słowo Prawdy*, September 1927, No. 9, p. 9.

⁶¹ M. Popko, *Jak Pan Bóg usuwa przeszkody w zbudowanie królestwa swojego na ziemi*, *Słowo Prawdy*, November 1926, No. 11, p. 4.

⁶² ‘...A ludzie przychodzili i chrzcili się’, *Słowo Prawdy*, August 1927, No. 8, p. 5.

immersed into the death of Christ. When all 20 people had been baptized, we returned to the house for prayer and singing.⁶³

The celebrations might continue for many hours. The believers normally returned to the church, partook of the Lord's Supper, and often continued singing, praying and preaching – even into the early hours of the morning. Whole villages were shaken by the 'performances' of the Baptists. Both believers and unbelievers were attracted to the services.

Music

Although baptismal services constituted an obvious high point of Polish Baptist life, there were other features that were of great significance. One of these was the use of music in worship. Great efforts were made to make the celebration of worship in the churches spiritually attractive. The aim was to utilise all the different talents of the believers: orchestra, men's choir, soloists, duets, recitation and congregational singing. The members worshipped God together – different ages, languages and cultures. Churches frequently scheduled services to celebrate special anniversaries. Such a celebration at the Łódź church was described as follows:

...this special service started at 4 pm, the sanctuary was full of people. A local pastor, brother M. S. Lesik led the service. The orchestra under the direction of conductor Kowalski performed the hymn 'Czynny badz' (Be Active). After the hymn and prayer of thanksgiving the whole congregation sang 'Zjednoczył dzis ze wszystkich stron Duch Swięty nas przed Boski tron' (Today We Are United by the Holy Spirit Before the Divine Throne). This wonderful song was to emphasize our unity in Christ. All differences of nationality were forgotten. There were about twenty Jewish people in the Baptist church in Łódź.⁶⁴ In our church especially there are many nationalities. But there is 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'. He has made us one.⁶⁵

Later in the article more detail is given:

... as well as the choir and the string orchestra, the programme included songs performed by soloists, duets, and poems were also recited. The Men's choir sang in Polish, Russian and Czech. One of the most beautiful parts of the service was a poem written by our national poet M. Konopnicka 'Przed Sadem' (Before Judgment) recited by brother T. Radomski. There was a violin duet, and after a congregation hymn, a sermon preached by M.S. Lesik, entitled: 'The Purpose and Goal of the Local Christian Church'. Many of the people heard for the first time

⁶³ *Trip Report*, Słowo Prawdy, August 1925, No. 8, p. 53.

⁶⁴ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, p. 31.

⁶⁵ *From the church in Łódź*, Słowo Prawdy, No. 4, April, 1928, p. 6.

what a true living church really is and what its missional task and purpose is. In the last part of the service the voice of the youngest was heard. Parents clearly understood that children also belong to the Lord. Four-year-old Aluz Petreniow sang a solo and seven-year-old Adelcia Burchartówna recited a poem.⁶⁶

This report stresses the mixed nature of the congregation. The men's choir sang in three different languages. At the same time, there was a sense of unity in being Polish, as evidenced by the reference to 'our national poet'. Children as well as adults took part. The whole was intended, as the sermon emphasised, to express the worship of 'a true living church'.

Polish choirs co-operated with German ones after the war. But the German style was somewhat quieter than the Polish style. The Germans emphasised that '...when we come for the service we should come with prayer in our hearts, without a secular spirit. A true service needs special silence and meditation. The Holy Spirit can work only in the quietness of our hearts. Only in a time of silence we can truly worship God.'⁶⁷ Many German songs and hymns were translated into Polish, but there was also a desire for a more explicitly Polish expression of praise. It is this that ultimately prevailed.⁶⁸

Education

At the same time as encouraging musical involvement, Baptist leaders took seriously the challenge of raising educational levels in the congregations. In wider Polish society, education, or lack of it, had a powerful impact on all new institutions like schools, civil services, and churches.

In the educational sphere, daunting problems faced the new authorities. When Polish speakers formed the bulk of the population, and when barely two-thirds of the Polish speakers were officially literate, one arrives at the stark conclusion that literate Poles formed only 44 % of the society as a whole.⁶⁹

For Baptists the need for literature in the Polish language was critical, and in 1925 a Publishing House created the first edition of 'Słowo Prawdy'. It spoke of the destruction which had occurred during World War I and which was still very much in the thoughts and lives of the people. Baptists wanted to face up to the difficult times by speaking out the truth and proclaiming

⁶⁶ *From the church in Łódź*, Słowo Prawdy, No. 4, April, 1928, p. 6.

⁶⁷ *Silent before Service*, Słowo Prawdy, February 1925, No. 1, p. 6.

⁶⁸ Piotr Nazaruk, *Chóralistyka w Kościele Chrześcijan Baptystów w Polsce*, 1997 (Akademia Muzyczna w Warszawie), pp. 28-29.

⁶⁹ Davies, *God's Play Ground*, p. 309.

hope.⁷⁰ Reading ‘Słowo Prawdy’, people could ask themselves, ‘Am I a true Christian?’. Articles very often described the situation of a typical Polish person. However, ‘Słowo Prawdy’ did not target the Roman Catholic Church directly.⁷¹

Three monthly newspapers, ‘Chrześcijanin’, ‘Nowe Drogi’ and ‘Słowo Prawdy’, began publication. In 1926 the printing house called ‘Kompas’ was set up. Later in 1927 the Slavic Union partnered with the Ukrainians and Russians to publish ‘Pislaniec Prawdy’ and ‘Majak’.⁷² Because of the variety of nationalities within and outside the Baptist churches, and the range of languages required, the publication ‘Kompas’ faced many problems.⁷³ To have an impact on Polish society, the publisher tried to cover all necessary language groups. The purpose of the educational ministry was to inform the churches and also share the evangelical message with every person in Poland. It did not matter whether the readers were Poles or Jews, Ukrainians or Germans – as Baptists saw it everyone needed to know Christ and this goal was achievable by using literature in different languages. In 1926 and 1927, at the request of Łukasz Dziekuć-Malej, ‘Kompas’ published the Four Gospels in the Belarussian language. Even the Roman Catholic Church, which rarely commended Baptists, spoke positively about this publication and encouraged people to buy it.⁷⁴

Another aspect of the emphasis on literature was the work of colporteurs. Karol Strzelec co-operated with Waldemar Gutsche, a director of the Tract Society, which had, on its Board, people from a variety of ethnic groups. There were five colporteurs: a Pole, a Ukrainian, a Belarussian, a Czech and a Jew (J. Perelmann). This was a remarkable mix in the Poland of that time. Gutsche wrote about this: ‘In October 1921 I came back from Russia to Łódź where I lived for seven years. At that time in Poland K.W. Strzelec was head of missions, this being possible thanks to help from the Northern Baptist Convention... We visited churches together.’⁷⁵ But sadly this golden age of mission literature slowed down when the Polish government changed the currency and America found itself facing economic depression. Many of the people who worked as colporteurs of literature had to start working with local churches instead of distributing literature.

⁷⁰ *Do Czytelników*, Słowo Prawdy, February 1925, No. 1, p. 1.

⁷¹ Słowo Prawdy, November, 1965, p. 2.

⁷² All of them were gone with World War II except ‘Słowo Prawdy’. ‘Słowo Prawdy’ was reestablished in 1946 and ‘Chrześcijanin’ became an official monthly paper of the Pentecostal Church in Poland.

⁷³ Gutsche, *The Beginning of my work in Poland*, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Education also involved theology. Thanks to the experience of the German Baptist churches, with their seminary in Hamburg, the leaders of the Polish Baptist churches realised that the time had come to organise a theological seminary. A committee was set up in 1921 to organise a seminary. The main planning was done by Karol Władysław Strzelec from the USA, Edward Kupsch, and a former priest, Stefan Bortkiewicz. The students were to study in two languages – Polish and German – and to learn how to work with people and communicate in a proper way with the government of the country. In February and March of 1922 Bible courses were delivered in Warsaw and later that year in Volhynia.⁷⁶

Conclusion

By the time of the Second World War the Polish Baptist community had become the strongest numerically among the various evangelical churches. It was divided between two unions: the Union of the Churches speaking the German language (about 8,000 members) and the Union of Slavic Baptist Churches (about 7,000 members). Together the Baptist movement had around 75 pastors, headquarters in the city of Łódź, a Theological Seminary, a publishing house and five Christian newspapers printed in the German, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian languages.⁷⁷ These were the golden years for Baptists in Poland. Neither before that time nor since have the Baptist churches had that strength of influence on society and on other denominations.

The inter-war period was a time of Baptist renewal and was characterised by many attempts to connect with the wider society. Stress was placed on mission, both through partnership and with local support. Mission was not only a part of the life of the churches, but was central to the Baptist movement. The lives of Baptist believers affected others. Some of the other specific ways in which people were attracted to Baptist churches were baptismal services and musical events. Preachers and pastors who served churches also emphasised education. In order to be effective in mission in Poland, unity was important, but the wider unity of evangelicals proved elusive. Nonetheless, there was a remarkable ethnic diversity in the Slavic Churches, which was in itself a sign of an identity that transcended ethnicity.

Just before the Second World War, the Polish political situation was clearly full of foreboding. The German population in Poland started to turn

⁷⁶ 'Kształcenie teologiczne ...' K. Wiazowski, *Słowo Prawdy*, Warszawa, 2003, p. 8.

⁷⁷ Emil Wagner, *Baptyści i Pokrewne Ugrupowania*, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 39, 24 IX 196. The whole article was reproduced in *Słowo Prawdy*, September, No. 12, 1961, p. 16.

more toward Nazism, the Jews were being persecuted and there were tensions over Ukrainians.⁷⁸ The economic situation in Poland was deteriorating. The Baptist churches had been involved in the difficult period of national reconstruction after the First World War and then had seen their mission work flourish in significant ways. What they did not know was that a great deal of what had been accomplished would be devastated by the War. What was to come, for Polish Baptists and for society as a whole, was worse than anything they had experienced before. Yet the decades considered in this study show what Polish Baptists, at their best, were able to achieve.

Pastor Zbigniew Wierzchowski, Głogów, Poland.

⁷⁸ Norman Davies, *Serce Europy (Heart of Europe)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Polish Edition, 1984), p. 128.

8

Baptist Beginnings in Norway: Preparing the Soil for the Establishment of the First Baptist Church in Porsgrunn/Skien

Alf Olav Kavli

Introduction

Throughout history, changes and new developments has never happened in a vacuum. It has always been a reaction to various processes and pressures either from the outside or from within a country or organisation. The Baptist work in Norway did not ‘just happen’, it started as a result of outside events and because of the influences of others and other movements. In this paper I will show and document how and which of the various spiritual movements and revivals contributed to Baptist work gaining a foothold in Norway.

I will document how the Pietist¹ movement opened the way for the Moravian Brethren,² who influenced Hans Nilsen Hauge who led the ‘Haugian revivals’³ which laid the groundwork for Zionittene and finally for G.A. Lammers’ revivals.⁴ One influenced the other and, I will argue, prepared the way for the other, which finally produced the ‘prepared soil’ for the Baptist work in Norway, beginning in 1857, and the eventual establishment of a local Baptist congregation in Porsgrunn/Skien in 1860. I

¹ Ingulf Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år* [Norway’s Revival History through 1000 years] (Trondhjem: Hermon Forlag, 1994), p. 25.

² Some of the Pietist revival members became involved with the Moravian movement. One of them had previously been a Lutheran Pastor, Gerner i Våler, who led a large revival in Vestfold. After returning from Germany as a result of his expulsion, he joined the Moravians. The Moravians soon grew strong in Norway. They had their own meetings, some with pastors, in Christiania (Oslo), Moss, Drammen, Kongsberg, Sande, Holmestrand, Larvik, Skien, Kristiansand, Lista, Finnøy, Karmøy, Bergen, and Trondheim. They became the spiritual inheritors of Pietism, which was divided into different groups. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³ Hans Nilsen Hauge writes about one of these meetings during one of his travels in Asker (which is a town outside Oslo)... ‘In Asker was a remnant of a religious movement, which I believe a layman had been the originator of, from the beginning he had been a very humble and God fearing man, so when the persecution began in Norway against them, some of them went to Germany, but later returned to Norway. I did not know any of them having a different view than the State religion, outside of their strong desire and strong conviction, their talk about those who had a different view of life and living, and in their serious search and practice of the Scriptures. I talked numerous times with an older person with the name of Christen Ødegaarden, who showed more and more respect towards me....’ Christen Ødegaarden was one of the Zionittene. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴ Professor Stiansen states that this movement was the pioneer in the evangelical renewal in the State Church in the regions where the Zionittene gained power. And was a forerunner to later free church revival movements such as the Lammers movements and the Baptist beginnings.... *Ibid.*, p. 38.

will devote a considerable part of this paper to the preparation of the soil since this is an aspect that is often overlooked.

Influences on Baptist Beginnings

For nearly a thousand years Norway has been a so-called Christian country. About four hundred years ago Lutheranism succeeded Roman Catholicism as the religion of the State. The National Constitution, adopted in 1814, declared in article 2 'that the Evangelical Lutheran Religion' should remain the official State religion of Norway.⁵ In spite of this the nineteenth century was a time of emergence of religious pluralism.⁶ After the 1840s, the Evangelical-Lutheran state church could not recognise itself as the only Norwegian recognised church. The revival movements, the emergence of various evangelical free church organisations and foreign missions work took root after 1814, which changed the Lutheran church from within.

Pietist Influence

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Lutheran Church of Norway had become very committed to 'orthodox' ways in its beliefs and practice.⁷ This intellectual orthodoxy began to 'choke' the life out of the church and the people began to look for alternatives. They desired a more personal experience with God and this is where Pietism played an important part. Within Lutheranism one fruit of the depressed economic and religious conditions following the Peace of Westphalia, was an attempt to bring a vital renewal of practical Christianity.

Pietism represents a reaction against rigid intellectual scholasticism and an effort to return to experience, to holiness and to biblical convictions.

⁵ Astås Reidar, *Kirke Historie del 1* [Church History part 1] (Oslo: Fabritius Forlag, 1974), p. 201.

When the Protestant Reformation began in Germany, Denmark, which had controlled Norway through the Monarchy since 1380, became very interested as the discussions and the interest in the Reformation soon became a people movement. The Kings, beginning in 1523 to 1559, supported the Reformation movement both for political as well as religious reasons. Many of the kings wished for the abolition of the Roman Catholic Church so the Reformation played directly into their hands. Reformation in Denmark became a reality in 1536, when King Kristian 3rd, a Lutheran, put the Catholic Bishops out of the country and replaced them with Lutheran superintendents. The King now became the church's head and protector. In 1537, Peder Palladius came home to Denmark from his studies in Wittenberg with his Ph.D in theology and became the overall supervisor of the Lutheran Churches in Denmark and Norway. On 2nd September 1537, the 'Danish Church Order', signed in Copenhagen, and also legal in Norway, gave the responsibility to teach the Lutheran faith to the superintendents, not the King. Two years later Geble Pedersen, from Denmark, was ordained to be the first superintendent, with his office in Bergen.

⁶ Peder A. Eidberg, *Det folket som kalles Baptister. En undersøkelse av Det Norske Baptistsamfunn bakgrunn, tilgivelse, historie og egenart til jubileet 1902* [The people called Baptist. A research of The Norwegian Baptist Union, background, existence, history and identity for the anniversary of 1902] (ET from Norwegian, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oslo, Stabekk, 1998), p. 13.

⁷ Reidar, *Kirke Historie Del 1*, p. 208.

Valkner states that Pietism is the most attractive ‘Christian type’ we have had.⁸

Kopperun states: ‘While the orthodox pastors taught *about* God to its church members, the pietistic pastors taught the simple and awakening words *from* God’.⁹ Pietism brought two things into focus. In the first place it emphasised a born again experience and resulting Christian life. In the second, this Christian life should be free from sin and the influence of the world from without. Many pastors within the Lutheran Church became affected by Pietism, but as a result met with persecution and often disbarment from their churches by the Bishops.¹⁰

Three results of Pietism left lasting impressions upon Norwegian spiritual life. First, more and more of the Lutheran pastors became aware of pietistic teachings, and various groups were formed. Secondly, Pietism gave inspiration and impetus to missions work, especially in the north of Norway and later to Greenland. Thirdly, uplifting psalms and inspirational literature were published and distributed.¹¹

The Pietistic movement and the influence of the Moravian Brethren in particular made a strong impact on religious life in Norway during the first part of the nineteenth century, as in other parts of Scandinavia.¹² Pietism was focused upon deepening and strengthening the devotional life of people rather than upon correctness of theological definition or liturgical form. It would seem, indeed, that it was the Pietistic tradition pre-eminently which carried on the principle of protest within Protestant Christianity.¹³

It would seem, then, that this experiential element within Reformation churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries should be seen in its essential oneness.

Whether it occurred in England, Scotland, Wales, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia or North America; whether it is linked with a Calvinistic, Lutheran or Arminian

⁸ Diesen, *Norges Vekkelsehistorie gjennom 1000 år*, ET from Norwegian, p. 25.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 27. One such pastor was Henrik Gerner (1731-1738), from Våle, close to Tønsberg. He became the leader of a great revival in the city and surrounding areas. He was strongly attacked by his own Bishop, Nils Dorf of Oslo. He was forced to leave his position and leave Våle. He left Norway and went to Denmark where he joined the Moravians.

¹¹ The most important and best known book was written by Erik Pontoppidan at the behest of King Christian VI. *Explanation* became a teaching book for confirmations for generations. This book has influenced Norwegian Christian thinking in an unusually strong way. It has been translated as recently as 30 years ago.

¹² Erik Ruden, *An outline of Baptist Life on the European Continent* (American Baptist Mission Society, 1963), p. 42.

¹³ F. Earnest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), p. 2.

theology, its main features are always the same.¹⁴ The great Pietists channelled their religious zeal into the creation of a way of life which was in itself intended to be a 'protest against the prevailing conditions in the Church and in society. They were not satisfied to be merely baptized, married and buried in the Church.'¹⁵

Conclusion

As Stoffer states, 'One of the least understood movements in the History of Christianity has undoubtedly been that of Pietism'. It should be reiterated that Pietism truly should be seen as a major reform movement, the influence of which made itself felt in various phases of Protestantism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It remained an important source of whatever religious dynamic was developed by Protestants around the world during and beyond that time. Its four characteristic emphases – on the experiential, the perfectionistic (holiness), biblical, and protest – have to a greater or lesser degree penetrated all of Protestantism, and are still discernible elements in present day Christianity.¹⁶ It is my opinion and assessment, based upon the collected evidence from several scholars, that one cannot conclude anything different in the case of Norway. The presence of this movement was to be highly significant for the emergence of Norwegian Baptist life.

Moravian Influences

The Moravian Brethren gained numerous adherents across Europe and beyond from the 1740s, and separatist groups of people who were religiously awakening appeared in many places.¹⁷ Arnold T. Øhrn states: 'This movement has no ascertainable connection with the Baptists'.¹⁸ This, however, has been disputed by J.C.S. Mason. Moravian piety had in fact great influence.¹⁹ Moravians began their work in Norway in the 1730s.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 23. Note: It would seem that an adequate understanding of this movement must be based upon four characteristics found in all Pietism. In the first place, all Pietists agreed to the fact that the essence of Christianity is to be found in the personally meaningful relationship of the individual to God. A second basic characteristic of historic Pietism is to be found in its religious idealism - perfectionism. The third basic characteristic of Pietism was its biblical emphasis. How are the insights of the Bible to be applied to the problems of daily life. The fourth characteristic of Pietism is intrinsic to many historical movements to the designation of which we add the suffix 'ism'. The 'ism' must assert itself against a dominant pattern. This is the aspect of protest. Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁷ Arnold T. Øhrn, *Baptist Work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden* (Stockholm: Baptistmissionens bokforlag, 1947), p. 51.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁹ The most telling evidence came from the internationally respected and scholarly Danish Pietist, Erik von Pontoppidan (1689 – 1764) a bishop of the Lutheran Church in Norway and, from 1755 until his death in 1764, Principal of the University of Copenhagen. A 'Church Pietist' close to the Danish court, Pontoppidan had originally been one of the most severe critics of Aindendort and the Moravians during

Along with the various pietistic influences on the Norwegian population, we also see Unity of the Brethren influence, especially in the southern part of Norway where Baptist work had its beginning. Two Moravian preachers came to Norway from Herrnhut. One was Nils Mønich and the other Geir Hansen. They were active in several places. In 1739 they organised a society in Christiania (Oslo), in Bergen in 1740, and in Drammen in 1746. Also in Trondheim and surrounding areas there were Moravian influences.²⁰

Four basic notions from the Pietistic and Moravian movements were carried over into most major revival movements in the nineteenth century, namely the stress on personal conversion, biblicism, the gathering in conventicles, and the right for laypersons to participate in teaching and preaching. The Pietistic-Moravian spirit can be traced to a lesser extent through a number of revival movements. Moravians were influential in renewal in Norway. Even though Norway was under the control of Denmark and Sweden for most of its history up to the nineteenth century, Norwegians were able to read various publications and as a result Moravians had an effect upon Norway, as elsewhere. A Moravian leader, A. Spangenberg, said of the movement: 'It made a good impression in Europe'.²¹

As late as 1848 it can be documented that Moravians had a significant influence in Norway. An established Moravian missions institute in Stavanger, in the southern part of Norway, shows how important the influence must have been. We know about this influence not only in Norway but also in the USA. J. T. Hamilton writes about this.²² Stavanger is geographically located approximately 100 miles from

the 1740s. Like many who became Pietist in their thinking, he became an ardent supporter of the Royal Danish Lutheran Missions. Here we can see that Pontoppidan as bishop in Norway was a key link with the Moravians. He was one who for nine years had considerable influence in Norway as a result of his position within the Lutheran Church. The translation of Spangenberg's *Exposition of Christian Doctrine* as taught in the Moravian Brethren, was published in 1779. See J.C.S. Mason, *The Moravian church and the missionary awakening in England 1760 – 1800* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press 2002), p. 17.

²⁰ Øhrn, *Baptist Work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden*, p. 51.

²¹ A. Spangenberg, *Exposition of Christian doctrine as taught in the Protestant Church of the United Brethren* (Germ, 1779), p. 66.

²² He writes about John Frederick Fett, born 1800, near Nuremberg, of Lutheran parents. In 1848 he had been working as a home missionary amongst the Germans in Philadelphia. He was undertaking a tour amongst the German immigrants of the north-western territories, with Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Quincy, Illinois, being the special points of interest. Correspondence had already been exchanged with Andrew M. Iverson, of Milwaukee, a native of Norway, who had learned about the Moravian Church through its *Diaspora* while a student in the missions institute at Stavanger. He was now ministering to a small congregation of Scandinavians in Milwaukee and with them sought the fellowship of the Moravian Church. Fett arrived at Milwaukee in the middle of October, 1849, and found a number of Germans formerly connected with the Moravian Church of Europe. He cordially urged the ordination of Iverson and the reception of his Scandinavians into the Moravian Church. J. Taylor Hamilton, *The History of the church known as the Moravian Church* (New York: Ames Press, 1900), p. 402.

Drammen and Skien, where Frederick Rymker would later establish the first Baptist Church in Norway, again showing through the Moravian influence that the ‘soil was being prepared’ for future Baptist work in the region.

Another clue to the possible connection of the Moravians to the wider church in Europe is seen through the Moravian mission called *Diaspora*. This is one of the most interesting phenomena in modern church history. It was a mission among the state-churches of the Continent of Europe having evangelisation as its object, without thereby severing the ecclesiastical connection of their members.²³ One can see the impact upon the great geographical area where the Moravians were established. The *Diaspora* were present in the following districts: Moravian District III: Denmark, Norway and Sweden – in the towns of Jutland, Copenhagen, Christiania, (Oslo) Drontheim, (Trondheim) Stavanger, Stockholm and Gøtenburg.²⁴ In 1795 the Scandinavian *Diaspora* flourished. Christiania (Oslo) and Drammen in Norway had resident Moravian ministers and other places followed in due course, as noted below.²⁵

Conclusion

Dr Robert Baker states, ‘The zeal and missionary activity of the Moravian Brethren were quite pronounced during the eighteenth century’.²⁶ This degree of activity explains the rapid Moravian growth and great influence the Moravians had upon all the countries in which they established themselves, including Norway. There was a need for renewal in the state churches.²⁷ The Moravians soon grew strong in Norway. They had their own meetings, some with pastors, in Christiania (Oslo), Moss, Drammen, Kongsberg, Sande, Holmestrand, Larvik, Skien, Kristiansand, Lista, Finnøy, Karmøy, Bergen, and Trondheim. They became the spiritual inheritors of the Pietism which was divided into different groups. Moravians provided a very important groundwork for the Hauge revival which would later follow. Thus Bishop Bang states, ‘Wherever true, honest

²³ Edmund de Schweinitz, *The Moravian Manual containing an account of the Moravian Church or Unitas Fratrum* (Bonrovan Publication Office: A.C. & H.T. Clauder, 1869), p. 57.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁵ J. Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church the Renewed Unitas Fratrum 1722 – 1957* (Interprovincial Board of Christian Education Moravian Church of America, 1967), p. 193.

²⁶ Robert A. Baker, *A Summary of Christian History* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), p. 284.

²⁷ Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 419. The essential Reformation message as it was conveyed through the state churches was rather badly suited to the cultural needs and ambitions of most of the lay people who espoused it. So, far from offering additional spiritual comfort, or emancipation from clerical dominion, it reduced the scope of available religious comfort and reassurance, while raising both the professional standards of the clergy and the moral or intellectual demand which they made of the laity.

and live Christianity existed before Hans Nilsen Hauge, it was coloured by the work of the Moravians'.²⁸

Zionittene

With its beginnings in the Moravian groups, another movement began and developed for a brief period in Norway's spiritual history. This movement received the name Zionittene (Zionists), and was based in Drammen.²⁹ It was short lived, but it also made its impact felt. Søren Bølle, a Danish gentleman residing in Norway, was converted mainly due to the influence of the Moravians. He came to Norway after leaving Copenhagen Lutheran Seminary because of the low spiritual and moral life of the students and the pastors. After arriving in Drammen he became aware of the spiritual hunger and need of the people, so he returned to Copenhagen and finished his theological education. When he returned to Drammen, he immediately began to preach the Word of God, with evident results.

Søren Bølle became leader of a group of re-awakened people in the town of Drammen, not far from the capital, and preached in private homes. Bølle left the State Lutheran Church in 1741 to form his own church. He looked upon the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice. In 1742 he started immersing believers and was immersed himself. In July 1742, they baptised by complete emersion eight people in the Drammen river. Other baptisms followed during the year.³⁰ The movement spread to other places, and instances of baptism grew in frequency.³¹ Drammen is one of the towns in which Rymker held meetings when, in 1857, he came from Denmark as a colporteur and began Baptist work in Norway.

The question now became, why would these baptisms in the 1740s not be considered as the beginnings of Baptist work in Norway, since they practised total immersion based upon their faith in Christ? Most historians agree that Baptists were unknown in Norway at this time in history. There were other instances of total immersion performed as well. But there was no organised Baptist denomination. Persecution followed after a short time. Bølle and a number of others were arrested in 1742. Imprisonment, confiscation of property, and persecution of various kinds took place. The

²⁸ Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, ET from Norwegian, p. 41.

²⁹ Eidberg, *Det folk som kalles Baptister. En undersøkelse av Det Norske Baptistsamfunn bakgrunn, tilblivelse, historie og egenart til jubileet 1902*, p. 14.

³⁰ Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, p. 35.

³¹ The revival movement spread east to Oslo and west to Kongsvinger and to many of the smaller cities in between. A members' list written on 1st May 1744 states: 74 adults, 23 children; 43 from Drammen, 36 from Asker, 14 from Kongsberg and 8 from Kristiania (Oslo). Pastor Vogelis wrote at this time to his Bishop in Oslo concerning his diocese in Asker... 'that the number of these 'kjetterske' unbelieving troublemakers grew daily and their troublemaking was becoming worse and worse'. Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, p. 35.

only way to be rid of the ‘problem’ was to seek to banish all the Zionists who were in jail, expelling them from the country. In 1744, forty-eight of them left Norway for Altona near Hamburg, Germany, which at the time was a free town for religious dissenters. The banishment of the leaders from the country, together with the vagaries of fanatical elements in the movement, was too heavy a burden for the movement to survive, and by the end of the century it had become practically extinct. Although most of the leaders were removed some remained and later became influential in Norway.

Conclusion

The Zionittene impact, although brief, set the stage for future changes. Their ardent search of the scriptures led them to practice and teach four basic principles of Baptist identity, which is for me the key to their impact and preparation of the soil for the eventual establishment of the Baptist work in Norway in 1857. These were: new birth with believer’s baptism; a believer’s church; separation of church and state; and the priesthood of all believers.³² We can establish the connection between the Zionittene and the next and maybe the most important movement in Norwegian spiritual history, namely the Haugian Revivals. The founder of the movement Hans Nilsen Hauge wrote fifty years later when in Asker about the Zionittene movement.³³

Hans Nilsen Hauge and the Haugian Revival

Prior to Hans Nilsen Hauge’s entrance onto the spiritual landscape of Norway, the Norwegian spiritual landscape had been changing drastically. Rationalism had its greatest impact. It was during this period when the view was put forward that human intellect should impact all of life, and of course God’s Word especially. When rationalism arrived in the church sanctuary and in theology, it denied the reality, possibility, and necessity of

³² First of all, they proclaimed strongly the necessity of a new birth experience, rejecting infant baptism and practising total immersion based upon their faith in Christ. Secondly, they taught that the local congregation was made up of only the saved. Thirdly, they believed strongly in separation of Church and State. Fourthly, they believed in the biblical concept of the priesthood of the believer and practiced the Lord’s Supper as a symbol and meal of remembrance. All of these are strongly held Baptist beliefs today (Personal Comments).

³³ He wrote: ‘In Asker there was a remnant of a religious movement, which I believe a lay person had been the originator of, since from the beginning he had been a very humble and God fearing man, who when persecution began in Norway against them, some of them went to Germany, but later returned to Norway. I did not know any of them, but recognised differences between them and the State religion, and their strong desire and strength. People talked about them as different in their life and living, and in their serious search and practice of the Scriptures. I talked numerous times with an older person with the name of Cristen Ødegaarden, who showed more and more respect towards me.’ This Cristen Ødegaarden was one of the Zionittene. Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, ET from Norwegian, p. 37.

a spiritual revelation. The result of this way of thinking was evident. A religious apathy spread more and more throughout the land, especially amongst the upper classes, and influenced some of the pastors within the Lutheran Church. Godlessness became more and more prevalent amongst the people.

Before Hans Nilsen Hauge, one could divide the Norwegian people into three groups as far as religious thinking was concerned. First there were the Rationalists, mostly from the upper class. Secondly, there were large groups of church members who were spiritually apathetic. Thirdly, there were individuals and small groups influenced by Pietism/Moravians. Bishop Bang added a fourth group: those that represented Lutheran orthodox or the so called 'dead' orthodoxy. They were more interested in the correctness of their teachings. This external correctness led to the forgetting and de-emphasising of the personal spiritual revelation which guided their Christian life.

It was at such a time that Hans Nilsen Hauge and his movement began. He was born in 1771 in Tune, Østfold, into a farmer's family. From his early life he was very aware of God and his own relationship to Him. He was baptised as an infant and confirmed in the Lutheran Church where he remained a member until his death. When he was 25 years old, something happened that would lead Hauge into his prophetic service to the Norwegian people. On 5th April 1796 Hauge was ploughing the fields. Suddenly he experienced what some would call the 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit', others would maybe call it 'infilling of the Holy Spirit'. It was an experience which filled his heart with an awesome unexplainable love for his fellow men and women. This gave him a strong call to preach about the need for conversion for everyone. This experience became so important for Norwegian Christian life that all historical researchers should see 5th April 1796 as the big turning point in the history of the Norwegian Lutheran Church.³⁴ What is more important in my opinion was the statement by Dr Philos Sverre Nyrborg about this experience and its meaning for Hauge. 'His spiritual experience from 1796 was his beginning of his service, which was renewed several times in his inner man. This call to renewal repeated itself in November 1812 and fall of 1823.'³⁵

From 1797 to 1804 Hauge travelled practically over the whole of Norway. Meetings were held and in every place; revival broke out. Places where he was not able to visit were reached with his books and pamphlets. There were also fellow workers who had received the same call as him.³⁶

³⁴ Diesen, Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år, p. 47.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 48.

As a result of his work and the people's response to his message, revival broke out throughout Norway. As always, strong opposition resulted, mainly from the Lutheran hierarchy. The government had sent out letters stating that all 'unauthorised preachers' should be considered as 'loose cannons'. 'Tukthusloven' (The Silence Law) of 9th August 1799 was meant to stop 'the unauthorised' preachers by either sending them home or putting them into chain gangs. The 'Konventikkelplakaten' law of 1741 forbade preaching by unauthorised preachers.³⁷ In an attempt to stop Hauge, the authorities arrested him in 1804. Nine years later his trial began, and in 1814 he was found guilty. During his imprisonment his health deteriorated and he was never active again as in the first eight years of his ministry. He died on 29th March 1824.

Today Hauge is recognised as one of Norway's greatest and most important men, even by the Lutheran Church which rebuked him. Hauge's connection with the Moravians has been much debated.³⁸ It is right to say that Hauge's preaching was concentrated on conversion, new birth and forgiveness – along the same lines as the Moravian churches. But in addition, Hauge's preaching was very strong in its emphasis that conversion had to bear fruit, evidenced by new life. On this point Hauge was likened by some writers to the older Pietists.³⁹ This was the central point of Hauge's message throughout his remarkable work in Norway. Bang states 'that Haugianism is *sole fide* (faith alone), plus fruits which were the proof of salvation'.⁴⁰

Were there any Free Church elements in Hauge's preaching? The following things could be included. First, his strong emphasis upon personal conversion drew a clear distinction between the lost and saved. Secondly, this caused a split from the ruling Church. Hauge's friendship societies became a separate church-like flock with their own meetings. This

³⁷ Already in 1798 he tells about being beaten three times and thrown in jail three times in a very short period. By the end of 1799 both Hauge and many of his fellow workers were in jail. In 1804 he was arrested and was jailed for ten years. Bishop Peder Hansen was directly responsible when he sent a letter to the King's minister in Copenhagen, attacking Hauge. He was accused of the following: He had held a religious meeting which was illegal according to the law of 1741. He had attacked the rationalistic pastorates of the Lutheran Church. He had led people into a 'religious excess'. Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, p. 50.

³⁸ Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, p. 53. Some maintain that Hauge's preaching was a clear reaction to Rationalism, Orthodoxy and the Moravian movement. But in regard to the last group, is this perhaps only half the truth? Hauge reacted strongly against a pastor called Seeberg close to his home town. Seeberg's background was in the Moravian Brethren and he proclaimed a view which Hauge was against. But in his travelling log Hauge tells of attending a Moravian meeting in Christiansfeld, not far from the German-Danish border. He spent some time with the leaders, and found joy in their company and they in him. Later in his log, Hauge states that he had read some of Zinzendorf's books which agreed with his own understanding and teachings about Christ.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

allowed many Lutherans to leave the church and join them, especially if the pastor was rationalistic. That gave them a reason for leaving the Church and joining the Haugians. If they knew that the pastor was born again, they would work in harmony. The third factor in the Hauge-movement that could point to a free church movement is Hauge's own testament. In his testament Hauge's friendship groups were called congregations: 'vennesamfunnet' (fellowship of friends). Fourthly, the leaders of the friendship groups were called the congregations' elders. The Hauge movement led to a separation between the believing lay people and the official Church.⁴¹

Conclusion

One can sum up Hauge's main emphasis of his preaching at all his meetings as a calling to repentance and conversion. He wrote a total of thirty-three books, reprinted approximately eighty times, and by 1816 a total of 250,000 of his books had been printed and distributed. In addition, lots of letters were mailed to individuals and friends. After his death the movement continued through the distribution of his literature and through co-labourers. Haugian influence caused the Konventikkelplakaten law of 1741 to be cancelled in 1842. One can even put it as dramatically as Brændeland does: 'Hauge's imprisonment led the way to the cancellation of Konventikkelplakaten in 1842. In addition, this change in the law opened the possibility for 'lay preachers' to follow 'Gods inner call' to preach, something the Konventikkelplakaten did not recognise or allow. This of course allowed the Free Church movement to grow and function in freedom.

Only three years later, in 1845, the Hauge-movement received the first 'Dissenterloven' which gave them the right to organise a dissenter's Christian congregation. Again we see the 'soil' being prepared for eventual Baptist work, and distinctives beginning to take root. In conclusion one can establish the fact, as Diesen concludes, that: 'Hans Nielsen Hauge was one of our countries biggest personalities. In Christian circles, he was outstanding in his influence. First of all he was the instrument of Norway's biggest revival, for which many gave thanks, and are thanking God for even today.'⁴²

The Lammers

Finally, of the movements which I am arguing led to the establishment of Baptist work and the Baptist church in Norway, we have the Lammers.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴² Ibid.

Since Skien is the city where a Baptist church was established in 1860, along with a Baptist church in the city of Drammen, it is important that we look at the spiritual atmosphere in this region of Norway. At the same time as the State Church had been affected by Pietism, the Moravians, Zionittene and Hauge revivals throughout the country, a new movement broke out in Drammen which affected the Lutheran State Church from within. The revival did not originally only affect Drammen but also Skien and the surrounding areas. Diesen states: 'It is important to remember that this Free Church movement started right after the Konventikelplakatten was established'.⁴³

In the 1840s Lutheran pastor Gustav Adolph Lammers, senior pastor of Bamble diocese, experienced a conversion from a worldly life. As Lammers went to the pulpit in his new church in Skien, he was a changed man. Immediately waves of revival began to break out over the town of Skien and its surrounding areas. He had a huge effect upon his congregation.⁴⁴

By contrast with the Haugian revival, the new Lammers revival reached into the theological realm. In the capital, Gisle Johnsen, Dean of Theology, became leader of the new movement. Lammers reacted to the practices of the State Church.⁴⁵ Lammers, who had been affected by the spirituality of the Moravians, was impressed by the case for believer's baptism and came to baptistic convictions. Several groups associated with the Moravians and Hauge were involved in collective Bible study and Lammers made links with them. Several 'Lammers' churches were to be formed, but there were tensions over Lammers' attitude to infant baptism.⁴⁶

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 62. In 1848 he was appointed senior pastor of the Lutheran church in Skien. This was the turning point of his life, when he personally decided on a new and different type of life. A new and wholehearted Christian life was beginning. A meeting with Johannes Grossner made a big change in his life, when he became aware of Søren Kirkegaard's writings. New research has revealed that Lammers studied Kirkegaard's writings. Especially, Lammers was touched by a series of pamphlets under the common name *Øyeblikket*. Kirkegaard was very radical in his demand for a genuine truthful Christian life, not only an official State religion.

⁴⁵ The obligatory repentance of sin, with absolution, which was given completely or in part before taking the sacrament of the Eucharist. Openly unbelieving people were able to participate at the altar with the saved. It was completely impossible to exercise church discipline in the State church. The way the church practiced infant baptism, made the church a pillow for the unsaved. In addition one could see different methods of the Lammers movement which led to the Free Church movement. Their use of newly built prayer chapels as their official church sanctuary was one important move. Lammers began to exclude the unsaved from participating in the Lord's Supper. In 1855 Lammers took a trip to Sweden where he became acquainted with the famous evangelist, singer and preacher Oscar Ahnfeldt. It is said the two affected one another more and more in the separatist direction. Ahnfeldt visited Skien many times. Diesen, *Norges Vekkelseshistorie gjennom 1000 år*, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Ian M. Randall, 'Pious Wishes, Baptists and wider renewal movements in nineteenth century Europe', *The Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 7 (2000), p. 316-331. Although he taught that new converts should be immersed upon profession of faith, Lammers did not consider that those who had previously been

Disillusioned by the Lutheran Church, Lammers, on 22nd June 1856, preached his farewell sermon in Skien Lutheran Church. He had come to doubt the views of the Lutheran Church concerning ordination, the administration of the sacraments and church organisation. Lammers concluded that it was best for him to resign. In Skien alone his reputation was without blemish, and he had great influence upon the religious life in the town. On 2nd July 1856, Lammers left the church along with 38 people – ten men and twenty-eight women. They gathered at the pastor's residence and founded 'The Free Apostolic Christian Congregation in Skien'. Lammers was chosen as the congregation's pastor and was installed with prayers and with laying on of hands led by Knudsen, who was previously a member of the Moravians. This, of course, would prepare the 'soil' for future Baptist work in Skien. In the later part of the 1860s and in the 1870s many of the Lammers churches declined. The Baptists benefitted when many Lammers members joined various Baptist Churches.⁴⁷

Baptist Beginnings in Norway

Frederik Ludvig Rymker, the Norwegian Baptist pioneer, was born in Stige, near Odense, in Denmark on 22nd September 1819. He grew up in a strong Christian family. They were poor and, as a result, education was limited. Like many young men of his day, at the age of nineteen he became a merchant mariner which he continued to do until 1846. The ship travelled along the Eastern sea coast of America, from Maine to South Carolina. In 1845, in New York City, Rymker came in contact with members of the First Mariner's Church.⁴⁸ His conversion did not happen in New York as stated by Arnold T. Øhrn in *Baptist Work in Norway* (p. 53), but in a hospital in Charleston, SC. As a result of an accident aboard ship, he was admitted to this hospital where he had his leg amputated. After his recuperation, returning to New York, he made contact with the Mariner's Church. He was baptised and became an active member. In 1848 he was licensed to preach.⁴⁹ Rymker wanted to return to Denmark, and 'The Bethel Union' supported him economically with 100 dollars a year. The money had been donated by a Norwegian, Nils Shobart of Rhode Island. He had additional support from others in New York and from Edinburgh. He

baptised as infants needed to be baptised again. Despite his personal authority, several of his followers came to a different conclusion.

⁴⁷ Eidberg, *Det folk som kalles Baptister. En undersøkelse av Det Norske Baptistsamfunn bakgrunn, tilblivelse, historie og egenart til jubileet 1902*, ET from Norwegian, p. 20.

⁴⁸ This church had its beginning in 1841 when the Baptist Female Bethel Union wanted to start a ministry for the merchant seamen. As a result the Church was constituted in 1843. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁴⁹ He was not ordained until 1852 in Denmark, and later in Norway by the Swedish Baptist Church in Stockholm led by the well known leader Anders Wiberg in 1860. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

returned to Denmark in 1850 as a ‘colporteur missionary’ as he called himself.⁵⁰

In 1852 the Odense Baptist Church was founded and Rymker was appointed its pastor. Conflicts and meagre results might have caused Rymker to look for other fields of service.⁵¹ Later in October, Rymker writes to Wiberg ‘But some of my Brethren wish me to go to Norway, now this is also a question with me if there is any call for me to go there, about which I could ask your opinion’. He continued: ‘There is no question but that Norway should have a good Missionary or that the whole Scandinavian Fields should be taken in, but if I am the man, I doubt much’.⁵²

Arrival in Norway

In 1857, with the support of the American Baptist Publication Society (ABPS), and of Wiberg as the ‘Superintendent of Missionary Colportage’, Rymker became an ABPS worker, which made Rymker report his missions work in Norway through Wiberg. As a result, Wiberg had a meaningful and important influence on the Baptist work in Norway until the 1880s. Rymker left Denmark on 19th September 1857, leaving his family behind in Odense, bound for Christiania (Oslo). During his sea voyage he met Peder Sørensen who was familiar with the Lammers movement in Skien. Four days later he arrived in Skien. He reported back to Wiberg ‘my meeting with Sørensen made me choose Skien instead of Christiania, because in Skien it was said that there was a little unrest concerning the view about baptism.’⁵³

Arriving in Skien, Rymker met and came into contact with quite a few people. Many of them were members of the Lammers Free Church or agreed with Lammers about their faith and Christian practice. Rymker discovered that a large group of people agreed with his Baptist biblical view of baptism and other teachings.⁵⁴

Work in Norway from 1857 to 1860

Rymker’s contact with the Lammers Free Churches in Skien allowed him to be invited to preach there many times. In addition, he visited the surrounding villages of Brevik, Porsgrunn and Langesund. In Langesund,

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ He began correspondence with Wiberg, beginning in May 1856. His supporters in New York suggested he find other places to serve. In his journal of 28th August 1856 he writes ‘received a letter from Putnam, who advises me to choose another field of service, O Lord, show me the place’. Ibid., p. 63.

⁵² Numerous letters and recommendations flow back and forth between the States, Rymker and Wiberg. Wiberg’s wish was that F.O. Nilsson, who was in Minnesota, USA, go to Norway, but Nilsson declined. Ibid., p. 63.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 69.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

on 3rd October 1857, he held his first meeting in businessman Wright's building. Rymker travelled extensively and made personal contact in all the cities he visited.⁵⁵ He was keenly aware of the importance of locating Baptist churches strategically in Norway.

Porsgrunn and Skien became the area of concentration for Baptist mission. It is in Porsgrunn that Rymker met his first opposition from the local Lutheran Church. Meetings were held to speak against the Baptists. Rymker's first year in Norway ended on a happy note when in December he returned to Denmark to get his family. On 28th December they returned to Porsgrunn and there rented a house. He continued to visit the surrounding towns of Skien and Langesund.

1858 was a very difficult year for the Baptists' pioneering work in Norway. First of all the relationship between Lammers Free Churches and the Baptists in Skien became very difficult when Pastor Søren P. Tufte disagreed with Rymker and the Baptists' view of baptism.⁵⁶ Rymker continued to meet opposition.⁵⁷

The family's economic situation grew worse. His support from the USA did not arrive regularly and numerous letters to Wiberg did not solve his problem. Nonexistent results, and evaluation from the Americans and Wiberg, bothered Rymker, especially in 1858. In his quarterly report to ABPS he states that only negative news would be in his report. He was sorry for not having baptised anyone, and that he had hoped to have had the joy of establishing a Baptist church by this time.⁵⁸

However, in November he received help from G. Palmquist from Stockholm who held meetings in various places, which gave results.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71. He continued his travels east towards Christiania, Fredrikstad, Sarpsborg and Moss and on his return to Skien visited Vallø, Langesund, Stathelle and Brevik. In all the places he visited, he made contact with individuals and free church groups where he held meetings. He also made contact with bookstore owners as well as publishers. He wrote to Wiberg 'We need at least 5 Missionaries, one at Christiania, Skien, Stavanger, Bergen and at Trondhjem or Tromsø, may the Lord of the Harvest send us true Labourers'. *Ibid.*, p. 71. One can report that in all of these cities we find a vibrant Baptist work today in 2008; in Oslo alone there are ten Baptist churches (my comments).

⁵⁶ Lammers, who was in the North of Norway, had written a letter to his church in Skien warning them of the Baptists. Later a direct confrontation between Lammers and Rymker took place in June 1858. Lammers visited Rymker and wished to speak to him about baptism and the Lord's Supper. Rymker writes in his journal 'Lammers judged the Baptists as formalists and that it had to be something unclean behind their beliefs'. ET from Norwegian. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁵⁷ In a letter to Wiberg he wrote, after holding a meeting in Larvik one Sunday night: 'In the evening the Bishop of the Diocese held a meeting to discuss the "Baptist wild escapades"'. On Monday, Rymker went to the Bishop and talked with him and concludes "He is no believer; I did not find him as bitter against us as others. He said even that he wished those that were 'sick' and gone out of the Church, to be organised to be Church under my guidance." This was a positive sign and he, in his yearly report, states that in his opinion the first church could possibly be in Larvik since at his meeting here were gathered around 30-40 for each meeting.' ET from Norwegian. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Rymker writes in his journal ‘in the evening Carl Gundersen came and wished to be baptised, which with joy I agreed to do after the Lord’s command, even though it might cost me my freedom or expulsion to Denmark. May the Lord’s will be done, Amen.’⁵⁹

1859 was also a year of similar difficulties, but Rymker’s tenacity and hard work began to bear fruit. More of those he had made contact with in 1858 now wanted to be baptised.⁶⁰ On 19th May, Rymker travelled, together with Jeppe Olsen, a Danish preacher, to Bergen. It was the beginning of a route which included most of the largest towns in the south western part of Norway. It included Stavanger, Kristiansand, Risør, Larvik, Tønsberg, Horten and Christiania, before he came home to Porsgrunn on 18th June. During his travels he made contact with pastors in the Lammers Churches and the Moravian Brethren and was given opportunity to preach. He continued to distribute pamphlets and sold Bibles. In every town he visited, he made thirty home visits each day. As the year 1860 began, the dream of establishing a Baptist Church in Norway was to be realised, and as a result a new face of Baptist work in Scandinavia was begun.⁶¹

Church Planting in Porsgrunn and Larvik

A letter to A. Wiberg in January 1860 was one of the most positive letters written by Rymker during his time in Norway. Even though only nine people had been baptised, he felt it was time to constitute a church, though he personally wondered if it was wise with so few members and without a qualified brother as pastor.⁶² He thought it was correct to be recognised officially as Baptists with a statement of faith. It might hinder the newly baptised to be left ‘free’ or ‘disappear’, or end up in the Lammers Free Churches. In a further letter in February to Wiberg he again mentions the constitution of a Baptist Church.

In April, in another letter, Rymker reports of a trial against him. He had performed baptism and the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper without

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 76. The reason for his fear was that Gundersen was only 18 years old and under the age of accountability and could not take himself out of the State Church. There was no local Baptist church for him to become a member of either. Also, Rymker baptised without having the necessary ordination papers required by the State.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 77. Abraham Pedersen Klovholdt was baptised in a lake next to his house on the 9th February. Sigvald Andersen was baptised in the river outside Porsgrunn on 20th March. The first woman baptised was Ingeborg Kristian Oldsdatter, mother to Carl Gundersen on 30th October. A few days later, on the 6th November, Anders Olsen was baptised. On the 10th Kari Christendatter wanted to be baptised, but her husband did not want Rymker to baptise his wife, but before his eyes, she was baptised. The last who was baptised in 1859 was Tharan Bertine Kristoffersdatter from Porsgrunn which happened on 26th December. After two years of work, seven people had been baptised and one could make the statement that it was minor results. However, it was the groundwork for the establishment of the first Baptist church in Norway which happened in April 1860 in Porsgrunn.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 79.

⁶² Ibid., p. 81.

having ordination papers from the Baptist Union. The Town Sheriff advised him to obtain the required papers, which he got from Julius Købner in Copenhagen (a colleague of Johann Oncken, the Hamburg Baptist leader) and Wiberg in Stockholm, and to organise a church for all the Baptists in the area, and that he himself should be accepted as pastor. He would have total freedom to preach, baptise and serve the Lord's Supper.⁶³

So on 22nd April 1860, in the home of Rymker in Zimmermanngården in Porsgrunn, against the advice of A. Wiberg who wanted them to wait until F.O. Nilsson arrived in Norway, the 'Baptist Congregation of Porsgrunn and Solum' was constituted with eight members.⁶⁴ With this act, the Baptists became more than individuals who had a baptistic faith and conviction; they now received a collective, organisational expression even though it was basic in its format.⁶⁵

Although the first Baptist church was constituted in Porsgrunn and Solum, Skien is recognised and published as the first Baptist church in Norway. There were no new Baptist churches constituted in 1861. The work of the church in Porsgrunn was moved from Porsgrunn to Skien, where they got a permanent meeting place in 'Stuen i Blekedalen', a house owned by Skien's brewery. They changed the name of the church to 'The Baptist Church in Porsgrunn, Solum and Skien'. On 14th July, five people were baptised in Skien and added to the membership. In August F.O. Nilsson from Sweden arrived in Skien and helped Rymker in the work. He stayed six weeks. During his stay, Rymker baptised more people in a few weeks than in the four years of his work in Norway. At the end of the year the Skien church had thirty members.⁶⁶

There were several different phases in Rymker's life and in the life of the Skien church.⁶⁷ Rymker returned to Denmark in 1862. Before his

⁶³ Frithjof Iversen, *Norges Baptister 100 år 1860-1960* [Baptists of Norway, 100 years, 1860 to 1960] (Oslo: Norsk Litteraturselskap, 1960), ET from Norwegian, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Before 22nd April, Rymker had received a letter from Wiberg, that ABPS had decided to stop supporting him and that F.O. Nilsson would replace him. He answers Wiberg and his letter shows his sorrow. He felt humiliated and wonders if this is God's will for him. He asks Wiberg to explain his firing and wonders if he would get paid until Nilsson arrives and if his return trip to Denmark for his family would be covered? At the same time his ordination papers arrive from Købner and other papers and references from Oncken or Wiberg. Eidberg, *Det folket som kalles Baptister. En undersøkelse av Det Norske Baptistsamfunn bakgrunn, tilgivelse, historie og egenart til jubileet 1902*, p. 91.

⁶⁵ The first members of the Porsgrunn and Solum Baptist Church were: Carl Gundersen Køngerød, Abrham Pederen Klovholdt, Sigvald Andersen, Ingeborg Krisitne Oldsdatter, Anders Olsen, Kari Christendatter, Mathilde Lovise Kristine Rymker, and Frederick Ludvig Rymker. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁶⁶ Iversen, *Norges Baptister 100 år 1860-1960*, p. 12.

⁶⁷ A question has been raised as to whether Skien Baptist Church can trace its origins back further than 1872. After some turbulent years, an organisational change took place in the church in 1872 but the church does go back to 1860. Was the change the reorganisation of the church, or did it dissolve, and was a brand new church constituted by previous members? Does the first church end in 1872? Olav Søyland, Porsgrunn, comments, in a note to Peder Eidberg, dated 6th July 1996, concerning the situation in Skien during the 1870s: 'When was the old Baptist Church in Porsgrunn or Solum with its changing names

departure he visited many of the places in Norway he had previously visited. He looked back over his work in Norway and in his journal of January 1862 he stated that ‘he was very disappointed that he had failed to establish work in the surrounding area outside the city of Skien’.⁶⁸ After a lengthy absence from the churches due to his travels Rymker found that his church in Larvik had reduced itself to one or two who attended Sunday meetings. Other meetings were cancelled because no-one came. In Skien and Porsgrunn it was a little better, but Rymker thought the time had come to discontinue his work in Norway.⁶⁹ In the weeks that followed Rymker wrote to his supporters in the USA, England, Sweden, and Denmark about his decision. He sold his house in Larvik and travelled with his family back to Denmark where he died on 23rd January 1884.⁷⁰ Although he felt discouraged, he had been the means of the beginnings of Baptist work in Norway.

Conclusion

Based upon the evidence presented in this paper, one can conclude that changes and new developments never happen in a vacuum. As the ‘soil’ was prepared, it is important to look back and summarise the key events, and see how these movements that have been analysed played an important part in the preparation for the establishment of Baptist work in Norway. First of all, Pietism made a crucial contribution, in my opinion, to the awareness of the Norwegian people that other thoughts and ideas concerning spiritual things were available. People were not spiritually satisfied.

Being baptised as infants, married and buried in the Lutheran Church was no enough. Through Pietism they became aware of the experiential and biblical alternative to the State Church. They were tired of hearing *about* God, but longed to hear *from* God.

Secondly, the Moravians exemplified the importance of personal conversion, the right of the laity to preach and teach biblical authority, their zeal in evangelisation, and their desire for missions, especially among the State Churches – elements that are vigorously held among Baptists even today.

really dissolved and 2 new Baptist churches in Skien constituted. This is something to think about seriously when it concerns Baptist history in Norway. Has it been a historical coup here?’ ET translation from Norwegian, Eidberg, *Det folket som kalles Baptister. En undersøkelse av Det Norske Baptistsamfunn bakgrunn, tilgivelse, historie og egenart til jubileet 1902*, p. 82.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 100.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 101.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 102.

Thirdly, the Zionittene, established through the ardent searching of the Scriptures, along with the Moravians emphasised the importance of a personal conversion based upon faith in Christ. They rejected infant baptism and maintained that the local congregation should consist only of saved people. They established the biblical concept of 'the priesthood of all believers' and saw the Lord's Supper as a memorial meal, breaking with the traditional sacrament administered by the Lutheran Church. Again we see Baptist distinctives emerging.

The Haugian revivals influenced the nation as a whole, whereas the other movements were more local in nature, confining themselves to the southern part of Norway commonly called the 'Bible belt'. This revival was intended to revive the State Lutheran Church; Hauge never left the Church. The 'call' to preach personal conversion and to seek to bear fruit as evidence of conversion were Hauge's main emphases. The people who were affected by the revival formed various groups known as 'vennesamfunnet' (fellowship of friends) which later gave impetus to the Free Church movement. One of the biggest contributions was the abolition of the 'Konventikkelplakaten' in 1842 forbidding lay people to preach and hold religious meetings without the oversight or permission of the Lutheran Church. The 'Dissentersloven' (Dissenters law) in 1845 was enacted, giving rights to dissenters to organise local Christian congregations, again giving life to missions and enabling the establishment of new congregations throughout Norway.

The Lammers churches were a further step, and out of all these movements came the growth of Baptist witness under the leadership of Rymker. He was able to work at a time when there was freedom for the free churches and he established, even though in a small way, the foundation for congregations in Norway that embodied Baptist ecclesiastical distinctives.

Pastor Alf Olav Kavli, MTh Student, IBTS, Prague.

Book Reviews

Frank W. Rinaldi

The Tribe of Dan: The New Connexion of General Baptists 1770-1891: A Study in the Transition from Revival Movement to Established Denomination

Volume 10, Studies in Baptist History and Thought

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008, 264 pp.

We European Baptists have long recognised and lived with the fact that Baptist beginnings, which we celebrate this year, have several foci. The 400th anniversary of the foundation of a General Baptist Church by English exiles in Amsterdam is rightly celebrated amongst us. This denomination, reflecting other free church communities in the Netherlands, adopted a form of believing in the Arminian rather than the Calvinistic theological tradition. The Particular Baptists formed some years later in London, had a Calvinistic theological accent. Part of the genius of European Baptist life is that both theological streams could unite in 1891 in one Baptist Union of Great Britain and be found co-existing side by side in Europe today.

For the General Baptists it was no simple journey from the bakehouse in Amsterdam to the uniting assembly in Burnley, Lancashire. On the way, a major part of them slipped into unitarianism. However, true to our baptistic genes, for other General Baptists the English evangelical revival associated with Wesley became the spark of new life, of revival, mission, growth and upsurge in what became known as the General Baptists of the New Connexion.

Frank Rinaldi has placed us all in his debt by producing a contemporary study of the New Connexion. Your reviewer is especially glad that this study has finally transformed from doctoral thesis to book because it is my 'home communion'.

Rinaldi traces the enthusiasm of the movement focused in the conversion of Dan Taylor, the coal miner. Taylor, under the influence of a Wesleyan 'Class Meeting' was converted at the age of fifteen to an enthusiastic and evangelical belief, but differed from the Methodists, amongst whom he had found faith, on the doctrine of Baptism. Taylor, studying the Bible and living in the Pennine foothills near Halifax, turned to the Particular Baptist, John Fawcett of Hebden Bridge, for believer's baptism. However, the Calvinist Fawcett, though later to be a friend of Taylor's, directed him towards the General Baptists with their Arminian beliefs to find his spiritual home. The hand of God was surely in this as Taylor was used as an instrument both to bring evangelical zeal back to many General Baptist Churches and to found new General Baptist causes

throughout the north and midlands of England. Taylor and his followers encouraged pioneering mission work in the growing cities of the industrial revolution with striking success. In this book we are able to see how revivalism develops and matures into a denomination with ordered ministry, doctrines and practices, a theological college and strong ties of interdependency. However, after more than 120 years, the amazing pioneering work of Dan Taylor and those who succeeded him, became the measured search for common ground with the Particular Baptists through such key figures as John Clifford.

Rinaldi ponders the question of why it took so long for the New Connexion and the more openly evangelical Particular Baptists to come together fully in one Baptist Union. This reviewer is attracted to his notion of intimacy. Inherent to the New Connexion was a strong sense that the leaders in the churches knew one another. They held key elements of their life together – magazine, missions, college – through central funding, but by the 1880s the word ‘Baptist’ had come to be the stronger identifier than ‘General’ or ‘Particular’. Today, within our European Baptist family, both theological streams are present, but for us, too, baptistic identity is more important than one specific theological stream.

This excellent book deserves to be studied carefully for the insights it gives us on the pioneering mission spirit and the desire to evangelise, rather than on spending too much time arguing over fine points of doctrine.

Keith G. Jones, Rector, IBTS

Brian Haymes, Ruth Gouldbourne and Anthony R. Cross
On Being the Church: Revisioning Baptist Identity
Volume 21, Studies in Baptist History and Thought
 Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008, 213 pp.

European Baptists have long needed a contemporary book expressing our identity cogently in thought-through theology. Europeans are still generally reliant on books written in the 1950s to express who we are in classic terms. It will not do for us to describe and reflect today on who we are through the eyes of North American authors only. This is both the joy and the problem of this volume. It is written by three British Baptists who were all formed theologically in our oldest Baptist College at Bristol, England. The book is dedicated with gratitude to that college which was established in 1679. As such, it is in the ‘Bristol tradition’ of sound scholarship and of the mainstream of English Baptist life. The examples used to illustrate Baptist life are drawn mostly from the Baptist Union of Great Britain and, if the eyes of the authors are lifted from that narrow perspective, it is only

to compare and contrast with Baptist life in the USA. As such, it is an Anglo-American product. So, we can certainly see a different 'take' on Baptist ecclesial life, mission and ministry to that pertaining in many parts of the USA, but the present reviewer kept longing for some acknowledgement of the European context. Readers of this *Journal* will find much to please, but will have to wait longer for a truly European-focused offering.

Taking a traditional stand within English Baptist life and thought, the book sets out a classic ecclesiology of the local church, extensively reviews issues of believer's baptism, explores our theology and practice of the Lord's Supper (no language of Communion or Eucharist here), presses the case for the primacy of worship before mission in the believing community and argues for a classic 'structured ministry' of presbyters focusing on the ministry of Word and Sacraments.

The book, as such, offers a helpful counterpoint to the stream of books on the emergent, missional, new monastic and home community assemblies of believers. The model of 'church' is the classic one of the gathered community with appropriate anxieties expressed about Baptists who invest too much in the church as 'buildings'. It does not engage with the current active model of the gathering church as favoured by McClendon, Wright and myself. It argues trenchantly against the pervading spirit of individualism in the case of baptism and in favour of the person being incorporated by baptism into the body of believers.

The book claims to have been co-written, which means it has taken a long time to move from inception to publication, but occasionally lapses into the singular 'I' in the text and it is clear that primary authorship has been assigned by chapters, if only in the way that some chapters are very heavily footnoted and others lightly. Those who know the authors might engage in a textual criticism of the 'H', 'G' and 'C' variety.

The accent on the primacy of worship and the relationship between Bible, baptistery and table is excellent.

There are modest textual errors which would have repaid further sub-editing. For instance, page 43 footnote 91 offers us Earnest (sic) Payne, which may have been true of him, but Ernest was his given name.

Every British Baptist ought to go and buy this immediately. For Europeans, the book is valuable, but not decisive. We must wait longer for a reflective look at our gathering, convictional, intentional and missional ecclesiology, identity, worship, ministry and mission.

Keith G. Jones, Rector, IBTS

Toivo Pilli

Dance or Die: The Shaping of Estonian Baptist Identity under Communism
Volume 37, Studies in Baptist History and Thought

Milton Keynes: Paternoster (in cooperation with the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague), 2008, 295 pp.

This study explores the formation of a communal identity under an intense test which has affected many aspects of the life of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Estonia (UECBE). Part One of the book presents an historical overview of the church-state dynamics and the impact of the political currents upon UECBE from 1945, when Estonia came under the firm and long-lasting grip of the Soviet powers, until 1991 when Estonia again became an independent Republic. Part Two deals with the theological aspects of the UECBE's identity molded during those years, covering themes such as the tension between unity and diversity, Word and Spirit, approaches towards evangelism and mission, and ethical expressions of the UECBE's identity.

As in all of the Soviet Union, Baptists in Estonia had to find the way of a conjoined life with Evangelical Christians and Pentecostals, to whom the Soviet authorities denied a separate existence. In the case of Estonia, the Revivalist Free Churches were also brought into this new body of the UECBE (which, in its own turn, became part of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of the Soviet Union). The reality of tension in finding a common way forward was a key concern of those times and has formed a leitmotif of this study. As Pilli argues, the churches (a great majority of which were often women, though commonly led by male preachers and pastors) had to learn 'a new dance' if they were to survive the 'new times'. The dance had to be danced together by all four traditions and had to be performed subtly if it was to enable the carrying on of the ministries officially prohibited by the authorities, such as opportunities for theological education, evangelism, or work with children and youth. One striking example explored in this book of how such prohibitions had been subverted is the role of singing in making way for such activities.

The author, currently the Rector of Tartu Theological Seminary in Estonia, speaks as an 'insider', relating his personal experience with an impressive amount of primary sources including archival data, *samizdat* (illegally produced and circulated materials) and bits of oral history, now made more widely known outside the Estonian-speaking world. This is an excellent contribution to a limited body of historical studies of churches under Communism. For those who know little about life with the Soviets, this work can be a helpful window into a powerful and authentic testimony of how the church can struggle, learn, survive and grow. For those who

themselves recall the times under Communist pressure, this can be a stimulus to reflect on what that testimony has to say into the here and now, which, though without political oppression of the Soviet style, presents another challenging test to Baptists across post-Communist Europe as they learn a new dance once again.

Lina Andronoviené, IBTS, Prague

Anthony R. Cross and Philip E. Thompson (eds.)

Baptist Sacramentalism (2)

Volume 25, Studies in Baptist History and Thought

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008, 269pp.

This is a collection of fifteen essays by eleven British evangelicals (principally, but not exclusively, Baptist) and four from the USA. They claim to stand broadly within the open evangelical tradition and write out of an Anglo-American context. Here, the authors take the notion of sacrament beyond the confines of the two Gospel sacraments of believer's baptism and the eucharist and explore notions of sacramentalism in penance, sacred space and the Word.

One common feature is the search for dialogue and seeking points of agreement with other Christian world communions, for which the authors are to be applauded. This dialogue extends to 'cousins' such as the Churches of Christ, and more distant family relatives such as the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics. Being Anglo-American in shape and authorship there is a noticeable absence of engaging with the Orthodox churches, which is very important to many, if not a majority, of European Baptists. The essays, inevitably in such a volume, are of mixed interest and quality. As might be expected, there are good offerings from Christopher J. Ellis on the notion of embodied grace, and from Paul S. Fiddes examining afresh the doctrine of *ex opera operato* and suggesting that this understanding affirms for Baptists 'that there needs to be no bridge between the actions of the world and the saving acts of God... the gracious presence of God is there through the act performed'.

Peter J. Morden explores the eucharistic theology of C.H. Spurgeon and the interaction with his spirituality, building on the chapter by Tim Grass and Ian M. Randall in Volume 5 of the series, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought*. He provides further illumination of the depth and breadth of the faith of Spurgeon, who most Baptists think of only as a popular preacher. Communion with God, which Spurgeon generally spoke of as communion with Christ, was at the heart of his faith and life. Though theologically conservative and an exponent of orthodox faith, Morden helps

us to see the importance to Spurgeon of a deep spiritual relationship with God in the Lord's Supper, in prayer, in meditation, and in reading spiritual classics. Spurgeon can thus be placed in juxtaposition to the 'mere memorialism' of a John Clifford. Strange it seems that British Baptists took more from Clifford than Spurgeon in the last century regarding the Lord's Supper, though we might rejoice, as this volume testifies, that a better appreciation of the sacramental realities of faith belong to this present time.

The general editors of this series are to be commended for publishing a second volume on Baptist Sacramentalism. We might hope in the future for a further volume which deals with these themes amongst mainland Europeans.

Keith G. Jones, Rector, IBTS

Mark Smith (ed.)

British Evangelical Identities Past and Present Volume 1: Aspects of the History and Sociology of Evangelicalism in Britain and Ireland

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008, 280 pp.

This volume, to be followed by a second more theological investigation, contains sixteen very diverse contributions, plus an illuminating introduction from the editor and an afterword from the well-known Baptist theologian Derek J. Tidball. The essays cover, as the title suggests, Evangelical history in Britain and Ireland, and some current aspects of Evangelical life in Britain today.

Of particular interest to Baptist readers will be Brian Talbot's fascinating account of Jonathan Watson, Francis Johnston and James Paterson, three leading figures in the establishment of the Scottish Baptist Union, David Bebbington's essay on Evangelicalism and Culture and Ian Randall's essay on Evangelical spirituality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But this is not to suggest that the other essays in the volume will not repay careful reading.

One of the great strengths of the book is that it really does cover all of Britain. Andrew Holmes' essay on Evangelical identity in Northern Ireland is an excellent and informative study of a complex topic. David Killingray's contribution on early Black Evangelicals in Britain is another very important piece. The essays by Rachel Jordan and Kristin Aune on, respectively, the impact of marriage on women's ministry in the early twentieth century and on understandings of masculinity in the house church movement are illuminating.

As is the case with multi-author works, this book cannot present a unified vision. But it is perhaps precisely the point to show that there is a great diversity in British and Irish Evangelicalism – hence the word ‘Identities’ in the title – which should not be ignored, whilst at the same time there is a sort of family resemblance.

Mark Smith’s introduction sets the scene very well, and Derek Tidball’s Evangelical afterword (entitled ‘What’s right with Evangelicalism?’) is a reminder of what these identities have brought to the living out of the Christian faith in the United Kingdom over the past couple of centuries.

Tim Noble, IBTS, Prague

John Collier (ed.)

Toddlers to the Kingdom: Child Theology at work in the church

CTM, London, 2009, 256 pp.

Contributors: Marcia Bunge, John Collier, John Gilbert, Bill Prevette, Carlos Quieroz, Arioaldo Ramos, John Wall, Keith White, Haddon Willmer

Toddlers to the Kingdom engages the reader in a discussion of what does it mean to place a child in the midst of theological issues raised in the church and society in particular contexts around the globe. John Collier has collected key contributions which were offered at Child Theology Movement (CTM) consultations over the last six years and has compiled them into this concise work introducing Child Theology and considering attitudes and approaches to it.

The CTM consultations were organised in several locations, including Malaysia, Brazil, South Africa and Prague, with the objective of bringing together theologies from differing contexts to discuss, compare and learn from each other as to how Child Theology is addressed and worked out in particular communities.

Smaller reports have been produced from these consultations, but this is the first substantial piece of work emerging from the Child Theology Movement.

Part One gives a clear introduction to the book as well as to the approach which the Child Theology Movement takes when theologising with children. This section includes essential information for those who are novices in the world of Child Theology by clarifying from where Child Theology has developed, what it is and what it is not.

Chapters six to ten make up Part Two, which gives a face to the ‘child’ in Child Theology by recounting stories told by consultation

participants of their own childhood experiences as well stories from children with whom they work and know. From these accounts, questions and issues emerge which directly relate to the culture in which these children are being raised and often point to the oppression that children face whether purposeful or not.

The largest section of the book, Part Three, looks to developing a Christian response to the oppression of children around the world, coupling this with doing theology with the 'child in the midst'. These chapters are educating and informing the reader as to how this can be done in very practical ways, walking through some basic teachings of scripture, relating these to the child's context and vice versa, discusses basic needs of any child, and how scripture encourages and insists on involvement.

The fourth and final part carries with it a strong international tone. These chapters are specific reflections and responses from CTM participants, who relay examples of how they have appropriated Child Theology in the specific contexts of their churches and communities. The objective of this last part is to motivate the reader to do more research and further work into his or her own area of interest in light of Child Theology.

Overall, *Toddling to the Kingdom* is a strategic book to initiate the reader into today's conversations of what is taking place in Child Theology and is fresh enough to welcome new voices into the discussion.

Vanessa Lake, IBTS, Prague