EASTERN ORTHODOX INFLUENCE ON RUSSIAN EVANGELICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

by

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I declare that
EASTERN ORTHODOX INFLUENCE ON RUSSIAN EVANGELICAL ECCLESIOLOGY is my
own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and
acknowledged by means of complete references.

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EASTERN ORTHODOX INFLUENCE ON RUSSIAN EVANGELICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

Summary:

The identity of Russian Evangelical Churches theology is considered in this thesis. This identity arose as result of interactions of Western Evangelical movements with the Orthodox Church, and with native pre-Protestant groups. The separate area of theology chosen as the subject of research is ecclesiology. The historical background of the appearance of inner-orthodox movements is shown in this work in order to understand the theological peculiarities. Peculiarities of the orthodox and extra-orthodox mentality also are considered, as they become an important environment for the appearance and development of Evangelical theology in Russia. The last part of this work shows peculiarities of recent Evangelical ecclesiology.

Key terms:

Ecclesiology; Church Structure; Sacraments; Theosis; Russian baptist movement; Evangelical Christians; Orthodoxy; Old Russian Sects; Spiritual Christianity; Stunde; Evangelical movement; Hesychasm; Mysticism.
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Chapter 1

Methodology

1.1 Importance of the Theme

The theme of the interaction of various theological movements is very important for Russia in the present situation. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Russia has met with theological movements, which evolved in completely different cultural environments.

There are tendencies to an uncritical perception of these theological systems or their separate elements in modern Russia. As a result, newly appearing religious formations have problems with suitability to real life, and with an internal dissatisfaction of the followers of these movements.

On the other hand, voices are calling audibly to be cleared “from foreign influence” and to return to the “Old Patriarchal Past”. The possibility of such historical recourse looks very doubtful to the author of this work. The picture of the past created by such propagandists is greatly simplified. In the religious sense, this view is reduced to the state-legalized domination of Orthodoxy and the elimination of any external influences or inner-orthodox movements. But such simplification does not take into account all the richness of religious life in Russia for the many years of its Christian history. These proponents of returning to the past do not mention the existence of plenty of religious movements in the territory of Russia and the Russian Empire, which can not be entered in a framework of “traditional Orthodoxy” (if such a term is possible in general).
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From the very beginning of its existence the Russian Orthodox Church was represented not by a theological homogeneous creed, but by a whole set of various religious-philosophical directions. There was a large struggle between pro-Byzantine and national movements. There was a certain intensity in interaction between mystical and rational poles of Orthodoxy. Some movements demanded changes in church hierarchy (strigolniks and ‘judaistics’). Some of these movements remained within the framework of the existing Church, others were excluded from it. Disagreements inside the Orthodox Church have come to light in the period of Nikon’s schism (17th century). After the schism the number of movements leaving the Orthodox Church increased. The important component of this motley picture is represented by the movements, which have arisen through active interaction with western creeds.

Close consideration of the history and ways of interaction between various theological movements helps to generate the correct attitude toward a modern situation. It will be shown in this work, that non-destructive interaction of various theological systems can result in their mutual enrichment (in issues, in which they have a common understanding) and enhancement (in areas specific to each confession). The occurrence and development of evangelical movements in the territory of the Russian Empire will be considered as an example of such interactions.

On the other hand, the uncritical perception of the separate elements of the theological system appears very often. The author of this work is convinced, that movements, which met counter tendencies in the appropriate culture, or which have answers to the questions which are non-answerable in the framework of the existing theological systems are successful in their distribution and are the most viable. Thus, there is a mutual enrichment (in the case of counter tendencies), or enhancement (in the case of non-answerable questions).
1.2 The Basic Approach

Interactions of Western Evangelical movements with the Orthodox Church, and with native pre-Protestant groups will be considered in this work. The particular area of theology chosen as the subject of research is ecclesiology. The features inherent to the Eastern Orthodox Church and to Western Evangelicals could be shown in this area.

Russian Evangelical Churches have apprehended the general theological outline of traditional Western Protestant Churches. Such theological concepts, as 'priesthood of all believers', 'salvation by faith alone' were the important elements in the self-determination of Evangelical movements in an Orthodox society. But the followers of these movements renew the meaning of these concepts. They displaced the theological accents. The important reason for this displacement of emphases was the retention of orthodox perception. Beside this, such perception has become an element of culture that also influenced the development of the theology of Evangelical Churches.

This displacement of accents is showed in a more mystical perception of the sacraments, a more important role of church structure, the special role of the priesthood in Russian Evangelical Churches and other aspects of ecclesiology. Such features show themselves not in official confessional formulations, but more often in existing practice.

The historical background of the appearance of inner-orthodox movements will be shown in this work in order to understand the theological peculiarities. Peculiarities of the extra-orthodox movements also will be considered, as they become an important environment for the appearance and development of Evangelical theology in Russia.

1.3 Existing Research

There are problems with a reproduction of an exact history Russian Evangelical movements. The basic problem is the tendentiousness of the majority of research coterminous
with the movements.

Basically these studies were propounded by Orthodox missionary and government officials, which were interested in emphasizing the destructive side of arising movements. The tendency to attribute the occurrence of existing movements to foreign influence is also found in these works. Even the statistical data are frequently distorted, purposely or in ignorance. Jasevich-Borodaevskaja (1912:205) writes:

> It is very difficult to receive the exact and correct information about sectarianists in general and about their number in particular. Every establishment has new numbers, and various names of the same sect. The Spiritual officials show one, State administration — another, statistics — third... If the researcher find the numeral indications, or ethnographical one, or attempts of the sects' doctrines characteristics, it is necessary to concern to these indications with the large care. Almost always all present sectarianists call either “Stunde” or “Shaloputs”, without care if it is “Jumpers” or Molokans. Sectarians, rather carefully hide the number...

Another, rather extensive group of works was made by the defenders of human rights of that time. These works try to be free of judgement, however, basically they consider movements from the perspective of their legal relations with the state; they aspire to ratify their right to exist; and to show incidents of injustice in relation to these movements. The serious analysis of peculiarities of their theology is absent.

The fundamental work of 1989 *A History of Evangelical Christians — Baptists in the USSR* (VSEHB 1989) has opened by itself a lot of research in the field of the history of the movement, which was prepared by researchers identifying themselves with this movement. However, most of this work consists of the history of their development; but research on theological peculiarities, and especially connection of the movement with an orthodox environment is not yet advanced.

The author of this work realizes his own inability to have an ‘objective’ independent view (if such a possibility exists at all). Therefore he tries to consider the problem of the
formation of Russian Evangelical theology, as it is represented from a perspective of a Baptist, but at the same time, the author tries to give a critical estimation of existing beliefs.

1.4 Sources of information

It is possible to single out some sources of information about Russian Evangelical movements: first, their own literature. This is presented, basically, by preserved confessions of faith (and also judicial protocols containing "question points" on items of confession), and what may be called sectarian periodicals.

However the theological content of a pre-Revolutionary periodical consists of a lot of translated articles. They reflect the official point of view, because their publication was possible only if the contents did not contradict the theology accepted in official Russian churches. On the other hand, the publication of translated texts (unlike those of Russian authors) was possible even without a deep comprehension and experience of their theological content. Thus, a special role is played by the works of native authors in understanding the theology of Russian Evangelical Churches. The creeds, created by the representatives of these currents, also are very interesting, because they contain a presentation of the essence of theological understanding. However many official Confessions were created under the direct influence of western protestant movements.¹

The author deliberately avoids the extensive use of Soviet era works in his research. At this time the state aspired to influence the church not only from the outside (by persecutions and restrictions of freedom) but also from within (by sending agents and by compelling the Church to accept those or other resolutions). The detailed consideration of the influence of the political regime on the development of theology is an important theme.

¹For instance, Confessions of Russian Baptists 1876, 1906, 1928 are translations of the confession offered by a German Baptist missionary I. Onken (Onken 1908).
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However, this does not fit into the framework of this work, either by volume or by purpose. Some elements of theological development during this period will be covered in the work. These will be those elements that better reveal the development of the tendencies shown even in the beginning of the theological development of Russian Evangelical movements.²

Another source of the information about Russian Evangelical Churches is the works of orthodox missionary-apologists. When considering such works it is necessary to take into account their controversial and accusatory tone. In some cases the authors resort to distortion of the facts to achieve their purpose. However, such works can have great value, because they offer a view from the outside. Also orthodox apologists try to analyze the existing theology of churches and its connection (similarity or difference) with Orthodoxy in the polemic.

There are also a number of works of Russian Evangelical researchers. The beginning of these publications was the appearance of the already mentioned research A History of Evangelical Christian-Baptists in the USSR (VSEHB 1989). Undoubtedly, the view of modern evangelical researchers has great value in understanding the features of the appearance and development of Russian Evangelical movements. However, basically, these works are concerned with history. In this work the main attention will be paid to theological features.

Since 1994 the work of collecting and researching archival materials and oral testimonies concerning a history of Evangelical movements in Russia is being carried out within the framework of the joint project of a number of secular and Evangelical research and educational institutes and other organizations. The results of these researches were published in 2001 by EAAA (EAAA 2001).

²There are works, in which this theme is mentioned deeply (cf. Gartfeld G. 1995, Zavatski, V 1995).
1.5 Necessary restrictions

1. The sphere of this work does not include a complete description of theology, but only reveals the themes that concern ecclesiology, and only as it concerns the interaction between Evangelical and Orthodox theologies.

2. The basic task of this work is to show the identity of Russian Evangelical theology, as a result of the interaction of two different sources.

3. The section ‘The Peculiarities of Russian Evangelical Church Ecclesiology’ does not attempt to give a complete picture of Russian evangelical theology, but only to show some vivid examples of the emergence of a specific ecclesiology.

1.6 List of Terms and Abbreviations

Iosifjans (also called 'stjajatels' ['collectors, grabbers, money-grubbers']) and nestjajatels ['non-collectors'] - two big movements of the Russian Orthodox Church (16th century). They differed by the attitude to Church possessions.

Shaloputs, Khlysts — ['whips'], Molokans, Dukhobors, Stunde — the names of the Russian sects (movements) (18th–19th centuries).

EHB — Evangelskie Hristiane-Baptisty [Evangelical Christian-Baptist]. The largest evangelical movement, which was created after consolidation Russian Baptists and Evangelical Christian movements, which had place in 1944 (Firstly, It was called 'Evangelical Christians and Baptists').

VSEHB — Vsesojuznyiy Soviet Evangelskih EHB [Soviet Union-Wide EHB Council]. Parent organisation which was supervised work of EHB churches.

SCEHB - Sojuz Cerkveiy Evangelskih Hristian - Baptistov [EHB Churches Union]. Alternative VSEHB organization, It was much more strict in the relations with Soviet regime.
Chapter 2

Roots of the identity

The history of the appearance and development of various theological movements inside Orthodoxy will be shown in this part. Orthodoxy was not theologically homogeneous. It was represented by a wide spectrum of different theological approaches. The determination and unification of its theological understanding took place gradually. There was a set of movements, which didn’t agree with the direction of the official Church. Their relationship with the existing Church became more and more difficult. After the schism the tendency of these movements to branch off from the Orthodox Church became obvious. A part of these movements (basically rationalistic) has become the ground for the development of Russian Evangelical theology. By accepting Western confessional formulation, they nevertheless have kept many features of ex-orthodox perception. Over the course of time this has been shown more clearly.

2.1 Kievan Rus (up to the 14th century)

One of major stages in the acceptance of Orthodoxy in Russia was the translation of the Bible and several liturgical books in the 9th century by enlighteners Kirill and Mefodius. Kirill and Mefodius represent the philosophical direction of Orthodoxy. Thus, there was a familiarizing of the Slavic peoples with a philosophical heritage of antiquity and Byzantine together with Christianizing of Russia.
CHAPTER 2. ROOTS OF THE IDENTITY

After the 'Baptism of Russia' by Grand Duke Vladimir (in 988) two frequently contradictory tendencies appeared in the Russian Orthodox Church: aspiration to support the interests of Constantinople and adherence to the national interests of Russia (cf. Zamaleev 1998:18).

There were two wings of Orthodoxy:

1. Christianity was ratified in Russia under the direction of the Grand Duke. The official line of the state church tended to support the interests of the Grand Duke.

2. The other part of the Church continued to support the ideas of Constantinople. It was connected with specific princedoms. This theological direction tried to develop the idea of a consolidation of Russia on the basis of the idea of the Church playing a major role as a source for uniting separate lands and of her supremacy over secular authority.

The first type was connected with official authority. The ideas of asceticism were not advanced in it. This line was the continuation of the philosophical line begun by Kirill and Mefodius. The works of the antique and Byzantine philosophers had an important place (explicitly or implicitly) in this type of theology. There was a development of humanistic ideas in the direction of Orthodoxy. The main political concepts of this direction were the concepts of government of the Grand Duke, and an aspiration to political and ideological independence from Constantinople.

These two theological lines differed also in their understanding of the relationship between law and Grace.

The Orthodoxy, which has appeared in Russia, was a branch of Christianity with an advanced liturgical component. Besides this, at the beginning, a deep understanding of Christian theology has not yet appeared. As a result, only the external part of the liturgy has been accepted. Anxiety about this grew in the church. The most important
literary source of that time is *The word about the Law and Grace* ([Illarion [s a]]). This work is against law and it indicates the superiority of Grace (1–37). This work shows Jews separated from the true faith (38–42). On the other hand the author eulogizes Grand Duke Vladimir’s violent methods of compelling the people to accept Christianity.

There was not one person resistant to pious [Grand Duke — G.L.] and his command. If somebody is baptized not out of love, but out of fear of those in authority, then his faith is connected with that authority. And all at one time our whole land has glorified Christ and the Father and the Holy Spirit.

(47)

Thus, some church leaders struggled with ritualism for political-ideological reasons. Its main task was to be set free from external cultural influence, to preserve their ethnic independence. The role of Orthodoxy in the self-determination of Russia was very important in this period.

In spite of an obvious rationalistic tendency, this direction of Orthodoxy kept the mystical elements, which were shown in ecclesiology as well. The traditional concept of sacraments was remained. According to this concept, the Eucharist is a continual sacrifice (cf. Illarion [s a]:43–45), and baptism is a saving force (46).

The development of the second type of theology was connected with the appearance of the mystical-ascetic movement in Russia. This movement was borrowed from Byzantium. This theological direction maintained close relations with the Byzantine clergy, and especially with monks. This type of theology is characterized by an obvious anti-intellectual orientation, a belief in the “un-understandability” of God.

There are some attempts to see only one direction in Orthodoxy (usually a ‘monastic’ one). In these cases, any philosophical or humanistic idea is perceived as an opposition (explicit or implicit) to the official Church. However, a more legitimate approach is to consider both lines as appropriate Orthodoxy, (just as Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, despite their opposite estimations of the importance of Greek philosophies, belonged
to one Church). The existence of a multitude of theologians in an intermediate position corroborates the legitimacy of such an approach.

The distinctive feature of the ecclesiology of these two directions was the different understanding of the role of church hierarchy and the Church's relationship with the State. The pro-State movement did not require the idea of a strict Church hierarchy. A strong National State, which will assert the interests of the Church, was much more important for it. The mystical-ascetic direction, on the contrary, aspired to build a strong hierarchical structure. And this hierarchy must be built not only in Russian territory, but also for the whole world.

These two directions of orthodox theology continued their development. Followers of monastic asceticism gradually moved away from their anti-imperial position as the government of the Grand Duke became established. At the same time they continued to develop mysticism and asceticism. At the same time, the official, pro-State direction of Orthodoxy gradually 'absorbed' certain elements of ascetic experience.

Vladimir Monomah has written his *Homily* (Monomah 1997) which is the spiritual heritage of a monarch. With respect to religious issues this *Homily* is 'almost protestant'. Monomah resists attempts to build a complex hierarchical structure; instead, he opened the way for an opportunity for everyone to have direct access to God (8-13). Despite the abundance of spiritual teachings, there is not one being mentioned of the role of the Church and its hierarchy in the entire message. Also he reduces the role of the priesthood. He asserts the necessity of a personal repentance before God (9-11, 14), speaks about an opportunity of prayer in any place (14, 17). He proclaims the voluntarism of church support (15). He rejects monastic asceticism, and he considers that daily business is the true proof of faithfulness (11). However, *Homily of Monomah* includes separate elements of monastic practice. He gives instructions on the use of the "*kyrie eleison*" (14).

The answer to Monomah from the monastic part of Orthodox Church followed
soon. The Kiev metropolitan Nikifor wrote his *Letter to Vladimir Monomah about fasting and restraining of feelings* (Nikifor 2000). A.F. Zamaleev (1998:68) considers that this message is a criticism of the Grand Duke. However, in its general tone, this message is only an exhortation. Even when the author is speaking about being unfairly condemned, he tries to excuse Monomah. He attributes mistakes to the unrighteous environment of the Grand Duke. The work of the metropolitan includes some elements from Plato’s doctrine of a three-component structure of the soul (cf. Milkov 2000:18). Probably his symbols of the state structure as an organism are borrowed from Plato’s work (ibid. 50). Apart from this, the metropolitan estimates the importance of reason very highly.

Thus, the idea of a principal opposition of the Church (anti-intellectual, ascetic, mystical) and state (philosophical-humanistic) is not quite reasonable. Undoubtedly, there were contradictions between the aspiration to build a political monarchical system and the Church aspiration to have political authority. However such contradictions disappeared in the process of the gradual building of the Grand Duke’s government system.

In the first period of the development of the Russian Orthodox Church there was a very wide spectrum of theological traditions and schools. Therefore, the existence of various movements inside the Russian Orthodox Church was possible. The new movements remained within the framework of the existing Church, and they did not break off relations with it.

In spite of the fact that this period of a history has no direct connection with the appearance of Evangelical movements, it is important for an understanding of the direction taken by the development of Russian theology. Interactions of various cultures occurred in this period. Christianity penetrated Russian territory from Byzantium. However, it very quickly formed a unique branch of Orthodoxy. On the one hand, Russia was introduced to a European philosophical heritage. On the other hand, Christianity promoted national self-determination.
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Besides this, the school of rational-humanistic theology was founded in this period. Later, the appearance of pre-protestant movements resulted from the existence of this school in Russia. Monastic-ascetic practices were spread in Russia. Over a long period of time, this direction of theology formed the internal substance of Russian Orthodoxy, and also had an impact on the appearance of mystical extra-orthodox movements of the 17th–19th centuries.

Major issues for Russian Orthodoxy at this time were the constructing of a model of mutual relations between church and state; and understanding the importance of sacred hierarchy.

2.2 The period of the formation of Muscovy Rus (14th–17th centuries)

2.2.1 Polarization and mutual penetration of theological movements

There was a further development in Russian Orthodoxy in this period. This development took place in various theological spheres. The final establishment of a hierarchical structure and model of the relations between Church and state was most important for Orthodox ecclesiological development in this period. The Orthodox ecclesiological doctrine became more and more certain and stable. Because of this, some movements were put into the category of "heresy" (strigolniks, "judaistics"). An official struggle against them was organized.

The mystical-ascetic direction of Orthodoxy continued its development in two directions. First, it could penetrate deeply into the pro-state (rationalistic) part of Orthodoxy. Secondly, a considerable part of this movement became an opposition to existing church hierarchy. It was finally separated from the Church after the Great Schism (1667). These detached old-believers sects become the ground for the appearance of pre-protestant movements in Russia.
In disputes with heretics, the question of authority arose. The Bible played a more and more important role. Iosif Volockiij in *Enlightener* (Iosif 1999) refers to the Bible much more often than to any other source. The Archbishop of Novgorod Gennady by 1499 had prepared a new edition of the Bible. However, later, the distribution of the Bible was one of the factors that caused the appearance of new Christian movements.

The main way of struggling with unorthodox movements (besides the use of force by the state) was the development of apologetics, and improvement of teaching.

### 2.2.2 Division within monasteries

The monastic part of the Church did not unequivocally accept the appearance of changes. Among these was one of the strongest pro-state movements — Iosifljans (also called 'stjajatels' — ‘collectors, grabbers, money-grubbers’).

Its beginning is connected with the name of Iosif Volockij. He was the Father Superior of a monastery. He was in a difficult situation because of the existing independent principality system. Eventually, he had to resort to the Grand Duke of Moscow. After receiving help from the central authority he began to support the Grand Duke system in every possible way. He created ideological support for the growing authority of Moscow. His business was continued by his disciple metropolitan Daniil (1522–1539), who was put in this position by the authority of Grand Duke Vasily III. This assignment was made without the sanction of the Church Council. It showed increased authority in the spiritual sphere of a Grand Duke. Thus, at this time tendencies toward a reciprocal intimacy of the positions of the State and the part of Orthodox Church were intensified.

In opposition to pro-state directions were nestjajatels ['non-collectors']. The traditions of nestjajatels were a continuation of the Pechora line of monastic asceticism, and were closely connected with the traditions of Byzantine hesychasm. They were the successors of mystical-ascetic traditions. Therefore, they consistently acted for the division
of secular and spiritual spheres of influence. They opposed monastic ownership of land. Also they did not agree with the methods was used by the Iosifljans in the struggle against heresies. They did not allow the church the right of physical punishment of heretics.

In spite of the fact that nestjajatels were located in the mystical part of the Church, they consistently asserted the role of the intellect in knowing God. According to the description of Epifhan the Great, the “Father” of the nestajatel tradition Sergiy Radonejskiy received the wonderful gift of reading and writing (cf. Zamaleev 1998:155). The founder of the nestjajatels, Nile Sorskiy, points out, that it is necessary to begin any business by meditation. In his opinion, meditation clears the mind of a person from the influence of the evil world. Rationally and critically checking any existing copies of Holy Scripture is also necessary (ibid. 156–157).

Thus, there was a unique merging of mystical-ascetic tradition with rationalistic tradition at this time. This direction of Orthodoxy has stood up in defence of newly appearing protest movements. The unorthodox movements become politically much closer to the mystical-ascetic direction of the Orthodox Church (nestjajatels), than to the rationalistic one (Iosifljans) in this period of time. The political closeness caused a spiritual relationship. All extra-orthodox movements from the Great Schism up to the end of 18th century (Old-believers, Spiritual Christians, Dukhobory) have a pronounced mystical orientation.

2.2.3 Nikon’s Schism

The state used the contradictions existing in the Church in its own interests. The ideas of Iosifljans were accepted as a substantiation of absolute authority, and attached sacred attributes to it. On the other hand the state supported the attempts of the nestjajatels to reduce the property of monasteries and remove them from influence in the political realm. Submission of the Church to the state was gradual. A significant mark in the
establishment of new church-state relations was the ‘one hundred heads’ church Council. Ivan the Terrible headed it, thus taking on the role of church leader.

A reform that was carried through Patriarch Nikon was other major stage in the establishment of new relations between the church and state. This reform had both political and religious roots, and it affected all areas of life in the country. The union with Ukraine was an external reason for the adoption of reform. Reconstruction of a common canon was a necessary consequence. However, there were internal, spiritual reasons also. The Russian Orthodox Church tried for a long time to find spiritual and theological autonomy from Byzantium. As result, it became a phenomenon of local scale. After the fall of Constantinople there was no danger of falling under Byzantine ideological and political control. Instead, Moscow began to exhibit more importance in the world. The Church supported this, and proclaimed the thesis ‘Moscow is the third Rome’. By this action the Church tried to achieve importance as the global center of Orthodoxy. To bring liturgy and theology into line with common canons was necessary for it.

This tendency of the Orthodox Church was in accordance with the increased authority of the Moscow principality and received its support. However these reforms met with resistance from many laymen.

There was a set of the reasons for this resistance. Orthodoxy became an element of Russian self-understanding. Changes in the form of liturgy were perceived as anti-patriotism and betrayal of the ‘Faith of the Fathers’. However there are deeper reasons for such fear of reforms. Russian Orthodoxy is a religion with a strong mystical component. This kind of perception connected the spiritual sphere with external rituals. The inability to separate visible and invisible spheres caused fear of any changes.

The state government authorized Nikon’s reform of the Church. It was an important step in process of joining the state and the church. Peter the Great finally completed this process. In his time the church became an element of state government. The institu-
tion of patriarchy was cancelled. Henceforth any movements, which were not in agreement with the central line of the Church, were declared as anti-state. Protest movements within the church became impossible.

There arose a unique situation. Unlike in Europe, the State acted on the church's side of reforms. Protest came from the people who tried to hold to a traditional lifestyle. This set the tone for all further movements of protest in which traditionalism did not play an ultimate role.

The schism raised the question of authority in issues of faith. All movements (both intra- and extra-orthodox) were compelled to reflect on the essence of faith and to prove their choice. Thus, faith moved from the sphere of tradition into the rational sphere. It caused general rationalization of belief.

The question on authority caused re-understanding of the ecclesiological doctrine of Church hierarchy. A significant part of schismatics (bespopovcy [without priest]) refused any church hierarchy (not even their own). It forced many people to appeal to the Bible. It was not by accident that this schismatic environment was the ground for the subsequent appearance of a Spiritual Christianity.

The protest against reforms (unlike the European protest) aspired to preserve former mystical elements. As a result the theology of the Spiritual Christians (which arose later in the environment of schismatics), along with rationalistic elements contained plenty of mystical elements. (In consequence, Spiritual Christianity became the ground for Evangelical movements in Russia).

2.3 After the Schism (18th–19th centuries)

2.3.1 Spiritual Christians and Molokans

The reasons for the significant increase in the number of persons who left the Orthodox Church are listed in the previous section. Many different movements appeared. In addi-
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The 17th–18th centuries saw the start of new social and economic relations in Russia. As result, the social stratification of the people was extended. Many people began to be dissatisfied with the existing situation.

There was no strong opposition between spiritual and rational spheres in Russia. Because of this, all national philosophy (including economic) was connected to religion. The religious way was the most natural exit from this situation. The Church became a part of the State government after the cancellation of the institution of the patriarchate and the establishment of the Synod by Peter the Great (1721). The dissatisfaction with the State system was naturally transferred to the Church. Many people began to search for an exit outside the existing Church.¹

The numerous movements which arose at this time were called Spiritual Christians. Such movements as khlysts, hristovers, ikonoboreces are included under this name. Later movements such as Dukhobors and Molokans, are frequently referred to by this term also (cf. Staroe Russkoe Sektantstvo 1994:448).

The exact theological content of Spiritual Christians is difficult to establish. It was not homogeneous and its development depended on the changing of the environment and on the time. However it is possible to distinguish the basic ideas uniting them.

The protest doctrine consisted of a denial of the existing Church hierarchy and its complex system of ceremonies. They dismissed a multitude of visible ceremonies, interpreting them spiritually (cf. VSEHB 1989:28). Also, they denied the intermediary role of the Church in relations between a man and God.

The movement of Spiritual Christians was an extreme expression of the mystical public mood existing in the Orthodox Church. Personal experience was put forward.

¹Some researchers specify influence of Bogomil's ideas, which was transmitted through kept apocryphal literature, as possible (cf. Margaritov 1910:8). However it is not known about rather large amount of the literature kept by XVII centuries. The similarity of separate ideas can be explained by similarity of conditions for their occurrence (intensity of socio-economic conditions, discontent with church hierarchy).
Their Christology differed from orthodox (but it was close to the Christology of pre-
schism movements). In Christ they saw only a person in whom God’s Spirit operated
(cf. Margaritov 1910:23). According to their point of view, any person can go through a
similar state. Therefore these sects were remarkable for their high ecstasy and ascetism.

There were various understandings of how the Spirit is incarnated now. Some
movements called for each Christian to go through this experience, others considered that
it is possible only for some individuals (leaders of sects).\(^2\) Also, the religious sects after
the schism gained in eschatological intensity.

Movements of Spiritual Christians in different forms began to be distributed widely
among the orthodox population. One of the features assisting in this was the absence of
any requirement of an official exit from the Orthodox Church.

Spiritual Christians did not have a uniform centralized formation and soon (at the
end of the 18th century) two basic mystic-rationalistic currents — Dukhobors [Fighter by
the Spirit] and Molokans [called by name of a river] — were recognized as separate insti-
tutions. Dukhobors were more “anarchic”. They completely denied any church hierarchy
or secular monarchy. They called for equality of rights, refused service in the army (cf.
Mitrohin 1997:201). Also they refused all church ceremonialism. They recognized internal
illumination as the basic authority. They produced the teaching about the ‘Living book’
on this basis. The ‘Living book’ is a revelation from God that is kept in the hearts of

More moderate sectarianists were called Molokans. Originally, their main difference
from Dukhobors was recognition of the Bible as supreme authority. Thus, their christol-
ogy and understanding of the Trinity were more orthodox (cf. Popov, Ponkratov, Mi-
hailov [1805] 1896:4). Division between Molokans and Dukhobors grew gradually. Many

\(^2\) The founder of a Khlysta sect began his ‘Twelve commandments’ by the statement: “I am the
God, predicted by the prophets ... I have come down to the Earth for the rescue of human souls” (cf.
Margaritov 1910:16).
Molokans became more and more "orthodox". So in the beginning of the 19th century the sect of Molokans on the Don River recognized the main church sacraments. Also they recognized the authority of the Tsar and civil laws (cf. Zaharov [1899] 1908:18).

Such steps on rapprochement with orthodoxy displeased many Molokans. Very soon, more ecstasy sects came out from them. The works of Johan Henric Ung-Shtilling were widely circulated among Molokans in the beginning of the 19th century. The Second Coming of Christ in 1836 was predicted in this work. Eschatological expectations amplified in the movement. But they did not find satisfaction. A crisis in the Molokan movement was the reason for an internal dissatisfaction of its followers. As a result, Molokans became a good ground for the subsequent spread of Stunde and Baptist doctrines.

The Molokans were a moderate mystic-rationalistic movement. Thus, they kept and developed the mystical elements of Orthodox Church and later transferred theirs to other appearing Evangelical movements.

These movements incorporated theological ideas, which developed within the framework of the Orthodox Church up to their separation. These ideas could not stay and develop within the framework of the existing Church any more because of the strict structure of the Orthodox Church, its uniting with the state and unification of doctrine. So they split into separate movements.

The appearance of the movement of Spiritual Christians, was an important step in the process of the appearing and developing of evangelical Christianity in the territory of the Russian Empire because they became the basic ground for it.

2.3.2 Stunde

The term Stunde is very inexact. Usually this term was used for a whole variety of rationalistic national Christian movements arising in the 18th century. Orthodox missionaries
and state officials, in using the German name, aspired to emphasize the alien origin of Stunde (cf. *Materialy dla istorii* . . . 1884:305). This group of researchers attempted to present Stunde as an alien, transferred phenomenon (ibid. 305–306). Another approach which is basically presented by secular researchers, understands Russian Stunde as a national phenomenon (cf. Harlamov 1885a:152).

The influence of German colonists on the appearance of Stunde is indisputable. It specifies both historic facts⁴, and peculiarities of theology⁵. However, it is necessary to recognize that the Russian movement began to develop independently, in a similar direction to the German movement after receiving an initial impulse from them. The secular researcher Harlamov (1885a:153) maintains the statement that “similar growth could be possible only in a case if one idea has simultaneously grasped different nationalities with similar spiritual condition... Even if there was a borrowing, it proves only a closeness of spiritual relationship”. Thus, Stunde is the first significant example of interaction by Orthodoxy with religious foreign movements.⁵

At the end of the Russian-Turkish war (at the end of the 18th century) Russia rendered new territories habitable. The main part of the settlers consisted of Russian retired officers and foreign colonists. From 1780, Mennonite communities moved from Prussia to Russia. The reason was difficulties which they had in Europe because of its military preparations (they were convinced pacifists, so they did not take up arms and did not pay taxes for the war) (cf. Dyck 1993:167).

Mennonite and other German colonies, formed in the south of Russia, lost their spiritual fervor very quickly. The main causes of it were the following:

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⁴For example, Reform pastor Bonikemper recognized his sermon among Russian Bonikemper 1868:156). Also there are evidences of the activity of other colonists from Mennonite Brethren colonies among Russian peasants Kirijakov, Tarasech 1883:307–311.

⁵Rules of Confession New-believers of Russian Brotherhood (Ratushmyly 1908:477–482) has much in common with Hamburg Confession that was brought to Russia by I Onken (Onken 1908:495–511).

⁶Though, the first vivid example of such interaction was the 'baptism of Russia'.
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1. The community was simultaneously both religious and national, hence, the choice of religious belief was not free any more. Belonging to the Mennonites was determined not by personal belief, but rather by belonging to the community (and conversely, belonging to a community was determined by external consent to the doctrines of the Mennonites).

2. Preaching among the native Russian people was forbidden to foreigners. Therefore, the sole possible way of development was the preservation of an already existent spiritual capital without an opportunity to share it with others.

This situation brought constant dissatisfaction and disunities inside the Mennonite community. But eventually, all disunities came back to the original situation. The cause of this situation was that any exit from the community automatically would result in exile from the country. The significant achievement of the Mennonite Brethren was that they succeeded in getting official recognition from the state. However it did not remove all the problems.

German Stunde was a result of an awakening that began in home groups of Bible readings. The priest Kirijakov refers to the end of the 1850s as the date of separation of Stunde as a specific movement with its own peculiarities of theology (cf. Kirijakov 1885:307).

Similar movements arose among the Russian population at the same time.\footnote{The parallel development does not exclude existence and certain influence of German revival on Russian Stunde. However, Harlamov (1885:211) specifies that such connections were not available everywhere, “even in the places where this influence is indisputable, new followers from among the Russian peasants came much further than their patrons”;} There was a series of reasons for the appearance of many sects in the 19th century. Some of the external, social reasons were an absence of communal possession in Malorossa [Ukraine]; fast process of loss of land; and unevenness in property distribution. The moral shape of clergy and inconsistency of social reforms “thrown on a half-road” (cf. Harlamov
1885:148–149, Rojdestvenskiy 1889:37, Emeljanov 1876a:203) also had an effect.

Thus, internal pressure in the community grew and developed in first half of the 19th century. Many people began to search for religious answers to emerging questions. National movements and movements organized around Bible study appeared everywhere.\(^7\)


The confession of faith of Stunde groups is difficult to determine precisely. It was very heterogeneous. In many respects, Stunde can be compared with similarly heterogeneous Anabaptist movements in Europe in the 16th century. Their general orientation was rationalistic; frequently it had elements of mysticism and asceticism. Basically, it was inherited from mystical sects, whose followers joined the movement. Eschatological expectations, revolutionary tendencies, and appeals for social transformation were widespread in this environment. The appeal for internal renewal played a major role.

The external situation for Stunde groups very soon became hostile. Alexander III received the report of the Kiev governor in 1881. The activity of Stunde was described in the report. It was the beginning of serious persecutions. According to provision of July 4, 1894 (cf. Department of the Interior [1894] 2001) Stunde was recognized as one of the most dangerous sects.

The persecutions affected the internal nature of Stunde. It could not survive without an appropriate organization and formal confession. Baptism was spreading in the Russian Empire at this time. Many movements began to call themselves Baptist and

\(^7\)In the 19th century religious movements search resulted not only in the occurrence of rationalistic national movements (Stunde), but also in development of mystical sects (eumuchs, hlysts). There were many intellectual movements with vivid religious motives among Russian aristocracy and intelligence (sophiology and slavianophils). The creativity of many writers was saturated by religious motives (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy).
to accept their Confession. The Stundes had not enough time to create their own forms and confession. Baptism incorporated many existing Stunde movements by offering an already formulated theology and Church structure. However, assimilation of the Baptist confession frequently occurred superficially, without a deep comprehension.\footnote{The police officer of the Elisabeth district in 1881 (Materiayl dlija istorii... 1884:264-271) pointed out, that, in his opinion, Rjaboshapka (one of the Stunde leaders who accepted Baptist teaching), “does not understand the exact sense of the note (about the creed), which was submitted at his application and written for him in inaccessible language”. Another leader of Stunde M. Ljasockiyy, who was turned to Baptism, also marks the weak knowledge of the Baptist confession by Stunde’s followers (Rojdestvenskiyy 1889:174).}

The switch to Baptism was not always smooth. The spread of the Baptism was a two-sided process. On the one hand, Baptism provided a precisely formulated theology and forms to Stunde. On the other hand, Baptism was itself changed under the influence of movements entering into it. Long disputes followed. Some elements of theology were not assimilated.\footnote{Disputes concerning refusal of the believers to take up arms and to give an oath continued for a long time. In spite of the fact that basic foreign missionaries were particularly Baptist, the doctrine of predetermination was not accepted.}

2.3.3 Spread of Baptism

Various religious movements of an evangelical orientation spread in Russia in the 19th century. However, they were very heterogeneous, and their doctrines were not precisely determined. It was necessary for them to get the forms of stable religion to survive in a situation of growing persecutions.

The activity of the Philadelphia’s Baptist organization played a uniting role. Johan Onken was converted by their sermons and engaged in active work in Russia. He began the work among the Mennonite brethren and helped them to formulate the confession (which is similar as the Hamburg Baptist confession of 1849, except on two points). Very soon, his activity moved into the environment of the Russian people. His basic students were representatives from various Russian Stunde movements.
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The initial close communication between the new Baptist movement and the already existing Stunde movements was obvious. Thus people very frequently did not make any distinction between them. Even the name “Stunde-Baptism” appeared. Later, after the recognition of the Baptist movement by the state government, Stunde aspired to present itself as a version of Baptism to receive equal rights with it.

Nevertheless it is necessary to distinguish between these two movements that are essentially different in nature. Stunde is the original phenomenon, even though it had a foreign initial stimulus. It developed independently. Unlike it, the Baptist movement appeared in Russia as an already formulated religious organization with precise teaching about the structure of the Church and a clear theology.

The process of unification of various movements under the name of Baptism was not only a unilateral absorption of all movements by Baptism. When various movements were entirely absorbed into the Baptist structure, they enriched it by their own understanding, with unique features of theology. I. V. Podberezskii (1996:78) points out that even in modern Russian Baptism some elements of preceding movements are kept alive.

2.3.4 Evangelical Christians

The religious awakening of the 19th century embraced the aristocratic environment also. The Evangelical Christian movement began from the first conversion of the St. Petersburg aristocracy. It began in Paris and England with the sermons of Lord Redstock. He began to preach in St. Petersburg in 1874.

Soon afterwards, Petersburg’s converted began vigorous activity. They organized “the Society of spiritually moral readings encouragement” in 1876. The society engaged in the publication of magazines and brochures basically designed for workers and ordinary people.¹⁰ The movement moved out from the aristocratic environment and began to

¹⁰The orthodox author (cf. Terletckii 1891:33–34) testifies to the huge popularity of the brochures issued by this society.
influence wider strata of society.

This direction of development differed from all Stunde-Baptists. First, it was not based on the heritage of existing Russian dissenter movements; therefore elements of orthodox consciousness were not shown there so clearly. Secondly, this movement arose and spread originally as a revival movement. Leaving the Orthodox Church was not required from its followers, at least in the beginning. Inasmuch as the break with Orthodoxy was softer, negative elements of doctrine in relation to the Orthodox Church were not advanced as clearly as they were in the Stunde-Baptism direction.

The process of interaction between Baptism and Petersburg’s Evangelical Christians was not smooth. Despite a series of attempts, they did not manage to overcome their existing distinctions. They were united in one organization only during Soviet times, under pressure from the state. Moreover, everyone kept their own features.

2.4 Conclusion

Thus, it is possible to distinguish 3 basic lines of theological development as a result of the spread of the Baptist movement:

1. Orthodoxy ⇒ Baptism

2. Orthodoxy ⇒ Spiritual Christianity ⇒ Molokans ⇒ Baptism

3. Orthodoxy ⇒ Spiritual Christianity ⇒ (Molokans ⇒) Stunde ⇒ Baptism

Evangelical Christians arose in the Orthodox environment, and also absorbed certain elements of Orthodox thinking.
Orthodoxy was the basic "ancestor" for each of these lines of development. (Undoubtedly, some chains have moved far from the root). Beside this, Orthodoxy was the constant "background", which accompanied all processes of the appearance of new doctrines.

As a result, evangelical Christianity in Russia has some unique features. The churches and their theologies are not copies of western ones, but have incorporated and processed features of Orthodox and extra-orthodox religious movements' worldviews.
Chapter 3

Orthodox Ground — Peculiarities of the Mentality

Some important elements of an Orthodox mentality that created a background for the theological formation of the Evangelical Churches in Russia will be considered in this section of the work. The key element of this mentality is the general model of worldview that pays strong attention to the close link between the physical and spiritual worlds. The important consequence of it is mysticism that shows itself clearly in the Church. It pays more attention to personal experience than to Church doctrines. According to it, the major task of the Church is the collection, transfer and expression of this experience. Other important consequence of this worldview is the understanding of a special role of the Church in the process of salvation. Inasmuch as the visible Church is an expression of a Heavenly Kingdom on the Earth, it begins to play an important role in the process of human salvation. Salvation is determined by the relation of a person to the visible Church.

3.1 Inseparability of the Spheres of Existence

3.1.1 Various Worldview Models

Christianity deals with areas, which are not accessible to direct perception by limited human reason. Barth (1997:59) emphasized the existence of a principal contradiction
between the cognitive potential of human kinds and the limitlessness of God. Such a contradiction has a very important meaning in the light of the Biblical description of the Fall. As a result of the Fall, humanity has lost to a certain degree control of the world around. The human person’s relationship with surrounding reality has become rather antagonistic (Gen.3:16–19). This event has aggravated human alienation from the spiritual sphere even more. This conflict occurs in all areas of human relations with the external world (humanity — nature, humanity — humanity, humanity — God).

In this situation, a completely adequate perception of reality becomes unattainable for human being. It becomes necessary to overcome these restrictions artificially. It is possible to distinguish three basic ways of overcoming this limitation. Two ways are the opposite of each other: an attempt at an integrative synthesis; and an analytical division of the Creation into separate spheres. The third way occupies an intermediate position: the perception of reality through images (the visible world is an image of the invisible world).

These models of overcoming the restrictions are ideal types. The various ways of overcoming are combined with each other in actual societal situations and philosophical currents.

The whole theological system, and in particular ecclesiological issues, depends on the choice of a worldview model. Is the church only an earthly institute, or does it represent the Heavenly Kingdom on Earth in a mystical way? What are the sacraments: only symbols, or an integrate process in which visible and invisible actions are connected? What is the role of the priesthood: is the Church hierarchy only a temporary earthly organization or is this a mystical means for the transfer of divine Grace? The general dominant model of the worldview determines the answer to these and many other questions.

3.1.2 Attempts at integrative synthesis

The attempt to overcome existing borders of knowledge and to understand the whole world as single unit is characteristic of Eastern societies. The division of the world into separate
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spiritual and physical spheres is unusual for these societies. One task of humanity is to comprehend the interrelation of its separate parts. The goal of thought is to apprehend the whole world as an integrated unit. The extreme expression of this approach is monism. It considers all the visible world, including the person, as illusion only. The infinite deity is the sole reality.

According to Malyavin (1995) the East:

...Differs from the West in directing reflection not to the object of experience, but rather to the fact of the presence of the existence, to the "suchness" of the things, to pure existence of consciousness; such an orientation of thinking is equivalent to a striving to consider the limits of understanding.

Such a point of view is not interested in research into separate phenomena and objects of the surrounding world. The connection between separate elements is considerably more valuable to it. Anything, even opposite realities, is perceived as a part of the whole. The concepts of good and evil are not absolute, but they are opposite parts of one reality, they are complementary.

Such methods of cognition as contemplative perception and meditation relate to this approach. Through these methods, humanity aspires to empty itself, its consciousness, to open itself to existing reality. A human being dismisses influence on an object of knowledge, and instead converts themselves from the learning subject to the influenced object.

The value of the separate person decreases in such an approach. In comparison with the perceived whole world as an unity, the person has value only as a part of the whole. His/her glorification occurs by means of self-destruction, comprehension of the fact of delusive existence.
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In all Eastern practices, pagan mysticism and others, the [highest, desired — G.L.] condition is a dissolution and loss of identity, achievement of impersonal uncharacterizable existence that is undistinguishable from nonexistence (nirvana, Great Emptiness etc.).

(Horuiy 2000).

On this point certain parallels with biblical examples of a breaking through the existing division of spiritual and physical spheres emerges This supernatural reality was open to the prophets, in order to be open to the rest of humanity through them. The natural consequence for the participants and witnesses of those events was the comprehension of their own inability to cope with that revelation. In some cases that equaled understanding of their death (Ex.20:19; Is.6:1–7). This reaction is described also in many cases of the appearance of God’s Glory.\(^1\)

However, the Bible does not offer this way of world understanding as the basic one. On the contrary, it recognizes existing restrictions as real, and warns against any attempts at “non-authorized” overcoming of these restrictions (Lev. 20:27; Deut.18:9–12). These borders can be overcome only with special intervention by God.

3.1.3 Analytical division of spheres of knowledge

Consecutive analytical division of existing reality in various spheres is another way that helps human beings to perceive the existing contradiction between an unlimited object of knowledge and their own limitations. A humankind concentrates its efforts in a certain sphere. Others spheres remain without attention. This approach does not aspire to overcome the existing gulf and the contradiction, but only recognizes their existence.

This way of comprehension is more characteristic of Western societies. The Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovev (1998:91) recognizes that the beginning of the division of

\(^1\)Ex.40:34–35; Lev.9:23–24; 1 Kin.10–11; 2 Chron.5:13–14; Ezek.3:23; 44:4.
the various vital spheres and elements historically concerns the Ancient Mediterranean world, but

...for consciousness of the whole of mankind the initial wholeness was shaken resolutely and to its very root only with the appearance of Christianity, when *sacrum* was essentially separated from *profanum* for the first time.

Christians refused to worship the emperor, recognizing in him only terrestrial, human authority. The ancient basic wholeness of the world was shaken. Heavenly and terrestrial authority have been divided (Mat.22:21), and it concerned not only the Roman state, but also the Jewish one that was constructed on divine revelation (Act. 4:19). The heavenly kingdom was separated from the external political system.\(^2\) Undoubtedly, the spread of Christianity did *not* mean instantaneous change of consciousness. It was a process that began earlier and proceeded many centuries after that. Augustine in *de civitate Dei* laid the foundation for the new model of the relation between the terrestrial and heavenly kingdoms. Protestantism continued the process of this division.

This division concerns not only the sphere of church and state relationship, but especially the relationship between science and religion. Originally science remained in submission to philosophy — “the queen of the sciences”. Philosophy in its turn was closely related to religion. Later these three spheres were also divided. Such division has given freedom to science and philosophy. It resulted in a development of science unknown before.

The reverse side of this process was loss of wholeness of perception. The spheres of knowledge continue to divide into many parts. Tendencies toward narrower and narrower specialization in the spheres of education and science proceed.

Such a worldview concentrates on research into separate phenomena. The subject of knowledge (humanity) is distanced from the object as much as possible. Human beings

\(^2\)This division is not absolute. Christians aspired to change the existing world according to God's laws. However the preceded representation about the unity of these two empires was undermined.
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aspire to reach maximal objectivity in knowledge. The main means is the distance of
the learning subject from the object of knowledge. However (especially in recent times)
humanity is convinced of the impossibility of objective knowledge at all. Human beings
not only the subject of knowledge, but also the object involved in interaction with the
external world. Originally this model of thought caused ‘a burst’ of enthusiasm about the
opportunities before humanity, but at the same time it has resulted in the postmodern
epistemological crisis.

One theological representation of the extreme forms of analytical division was
the Gnostic heresy, and later Manichaeus and other sects, which arose from extreme
opposition between the physical and spiritual worlds. The possibility of a combination of
the Physical ("guilty") and the Spiritual ("ideal") elements in Christ seem unacceptable
to them. They offered a way of salvation that is a transition of humanity into the spiritual
dimension. The basic answer to these heresies was formulated in 451 at the Council of
Chalcedon, where the question of the relation of the two natures of Christ was discussed.

3.1.4 Perception through images

Perception through images is a third type of worldview. Such an approach, like the
analytical one, recognizes the existence of a division between separate spheres (the physical
and spiritual worlds). However it recognizes the existence of a certain mystical relationship
between the worlds. The physical world expresses the spiritual world in a certain way.
This perception aspires to see a spiritual, incomprehensible reality in accessible physical
images. This approach asserts a close connection (but not identity) between the physical
and spiritual worlds.

An early representation of this approach is in Plato’s teaching about “kinds” or
“ideas” which are expressed in separate objects. There is a certain interrelation between
them. It is possible to cognize the essence of “ideas” through consecutive generalization
of concepts about separate objects. The revival of his philosophy by Plotin added to his
ideas a greater religious content.

It is necessary to distinguish between imagery and symbolical approaches. Im-
geracy perception means the existence of a certain mystical connection between the spiri-
tual primary source and its physical image. In symbolism the connection is conventional,
the terrestrial symbols have no importance by themselves, their purpose is only to remind
humanity of the spiritual world. Symbolism understands terrestrial symbols as signs with
psychological value only. Perception by images assigns great importance to the interac-
tion between an image and a spiritual reality. An image, unlike a sign, can not be easily
replaced by another image, without a change of epistemological functionality of the whole
structure and its ontological integrity. However, perception by images does not identify a
visible image with a spiritual reality. Also, it recognizes human limits to the possibility
of cognition of reality.

According to imagery perception (unlike symbolical), terrestrial elements represent
spiritual reality (an earthly human person is an image of the invisible God). The difference
shows itself in the understanding of the Eucharist. In the symbolical perception, terrestrial
elements (bread and wine) are only symbols of the spiritual world, reminders of it, they
have no importance in themselves. The imagery approach, recognizes them as images of
spiritual processes. The actions, which are carried out with them, have a spiritual reality
in an incomprehensible way.

Alexander Shmeman (1993b:1) wrote (he uses the terminological pair “symbol” —
“allegory” instead of “image” — “symbol”):

...Also symbols are present in Christianity; In this respect, our entire
Orthodox liturgy is symbolic. These symbols are very frequently understood
as allegory, i.e. as allegorical pictures of Christ’s life... However these usual
interpretations are of a later origin. The original symbol has real importance;
it is not simply a sign, but a sign that is filled by sense. So, the opportunity to

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3 Unfortunately, there is no arrangement on the use of these terms. Usually, its meaning is set by
author’s choice, and can be found from the context.
participate in the Body and Flesh [sic!] of Christ is given to us only through a symbol... 

3.1.5 Development of Imagery Perception in the Orthodox Church

Appearance of imagery perception

The basis of Christianity was the perception of Jesus as a man, as an image of the invisible God. The limited person was comparatively intelligible to human perception, but at the same time he was an incarnation of the infinite essence of God.

He has become “the image of the invisible God” (2Cor.4:4; Col.1:15; Heb.1:3) and in a way accessible to the people, has presented the Heavenly Father to the people (John.1:18). On the one hand, his incarnation rejected the monistic idea of complete unity of the world, because it recognized the existence of a boundary, which was necessary to overcome. God the Father could not open Himself to the people, in His essence. Christ continued to teach about the existence of two worlds, and ranked Himself primarily in the Heavenly one (John.18:36). On the other hand, His existence in an image of the earthly human being warned against extreme forms of analytical opposition of the two worlds, protected from conflict between them.

For Christians in the New Testament the similar imagery perception of God was a natural and self-sufficient one. The necessity of analytical understanding of the interaction between divine and human elements arose after the spread of Christianity in territories with a different way of thinking. An attempt to analyse the relations between reality and the image was a cause of Christological disputes. The results of the disputes were fixed in creeds.

Such perception showed itself in various areas of development of Eastern theology. For example, a special method of interpretation of Scripture was developed. (cf. Origen 1998:4). Another important result of the development of imagery perception was the formation of the “theology of an image” in the East (cf. Horujy 2000). This doctrine
differed from the western augustinian doctrine about the complete fall of man. According to a "theology of an image" it is necessary to distinguish "likeness" that was lost by humanity, and "image of God", which has stayed in them. The image is a "more static, essential concept: it usually seen in those or other immanent attributes, features of the nature and structure of man that are the elements of a trinity structure, a reason, an immortality of soul, etc" (ibid.).

The image is a pledge of the possibility of theosis — a specific doctrine advanced in the Eastern Church. The doctrine of theosis asserts the possibility of a gradual ascension and approximation to likeness with God and a mystical connection with God. This doctrine appears in Irenaeus (1998:III.X.2): "He would become the Son of man for this purpose, that man also might become the Son of God". It was further developed by Athanasius of Alexandria and ‘the three great Cappadocians’.

Thus, imagery perception had already had significant influence on the formation of early theology. Later, it was developed in the works of the Eastern fathers and teachers of the Church. It came to Russia already formed.

Development of imagery perception in Russia

In each society, a different way of perception of reality predominates (but this does not exclude other perceptions). The imagery perception of reality dominates in territories influenced by Byzantine Christianity.

There can be various interpretations of cause-effect relations between these facts. However, it is most likely, that each specific way of perception promoted distribution of its correspondent interpretation of Christianity in that territory. This choice fixed the existing preference.

There is narration about Grand Duke Vladimir’s choice of Orthodoxy (tells the story of the choosing of Orthodoxy The Story of the Old Days, written in 1113–1118
(Povest vremennyh let 1980:II)). According to this narration, the Grand Duke arranged an “examination of the faiths” which helped him to choose Orthodoxy. There are a lot disputable elements in this text; however, there were certain events, which occasioned the creation of such a legend. It is necessary to pay attention to what peculiarities of Orthodoxy are emphasized by Nestor (probable the author of The Story...). According to the text, one of the main criteria for the choice was beauty. Thus, external expression of Christianity was one of the most important ideas in the opinion of the Russian author (cf. Shneman 1993b). This type of thought is typical for imagery perception of the world.

Byzantine Christianity, which grew on rich Greek traditions, was impregnated with images. Those images have made Orthodoxy attractive. On the other hand, Orthodoxy has a fixed existing paradigm of thinking within the nations which have accepted it. The Orthodox historian A. V. Kartashev (1936) shows that Russian adherence to the external side of sermons, rituals, symbolic greatly surpassed the Byzantine one.

From the very beginning the Russian Orthodox Church aspired to be independent not only politically but also in theology. Yaroslav the Wise (1015–1054) organized a library, collecting translations of the authors from the 4th–8th centuries (instead of recent to him Byzantine literature) (cf. Zamaleev 1998:25). It is significant that the new Russian theologians paid more attention to the Old Testament, with all its numerous prototypes and external rules. “From the very beginning of Russian Christianity we notice in Russians an extraordinary, petty, superstitious adherence to once accepted liturgy order of words, or rituals” (Kartashev 1936:27).

However it would be incorrect to represent the Russian variant of Orthodoxy as only an external religion, not overstepping the bounds of the physical world. The word about the Law and the Grace was written by metropolitan Illarion. He was the first Russian metropolitan appointed without the official sanction of Byzantium. In this work the Russian theologian comprehends the relation between the Law and Grace in the spirit of
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Paulinism. The law is a shadow of Grace. In this message Illarion gives significant attention to images, which already exist in the Scripture (for example, the story of Abraham and Sarah) "the shadow is before Truth. Sarah and Abraham is an image of the Law and Grace" (Illarion [s a] 17). In addition, he finds images in other texts, for example in the story of Gideon (ibid.).

In spite of the fact that these two positions (Old Testament ritualism and the "spiritual" approach) represent opposites, they have much in common. 4 Both approaches actively use imagery perception of Christian doctrines. There was an attempt to escape the limits of the physical world. There was an attempt to touch the Divine sphere through following external ritualism.

This cast of thinking was clearly shown in the history of the Russian Orthodox schism of 1667 ("the Great Schism"). It was the largest schism in the life of the Church. The reason for the schism was a correction in the liturgical book. The changes mainly concerned the external side of liturgy and rituals. However many Orthodox believers were not ready to agree with the changes in rituals, which were authorized by the high Church leadership. This differs radically from the situation in the West, where, during the time of the Reformation, people who wanted reforms and changes separated from the Catholic Church. "That phenomenon of schism because of rituals was never observed anywhere in all the history of Christianity" (Kartashev 1936:26).

Certainly, it takes more effort to separate from the Official Church, than to remain in it. In the West, the supporters of change had such energy, while in the East the opposition to change found a large response in the consciousness of believers. The reason for this was the great importance which imagery perception gives to external images.

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4This contradiction has leaded the researchers to put forward the theory about the existence of two sources of Russian Orthodoxy. But, despite of all contradictions inside the Russian Orthodox Church and its heterogeneity, there was a common "average line", which determined the character of the Church. Besides, there were various movements between of the poles of a the theological spectrum inside the Church.
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Sometimes inability to distinguish the reality and the image (which expressed the reality) causes the actual deification of the image.

Typical Peculiarities of Imagery Perception in the Eastern Orthodox Church

There are two characteristics that can be distinguished in the imagery perception of the Eastern Church. The first is the inseparability of reality and the image which expresses the reality. Malyavin (1995:22) shows that such thinking “proceeds from strict conformity of sign and essence”. Secondly it is the integrity of perception of the world, and an absence of a tendency to analytical division of reality into various spheres. For example, the opposition between faith and philosophy was not typical for the Eastern Church, as it is for the Western (cf. Ekonomtzev 1997a:7). These features will be discussed in more detail later in their relations with mysticism.

There are various representations of imagery perception. In the sphere of theology it was expressed in the dismissal of an analytical division of theology into sections, and in the special role assigned to mystical experiences and sacraments. This way of perception is clearly represented in the life of the Church through icon making, liturgy and Church architecture.

Imagery perception in the Eastern Church has allowed it to avoid the ontological gulf between the divine and human spheres.

The emphasis on the complete depravity of man and his separation from God that is natural for the Western world was not typical for the East. Augustine, Luther, early Barth are the teachers characteristic of the Western model of world perception. Perception by images is characteristic for the Eastern Church. It recognizes that “after the fall the image of God has become dull in the man, but not enough that he could not perceive Grace even more” (Semenov-Tyan-Shansky [s.a.]:162). Thus, the original “image theology” was developed in the East (cf. Horujy 2000).
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From this follows the doctrine of *thesis*, which is characteristic of the Eastern Church. It is a process of gradual likening to God, a more complete revealing of His image in man. According to Origen and later Eastern tradition, “the image is nothing else, but the rudiment of *thesis*, whose purpose is to become as close to God’s likeness as possible” (Shpidlik 2000:71).

This characteristic distinction is visible when comparing the Eastern Orthodox Church understanding of sacraments with the theory of transubstantiation that is characteristic for the Western Catholic Church. The Eastern Church refuses to recognize the change in essence of the bread and wine, and at the same time it points to the reality of the presence of the body and the blood in the sacraments. That understanding is close to the Lutheran concept of consubstantiation; while the Eastern Church is based on other premises. The basic point in understanding the essence of sacraments is the example of Jesus Christ, who being God, has become a human being (cf. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky [s a]:162). The sacrament is an image of the spiritual reality, just as the human being Jesus was an image of God.

Adherence to imagery perception was clearly shown in the Life of the Church. The propensity “to identify a name with a reality” (cf. Maliavin 1995:22), resulted the special importance assigned in the East to external rituals.

The Orthodox cathedrals is an important expression of the relation between the two worlds. Metropolitan Eleftheriy says: “the fullness of the Godhead lives in a cathedral, so your cathedral is wider than the heavens” (Antonij 2001:1). At present, practically all external sides of the Church’s life-architecture, form of liturgy—are perceived as an imagery expression of a spiritual reality. Icon making is the “essence” expression of these peculiarities of perception. The basic principle of the Eastern icon (in contrast to traditional painting) is not the principle of adequacy, but of imagery. “The ontological (basic) plan of an icon is the spiritual essence that is expressed in an image” (Karelin 1997).
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3.2 Mysticism

3.2.1 Definition

The term mysticism is used with various meanings. Its semantic content strongly depends on the position of the author. For example, atheistic authors use the concept with a very general meaning. Mysticism is any "religious-idealistic view of existence, whose basis is belief in supernatural forces" (Mysticism 1987:285). Protestant authors, on the other hand, who frequently narrow this concept too much, do not recognize it as a whole system of a worldview. Mysticism in their works is represented only as a set of separate representations of sacramentalization of physical objects, and sensual perception of the spiritual world (cf. Smirnov 2000). The basic orthodox doctrine of mysticism will be considered in this section, therefore the term will be used as it is used by orthodox authors.

Mysticism is an attempt to comprehend the spiritual world by one's own experience that very often is inexpressible in rational terms. Dionysius the Areopagite used the term "mystical contemplation" to define the process of connection with the "Integrated" Highest One. This process can not be expressed or comprehended through "sensual" or "intellectual" images (Dionisios 1994:341). A similar understanding of mysticism has been kept in Orthodoxy until now. The orthodox theologian Vladimir Losskiy (1991:9) writes:

...Doctrine, which is expressed truth revealed by God, presented to us as an incomprehensible mystery, should not be experienced by us in the process by which we adapt it to our modus of perception. On the contrary, we should impel ourselves to a deep change of mind, to its internal transformation, and in this way to become capable of finding mystical experience.

There are some key elements of Orthodox mysticism in this formulation. First, the term mysticism is connected to the dogmatic side of theology. Secondly, the existing knowledge is personal and often inexpressible. Thirdly, the basic way of comprehension of God's revelation is a radical change of mind. In practice, the last aspect very often
is connected with ascetic practice. The goal of Orthodox mystics is to reach specific enlightenment, mystical connection with God.

3.2.2 Appearance of mysticism in the Church

The Bible describes certain sides of mystical experiences. Such experience is found in the Paul’s description of the man (possibly Paul himself) who was “caught up to the third heaven” (2Cor.12:2–4). Some other fragments in the Old and New Testaments, also can be understood as descriptions of mystical experiences. (For example, abiding in Christ (John.15, 1 John.2:6) is not given as a list of certain terms, but rather it is a description of mystical unity).

During the first century the Christian Church underwent a strong influence of unchristian mysticism. A series of Gnostic schools arose at this time. It represented a mix of Greek philosophy and Eastern mysticism (cf. Shmeman 1993:66). There are attempts to deny the traditional understanding of Gnosticism as a deviation from Orthodoxy. The authors of these works attempt to present it as one of a set of equal Christian movements (cf. Afonasin 1999). However this same author recognizes that Gnosticism is not something specifically Christian.

Some of the “Gnostic in every respect” texts are based entirely on the Old Testament or represent by themselves as whimsical syncretism... Such Coptic Gnostic texts, as Paraphrase of Sem (Nag Hammadi VII 1) or Three supports of Sem (VII 5) are based entirely on the Old Testament plots and to a certain extent are saturated by Platonic and Piphagoreic terminology, and therefore can be considered as examples of Judaic or even Neoplatonic Gnosticism, rather than Christian ones... This allows us to assume that Gnosticism is not a part of something, but it is an independent type of worldview, a World Religion that is distinct from others.

(iband)

5That caution with which Paul describes this event is indicative. He realizes all impossibility of adequate expression of this experience, by rational description.
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Thus, it is possible to consider Gnosticism as a wide cast of mystical-rational thought. In history the Christian Church played a strong role in the spreading of mysticism. Mysticism exercised influence on the development of the basic direction of theology, but was rejected in its essence.

The Church has distinctly opposed itself to such mysticism, which in its essence was unchristian, and which was based on pagan mysteries. The basic point of the Gnostic movements was the complete opposition between the physical and spiritual worlds. Freedom from the physical (sinful) and transition to the spiritual (highest) world was recognized as man's purpose. This doctrine fundamentally contradicted the Christian doctrine of incarnation. Recognition of the bodily incarnation of Christ is presented in 1 John. 4:1–5 as the basic criterion for examining teachers. Later, in the Oecumenical Councils, the formulations describing this doctrine were maintained (these formulations were made basically under the influence of the Eastern, and especially Cappadocian teachers). Christian mysticism was based on the unity of the divine and human natures of Christ.

The doctrine about the Incarnation is not limited to Christology only. It is a key in the understanding of Christian anthropology and the doctrine of Atonement. This understanding influences the answer to the question: "Does Atonement concern the spiritual sphere only, or does it concern the whole world?" or "is the human body only a prison for the spirit or it will be consecrated and transformed?"

Thus, there is nothing specifically Christian in mysticism itself. However, in Christianity it acquired a new substantiation and specific character of development.

3.2.3 Initial development of mysticism in East Orthodox theology: Hesychasm

Mystical experiences were an integral part of the Christian life in the Early Church. At the same time they were not a key criterion in determining the path of theological
development. Origen recognized the necessity of mystical enlightenment in the spiritual life. In the introduction to his work *About a prayer* he specified the necessity of both rational reflection, and supernatural enlightenment with the special action of the Holy Spirit in a human being for effective prayer (Origen 1992:1–2). His disciple Euagriy developed the doctrine about gradualism of the process of contemplative knowledge (cf. Shpidlik 2000:394).

The works of Dionysius the Areopagite played an important role in the extension of the role of mysticism in Eastern Christianity. Dionysius asserts the impossibility of a rational comprehension of God. He called for an apophatic path that is a consequential denying of the characteristics of God. The basic way of understanding God, according to his understanding, is mystical contemplation.

[Mystics] are deified and reach unity with God, by refraining from natural actions. They can not find a more suitable way to glorify God, than by denying any manifestations of His attributes.

*(Dionisios 1994:345).*

Thus, mysticism in the works of Dionysius is closely connected with apophatism. This connection was natural and was kept throughout the development of Eastern Orthodox theology.

The doctrine of Dionysius was not a declaration of the principal incomprehension of God, and the division between Him and mankind. So his doctrine about God’s obscurity (cf. Dionisios 1994:339–347) is not a statement of the impossibility of positive knowledge about God, but a positive declaration of a distinctly negative way of knowledge (ibid. 347–351). Hence, his doctrine is not only a doctrine of the impossibility of knowledge of God, but rather confirmation of the experience of negative knowledge.

Maximus the Confessor, who was named “the father of the Byzantine theology” (Lane 1997:77) collected and processed the works of Dionysius and Euagriy. Also he
created a basis for the later-formulated division between the essence of God and His energies. The idea of *thesis* was developed in his works also.

The center of Christian mysticism in Byzantium was the monasteries of Aphon. They became the center for the origin and development of the main mystical direction of the Eastern orthodox mystical teaching — hesychasm. The teachers of hesychasm — Simeon a New Theologian, Gregory Sianit and Gregory Palama — taught about the necessity of special ascetic practices, constant self-supervision and elimination of passions for the purpose of achieving special enlightenment.

In the 15th cent. Gregory Palama generalized ideas of mystical theology that were developed before him in the works of Eastern theologians and in monastic practice. He defended his point of view in “Palamit Councils” (1341–1351).

A. Zamaleev (1998:24) sees the doctrine about division between the world and God as the main feature in Gregory Palama’s teaching. The nature of God is not identical to His divine energy. The only way to comprehend God is faith, in contrast to reason. However, the interpretation of Palama’s teaching brings him and other Eastern Fathers closer to unchristian mystics and gnostics. But their teaching consists of an attempt to define the possibility of the comprehension of God and participation “in the divine nature” (της κοινωνίας φύσεως) (2Petr. 1:4).

As in the doctrine of Dionysius, Gregory Palama asserted the way of mystical comprehension of God. The idea of mystical joining with God has a practical meaning in his doctrine. He asserts the necessity of psychosomatic exercises to be open to “mystical enlightenment”. This enlightenment is interpreted in hesychasm as God’s special revelation that can be perceived not in a sensual or rational way, but by joining with God. Hesychasts kept the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God (in His nature) and, at the same time, asserted the possibility of a mystical connection with Him, by the theological differentiation of God’s nature and His energies. Thus, in contrast to the
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Eastern unchristian religions, a human being to keep his/her individuality. The process of theosis consists of the perception by Grace of God's energy, participation of His nature "without that our nature has become the nature of God" (Lossky 1991:68). The basic means of accomplishing this purpose, according to hesychasm, are ascetic practices and Church sacraments.

There is a clear connection with perception by the images. Hesychasm theology recognizes the division of the world into spheres, and, in the same time, it asserts the possibility of overcoming of this division. Christ's Incarnation is a pledge of human theosis. All practical actions of the Church gain significance from this event. Sacraments are ascribed not only a psychological role, but also a role of real intermediaries in the Atonement of the human body. Ascetic exercises have importance, because they influence the human being which prepare human being for acceptance and perception of God's grace.

3.2.4 Features of the Development of Mysticism in the Russian Orthodox Church

Russia took mysticism from Byzantium. In the 11th century Kievian-Pechorian elders apprehended "the way of Aphon piety" (Zamaleev 1994:25). Hesychasm was established in Russia about the time of the "Palamit's Councils". Such Christian figures of the Eastern Church as Cyprian, Serge of Radonej, Fedor Simonovsky were founders of it (Zamaleev 1994:27). Russia not only passively received these traditions but actively developed them, especially after the fall of Constantinople. The hesychasm tradition did not become solely the destiny of the monks and hermits, but were widespread among laymen. Vladimir Monomah (1997) in his Homily instructs how to pray the "kyrie eleison" (the basic element of hesychasm practice).

The tradition of hesychasm is still kept in the monasteries to this day. Interest in the heritage of Aphon was renewed in the 19th century under the influence of metropoli-
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tan Philaret (Ekonomtzev 1992a:168). Thus, the mystical direction of theology was and remains the important element of Eastern Church theology.

A new wave of mystical movements arose among the schismatics of 1667. The reason for it was the growing religious consciousness of people forced to assert their beliefs deliberately. Besides, authority of the official Church was destroyed for them. The Bible, because of its relative rarity, could not occupy its proper place (in contrast to western Protestant movements). So, they sought a new authority. The people who received, as they claimed, direct revelation from God, took authority. The non-homogeneous movement "the Spiritual Christians" was the clearest and most widely distributed mystical movement. Later it formed the basis for the appearance of such movements as Molokans and other pre-protestant movements in Russia.

Quite often the mystical way of comprehension is opposed to the theological rational one. However such opposition does not always had a place in Eastern theology. Eastern Christianity retained both sides of the theological process during its history. Vladimir Lossky notes that in Eastern tradition only three Christian writers are given the title "theologian": they are "John the Theologian" — the "most mystical" of the four evangelists, "Gregory the Theologian" — an author of contemplative poems, and "Simeon the New Theologian", who praised the connection with God (Lossky 1991:10).

This surprising ability to combine extreme displays of mysticism with a rational understanding of theology was most clearly shown in the practice of the Russian Orthodox Church. Thus, such a representative of the Russian tradition of hesychasm as Nile Sorskiy asserted that "even the reading of Church books is pernicious without meditation" (Zamaleev 1994:29). Ascetics took the books with them even when they ascended to a pillar.

It is possible to explain this feature, by noting the imagery characteristic of thinking that is peculiar to the Eastern worldview. That thinking does not aspire to contrast reason
and faith, but it strives to combine them, using terrestrial wisdom, as a prototype of the heavenly. According to this understanding, the purpose of asceticism is not to destroy the body, but to deify it, to use it as an instrument for the achievement of a spiritual condition.

Hence, the revelation was not limited by a text that is fixed in written form in the Scripture, and decisions of the Councils, but it was thought by living truth, which was attainable by direct experience, when man can feel the presence of God in His Church.

(Meyendorf 2001:26)

Thus, the Church with its liturgy and sacraments is perceived in Orthodoxy not only and not so much as a keeper of correct doctrine, but it is a way for a human being to participate in divine experience. The practical elements of theology take first place. The accumulated experience mainly concerns the practical side of Christian life. Unfortunately, in practice, this often results in ignoring theoretical theology and major Christian doctrines.\(^6\) In this regard, the understanding of Christianity as Good News is being lost.

### 3.3 The Meaning of Church

The basic theological disputes, which flared up in the history of the Christian Church, revolved around such themes as christology, teaching about the Trinity and soteriology. It is natural, because these doctrines concern the essence of Christian teaching. Nevertheless the doctrine of the Church remained also one of the major theological themes. The bases for the later construction of doctrines about the nature and function of the Church and church hierarchy were incorporated into the New Testament. Later these doctrines were developed in the works of the apostolic disciples and the Early Church Fathers. The beginning of the doctrine of episcopal management was found in Justin’s work. Augustine

\(^6\)F. Shpidlik (2000:37) points out that Russian Orthodox tradition easily absorbed the practical experience of theologians, whose theology it recognizes for false (Origen, Abba Isaiah etc.).
developed the teaching about the nature of the Church as a means of salvation in his
disputes with the Donatists. The disputes also flared up around a control system for the
Church, its relations with the State.

The orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky (1991:140–141) points out that eccle-
siology is a reflection of christology and pneumatology. All basic christological disputes
were reflected in the doctrine of the Church. Therefore it is impossible to consider the
doctrine of Church separately from the whole theological system. This relation of eccles-
iology with the whole structure of theological knowledge was clearly shown in the doctrine
of the Eastern Orthodox Church. It practically impossible, to separate the social aspect
of the Church from its mystical nature.

3.3.1 The transformation of the meaning of Church

The meaning of Church was not constant during all of Christian history. Ecclesiology
was developed as a formulation of already existing concepts, and through their gradual
transformation in the society at stake.

First, there was a shift in the institutionalisation of the Church. The role of
charismatic leaders was gradually superseded by administrative ministers. The accent was
shifted from prophets, apostles and evangelists to bishops and deacons (Bosch 1997:216).
The concept of church hierarchy is precisely visible in the works of Ignatius. He constructs
the concept of a heavenly hierarchy: the Heavenly Father — Jesus Christ — bishop —

The development of the hierarchical structure in the Church was one of the impor-
tant factors which influenced the spread of heresy. The strengthening of Church Structure
was one of the ways of struggling with them. During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, the struc-
ture of the Church was becoming more exact. Irenaeus (130–212) had an influence on
its development. He connected the authority of bishops with that of the apostles, which
established this institute (Irenaeus 1998:III.3.1).

A second shift in the understanding of Church was a gradual development of the doctrine of a catholic (universal), invisible Church. The New Testament uses the term ἐκκλησία in two major important meanings: a local church (Mat.18:17; Act.9:31; 1 Pet.5:13; 3 John.1:9; Rom.16:1 etc.) and a catholic Church (Mat.16:18; Gal.1:13; Eph.1:22; Heb.12:23 etc.).

There was a gradual development of these two concepts. The ecumenical Church was perceived as an embodiment of God’s Kingdom. At the same time, the visible representation of the ecumenical Church on earth is local churches, which are connected by a common hierarchy.

Also there was a gradual development of doctrine regarding sacraments. The New Testament does not contain a precisely formulated concept of sacraments. Some passages speak about their symbolical meaning (1 Cor.11:24–26, 1Pet.3:21); others allow a more mystical meaning (1 Cor.10:16–17, Rom.6:4–5).

In the time of the Apostolic Fathers a specific mystical force was attributed to sacraments. Ignatius (1998a:XX) understood that the Eucharist “is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to prevent us from dying”. Later, this doctrine was developed by Irenaeus. He developed the doctrine of the two natures of the sacraments. According to his understanding, the Eucharist “consists of two realities, earthly and heavenly” (1998:IV.18.5).

The functions of Church also have changed in connection with it. David Bosch (1997:217) points to the change of the missionary paradigm. The Church became an “organization of salvation” instead of a “meeting of saved ones”. The meaning of salvation

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7James Dunn assumes a presence of chronological shift in the use of these terms already in New Testament (Dunn 1997:363). However, even if this shift happened, it could not be very strong. It proves to be true by separate cases of the simultaneous use of this term in different meanings (in early Paulinistic letters also): Mat.16:18 and 18:17; Gal.1:2 and 1:12; Phil.3:6 and 4:15, Col.1:18, 24 and 4:15, 16).
was changed to participation in the Church. The Church did not consist of saved ones, but salvation became impossible without the Church. Originally, the basic purpose of the Church was proclamation, now its presence in the world has become a testimony for non-believers. Cyprian (1998:IV.36) in his Treatise on the Lord's Prayer wrote: "Let the Gentiles look to this, who! [sic!] Are [sic!] not yet enlightened, or the Jews who have remained in darkness by having forsaken the light".

Thus, Eastern Christianity had an already-formulated ecclesiology, when it appeared in the territory of Russia. The understanding of Church as an embodiment of God's Kingdom was the basis for its ecclesiology. From this, the Church hierarchy, the concept of sacraments, and the missionary paradigm were molded.

3.3.2 The meaning of Church in Russian Orthodoxy

Byzantine theology continued its development in the territory of Russia. A specific ecclesiological theology was generated as a result. For the Orthodox priest A. Shneman (1993a:1) the whole “…theology is based on the belief in the Church, which is not simply faith in asserting the existence of God, — it asserts the facts that occurred in history” [author’s selection]. Thus, the Church becomes the center of all spiritual life. There was a shift of accent from the eschatological expectation of Christ to assurance in His presence within the framework of a terrestrial organization.

Sarychev ([s a]:II.2) in his lectures formulates the purpose of a Church:

The visible or terrestrial Church is given by our Lord Jesus Christ as an establishment that includes true believers in Him. They form a mysterious spiritual Body of Christ, in which through the teaching of doctrines, sacraments and the visible hierarchical leadership (priesthood), by an action of the Holy Spirit, under the invisible heading of Jesus Christ, occur enlightenment and consecration of the people. This enlightenment and consecration are given by the Redeemer and proceed forever, for the purpose of leading people to salvation (— reunion with God).
In another place Sarychev (II.1) wrote: "the terrestrial Church is a preliminary establishment for transition to the heavenly Church". The earthly Church is a "spiritual Eden" (Okrujnoe Patriarshie i Sinodalnoe Poslanie... [1895] 1995:200). Churches have gifts of the Spirit for the spiritual growth of their members. Connection with God (theosis) is possible only through the Church, its unity and sacraments. This understanding causes the sizable attention to the practical side of tradition and seeming inactivity of the Orthodox Church in mission. Actually, the meaning of mission in the Orthodox Church is remarkably different from the Protestant or Catholic understanding. The basic purpose of missionary activity is to unify everybody within the framework of the Saving Church. The Church's being in this world, is a pledge and means of change, consecration of the world. The basic missionary task of the Church is preservation of purity and power to change. The basic way of testimony is an invitation of humanity to the liturgy (Bosch 1997:211).

For the Eastern Church, in contrast to the Western church organization was not necessarily connected with terrestrial authority. The uniting source in Byzantium was not the Church, but a secular authority. The importance of the common center decreased even more after the fall of Constantinople. Every autonomous church (patriarchates, metropolis) is considered as completely independent. None of them was officially supreme. The "Patriarch of Constantinople has some primacy of honour, and sometimes he is the judge in the settlement of disagreements; nevertheless the totality of the Church (the Eastern Orthodox — G.L.) does not fit into his jurisdiction" (Lossky 1991:15).

The main attribute of the true Church is unity.

Only one Church can be named "The Church", The United, Holy, Synodical Church, the Church where His true teaching is maintained unmuddied,
the Church as the Body of Christ. This Church is the community of local orthodox churches who alone make a united Catholic Church of Christ.

(Ogicki, Kozlov 1995:11)

This definition contains some important aspects of orthodox understanding. The basis of orthodox structure is local Orthodox churches.⁹ Unity is created on the basis of their specific interaction ("community") and also maintenance of a common doctrine.

The absence of a strict administrative and didactical hierarchy in the Orthodox Church can be observed both at the level of the relations between metropolitans, and within local churches. So the Encyclical of the United, Holy, Synodal Church to all Orthodox Christians of 1848 (Okrujomoe Poslanie... [1848] 1995:17) asserts, "that for us the keeper of piety (ἐπερασπιζής τῆς ὑπηρεσίας) is the body of the Church, that is the people (laypeople — G.L.)."¹⁰

The meaning of the priesthood in the Orthodox Church relates rather to the mystical role which it plays in the Church, than to its administrative position. It is impossible in the Orthodox Church to administer the sacraments (and service in general) without a special minister who has a right to do it "from the Church’s face and together with the Church" (Semenov-Tyan-Shansky [s a]:68).

Conditional sanctity of the church hierarchy (caused by a place in the "christological structure of the Church" — G.L.) gives, independent of persons and intentions, objectivity first of all to the liturgical actions of clergy.

(Lossky 1991:141)

The role of the priest in Orthodoxy is the role of an intermediary to administer sacraments, in contrast to the Western Catholic Church, where the priest has special

⁹It is applied to the patriarchies and metropolises but not to local parishes.
¹⁰This division is often necessary in the practical life. However it is not fixed in theology. The basic division is in the sequence of transfer of "gifts of Grace". Terlecki (1891:107) describes the united Church, as consisting "from the pastors (shepherds), who are givers of gifts of Grace, and from those who are shepherded".
authority. The impersonal passive forms "you are baptized..." and "thine sins be forgiven thee" are used in baptism and confession instead of words uttered in the first person "I baptize you..." and "I forgive your sins..." (Ogickiiy, Kozlov 1995:112). The bishop does not have his own authority, but the sacraments and rituals, which are administered in the Church, enclose two wills and two actions (priest and Holy Spirit — G.L.) that are shown simultaneously..." (Lossky 1991:141–142).

The Church is compelled to rely on other authority because of the absence of a common administrative center. Tradition has become the authority for the Orthodox Church. The meaning of tradition is based on God's continuing action in the Church. God keeps and develops revelation through the Church. The unity of the Church is considered not only as a unity between separate churches, but also as a "historical unity" (Sarychev [s a] 2.1).

Historical unity is understood as a continuity of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ. The terrestrial Church is endowed with Divine authority because of rapprochement of two concepts of the word ἐκκλησία. This authority of transmitted teaching is called Church Tradition. The Orthodox Church considers the maintenance of tradition as one of its main functions.

However, like any church structure, tradition is not something stiffened, unequivocally determined, and fixed. Tradition is not only a set of information. Orthodox tradition is deeply practical. It offers the experience of interpretation, application of apostolic understanding of the Scripture to human beings (cf. Kuraev [1997] 2001:11).

The tradition of the Orthodox Church is very eclectic by nature. It includes some elements of Judaism, Hellenism, and ethnic traditions of the nations where its theology developed (Shpidlik 2000:15–17).

It includes even the works of theologians who were recognized (by this Church) as heretics. For example, Eastern Christianity treats with great respect Origen, the
monophysit Abba Isaiah and the nestorian Isaac Sirin. The reason is the emphasis of orthodox theology on practical experience ($\pi\rho\alpha\varsigma\nu\zeta$).

The liturgy is a most important factor in the maintenance and transfer of tradition. Its basic structure was formed quite early, and after that there was a gradual enrichment by various elements.

Considerable attention to external elements of church tradition in many respects is determined by features of imagery perception, when the external elements relate to a spiritual reality which is standing beyond them. Eucharistic theology begins to play a basic role because of the significantly smaller attention given to church teaching.

The accumulation of experience in the Orthodox tradition occurred in various areas. Shpidlik points to five directions in which there was a development of orthodox tradition: practical theology (tradition of “doing”), spirituality of “learning” (that sometimes passed for mysticism), “spirituality of heart” (spiritual experience), honoring of the images, and church spirituality (or spirituality of communal monasticism) (Shpidlik 2000:32–37).

One of the features of orthodox tradition is that it is not often unequivocally and authoritatively expressed. Therefore it is not a set of unequivocally certain establishments (though such establishments also exist). Rather it represents a wide theological spectrum including various (sometimes inconsistent) representations concerning a set of theological issues. A. Kuraev ([1997] 2001:11) shows a number of apostolic disciples and the Church Fathers whose practical decisions were not executed. I.e. tradition is not constant (Kuraev 2001:11). It is difficult to determine by means of tradition the correctness of a separate theological statement or its acceptability in the practice of the church. However, tradition keeps a vector of the development of the Church.

Thus, it is possible to find some basic features in the ecclesiology of the Eastern Orthodox Church. First, the Church is the embodiment of God’s Kingdom. The clearly
expressed common hierarchical system and division of the church on teaching and listening are absent in this kind of church. However, ministers of the Church have a special role in the administering of sacraments and rituals as mystical intermediaries. Also they are the representatives of the Church before God. Tradition finds an important role in the creation of unity because of the absence of a strong hierarchical system.
Chapter 4

Examples of Identity

4.1 Mystical understanding of a Church

The aspiration to be released from the claims of Church in the exclusive role in the process of personal salvation was one of the motives of Luther’s reforms. Luther has updated the doctrine of salvation through faith in Christ. He has put a human being in front of God by removing all intermediaries. His reforms have resulted in a new understanding of the priesthood of all believers. It gave the right to read and interpret the Scripture to all Christians. However:

Luther revolted against abuse, misinterpretation, and distortion of Christianity, which transformed customs of the Roman Church of epoch of Renaissance into something reminiscent of Sodom and Gomorrah. But at the same time he continued to esteem as gracious the same Church (as in it “the Word of God was audible and Sacraments was accomplishing”), and consider himself as its faithful child.

(Mudjugin 1994:13)

Luther and later Calvin continued to develop the doctrine of the Church. By refusing to recognize the priesthood of the existent church institutes as the basic attribute of the true Church, they have put forward the sermon of the Word of God and correct the accomplishment of the sacraments.
The English Congregationalists and the Baptists, which were branched from them, have proclaimed the idea of the Gathered Church as basic. In their understanding a Church "consists of the whole number of the elect" (Confession of 1689, item 26:1). The horizontal dimension of a Church has become basic in their understanding.

Those thus called, he commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship, which he requireth of them in the world.

(26:5)

As it was shown above, the Orthodox Church, on the contrary, emphasises the vertical dimension of a Church, as a Kingdom of God on Earth. It is the basic channel of the action of God. It does not consist of saved people, but salvation occurs through it.

The engendering Evangelical movement in Russia has appeared between two poles of opinions (the Orthodox and the Baptist). It will be shown below, that in its official creeds the movement developed in accordance with traditional Baptists, however in practical life it gave large attention to the vertical dimension of a Church, recognizing it as an important channel of divine action.

4.1.1 Understanding of a Church by the Dukhobors and Molokans

Dukhobors

The movements, which have preceded the Dukhobors and Molokans (the various mystical sects), did not aspire to a formal break with the official Orthodox Church. Basically they concentrated on a revival of spiritual life through special mystical experiences. They did not feel the necessity to create a doctrine about the Church.

The first Dukhobors continued this policy also. Despite the critical attitude to the practice and the theology of the Orthodox Church, they did not consider that it was necessary for them to leave it. Soon, however, as a result of the persecutions and the
exiles in 1801 on Molochnye Waters (Molochnaja river), Dukhobors were compelled to be formed in a quite independent and original structure. In the new situation they could not exist as a movement of protest based only on the criticism of the existent Church. They were compelled to develop their own doctrines in the details. The difficulty of researching the Dukhobors' theology is related to their tendency to discredit the importance of any written-down doctrines (of "the killing letter"). The work of the Ukrainian philosopher and humanist Gregory Skvoroda in the 18th century was the earliest attempt to write down and to systematize the doctrine of Dukhobors (cf. Karetnikova 1997).

The Dukhobors' doctrine of a Church is strongly dependent on their understanding of the highest authority of the "Living Book". According to this doctrine, God's revelation is kept in the hearts of the faithful disciples since the time of apostles. Any separate individual has no right to claim a completeness of revelation in himself. Thus, the comprehension of God's knowledge is possible only in a community (cf. Margaritov 1910:98–99). The content of this "Living book" consists of both tradition kept since Christ and the apostles, and new revelation given by God.

In contrary to Evangelical understanding, Dukhobors did not recognize the Bible as a full Word of God. They admit it is one of the attempts to render the contents of the "Living Book". Pobirihin (one of the leaders of the movement of Dukhobors), named the Bible the "great troublemaker" (VSEHB 1989:30). The "Living Book" has been embodied in a visible form only in the beginning of the twentieth century. The teachings and psalms were assembled there. However Dukhobors never gave major importance to the written words. First of all, they paid attention to the book, which "is distributed among hearts of separate Dukhobors" (Margaritov 1910:100).

The Dukhobors protested against the Orthodox tradition (Margaritov 1910:100). Nevertheless their understanding of the "Living Book" in its nature is the hyperbolic Orthodox doctrine. In their understanding the existence of the "Living Book" provides a
historical continuity of the true Christianity from the time of apostles.¹

In the Orthodox understanding, tradition is one of the major ways of the transferring and development of God’s revelation. Tradition is a key for interpretation of the Scripture and the development of mystical experience. In the doctrine of Dukhobors, as a matter of fact, a tradition (the “Living Book”) surpasses (or much more replaces) all other ways of revelation of God.

In the doctrine of Church, Dukhobors are concentrated on the universal body more than on a local community. Their “Living Book” is not limited by the framework of a certain community of the believers. S. Margaritov (1910:103) considers that the Dukhobors understanding of a Church includes the representatives of all religions. However this interpretation of their doctrine is not quite reasonable. The aspiration to determine the attitude to nonchristian religions was not peculiar for Russian dissenters, which have appeared and developed in the mono-denominational Orthodox environment. On the contrary, according to resources of interrogation of Dukhobors in 1792 (cf. Jasevich-Borodaevskaja 1912:214–215) they “Believe in the United, Holy, Apostolic Church, which is an assembly of the true Christians”.

Besides, as in the Orthodox Church (and in contrary to Protestants), sermons or interpretation of the Scripture in the community was practically absent. They recognized the Holy Spirit as a basic interpreter and teacher (Margaritov 1910:126). There was not enough attention given to the role of the Church as teacher in the Dukhobors’ doctrine.

Choosing the Dukhobors’ way was quite individual since the Dukhobors did not represent the organized structure, and were scattered in various places. Right after their placement on the Molochnaya river they were compelled to organize a community with the specific established organization (Margaritov 1910:91–92). The new oppressions they

¹The disagreement with absolutisation of the ‘Living Book’ has become the basic reason of split between Dukhobors and Molokans.
underwent in the middle of 19th century, the Dukhobors' exile to the Caucasus, and internal disorder have caused them by necessity to be more careful in the development of their theology (Margaritov 1910:95–96). In the process of the appearance of the separate Dukhobors' communities, the doctrine of the Church (local community) began to play a more important role in the life of Dukhobors. Even in the first settlements on Molochnye waters there were attempts to organize a communal economy. Some communities began returning to the Orthodox understanding of the mystical role of a Church in the process of salvation.

Thus, a major element of the Dukhobors' understanding of the Church as a body of Christ is the doctrine of the maintenance, development and further transfer of God's revelation. This is a reason for both their ecclesio-centric theology, and reverence of each separate man as a carrier of God's revelation.\(^2\) The understanding of the Church as keeper of the "Living Book" is a major factor in the teaching of the Dukhobors. The role of a separate community is not emphasized. The understanding of its role was advanced rather in connection with economic necessity than a theological one.

**Molokans**

In many respects, the Molokans adopted their teaching from the Dukhobors. However, their doctrine obtained certain difference. The basic reason for division between Dukhobors and Molokans was the different understanding of the role of the written revelation of God (Bible). In contrast to the Dukhobors, the Molokans asserted the Bible's supremacy over all other ways of revelation (Popov, Pankratov, Mihailov [1905] 2001:4). Such understanding naturally changed their ecclesiology.

Tradition (the "Living Book") took a subordinate role in relation to the Scripture in the Molokan understanding. According to this, the role of the Church consisted not

\(^2\)The tradition, which was perceived with delight by Leo Tolstoy, was bright a representation of such reverence of a human being. At a meeting Dukhobors bow to each other esteeming the image of God, which is presented in each human being.
only in the maintenance and development of God’s revelation, but rather in its correct interpretation and application. It was reflected in the pattern of services. Now, services were conducted with a Bible on the table (Margaritov 1910:125–126). The interpretation of Scripture began to play an important role (cf. Popov et al [1905] 2001:5).

However, the understanding of each human person as a carrier of God’s revelation continues to play an important role in the teaching of the Molokans also. For example, interpretation could be made not only by specific preachers, but also by different members of the community (Margaritov 1910:126).

The Molokans’ dogma underwent various changes during the 18th–19th centuries. By the end of the 19th century there were many Molokan sects, which rather differed in their theology. The most interesting feature is not the Molokans’ creeds as such, but the process of their change.

In Molokan sects where theology underwent insignificant change (such as Tambov’s or Vladimir’s) the doctrine of Church is basically present in the negative form. They deny the doctrine of church hierarchy and the mystical role of the Church as mediator in the transfer of the sacraments (Popov et al [1905] 2001:5, 10–13, 23 etc.). This is caused by the fact that the process of the formulation of the theology of the Spiritual Christians coincided with the process of separating it from the Orthodox Church.

However, some items of the creeds expose their understanding of community. For example, in the section about prayer (6) the Molokans prove the practice of prayer by turning to face each other. They see the basis for this practice in the Biblical teaching about the special presence of God in the assembly (Ps.46:5, Zech.2:10, Mat.18:20). Thus, a local community begins to take a specific place in their theology. This doctrine is not advanced and does not go further than a direct Bible quotation. However, in comparison with the early forms of Spiritual Christianity, these indications are a definite step forward.

An indication of the special presence of God among the believers is characteristic
of confessional formulations of Russian dissenters.\textsuperscript{3} These movements separated from
the Orthodox Church with its imagery perception and the doctrine of the special action
of God through religious objects and church architecture. As an alternative doctrine,
Russian dissenters asserted the concept of the sojourn of God among them.

There was a new current in the environment of the Molokans — "the Don sect"
(named for the Don River) in first half of the 19th century. This Molokan sect took a
step back to the Orthodox understanding of sacraments under the influence of the exiled
Cossack Andrey Salamatin. In addition, the role of the Church has also changed. Since
newborn children were now being baptized (Kolodin [1986] 2001:3), the local church (in
this case, presbyters representing it) has taken on the role of intermediary in the transfer of
gifts of grace. A human being becomes connected with a local church from very childhood.

Thus, Spiritual Christianity initially represented a movement of individual renewal.
It did not try to create a new model of the Church, but continued to recognize the
existing one. However, by the separation of Spiritual Christianity from the environment
of Orthodoxy the determination of the understanding of the Church was required. The
role of the local church grew gradually and, in some cases, Spiritual Christians practically
returned to the Orthodox understanding of the Church as a place of Salvation (in contrast
to understanding Church as assemblies of the saved).

4.1.2 Meaning of the Church in the teaching of Stunde and the
Baptism

The Stunde revival in territory of the Russian Empire was similar to the initial forms
of the Spiritual Christianity; it did not represent a structured theological movement. It
was a movement of revival within the framework of the existing Church. The people

\textsuperscript{3}There is a similar indication in Stunde "Rules of Confession of New-believers of Russian Brotherhood"
(Ratushnyiy [1873] 1908), and it was point by collinear Dembrowskiy (Rojestvenskiy 1889:173). This
deliberate underlining of this item of confession shows the importance of such understanding for Russian
sectants.
aspired, to find the answers on spiritual and social issues in the faith. Russian Stunde did not aspire to separate from the Orthodox Church just as the German Stunde did not aspire to leave the frameworks of their communities, but it offered a certain revival and activization of spiritual life within the framework of an existing structure. However the Russian movement differed from others by bigger radicalism (Emeljanov 1878a:221). Very soon it left the official Church. Besides, Russian Stunde acquired some features of its theology directly from the Spiritual Christians, which converted to it (Emeljanov 1878b:211).

It is difficult to restore the theology of the Stunde precisely, because a common officially recognized confession did not exist (Копия доклада... [1896] 2001:9). In connection with the protest nature of Stunde it practically does not contain positive statements about the Church. The creeds, which preserved until now, such as: "The Asking Points to Stundist Ivan Egorov Strokin" ([1895] 2001), and Exposition of the Basics of Faith by Ivan Shubskiy ([1880] 2001) do not contain doctrines about the Church. Both of these confessions refuse the priest's hierarchy and sacraments (Strokin [1895] 2001:10,12,14; Shubskiy [1880] 2001:4,9,12). Ivan Shubskiy also refuses the identification of any church building as a place of God's presence (5). Besides, Ivan Shubskiy, like the Molokans, proves necessity of assemblies of believers by reference to special presence of Christ at the assembly (14). Thus, Stunde are in a transitive condition in the doctrine of the Church. They have refused the Orthodox doctrine about united terrestrial Church with its common priesthood and sacraments. But they have not created their own complete doctrine.

German colonists helped in the positive doctrinal formation. One of the basic centers of the Stunde's revival was in Molochnye waters (near the German colonies). A rather complete copy of Rules of Confession of New-believers of Russian Brotherhood was found in 1873 during the search in the house the leader of Stunde Mikhail Ratushniy ([1873] 1908:447-482). This confession is an adapted doctrine of the Mennonite Brethren
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There is a certain connection between this confession and Onken’s ([1872] 1908) *Hamburg confession*. These confessions coincide almost literally in some fragments (for example, Onken [1872] 1908:II and Ratushniy [1873] 1908:I). However this dependence is not very strong. The amount of direct quotation is quite insignificant. There is also a complete original structure in the *Rules of Confession of New-believers* (Ratushniy [1873] 1908). Thus, in spite of the fact that this confession was formed under strong influence of German colonists, it underwent a certain processing. Its specificity (which can be clearly seen in the light of comparison with Onken’s ([1872] 1908) confession) reflects the peculiarities of the Russian Stunde. The questions concerning unacceptability of pedobaptism (Ratushniy [1873] 1908:IV), and necessity of preaching to everyone (in spite of the confession) are specially stipulated in the *Rules of Confession of New-believers* (II).

The *Rules of Confession of New-believers* practically does not differ from Onken’s confession concerning the understanding of the Church. The doctrine about the visible terrestrial Church is in its confession. The first characteristic of the true Church is that it consists “of true — believing members only” (V). The basis of the Church is Jesus Christ Himself. Its pattern is the apostolic Church. The purpose of the Church based on Eph. 4:11–16 is affirmed in the item VI of the confession: the spiritual growth through Jesus Christ and mutual service. Thus, Ratushniy perceives the Church, as an assembly of believers, first of all. His confession quite coordinates with the Anabaptist’s wing of reformation.

The main term, designating the Church in this confession is “Brotherhood” (VI, VII). The importance of a horizontal dimension of the Church is emphasized. It is an important distinction between Stunde’s understanding and the Orthodox one, where the basis is an emphasis on the heavenly, mystical essence of a Church.

The doctrine about excommunication from the Church of those who are unworthy has been contained in it and also in all subsequent (already Baptist) confessions (VII).
A similar practice was almost not applied in the country where state religion was Orthodoxy. It was impossible because of the understanding of the Church as a place of salvation. This feature was emphasized also by the Orthodox viewpoint. For example, during the systematizing of the doctrines of the extra-orthodox movements in the village Novo-Vasilevka, the presence (or the absence) this item in the confession was one of the criteria in classifying the movement as Stunde (Golovashenko [1998] 2001:ad), 2,5:7). Baptism in general has continued a similar line of development. The basic confessions of 19th century were based on Onken’s confession and contained the same attitude and approach.

Thus, it is obvious, that originally Stunde incorporated the negative attitude to the Orthodox understanding of the Church. Later, the positive elements of the teaching, which were basically accepted from German colonists (Mennonite Brethren and German and Philadelphian Baptists, who was formed the background) have re-emerged.

The basic Baptist confessions in the territory of Russia were also connected to Onken’s confession (up to the end 20th century the basic confession was a corrected translation of the Hamburg (Onken’s) confession made by Pavlov, and edited and republished by Odincov). The understanding of the Church as an assembly of elected, saved, and true believing Christians was strongly fixated by those confessions. The active organization of para-church (interchurch) missionary organizations was possible because of such understanding. 4

A clear difference from the Orthodox Church views was shown in apologetic works. In the article “Christ and Church” V.G. Pavlov (1907a:2–8) points to the Church’s concentration on itself, instead of on Christ as the main reason of spiritual decline in the Orthodox Church. Pavlov calls to a return “to the initial apostolic practice” in order to

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4About a similar organization see, for example, the article of Pavlov (1907c:13–20) “Our assemblies”. It was proclaimed “allocation of the business of mission in the special society, which was named Missionary one” (15). The form of management in this society is described further on. It shows practically complete autonomy (including autonomy from the Baptist Union).
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change this situation (3). Pavlov finds the substantiation of his opinion in the practice of the first church:

The apostle's task consisted not in the baptism, but in the proclamation of God's words (Mat. 28, 18–20; 1 Cor. 1, 17). They knew that the door of the sheep-yard (the door of the Church) was Lord Jesus, and, hence, they tried to not enter the people into the Church, but lead them to Christ...At first the people "were attached" or "joined" to God and...then all such people, as "saved" have been already attached to the Church by God Himself (Act. 11, 24; 5, 7; 2, 47).

(ibid. 4)

Thus, the official position of the Russian Baptists was a continuation of a German line of the teaching (and Philadelphian Baptists). Nevertheless, the practice frequently differed from the public statements. The speech of V.G. Pavlov (1907d:16–20) is given in the magazine Baptist. This speech took place during the consecration of the house of prayer in Pyatigorsk. The sermon was based on the words of Jacob in Genesis 28:17. In particular, Pavlov said: "So for us, the place of God's presence is a Home of God, this is a place where God's people is gathering and His Word is proclaimed" (17). This definition of the Church is very eclectic. It combines in itself the characteristics of the Church of the Reformation and the confirmation of a special mystical presence of God, which is peculiar to Orthodoxy.

The existence of such "Orthodox" understanding of the Church is explained by spreading of Baptism, in the environment of the Molokans and others extra-orthodox sects. As it was shown above, they created an ecclesiology because they were aspiring to

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5 In general, the parallels between the Church (as an assembly of believers an as a building) and the Old Testament Temple even now are characteristic for Russian Baptism. For example, on the official sate of VSEHB (www.baptist.org.ru/html/all_other/architecture.htm) the citation of Ezr.5:15 anticipates the photo-gallery of Houses of Prayer. Also, the second important sate E3HB (www.rus-baptist.narod.ru) quotes the fragment of the book of N.A. Kolesnikov (1998), where the consecration of Houses of prayer is put on one line with baptism and communion. The purpose of the consecration is the special presence of God, similarly to Solomon's Temple (1 Kin.9:3). The familiar citation (Mat.18:20) about the special presence of God in the assembly of believers is proposed already in this article as one of the substantiations of the practice of a consecration of a House of Prayer.

6 Luther's doctrine about the Church as a place of the proclamation of God's word, and Anabaptist understanding of a Church as an assembly of God's children.
prove their right to existence and define their attitude to the Orthodox Church. In this approach they repeated some points of the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, using them in their own favor.

This was promoted by active Baptists' preaching among the Molokans and other sects of Spiritual Christianity. The Report to annual assembly of the Siberian department of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (Gorbachev, Vyrypaev 1907:13–16) and another Report about a missionary trip (Gorbachev 1907:16–17) are given in magazine Baptist. In these reports missionaries describe trips around the Russian Empire. The Orthodox and various Spiritual Christians (the Dukhobors, Malevans, and the Molokans) were the main recipients. The missionary's usual practice consisted in daily preaching for several days. Thereafter they interviewed and baptized new believers. The assembly, which was traditional for the Baptist practice, where communion and the laying hands took place, followed baptism. Thereafter, missionaries drove off to other areas. Their sermons were in settlements, where no or an insignificant number of other Baptists were situated. It becomes obvious, that the newly formed church, did not become Baptist instantly. The basic question for many believers, and especially among Molokans, was the question about baptism. In spite of accepting the Baptist's view on it, their former worldview remained.

Undoubtedly the Baptist movement, which came into Russia with an already strongly formed creed, reluctantly perceived these kinds of influences. The doctrines, which were unequivocally contradicting their views, were unequivocally rejected. On the other hand, there was a small change of emphases in the understanding of the Church as a place of the mystical presence of God (for example, it was mentioned in Ratushniy's

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7The places with the biggest number of families were Polish-German villages in which there were “4 families of brothers and 11 souls of Church members, 4 from which were excluded” (15). In the time of the missionary visit those villages 13 men became believers, 7 from which were baptized. Thus, the Church has grown twice during those days.

8Rojdestvenskiy (1889:173–177) points to the words of Ivan Ljasockiy, which was the leader of one group which was converted into Baptism: “concerning of this catechism (Onken's)... it was read at the beginning of the Baptist's assemblies, then the reading was stopped. Among Baptist leaders only Ratushniy and Riaboshapka know this catechism, other Baptists are familiar with it not satisfactorily”. There were also evidence of the rather sharp contradictions which existed between new-believers from Stunde and the formed Baptist movement (175–177).
confession, or Pavlov’s sermons). These emphases were especially strongly shown in “folk” theology.

This kind of theological “recidivations” are not unequivocally negative phenomena. They were a reflection of Russian conditions and further development of Russian theological thought. Frequently they aspire to fill certain holes in traditional Protestant theology. So, it is obvious that Russian Baptism in the understanding of the Church makes a certain step toward an emphasis on the vertical dimension of the Church. This kind of approach was typical of Orthodox understanding, and Evangelical believers have continued in their path of theological development.

4.1.3 The Understanding of sacraments by Evangelical Christians

As it was shown above, there was a certain distinction in occurrence and development of such sects as Molokans, Stunde, the Baptist and the Evangelical Christians. The first three sects were quickly formed as separate from the Orthodox Church organizations. Considerable prejudice and hostile attitudes to them from the part of State Church promoted this. It concerned especially the Baptists, which appeared in the territory of the Russian Empire as an already formed denomination with a creed and structure.

In contrast, the Evangelical Christians did not oppose the official Church. Initially it was a revivalistic movement, which only later took on the forms of separate confession and gradually drew together with the Baptists. The active participation in the movement of the Evangelical Christians did not mean a resolute break with the Orthodox Church originally. Initially in St. Petersburg rebaptism was not required from converts, who were already baptized in his childhood (Liven [1967] 1990:103–104). The basis for acceptance of people was a confession of Christ as a Saviour. Thus, the basic motive for confession of

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9 Lord Redstock did not aspire to create a new Church, he refused the necessity of the existence of a Church as organisation (see for example, the description of Lord Redstock’s sermon: “Christ has saved you, has justified you, has consecrated you, has redeemed... it does not matter to which Church you belong to... What do you need church after that for... you are a church for yourself now, moreover the Church of the Living God...” (Terleckiy 1891:14)).
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Evangelical Christians was personal faith. The intelligentsia, which came into the salon where lord Redstock preached, was not strongly connected with the Orthodox Church before joining the community of the Evangelical Christians.\(^{10}\) Repentance did not require from a human being the change of attitude to the Church. The faith and the process of salvation among the Evangelical Christians were perceived as something deeply individual first of all.

The conversion of a human person to a movement with an already formed structure required the resolute break with the Orthodox Church. However the result of such break with the Orthodox Church has led a Christian to keep the old ecclesiocentricity of his worldview. The people, who were coming into the Baptist faith, continued to search for a Church, which could give salvation. Undoubtedly, personal confession of faith played an important role, however the importance of belonging to a Church was emphasized in these movements much stronger than among the Evangelical Christians. This was prompted also by a difference in the social origin of the converts. Basically poor folk, which did not find the answers to their spiritual questions in the State Church, came to the Stunde-Baptism, in contrast to the Evangelical Christians. Many of these were much closer to the Church before their conversion.

The Evangelical Christians continued the theological line of Darbysts and English General Baptists who were standing behind them. They were not strongly focused on the Church; they made the basic emphasis the proclamation of revival through faith. This was promoted also by an initial spread of the doctrine among metropolitan aristocracy, which was not strongly connected with the Orthodox Church. However gradually, in the process of intensification of negative reaction to this movement on the part of the Orthodox Church, the Evangelical Christians were compelled to develop a structure and

\(^{10}\)Even Orthodox missionaries was compelled to recognize the insignificance of the influence which the Orthodox Church had on the number of metropolitan aristocracy (1891:5-7).
a doctrine.

The negative elements of the confession (the rejection of Church Hierarchy, non-recognition of the sacramental part of the church rituals) required creation of a positive doctrine. Until the official formulation of these items, Pashkovy (the name of the Petersburg Evangelical Christians) filled this lack depending on their understanding. So, the Petersburg community has continued the assemblies in the style which was begun by Lord Redstock (Terleckiy 1891:105–106). In the environment of pure folk the movement of the Evangelical Christians shaped from its brightly expressed Protestant essence into Stunde-like forms. Terleckiy (84–86) describes the development of the movement in a village Lad’ino, Tver’ province. The spread of the Evangelical Christianity in this place occurred, basically, among the peasants. The important emphasis in their sermons was the protest against rituals of the Orthodox Church, and its hierarchy.

The correspondence of Pashkov with archpriest I. L. Janyshev (rector of St. Petersburg Orthodox Spiritual Academy), published in Church Bulletin (Pashkov 1880:3–7) was indicative of the process of Evangelical Christian theological formation. There he offered his confession. In particular, he writes in the section about a Church:

The church of the living God is a pillar and statement of truth (1 Tim. III, 15), it is a body of Christ (1 Cor. XII, 27), consisting of the living members, those who believe in Christ, redeemed by Him, belonging to Him and those who love Him, of the members, who are already died in Christ, living now and all those whom God will attach in the future to the body...in which he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God... (Eph. IV, 11–13)

(6–7)

This confession quite corresponds to the traditional Baptist understanding of the Church as an assembly of the saved. At the end of the 19th and the beginning the
20th centuries only this confession (among the Russian Evangelical Christians and the Spiritual Christians) is contained in the obviously formulated doctrine about the local and the universal Church: “the Church is an assembly or community of believers in one place; all Christians together are called the Church too” (Terleckiy 1891:100).

A similar item exists in the *Exposition of the Evangelical Faith* (Prohanov [1910] 1996:XIII). There, in particular, Prohanov allocates three types of the Church:

1. Invisible, catholic Church;

2. Visible local; and

3. Home Church.

The purpose for a local church is proposed as “the statement of Christ’s Kingdom among its members and distribution of it in the world” (Prohanov [1910] 1996:XIII).

The basic distinctions with the Baptists arose because of the various environments in which it spread in Russia. The Baptists absorbed much more from the doctrine of extra-orthodox sects. The Evangelical Christians had lesser clash with accusations that there is an absence of divine authority in their Church existence, because at first they did not aspire to create their own Church. They gradually developed a doctrine about their Church in the process of being isolated into a separate movement. The orthodox elements of ecclesiology penetrated basically from the national environment, and become a more characteristic feature of the Baptist Church.

4.2 The doctrine of sacraments

4.2.1 The understanding of sacraments by Spiritual Christians

The theology of the Orthodox Church is named “Eucharistic”. It emphasizes the mystical part of the liturgy. This focus has a rather solid theological substantiation. However,
in the practical life of peasants of little education, such theology frequently turned to
superstition and worship of the image.\(^{11}\) In this connection, rationalistic movements
(Kliment Smoljatich, Kirill Turovskiïy, strigolniks, and movement of Bashkin and Kosoy)
arose even before the schism in the Russian Orthodox Church. After the schism this kind
of rationalistic idea was especially propagated in mystical sects.

The early forms of Spiritual Christianity proposed their way of finding a unity with
God through personal experience, but they did not protest openly against sacramentalism.
This was a basis for the future and open statements against existing theology.

The Dukhobors, and subsequently the Molokans, openly acted against the external
attributes of the Church. They rejected everything external that existed in the church in
an aspiration to be “Spiritual”. Thus, the imagery thinking that is common to Orthodoxy
was replaced by symbolical thinking. Everything, including direct Bible instructions, was
interpreted as a symbol of ongoing spiritual processes. The next logical step was the
complete rejection of external symbols and the attempt to move on to a pure spiritual
level. The Spiritual Christians tried to reject the external part of rituals in general, by
replacing them with instructions about necessary spiritual changes. A similar approach
was clearly shown in the Molokan approach. In contrast to the Dukhobors, they highly
appreciated the authority of the Bible, but at the same time they aspired to interpret in
their own way its establishments concerning the external ritual part of Christianity.

Thus, the question of the relationship between the physical and spiritual parts in
the sacraments was essentially important for reformation, but did not stand before them
in general. They refused to recognize any connection between the physical and spiritual
world.

The spiritual interpretation of physical symbols is the basic content of *Confession*

\(^{11}\)Orthodoxy made specific reference to the lack of religious education among simple people and among
clergy (Margaritov 1910:86–87).
of the 1st and 2nd Tambov and Vladimir Molokans (Popov, Pankratov, Mihailov [1805] 2001). The basic structure of separate items of this confession:

1. The physical symbol,
2. The basic spiritual meaning,
3. The explanation and widening of this meaning with a substantiation by Bible references.

So the major meaning of baptism is proposed as "baptism by the Spirit", and the following are further explanations about its meaning: faith, purifying from sin, baptism in the death of Jesus, spiritual unity with Christ and "the baptism is equal to the teaching" (13).

It is the same for communion (participation in): "Divine and life-giving sacraments". These sacraments make up unity with other faithful and communion (participation) with the Spirit, "by a divine word", to the "heavenly rank", to Christ, to God's words (10).

Other sacraments, church establishments, Old Testament rituals (anointment, sacrifice, elements, priest's clothes and church utensils) were all interpreted in a similar way. The whole system of a relationship between symbol and spiritual reality thus was created and emphasised.

The basic incentive of Spiritual Christians was a protest against the idolizing of images. However, the protest nature of these movements, in the process of legal and territorial isolation, gradually weakened. As a result, by the middle of the 19th century various sects arose among the Molokans. Some of the Molokans completely rejected the spiritual interpretation. The only example of interaction between a spiritual and a physical dimension known to them was the approach of the Orthodox Church. There was a large group of Molokans (the Molokans of the Don sect), which revived many elements of Orthodox ritualism.
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However, the vacillation which began has not stopped. Spiritual searches forced the Molokans to address various theological sources. Among the Don Molokans a group known as Zecharians Molokans appeared. Their confessions (Zaharov [1899] 1908) represented a mix of traditional Molokan, Orthodox and Baptist beliefs. Their official creed included a set of direct citations from the Nicene Creed\textsuperscript{12}, from the Hamburg confession\textsuperscript{13}, and from references to Orthodox dogmatic works\textsuperscript{14} (perhaps other were also used).

In direct citations from the Hamburg Creed, the Zecharians dropped the name they used in church establishments: “there are gracious means, through which He attracts sinners to Himself and endow them with the blessing which was acquired by Christ our Saviour” (6). This phrase can be interpreted in different ways. However, in other parts of the confession, speaking about baptism (8) and about the Last Supper (10) they use the word \textit{sacrament}. The use of this word is not accidental. In the section about baptism there is a completely original insert regarding the necessity of sacraments for salvation: “The one who even was kind in his deeds, but has not received the seal of water, cannot enter the Heavenly Kingdom” (6). It is the same for the Last Supper. Besides the traditional Baptist understanding of the Last Supper as a commemoration and means of declaration, the Zecharians have a teaching that “those who are worthy become participants of Christ’s Body and His Blood that was shed for us on the Cross” (10).

This type of Molokan understanding is far from the traditional Anabaptist and Baptist teaching of the establishments of the Church as symbols. Some major importance is given to baptism. At first, it is the traditional Anabaptist and Baptist understanding of baptism as the joining to the Church (however, concepts of catholic and local Churches

\textsuperscript{12}Item 1 --- About God

\textsuperscript{13}Item 3 --- About a sin

\textsuperscript{14}Item 6 --- About means for Grace Achievement, and About Gods Establishments.
  Item 8 --- About baptism (excepting inserts proving pedobaptism).
  Item 2 --- About God’s Word; the substantiation of canon, which is taken from introduction in Orthodox theology written by Archbishop Mackary.
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are not separated here) (8). Also the effectiveness of baptism is connected to repentance (for an adult) and the finding of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is "one of the fruits of faith and love to Christ, introduction into obedience to God". However it is affirmed here that "it is not possible...to reach the Grace...to enter God's Kingdom" without it.

The doctrine of the Lord's Supper is drawn upon similarly to this. The confession contains the traditional Anabaptist understanding of the Supper as "the declaration of Jesus' death" and "memoirs of God's Son in the hearts of believers" (10). However, beyond these meanings, the concept of sacrament as a participation "in Christ's Body and His Holy Blood which was shed for us on the Cross" is used (6, 10).

This understanding is far beyond the Anabaptists' concept of sacraments. The authors of The History of EHB (VSEHB 1989:32) point out, that Don Molokans "actually have returned to Orthodoxy". However, the Zecharian doctrine of sacraments does not correspond any more to the orthodox understanding. In Orthodoxy the sacraments have even greater importance. They are endowed with power, independent of the condition of the recipient: "the holy sacraments are always effective" (Semenov-Tyan-Shansky [s a]:68). But it also depends on the person, that the fruit of sacrament "was increased by personal efforts" (ibid. 71).

Zecharians in their theology aspired to combine the Orthodox sacramentality (the understanding of sacrament as an intermediary in the transfer of God's Grace) with Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone. This kind of theological exegesis could not be very strong. However, this turn from Molokan "spirituality" showed a natural paradigm of thinking that is formed in Orthodoxy and that is kept in extra-orthodox movements.

After some time, the Zecharians became one of the most fertile grounds for the spread of Baptism and Evangelical Christianity. Thus, they became one of the channels of penetration of orthodox imagery perception in the emerging Evangelical movement.
4.2.2 The Concept of Sacraments in Stunde and Baptism

Stunde

The initial forms of Stunde did not distinguish in particular theology and aspired to attach great fullness to the spiritual life of a human person. Thus, the Stunde were not formally separated from the communities they were part of or from the Orthodox Church. The Stunde were converted from the Orthodox Church, continued to attend services and to participate in the sacraments (Margaritov 1910:156). Stunde who were converted from Molokans, kept the Molokan understanding of sacraments (their rejection). The separation of the Stunde from the Church took place in many respects under the influence of German colonists (Mennonite brethren, Reformationists and Baptists). As a result, the Stunde’s understanding of sacraments is quite in accordance with the understanding that was proposed by Hamburg Baptist and Philadelphian brethren at the time of the breaking off of the Stunde into a separate movement.

The conversion from Stunde, with an advanced negative component in their theology, to Baptism with a formulated positive theology, did not take place smoothly. Emeljanov (1878b:212) quotes a letter of one of the Stundists, who was indignant over the actions “of a senior brother” (elder), who

bought... a chalice and coverlet for the table. This custom is stolen from the Orthodox Church, and it is said that we should impose it as sanctity. But it is an idol, and it shall not be so. All of these are only decrees and nothing more... I say the same about water baptism... These are the same noose [trap — G.L.].

Thus, Stunde’s protest nature of theology was maintained for a long time, despite formal rapprochement with Baptism and acceptance of its teaching.

There was a series of “transitive forms” of confession, which arose during the formation of Stunde — and later of Baptism — as a separate movement. Furthermore,
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after the transformation of Russian Baptism into an independent (from foreign missions) movement, frequent “relapses” into orthodox understanding could be observed.

The confession of the Stundists Ivan Strokin ([1895] 2001) and Ivan Shubskiy ([1880] 2001) are examples of the “transitive forms”. Ivan Shubskiy asserts complete rationality of Christianity on the basis of complete revelation in Christ: “We do not recognize any sacraments (secrets), because all the secrets are opened with Jesus coming to the Earth and His resurrection from death” (9). Ivan Strokin ([1895] 2001) regards as rituals all sacraments of the Russian Orthodox Church (10–12). His explanation proceeds from the Orthodox tradition of pedobaptism. However, he gives his own meaning to the action, depriving it of the meaning of a sacrament: “We recognize the sacrament of baptism not as a sacrament, and not as a sacred ritual, which is made above the non-believer, but as the name of that day when the non-believer moves into the category of the believers...” (10). Thus, baptism, according to his understanding, precedes faith and spiritual revival. However it is not in itself that kind of source that produces gracious faith in a man. The necessity of birth from the Spirit is especially emphasized by him: “all of us are born of water, and those only who fulfill the words of God are born of the Spirit. Therefore we should not be baptized by water but by the Holy Spirit” (10). The baptizing by the Holy Spirit is not connected to sacraments, but to the deeds of man: “It is necessary for us to act as the Gospel says, in order to have the Holy Spirit in ourselves” (10). This confession reflects the understanding of a human being, who takes existing Orthodoxy for granted, without trying to change them or to reject them. In same time, he gives them a little bit of a change of meaning and emphasizes their insufficiency.

The community of Ivan Strokin is already quite separated from the Orthodox Church. There is a management in it led by a presbyter (9, 10, 18). Baptism and Communion are performed in the community but they are not sacraments: “We have
baptism by water and break bread as rituals" (10, 14). However, a detailed description of those rituals is not proposed.

The separate groups of the Stunde completely refused fulfillment of sacraments. For example, Rojestvenskiy (1889:170) quotes the phrase of one of Stunde's teachers, Balaban, which he said in prison of Tarashan: "rituals are theatres". Also, later in 1867 in a conversation with the priest Kiriakov he declared the same idea but in a positive key: "Religion should be a matter of the heart, and we do not have any business with the external appearance of religion" (Rojestvenskiy 1889:170).

The Confession of M. Ratushnyiy ([1873] 1908) reflects the rapprochements of Stunde with Baptism that had already begun. He does not avoid the common Orthodox word "sacrament" (IV) (in contrast to Ivan Shubskiy and Ivan Strokin). Despite this, the meaning which he gives to this term is quite in accordance with baptist confession. From the very beginning he stipulates that the accomplishment of baptism and "other rituals" does not transform a person into a Christian (II). "The Sacraments of Christ... are established only for believers" (IV).

The meaning of communion and baptism is detailed openly in the Rules of Confession. Two meanings of baptism are emphasized (IV):

1. "The promise of a good conscience to God";

2. The baptism as a symbol (of purification from sins, "burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ".

The communion, in spite of the name "sacrament", is perceived only as "a memory of the suffering and death of Christ, in a symbol of fellowship with Christ and a symbol of fellowship of the believers with each other" (IV).

Thus, it is possible to observe a gradual development of theology of sacraments in the Stunde. At first, it was a gradual displacement of emphasis from accomplishment of
external church sacraments to a renewal of internal life. Later they came to a conscious rejection of sacraments in their orthodox understanding. At the same time most of the Stunde drew together with the Baptists and accepted their understanding.

The Baptists

The gradual transition from Orthodox sacramental (imagery) to symbolical understanding of sacraments was characteristic for the Stunde confessions. But the theology of the Russian Baptists developed in an opposite direction.

The basic confession (Onken [1872] 1908), which was the basis for the majority of subsequent formulations of the creeds of the Russian Baptists, understands baptism and the Last Supper as deeper than only symbols. In the confession it is spoken not about sacraments, but about “means of Grace, through which he (God) attracts sinners and adopt for them the salvation, which Christ has bought” (VI). Among these means are listed in order the word of God, baptism, Sacred Supper, fellowship of saints, and prayer. Such formulation and placing of the description of external actions (baptism and the Last Supper) between the Word of God and events of spiritual life (fellowship of the saints and prayer) point out that the meaning given to them leaves the framework of ordinary symbolism.

Descriptions of the essence of baptism and the Lord’s Supper show that the author saw a definite spiritual reality behind them. According to this confession, baptism is the connection to the Church of Christ (with no indication of a division between visible and invisible). The Supper is a proclamation of the redemptive sacrifice of a victim and a special “close fellowship with Him [Jesus Christ]” (VI). In addition, Onken sees a certain form of covenant between a human being and God in baptism. So, on the part of a human being: “Baptism is a first fruit of faith and love for Christ, it is entered in obedience to God”. On the part of God baptism is: “the solemn announcement and assurance to
the believing godchild from the part of God that he [the godchild] is immersed in Jesus Christ...died with Him, is buried and risen...That all his sins are purified...That he is God’s beloved Son, in whom the Father takes pleasure” (VIII).

This understanding of baptism as an agreement, concluded between God and a human being, was further developed in the confessions of the Russian Baptists. This idea is emphasized in the confession of Frizen ([1903] (sa)) where the word “vow” (V) is used for a definition of baptism. This part of baptism has received its clearest expression in the confession of EHB 1985 (Confession of EHB [1985] 1992.). The text of the baptism formula is presented here. It is constructed as a dialogue:

The minister asks a set of questions of the baptismal candidate: “Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Do you promise to serve God in good conscience?”...After the affirmative answers of the baptismal candidate, he says: “On your profession of faith I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”. The person being baptized pronounces the word “Amen” along with the minister (8).

Thus, the meaning of baptism in the formed confessions of the Russian Baptists moves far from the framework of common symbolism. Through baptism a human being receives the seal of the Holy Spirit, and in him “the sense of his salvation and of bliss [rises] more definite and stronger” (Onken [1872] 1908:VIII).

The understanding of the agreement concluded through mediation of external symbols is also developed in the theology of communion. So, at the “First Edifying Baptist Congress in Omsk” (Pervyi nazidatelnyi s’ezd... 1925:36) it was affirmed: “The Lord’s Supper is an agreement in words and visible symbols”. This agreement was put on the same level with Noah’s covenant, Abraham’s covenant, and the covenant that was made on the mountain of Horeb.

Furthermore, despite the absence of the words “sacrament” or “communion” in the early creeds, confessions based on Onken’s creed affirmed as a meaning of the Lord’s
Supper that "Jesus gives His Body and His Blood to believers to eat in spiritual form in a sacramental symbol... The participation in the Body and the Blood should be God's pledge to the believer, through which is strengthened the feeling of his participation in Christ and His sacrifice, through which the forgiveness of sins perceived by faith is again announced and assured to him..." (Onken [1873] 1908:IX). Extra-orthodox believers easily perceived this understanding. In the same way, in Frizen's confession ([1903] (sa)) it is affirmed that "the believers participate of in the Body and Blood of the Saviour spiritually and mysteriously" (VI).

Modern Baptist confessions are more cautious in the explanation of the meaning of communion. In the confession of 1985, the section on the "Lord's Supper" (IX) is one of the shortest. In it is written only that the bread and the wine "point to" Jesus' body and blood. However, it is not explained what meaning is given to the words "to point to". Also there is an indication of "participation" with the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Confession of SCEHB (1997:7).

Undoubtedly, the theology of covenant differs from the traditional Orthodox understanding of baptism as a sacrament. However, the understanding of baptism in Russian Baptism is far beyond the framework of symbolical interpretation. Relations between the physical event and the spiritual action, which is expressed by it, play an important role in their theology. That is characteristic for imagery perception. The understanding of communion as a "spiritual participation with the Lord's Body" was shown especially clearly.

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15 The only the section about God's Trinity is similar to it. The brevity of those section shows not their small importance, but rather unwillingness to get inter theological disputes, about those questions.
16 Though in the Orthodox understanding of baptism as testament plays an important role (Terleckii 1891:106).
4.2.3 The understanding of sacraments by Evangelical Christians

The understanding of sacraments by Evangelical Christians passed a development similar to Stunde. Originally, the message about justification by faith, which was received from Lord Redstock, did not mention the external aspects of Christian practice. Gradually, the group of believers took the shape of a structured Christian organization. With this, there was also a theological separation from the Orthodox Church. This isolation included the formulation of the understanding of sacraments.

However, the formation of a negative view of the orthodox understanding of sacraments occurred in this group much faster than in Stunde. This was promoted by the insignificant influence the Orthodox church had at this time in Petersburg’s high society. Furthermore, Lord Redstock’s personal beliefs influenced the formation of the views of his followers, even though those beliefs were not preached openly.\footnote{According to description, which was written in the Orthodo Review 1878 (3): “Baptism...in Redstock's opinion, is a public confession of desire to enter the herd of Christ, and communion are memories of our salvation by Christ” (Terleckiy 1891:19).}

The Petersburg believers developed their own theological formulation rather late (in 1903). However, their theological understanding is well revealed in the editions of the “Society of spiritual moral readings encouragement”.\footnote{This society was organized by Pashkov in 1876 for “giving the possibility to people on the places of they residence to get the books of Holy Scripture, Old and New Testament, and works of spiritual-moral contents for a cheap price”.} The meaning which the authors of these brochures give to sacraments can be seen in the silence surrounding this theme. All mentions of in these brochures are directed against a hope of their saving power (cf. Terletzkiy 1891:50, 61). Similar anti-sacramentalism arises as a protest against the existing situation in the Orthodox Church.

In the correspondence with archpriest Janychev in 1880 Pashkov wrote:

I must recognize the sacraments, which were established by the Lord and His apostles, but I cannot be unconvinced by the word of God, that all the
sacraments are established only for believers, for whom they have Gracious action, turning to condemnation of everyone who comes to them unworthily, i.e. without faith...

(Terleckiyy 1891:72)

The use of the word “sacrament” in this statement is probably connected not so much to a feature of Pashkov’s theological understanding, but rather to the polemic character of the letter. It was written as the answer to a concrete question: “whether or not he recognizes salvation by sacraments” (Terleckiyy 1891:72). Besides, this was unsealed correspondence, and Pashkov at this time aspired to keep, at least seemingly, a connection with the Orthodox Church. An open rejection about this term could frighten off many potential followers.

Pashkov unequivocally acts against understanding of sacraments as a means of salvation in themselves. He connected their effectiveness with the faith of the accepting person. However, at this stage he did not act from the position of symbolism, and spoke about the “Gracious action” of sacraments.

Until 1905, in communities of Evangelical Christians, large differences existed in the understanding of the meaning and importance of sacraments. S. Liven (1990:104), in whose house there were assemblies, points out that “the different opinions or beliefs did not serve as a handicap to their mutual dialogue”. In 1905 many isolated Evangelical communities were united around Pashkov, and as a result the “First Petersburg community” appeared. Some of the believers remained with Kargel. (Later it received the name “the Second Petersburg community”).

The views of I. S. Prohanov were well presented in the Confession of the Evangelical Christians (Prohanov 1910). The influence of Orthodox ecclesiology is practically invisible in his confession. He insists on the necessity of baptism and communion for all Christians. However he consistently make a plea for their symbolical understanding.
In his confession he names baptism and the Lord’s Supper as “church establishments” or “God’s commandments for visible performance” (XIV). In this his confession strongly differs from the Baptist and Stunde confessions, in which these views are called “sacraments” (Ratushnyiy [1873] 1908), “Gracious means” (Onken [1872] 1908, Pavlov [1906] 1996), or “the sacred gracious establishment of Christ” (Frizen [1903] (sa)).

He separates baptism into spiritual and physical realms. “Baptism by water is an external sign of baptism, which was performed in the soul of a person already baptized by the Holy Spirit, or death for sin and resurrection for righteousness” (Prohanov 1910:XIV). In the same way, the “Lord’s Supper points to spiritual and historical events, which occurred on the Earth and in the soul of a human being” (XIV).

Thus Prohanov does not recognize the existence of the imagery connection of an external action with a spiritual process occurring in a human person. There is only symbolical expression of the events that have occurred.

Thus, it is obvious, that in contrast to the Baptist confessions, where there were a gradual enrichment of theology by the Orthodox understanding of the connection of physical and spiritual processes, the theology of the Evangelical Christians consequently asserted the position of symbolical connection. It was influenced by a specific contingent of the first converts, and also by Prohanov’s personality.

4.3 Church Hierarchy in Russian Evangelical Ecclesiolog

4.3.1 Spiritual Christians’ understanding of Church hierarchy.

Many mystical and, later, rationalistic sects had their roots in the environment of old-believer Bespopovcy who refused to recognize the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. But these sects did not begin to create their own hierarchical structure. However, their
understanding was far from the Reformational theologians or especially Anabaptists’ understanding of the priesthood of all believers. They waited for the last days, when the God will restore the Church in a miraculous way.

The founder of the Khlysts, Daniel Philipovich, who was from a Bespopovcy group, fulfilled the expectations of a part of the schismatics. According to a legend of the Khlysts, the LORD of hosts came upon him to announce the soon-to-come judgement. As a result, the Khlysts began to revere their leader as the living God and his assistants as apostles and prophets. Very soon, this “the authority of God” was transferred to other sect leaders. A similar attitude was found among the other Spiritual Christians and especially among early forms of Dukhobors (VSEHB 1989:29).

The understanding of priesthood by Spiritual Christians was not limited to unexampled reverence of the leaders. Jasevich-Borodaevskaja (1912:230–231) notes the activity of everyone in the life of the community. This was one of the reasons for the rapid spread of these movements among the peasants, who had no rights and were under serfdom. The basis of such active participation is found in the understanding of the descent of the Spirit, which was not limited by any external structure. So, during the “radenija” (special meetings, where the sectarians achieved ecstatic trans condition) all Khlysts aspired to experience the direct influence of God. Anyone could become a prophet. The conviction that each believer can become a voice of Holy Spirit exists also among Pryguns (“jumpers”) (Jasevich-Borodaevskaja 1912:256) and the Dukhobors (VSEHB 1989:29). The doctrine of the ‘Living book’, which was spread in the hearts of all true believers, played an important role in these sects. So, there was nobody who could claim possession of special knowledge or access to God (except separate “embodiments” of God).

Because of the absence of doctrine about the intermediation of a priest between God and human being, the Spiritual Christians greatly changed their understanding of Church hierarchy (in comparison with that of the Orthodox Church). First, the doctrine
of the special mystical role of the priest to transfer God’s Grace was abolished. The role of the priest was changed to the role of elders (Popov et al [1805] 2001:23). Their rights to supervise a community depended on their personal qualities: “a man who is reverent, known for observing God’s commandments (Jer. 5:1, 9:12 [sic!]) a man, that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth”.

The role of elders in accomplishment of sacraments was abolished in the Molokan and Dukhobor communities, because there were not too many external rituals. They kept only two rituals: the naming of a child, and weddings. And the role of elders was minimal even in these ceremonies. Names were given by parents, and only then were they officially affirmed by the elders (29). The necessity of elders was not mentioned in the section about weddings at all (30) (nevertheless, undoubtedly, they were present at the rituals).

One of the basic reasons for the rapid spread of mystical and subsequent rationalistic sects among the Orthodox population was an dissatisfaction with the spiritual and moral condition of the priests in the Orthodox Church’s hierarchy. However, the first mystical sects, such as Khlysts, did not tend to be separated from that Church’s system. This was also true for the first Dukhobors and Molokans, who existed within the framework of the Orthodox Church structure (Mitrohin 1997:202).

The reason for it was not conviction of special grace of the priests, but rather backwardness of their own Church hierarchy and aspiration to avoid persecution (Jasevich-Borodaevskaia 1912:227). However, as these sects developed, they were recognized as separate movements with their own hierarchical structure.

One of the important features of the Dukhobor and Molokan communities was a collegial leadership. Molokans often talk about many “elders” instead of one (Popov et

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19It is marked by Orthodox researches. For example Margaritov (1910:10) points to “the coldness to all Church in general, and therefore to faith. This coldness was appreciable not only to the simple people but also at the clergy...”.
al (1805) 2001:23, 29). The Orthodox Eparhial Missionary Committee of Tavricheskaya province point to the absence of senior presbyters among Molokans as one of their major distinctive features (Golovashenko [1998] 2001: add. 2:5).

The end of the 19th century was a critical moment in the Molokan movement. At this time, it was divided into several streams. Part of them remained faithful to the initial principles. The main change in the church leadership occurred in the Don sect of Molokans, and in their branch — Zaharovcy (also called ‘Evangelical Christians’). The role of ministers also changed because of the Don Molokans returned to the Orthodox understanding of sacraments. Only one presbyter is mentioned in the confessions of the II-nd Donsect of Molokans (Kolodin H. [1896] 2001:2, 6) and of I-st Donsect of Molokans (‘Evangelical Christians’) (Zaharov, Z D [1899] 1908:2, 3, 4, 5, 7). The only reference of presbyters in the plural is in the confession of I-st Don sect of Molokans (6) about anointing by oil, which was done by presbyters.

Thus, Spiritual Christianity consistently developed its own understanding about the role of ministers. They gradually departed from the understanding of the hierarchy of the priesthood as a means of transferring God’s grace. However, there was a certain return to the Orthodox understanding. A large number of followers of evangelical Christianity (Baptists and Evangelical Christians) appeared among these new currents, which were attempting to revise their views.

4.3.2 Development of the understanding of priesthood by Stunde and the Baptists

Similarly to the Spiritual Christians, Stunde reject the doctrine of the Orthodox Church about sacred church hierarchy, and about the special role of the priesthood in the transfer of God’s Grace. Most significant is not their understanding as such, but rather its change in the process of the spread of Baptism, and development of the Baptist understanding
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during the movement's transformation into a national movement.

The Stunde, as a movement with developed negative elements, before their connection with Baptism consistently denied any institution of priesthood. A. Rojdestvenskiy (1889:179–180) describes their theology:

There is nothing superior and divine in the origin of a Church... In foundation of a hierarchy... All of these are human deeds... They apply Matthew 23 to the members of the hierarchy.

According to this, Stunde did not aspire to develop its own hierarchy. However, by necessity, "senior brothers" had prominence in the assemblies, for supervision. Stunde's understanding of a "senior brother" differed from the Baptist understanding of a "presbyter". The basic role of a Stunde leader consists in management of the assembly. The form of the election (or the appointment) of this brother was not absolutely clear. Probably, no special procedure existed. It was a position for charismatic leaders. The basis for the performance of such a service was gifts of the Holy Spirit, "which He continues to give to the believers from the day of Pentecost" (Rojdestvenskiy 1889:197)

Later, through drawing closer to Baptism, elective presbyters appeared among the Stunde. The process of transformation of charismatic leadership to elective posts is well reflected in the Confession of Dymlin Stunde (204–208). These Stunde did not yet accept the whole of Baptist teaching (for example in questions about water baptism), but they were already in communion, and had begun to build a Church hierarchy:

We do not yet have priests, and replace theirs by a senior in the assembly. But those of us who are worthy, we recognize as presbyters, after election, and we will have priests soon.

(240)

The author of the Rules of Confession of New-believers of Russian brotherhood (M. Ratushniy) was already under the strong influence of Baptism. He devoted a special
section (Ratushniy [1873] 1908:VI) to church leadership. The precise hierarchical structure with presbyters, teachers and deacons is described there. Also the procedure for their appointment (through elections) is described.

The common name for church leaders used in this confession is “spiritual instructors” (VII, VIII). Elected “spiritual instructors” are “at the head of the brotherhood” (VII). Their tasks are determined by the Biblical quotation from Eph.4:12–16. The important peculiarity is the omission of the indication of the purpose “the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry” in this citation. It shows the peculiarities of the developing Church structure, where established leadership plays a basic role, but the role of each member of the church is limited.

The other task of “instructors”:

...to observe order, for excluding from the environment those people who will be disobedient and rebellious, according to the design of the Holy Scripture.(VII))

Also, only the “spiritual instructors” have right to perform ordination. Thus, the major part of Stunde already had a precise doctrine about church hierarchy, at the moment of fusion with the Baptists.20

The basic confession (Onken [1872] 1908) also contains a developed doctrine of church leadership (X. a,b). Firstly, this confession affirms the absence of a visible Only Head of the Church (catholic). Only Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (X. a). Secondly, this confession contains the doctrine about leadership of the Church. Those leaders are the elders (presbyters), teachers, and ministers. The leaders are elected by the church.

The tasks of “elders”:

20This conversion to the Baptist confession was not smooth. One Stunde person rather skeptically regards to the idea of “the senior brother” in the letter published by Emelyanov (1878b:212).
CHAPTER 4. EXAMPLES OF IDENTITY

1. To lead services;

2. “To carry out the decisions of the community”;

3. “To care for souls” (X-b).

The main task of teachers is to preach in the services. In addition, the teachers and the elders perform communion and baptism.

The task of deacons is to help elders and teachers, especially in “temporary business of church... i.e. its corporal needs” (X).

After election to these positions, ministers “are invested with dignity by dedication”. Dedication is made through ordination (laying on of hands). It is important that already ordained “elders of this or another community” ordain new ministers.

The doctrine about church ministers, as about paid posts appeared here for the first time among other confessions of Russian Evangelical movements (X).²¹

The authority of elders and teachers in the Church is not unlimited. They are subordinated to “Church discipline”. The doctrine of teachers is under the control of the community, which can “discharge from the post” (X).

However, at the moment of the appearance and distribution of this confession in the territory of the Russian Empire, its adaptation to the Orthodox and extra-orthodox understanding had not yet taken place. The basic features of its developing understanding are found in the documents, which describe the practical life of the Baptist Churches.

The role of full time ministers gradually grew. Pavlov’s article “Our Presbyters” is printed in the magazine Baptist (Pavlov, 1907b:20–21). There the practical understanding of Onken’s confession becomes visible. In particular, it says that ordination “promote ministers out of the common environment of believers, it puts them in a privileged position” (20). Such a statement already radically differs from a Stunde idea of “equality”.

²¹Any attempt of organizing of the mutual-aid fund in communities cause the strong protest from the side of some of the Stunde (Emelyanov 1878b:212).
Ordination played a special “sacred” role. It was important to Pavlov to show the continuity of ordained presbyters. He lists the chains of presbyters’ ordinations beginning from I. Onken, to a length of 6 “generations” (21).

The main word, which is used to designate the function of the minister is “pastor” (shepherd). This word is almost never used in Russian Baptist confessions. The word “presbyter” (elder) is used much more often. This word rather relates to the position of a person in the Church. Ordination is perceived as one of the important elements of such prominence. It was confirmed at the First Edifying Baptist Congress in Omsk (Siberia) (Pervyi nazidatelnyiy s’ezd... 1925:35–39) that: “If a teacher was ordained as a teacher and latertakes the ministry of presbyter, he should not be ordained”. Therefore the ordination was accomplished not so much for appointment to a concrete post (new ordination was not performed for a change of ministry), but rather for placing the ministers in a special category. The same congress emphasized the unacceptability of creating any supervising bodies from part of the community, for checking the activity of the presbyter: “does the shepherd listen to the sheep or the sheep listen to the shepherd?” (Pervyi nazidatelnyiy s’ezd... 1925:35–39).\(^\text{22}\)

There was also the creation of above-church structures, such as Unions and Councils. Despite the kept principle of independence of local churches, still maintained, this kind of union took on a role not only as advisers for local communities, but as managers.

We, the Baptists, recognize baptism and the Last Supper as visible, so, our union should be expressed as a visible organization: in congresses, councils, and preachers. The tasks of the Union are: sowing God’s Word through preachers and stewardship, organization of communities and appointment of ministers through presbyteros. Tit.1.5.

(Pervyi nazidatelnyiy s’ezd... 1925:38)

The declared purpose of “appointment of ministers” is indicative in this definition of the tasks of the union. It is coordinated with the Jakimenko statement that “ministers

\(^{22}\)This theme was raised in connection with the existing Evangelical structure, in which the presbyter was submitted to the elective council of the community.
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in it (union — G.L.) supervise the business of preaching the Gospel and of the ordination of presbyters”. The partial handing over of ordination in the running of the external organization created an all-Russia hierarchical structure.

Thus, there was a gradual separation of ministers in the Baptists churches from the common environment of the church. In the same way the function of the management of the community and administering of sacraments (rituals) was transferred to them. Indisputably, this new hierarchy differed from the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. However, there was a certain shift toward a mystical understanding of priesthood.23

4.3.3 Understanding of the priesthood by Evangelical Christians

As it was already mentioned, the theology of Evangelical Christians was formed in a bigger separation from the Orthodox environment, than that of the Baptists. In this connection, comparison with the Baptist confession reveals features, in which Baptist theology was influenced by Orthodoxy.

In the negative side of theology, the confession of the Evangelical Christians was completely in accordance with Stunde doctrine. Evangelical Christians reject the importance of church hierarchy, and they insist on the priesthood and equality of all believers (Terleckiy 1891:101). At the same time, in contrast to Stunde, Evangelical Christians already had a model of positive understanding of a church structure (not advanced yet) from the very beginning. Lord Redstock represented the English general Baptists, with their structure. Undoubtedly, he did not create an advanced structure, but he incorporated

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23One example confirms the existence of mystical understanding of priesthood in the modern Russian Baptist Churches. It is a custom of special final prayer in the large churches. During the sermon parishioners write notes with the prayer requests. At the end of the sermon a pastor reads some of them. "Right at the end of the service...a minister lifts his hand with all the notes and says that God knows all needs and begins final prayer about satisfaction of the requests" (Podberiozski 1996:190). The main reason, which induce the parishioners to write these notes is not a desire to open the need before the community (there are very small part of notes is read in the large Churches), but to make a special prayer through mystical intercession of minister for Church.
some certain relations within the community.

However, in the Petersburg community of Evangelical Christians, charismatic ministers (such as V. A. Pashkov) played a major role. They were not elected officially; however the leadership of the church gradually passed into their hands (Terleckiy 1891:31).

Such absence of a precise structure has worked negatively on the community after the beginning of persecutions and the exile of Pashkov and other leaders of the movement from the country. At that time the series of differences appeared in the communities. The small communities that arose seemed to be very isolated (Liven [1967] 1990:103–104).

The structure of the church and understanding of the role of the minister were reconsidered by I. S. Prohanov, after his return to St. Petersburg. Prohanov aspired to create an interchurch structure, and promoted the formation of the doctrine about positions in the church. His doctrine was quite well coordinated with the understanding that already existed in the communities.

The understanding that was formed, is well formulated in the *Exposition of the Evangelical Christian faith* of 1910 which was presented by I. S. Prohanov ([1910] 1996). The section about the structure of the local church (XV) is similar to Onken’s Baptist confession, which begins with a statement about the One Single Head of the Church — Jesus Christ. However, in contrast to Baptist confession, God’s role in the leadership of the community “through prayer and dialogue in assemblies” is emphasized. It is also emphasized that only God places ministers “through sending them an appropriate gift and zeal in ministry”. The church elects the ministers by “recognizing these gifts” (ibid.). Such emphatic attention devoted to the role of God in this process is connected with a more charismatic understanding of ministers.

Any hints at a special role of ministers in the transfer of God’s Grace are also consciously rejected in this confession. In particular it affirms, that: “Preaching and fulfilling of Church establishments are not exclusively the duty of presbyters or deacons
(1 Cor.3,6; 1,14–17)” (XV).

The absence of a mystical element in ordination is also consciously emphasized:

We understand the ordination (laying on of hands) of presbyters and deacons in the sense of laying on of hands for healing, sending to the ministry in a distant place etc. This is a special sort of solemn prayer... It can be made by any believer in unity with the church... It does not depend on any continuity.


The model of Church leadership which is described in this confession consists of collegial leadership. According to this model, there are some number of presbyters and deacons. They are submitted to the whole church.

In spite of the fact that I. S. Prohanov conducted active work in the creation of an association which would unite all Baptist Churches and the Church of the Evangelical Christians (and also, probably, some Molokan and Mennonite communities), he emphasizes in this confession that “none of the Churches should forget complete independence” (XV).

Thus, it is obvious, that Orthodox theology has had quite an effect on the confession of Evangelical Christians.24

Subsequently, both main directions of the Russian Evangelical movement were included in the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (EHB). The modern theology of the EHB has tried to include features of both movements; however, to a larger extent it adheres to the Baptist line of understanding of the role of the priesthood. In this confession (similar to the confession of the Evangelical Christians) the role of God in the appointment of ministers and allotment with their gifts is emphasized (VSEHB 1985:V, VII). However, in conformity with the Baptist tradition, this confession (VII) says that

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24This kind of type of “non-orthodox” theology was not only stated but also existed in practical life. Because of this the process the connection with the Russian Baptist Church went very difficult (Pervyi nazidatelnyi s’ezd baptistov...1925:38).
the appointment of minister and “reprimanding for purposes of discipline” are conducted “with the participation of higher ministers” (VII). The item about the independence of local churches is removed completely from this confession.

25 For Evangelical Christians the decision of the community was enough.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, there is a huge difference in the theology of the Orthodox Church and Russian Evangelical Churches. In many respects, the appearance, existence and development of the Evangelical movement in Russia was caused by the protest against Orthodoxy. This protest was shown especially at the moment of origin of each movement. It was the basic driving force of these movements. However, gradually protest weakened and creative elements of doctrine stepped forward into first place. Besides western movements, the Orthodox environment and the past played an important role in the formation of positive theology.

The Orthodox influence is demonstrated not in copying external rituals, but rather in the emphases which are placed in theology. So, perception through images attempts to give more attention to the connection between the spiritual world and physical actions. It results in a mystical understanding of the sacraments, and a special role of the priesthood.

On the one hand such a synthesis of Orthodox and Protestant understanding has the result of an enrichment of Protestant theology. On the other hand there is the danger of leaving the framework of the understanding and meaningful role of the text of the Bible at the wayside.
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