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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

The role of Prokhanov as transformational leader in initiating a missional movement in Russia in the beginning of the 20th century.

by

DZMITRY LAZUTA

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PROMOTERS:

Prof. Dr. Johannes, J. Knoetze

Prof. Dr. Johannes Reimer

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this research is to elucidate the significant role played by Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov in shaping the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia. Prokhanov's reputation as an exceptional organiser is widely acknowledged. Utilising theories of transformational and authentic leadership, alongside an analysis of positive psychological attributes, this study aims to identify and evaluate Prokhanov's leadership qualities within the context of the missionary movement.

Furthermore, this dissertation seeks to investigate Reimer's hypothesis, which posits that Prokhanov anticipated many elements of the emerging missionary paradigm as formulated by David Bosch several decades later. Through this examination, the study aims to determine the extent to which Prokhanov's foresight and leadership aligned with the principles outlined in emerging missiological paradigm.

The integration of transformational leadership principles with the emerging transformational missionary paradigm is believed to have played a pivotal role in Prokhanov's ability to instigate and advance the missionary movement within Russia. This study sheds light on the intricate interplay between leadership theories and missionary paradigms, offering valuable insights into the historical development of the missionary movement in Russia.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| ARCEC | (All-Russian Congress of Evangelical Christians) – VRSEKh (Vserossiyskiy S'yezd Yevangel'skikh Khristian) |
| ARUEC | (All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians) – VSEKh (Vserossiyskiy Soyuz Yevangel'skikh Khristian) |
| AUCECB | (All-Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists) – VSEKhB (Vsesoyuznyy Sovet Yevangel'skikh Khristian-Baptistov). |
| IMC | International Missionary Council |
| RGIA | (Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvennyy Istoricheskiy Arkhiv) – Russian State Historical Archive |
| RSDRP | Russian Social Democratic Labour Party |
| SPb. | St. Petersburg, Russia's capital from 1712 to 1914 |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| WCC | World Council of Churches |
| YKpV | (Yubileynaya Komissiya pri VSEKh) – Jubilee Commission at VSEKh |
| VSEKhB | (Vsesoyuznyy Sovet Evangel'skikh Khristian Baptistov) - The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) |

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APPENDIX B406

NOTES ON THE TEXT

Transliteration: Transliteration of Russian personal names, geographical names, and titles of books and periodicals, with the exception of the most commonly used ones (Moscow, Kiev) usually follows the ALA-LC Romanisation tables approved by the Library of Congress and the American Library Association. The last name Prokhanov (Rus. Проханов) is spelled as Prokhanoff in all references to Prokhanov's autobiography (1933), when used in parentheses, reflecting the original English publication where it appeared with a double 'f'.

Translations: All translations of Russian quotes and titles of books and periodicals in this dissertation are mine unless otherwise noted.

Emphasis: Emphasis is mine unless otherwise noted.

Dates: The dates provided in this study are according to the Julian calendar up to January 31, 1918, and according to the Gregorian calendar after that date.

TABLE OF TRANSLITERATIONS USED IN THIS DISSERTATION

A-A
Б-B
В-V
Г-G
Д-D
Е-E
Ё - YO
Ж - ZH
З-Z
И-I
Й-Y
К-K
Л-L
М-M
Н-N
О-O
П-P
Р-R
С-S
Т-T
У-U
Ф-F
Х - KH
Ц - TS
Ч - CH
Ш - SH
Щ - SHCH
Ъ - ‘
Ы-Y
Ь - ‘
Э-E
Ю - YU
Я - YA

GLOSSARY

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|--|---|
| Bratskiy Listok - Brotherly Bulletin: | An informational bulletin founded and edited by Prokhanov. It addressed matters of internal church life, encompassing events within allied evangelical Christian denominations. |
| Utrennyaya Zvezda - Morning Star: | A weekly newspaper founded and edited by Prokhanov, focusing on diverse aspects of societal life, including religious, political, social, scientific, and literary perspectives from an evangelical viewpoint. |
| Khristianin - Christian: | A spiritual journal founded and edited by Prokhanov, which addressed spiritual questions in the lives of believers. |
| Bratskiy Vestnik - Brotherly Herald: | A journal and official publication of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians Baptists, serving as both an informational bulletin and a spiritually edifying magazine. For many years, it was edited by A.V. Karev, a close associate of I.S. Prokhanov. |
| Missional Movement: | The notion of <i>missional</i> movement in this study goes beyond traditional missionary activities abroad. It encompasses a broader church responsibility: implementing a comprehensive approach to transform its social environment beyond conventional gospel preaching. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>On the other hand, a social <i>movement</i>, as defined by Tilly (2004), entails diverse groups and individuals collaborating toward a common goal to effect specific societal changes. This study specifically focuses on the missional movement.</p> <p>Here, ‘movement’ aligns with David Bosch’s perspective. He critiques the church’s evolution from a dynamic movement to a static institution, contrasting movement as progressive, actively shaping the environment, future-oriented, risk-taking, and boundary-breaking (Bosch 2011).</p> <p>This study illustrates Prokhanov’s efforts to foster a similar movement, albeit grounded in autonomous church institutions and the union of autonomous churches.</p> |
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Socio-Political Background of the Study

The defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1853-1856 served as a pivotal moment, prompting Russian society to acknowledge the pressing need for substantial reforms across state and social structures. These reforms were enacted during the reign of Alexander II (1855–1881), a period marked by significant advancements in the economy, social frameworks, and educational systems, fostering the growth of civil society and public enthusiasm. However, persistent societal issues stemming from enduring legal class distinctions among nobles, clergy, commoners, and peasants persisted despite the abolition of serfdom in 1861. The unresolved issue of land distribution among peasants further exacerbated social tensions and economic disparities.

Economically, although there were indications of growth, Russia lagged behind developed nations, intensifying dissatisfaction with Alexander II's rule. This dissatisfaction eventually led to mounting opposition that became increasingly radicalised, culminating in his assassination in 1881. His son, Alexander III (1881–1894), ascended the throne and, alarmed by revolutionary movements, enacted stringent governmental policies.

Under Alexander III, the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobedonostsev (1880–1905), played a crucial role in shaping state ideology and strategies. He implemented severe measures against non-Orthodox Christian sects and curtailed freedoms of speech, press, and assembly.

The rapid expansion of capitalism during this era intensified social challenges, as the burgeoning factory workforce lacked organised labour representation. The majority of Russians, particularly peasants, continued to grapple with persistent land issues and low agricultural productivity, which occasionally led to food riots during periods of scarcity.

These economic disparities underscored the widening gap between the advancing industrial economy and the struggling agrarian sector.

Simultaneously, the Orthodox Church faced internal crises. Many priests, driven more by the promise of educational and employment opportunities than by a genuine vocational calling, struggled with significant financial constraints. Additionally, the use of Old Slavonic in church services created linguistic barriers for many worshippers. This crisis likely contributed to a surge in diverse religious explorations, facilitated by the translation of the Bible into modern Russian, which led to the emergence of various religious groups.

Both the state and the Church viewed the rise of sectarian movements with suspicion, perceiving them as threats to Russian identity and the stability of the autocratic state, which was founded on the principles of Orthodoxy and nationality. In response, the state imposed heightened restrictions on civil liberties, targeting both political and religious activities. These measures further deepened societal discontent and disillusionment.

During Nicholas II's reign (1894–1917), legal reforms improved religious tolerance amidst socio-political and military turmoil. From 1903 to 1906, decrees promoting religious freedom allowed evangelical churches to operate openly. Although the 1917 revolution and the subsequent civil war temporarily expanded opportunities for evangelical believers, the consolidation of Bolshevik power by 1929 marked a decisive turn. The Bolsheviks launched an aggressive campaign against Christian denominations, significantly curtailing these newfound freedoms.

1.2. A Brief Biography of I.S. Prokhanov

Prokhanov was born on April 17, 1869, into a Molokan family that relocated from the Saratov province to Vladikavkaz due to persecution (Redaktsiya 1922a:2; Prokhanoff 1933:29). Later, his parents joined the Baptist church. During his youth, Prokhanov experienced an existential crisis, losing his sense of purpose. He was drawn to the pessimistic philosophy popular among young people at the time, influenced by societal upheaval following a period of relative freedom and progress that was subsequently replaced by the reactionary policies of Alexander III (Popov 1996:12; Prokhanoff

1933:42-46). However, after his conversion and baptism in 1887, he embraced a newfound optimism (Prokhanoff 1933:48). A providential dream, interpreted as a call from Christ, solidified his dedication to the gospel (Prokhanoff 1933:40-41).

After graduating from a technical school, Prokhanov entered the Technological Institute in St. Petersburg, where he studied from 1888 to 1893 (Certificate 1987; SPb Tekhnologicheskii Institut 1893). The students at the Technological Institute were traditionally politically active (Nechaev 1997:208). During this time, Prokhanov became acquainted with the evangelical Christian intelligentsia of St. Petersburg, followers of Pashkov, who were socially active believers with a vision for Russia's future rooted in the spiritual transformation of individuals (Redaktsiya 1922a:3). It was likely during his student years, through dialogue with the Christian intelligentsia on one side and students favouring violent solutions to Russia's problems on the other, that Prokhanov's views crystallised, leading to his belief in social transformation in Russia through the spiritual renewal of its people (Prokhanoff 1933:73-75).

Even as a student, Prokhanov participated in creating the magazine *'Beseda'* together with Mennonite German Fast (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Val'kevich's 1900:162-164). In March 1895, facing increased persecution, he went abroad to study at theological institutions in England, Germany, and France. Returning to Russia at the end of 1898, he worked as a teacher and engineer (Redaktsiya 1922a:2-3).

In 1901, Prokhanov married Anna, and they had two sons, Yaroslav and Vsevolod. Anna, an educated and dedicated partner, passed away in 1919, and their son Vsevolod died in 1926 (Popov 1996:50; Dubrovskiy 1926; Zhidkov 1926).

From late 1905, Prokhanov focused on publishing, creating associations, founding churches, initiating educational projects, establishing a political party, defending human rights, and setting up agricultural communes. He also sought to introduce reforms within the Orthodox Church. A prolific poet, many of his poems were set to music by composers. Although he was imprisoned twice, his detentions were brief (Redatsiya 1922a:3-10). In 1928, after an overseas trip, Prokhanov did not return to Russia, which led to a decline

in his influence on the movement (Karetnikova 2001:124). He passed away on October 6, 1935, in a Berlin hospital (Popov 2007:163).

1.3. The Need for this Study

With the collapse of communist ideology in Russia in the early 1990s, evangelical churches—including Evangelical Christians, Pentecostals, and Baptists—found a unique opportunity to freely share the gospel and grow their congregations. For over a century prior, they had faced state suppression of religious activities. Initially, the tsarist regime, in alliance with the Orthodox Church, viewed evangelical communities, which began emerging as early as the 1870s, as competitors to Orthodoxy and as threats to the foundations of the state and societal order of the Russian Empire. Later, the Bolsheviks and the Communist Party, the ruling force in the Soviet Union, regarded religion as an enemy of the state and vehemently opposed any manifestation of religious activity.

There were brief exceptions in history. After 1905, the tsarist regime implemented socio-political reforms, allowing the evangelical church a respite until World War I. Similarly, immediately following the Bolshevik coup in 1917, authorities temporarily granted evangelical believers the freedom to spread their faith, leading to a 'golden age' for the evangelical movement in Russia. However, this period of freedom ended abruptly in 1929 with the enactment of the law on religious cults.

In the late 1980s, the laws restricting religious freedoms were abolished, allowing evangelical churches to develop freely once again. Leveraging the era of perestroika ('restructuring' in Russian), initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991, evangelicals experienced another period of growth. During this time, evangelical churches actively engaged with their Western counterparts. However, by the end of the 20th century, the growth of evangelical churches began to slow and eventually ceased altogether. Currently, as some researchers note, evangelical churches are experiencing stagnation (Reimer 2013:138).

The question of why this stagnation has occurred and why the growth of evangelical churches halted merits further investigation. However, the experience of the evangelical

movement founded by I.S. Prokhanov offers valuable insights for such a study. Under Prokhanov's leadership, the Union of Evangelical Churches exhibited dynamic growth from 1909 until 1929, when severe state repression halted its expansion.

While evangelical churches in Russia today still face certain limitations in their activities, they enjoy a relative degree of freedom compared to the constraints imposed during the periods of Imperial Russia and the communist era. Prokhanov's experiences hold particular significance due to their relevance to both past and present contexts. Although the period that modern Russia is experiencing differs greatly from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there are notable commonalities. Similar to Prokhanov's time, contemporary Russia is undergoing significant global changes, including geopolitical shifts and internal political reforms. Anti-Western sentiments, fuelled partly by historical tensions and recent political events, persist in Russian society. The evangelical church is often perceived by Russian inhabitants as being associated with the Western world. Historically, and even today, the Orthodox Church has served as a catalyst for negative attitudes towards the evangelical church, viewing it as a competitor and a threat to traditional values.

Therefore, studying Prokhanov's life and ministry can provide valuable insights for analysing the current situation of evangelical churches in Russia and other former Soviet Union countries.

1.4. The Purpose of this Study

Prokhanov played a pivotal role in shaping the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia, gaining significant recognition for his contributions. The primary aim of this study is to delineate the specific leadership qualities of Prokhanov and explore whether there is a connection between these qualities and his notable achievements in initiating and developing the missionary movement.

Additionally, this study seeks to examine Prokhanov's missiological paradigm, defining its key components and assessing how his theological and missiological beliefs influenced the direction and outcomes of the missionary movement. By conducting a

qualitative analysis of various historical texts – including personal correspondence, official documents, and contemporaneous scholarly accounts – this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Prokhanov's enduring influence on religious missionary work in Russia. The insights derived from this research may offer valuable perspectives for contemporary missionary practices and theological education.

1.5. Personal Interest in the Study

Over the past two decades, the researcher has been actively involved in establishing and developing new churches, as well as teaching courses on church leadership and the theology of mission at the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists Seminary in Belarus. The insights gained from this research into Prokhanov's leadership competence and his adaptable approach to developing a theology of mission are likely to provide new perspectives on the formation of missionary movements in Belarus, Russia, and other post-Soviet countries.

1.6. State of Recent Research on Ivan Prokhanov and Literature Review

1.6.1. History: The context and the emergence and development of the evangelical movement

The late 19th and early 20th centuries in Russia, characterised by significant social and political upheaval, have been extensively studied by both Russian and Western historians. Russian scholars, such as Tyukavkin (2006), Milov and Tsimbaev (2006), Rudnitskaya (ed. 1997), and the collective led by Zubov (ed. 2010), provide post-Soviet interpretations that challenge the ideologically driven narratives of Soviet historiography. These scholars offer a nuanced perspective on Tsarist Russia, emphasising the complexity and diversity of its socio-political landscape.

Western perspectives, exemplified by Whelan (1982) and Wood (1993), complement these Russian studies by focusing on specific aspects, such as the counter-reforms under Alexander III and the roots of the Russian Revolution. These works provide a

broader context for understanding the societal changes that paved the way for the Evangelical Movement.

Primary sources, such as leaflets from the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDRP) (1903) and proclamations by Sergei Nechaev (1869), are invaluable for understanding the ideological currents of the period. Pazhitnov's 1908 analysis, 'The Situation of the Working Class in Russia', offers a poignant illustration of the socio-economic conditions during Russia's industrial expansion. His detailed account provides essential primary data on the working and living conditions, highlighting the social disenfranchisement that fuelled revolutionary movements.

Philosophical perspectives from thinkers like Nikolai Berdyaev (1996; 2008) and Semyon Frank (2009a) add depth to the historical narrative. Their works offer interpretations of the ideological and cultural moods permeating Russian society, bridging the gap between historical events and the philosophical underpinnings that guided societal attitudes and responses. Berdyaev's existential and spiritual reflections, along with Frank's explorations of social and ethical issues, provide a richer understanding of the intellectual environment in which the Evangelical Movement emerged.

The confessional approach of Slavic historians is particularly invaluable in examining the religious dimensions of Russian history and the origins of the Evangelical Movement. The seminal work 'The History of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the U.S.S.R.' by VSEKhB (1989), along with extensive studies by Savinsky (1995; 1999; 2001) and Mitskevich (2007), provides a thorough exploration of the movement's emergence and development. These works detail the religious fervour and organisational growth that characterised the early Evangelical Movement.

E. Heier (1970) specifically addresses the Evangelical Movement in St. Petersburg, highlighting the roles of key figures such as Lord Radstock and Pashkov. Their efforts to renew Orthodoxy ultimately led to schism, illustrating the complex interactions between new religious movements and traditional structures.

Furthermore, Vladimir Stepanov's 2023 study, *Pashkovites*, advances scholarship on the Evangelical Christian movement by contextualising it as a continuation of the Pashkov movement. His exploration into the historical dynamics and theological evolution within the movement's interactions with the Orthodox and Baptist churches sheds light on the development of Pashkovite theology, offering new insights into religious transformations during a pivotal period in Russian history.

Western historians, such as A.W. Wardin (2013), analyse the development of the Evangelical Movement from its inception to the end of the Tsarist regime, while Sawatsky (1981) focuses on a later period. These analyses provide a comprehensive view of the movement's growth and its challenges under different political regimes.

Soviet scholars of religion, such as G.S. Lyalina (1966) and L.N. Mitrokhin (1997), offer valuable insights from both historical and analytical perspectives. However, their works should be approached with caution due to their pronounced ideological bias. For example, Mitrokhin's analysis often reflects the Soviet state's official stance on religion, portraying Evangelicals in a negative light.

In her monograph, Tatiana Nikol'skaya (2009) analyses the dynamics of relations between Protestants in Russia and state authorities from 1905 to 1991. Despite the complex and sometimes tragic circumstances faced by many Protestants, denominations of this movement managed to survive and defend their right to exist. Nikol'skaya's work provides a detailed account of the legal and social struggles that Evangelicals faced, enriching our understanding of their resilience and adaptability.

In *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths: Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia* (2014), Paul W. Werth examines the complex and often contradictory approach of the Russian Empire toward religious diversity. He demonstrates that while the empire moved toward a policy of toleration, it never fully embraced the concept of freedom of conscience before 1917. Werth argues that this reluctance stemmed from concerns over imperial unity, as granting full religious freedom would legitimise proselytism, potentially undermining the cohesion of the empire.

Thus, a balanced approach was used in selecting sources for this study to understand the complex analysis of the historical context and the emergence of the evangelical movement.

1.6.2. Materials on Prokhanov: Books and dissertations

Ivan S. Prokhanov was a significant figure in the evangelical movement in Russia. His contributions, spanning from theological reforms to social activism, have been extensively covered in various forms of literature, including books, articles, and dissertations.

W. Kahle's seminal work, *Evangelical Christians in Russia and the Soviet Union* (1978), explores the development of evangelical Christians up to the Second World War, focusing specifically on the life and ministry of Prokhanov. Kahle's analysis provides a comprehensive overview of Prokhanov's role within the broader historical and religious context.

V. Popov's (1996) detailed biography casts Prokhanov in a very positive light, labelling him as a pivotal historical figure in Russia's evangelical movement. Despite being written in a popular monograph style, Popov's work draws on numerous documents and primary sources, establishing a solid foundation for understanding Prokhanov's life and contributions.

V. Bachinin (2000) analysed Prokhanov's efforts to spiritually reform Russia, emphasising the value of his social projects for the contemporary evangelical church. Bachinin argues that Prokhanov's initiatives could have a lasting impact on modern religious practices and community organisation if they were more widely known, suggesting that Prokhanov's influence is under-appreciated but potentially significant. M. Kuznetsova (2009), in her research on hermeneutic trends among evangelical believers, draws on the work of I.V. Kragel, a long-time associate and colleague of Prokhanov. Kuznetsova highlights a paradox: although Prokhanov is a key figure in the evangelical movement, his personality elicits mixed assessments. She emphasises that

despite some of Prokhanov's utopian ideas never being realised, his contributions have had a significant positive impact on various aspects of the evangelical movement.

Andrey Puzynin's (2010) historical research focused on tracing the self-identification of traditions within the Evangelical Christian movement from its inception during Tsarist Russia to the post-Soviet era. Puzynin identifies Prokhanov as a central figure who carried forward the legacy of the Pashkovites, while also acknowledging his imperfections, offering a balanced portrayal of Prokhanov's character and contributions.

Liudmila Golovanova (2013) explored Prokhanov's influence on modern Evangelical Baptist communities, highlighting his enduring positive impact despite his personal flaws. Her thesis provides a nuanced view of Prokhanov's legacy.

Similarly, Natalia Mariukhno (2021) examined the socio-political dimensions of Prokhanov's theological ideas, asserting their relevance to the Ukrainian evangelical church today. Both works emphasise the ongoing influence of Prokhanov's theological and social contributions.

This literature review synthesises diverse perspectives from Russian and Western scholars, primary sources, and contemporary analyses, offering a comprehensive understanding of Ivan S. Prokhanov's role in shaping Russian evangelicalism. It underscores his contributions to theological reform, social activism, and community development, highlighting his enduring legacy within the evangelical movement.

1.6.3. Missiology

David Bosch's (1991) seminal work, *Transforming Mission*, is fundamental in establishing the framework for modern missiological discourse. Bosch outlines three New Testament paradigms of mission and traces their historical development, ultimately proposing an emerging paradigm that shapes contemporary research methodologies.

J. Verkuyl's (1987) *Introduction to Contemporary Missiology* remains a cornerstone in the field. Verkuyl's insightful analysis of the motivational aspects within missionary

endeavours continues to influence ongoing discussions and current research in missiology.

Stephen B. Bevans and Roger Schroeder's *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (2004) presents a comprehensive theological framework for mission by integrating historical paradigms with enduring theological constants. The authors trace the development of mission through shifting paradigms, drawing on David Bosch's typology, while also identifying six constants—foundational themes that persist across historical contexts. These constants include Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, salvation, anthropology, and culture, which shape and contextualise mission theology.

Dana L. Robert's *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (2009) provides a historical analysis of Christian mission through the lens of shifting paradigms and key themes in mission history. The book traces the expansion of Christianity from its earliest days to its global presence, examining the various forms and methods of mission across different historical periods.

Robert explores themes such as the relationship between mission and empire, highlighting both the complicity of missionaries in colonial expansion and their advocacy for human rights. She also examines the role of women in mission, emphasising their contributions to education, healthcare, and social reform. Additionally, she discusses the significance of Bible translation and vernacular adaptation, demonstrating how these efforts not only facilitated the spread of Christianity but also fostered the development of indigenous Christian identities.

C.J.H. Wright's (2010) *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's* explores the inseparable link between theology and mission. Wright argues that mission is intrinsic to the identity of the church, emphasising that the church exists for the mission of God, not the other way around. This theological perspective is crucial for understanding the evolving relationship between theology and mission.

Gregory Nichols (2011) examines Prokhanov's influence on the broader evangelical movement through the lens of Ivan Kargel's ministry, highlighting Prokhanov's significant role in shaping evangelical spirituality and leadership.

Alexander Yuchkovski, in his 2014 PhD thesis, conducts a comparative analysis of evangelical spiritual awakenings in Russia during the 1920s and the 1990s. His research identifies common patterns in these awakenings, focusing on shifts in state ideology and the evolving role of the Orthodox Church. Yuchkovski also explores Prokhanov's contribution to fostering a missional culture aimed at spiritual renewal in Russia.

Andrey Kravtsev (2017) explores contemporary missiological paradigms among evangelical Baptist Christians in Russia, distinguishing between escapist tendencies and innovative approaches within mission theology.

Mary E. Raber's (2014) *Ministry of Compassion among Russian Evangelicals, 1905–1929* underscores Prokhanov's significant contribution to the development of agricultural communes during a critical period of social change in Russia.

In *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905–1929* (2005), Heather J. Coleman situates the development of the evangelical movement in Russia within the context of three revolutions, demonstrating how evangelical believers proposed their own alternative revolution, which they called a "spiritual revolution." Coleman argues that the primary challenge faced by these believers was a crisis of identity, stemming from their Western origins, which complicated their relationship with Russian society and the state.

These works collectively contribute to a nuanced understanding of missiology, integrating theological reflections with historical analyses and contemporary insights into the practical dimensions of mission and its impact on religious communities.

1.6.4. Leadership

J.M. Burns (2003), in *Transforming Leadership* (originally published 1978), presents a seminal discussion on the concept of transformational leadership. Burns explores the

essence and nature of effective leadership, emphasising its transformative character. He contrasts transformational leadership with transactional leadership, which he considers less effective due to its focus on exchanges and short-term rewards rather than inspiring profound change. According to Burns, transformational leadership motivates followers to transcend their self-interests and commit themselves to the welfare and goals of the group or organisation.

In *Authentic Leadership* (2003), Bill George makes a notable contribution to leadership studies by introducing the concept of 'authentic leadership', which he breaks down into five dimensions. This theory emphasises the leader's inner self, focusing on their character and motivations. Such an approach is especially crucial for developing a profile of Christian missional leadership, as it aligns leadership practices with core personal and ethical values. This grounding in authenticity is vital for leaders who aim to inspire and guide in religious or mission-driven contexts. Luthans and Avolio (2003) propose a more scholarly approach compared to Bill George, creating a theoretical foundation for the theory of Authentic Leadership Process. The scholars identify four positive attributes based on the theory of Positive Organisational Behaviour, which is grounded in Positive Psychology. These attributes – confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience – are essential components for shaping the leadership profile for this study.

Transformational Leadership by B. Bass and R. Riggio (2006) is a seminal text in leadership studies, building upon the earlier work of Burns. The authors outline specific strategies to enhance the motivation and productivity of organisational employees by applying transformational leadership principles. This approach is particularly effective in creating an environment where both leaders and followers are encouraged to elevate their ethical standards and motivation. The book provides a crucial foundation for developing a comprehensive leadership profile for this research.

In his 2016 book *Leadership*, Peter Northouse provides an analysis of various leadership theories, offering general introductions that highlight their key aspects and practical real-world applications. The book notably emphasises transformational and authentic leadership theories. Northouse particularly underscores the importance of positive

psychological attributes in forming a robust model of authentic leadership, a component that is especially critical for this research.

In *Leadership: A Communication Perspective* by Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman (2018), the authors explore various leadership theories with a focus on communication. They specifically highlight five characteristics of transformational leadership – creativity, interactivity, vision, empowerment, and passion – which will be utilised to develop a leadership profile in this study.

In his 2019 study *Missional Leadership*, Nelus Niemandt elaborates on the concept of 'missio Dei', providing a precise definition of the purpose of missional leadership: to transform both individuals and entire institutions for active engagement in God's mission. This transformation is facilitated through meaningful relationships within the Christian community and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Unlike secular theories, Niemandt grounds leadership in transcendent principles, which is particularly significant for analysing Prokhanov's approach to missional leadership. This emphasis highlights the distinctive spiritual foundation integral to the concept of missional leadership.

1.6.5. Primary sources on Prokhanov

Primary sources written by Ivan Prokhanov, both as an author and editor, are paramount for understanding his life and worldview. His autobiography, *In the Cauldron of Russia (1869–1933)*, first published in 1933 and translated into Russian in 1992 (Prokhanov 1992), provides a meticulous account of various periods of his life. In this work, Prokhanov details his instrumental role in founding the Evangelical Union, which laid the groundwork for the missionary movement. He presents himself as an optimist and suggests a significant personal contribution to the movement's formation. Prokhanov acknowledges that his portrayal may reflect caution due to the oppressive Soviet regime, suggesting a potential overestimation of his influence.

Uspekhi Evangeliya v SSSR (Successes of the Gospel in USSR) (1929) aimed at securing prayer and financial support from Western countries to advance ministry efforts in the USSR. *Zakon i Vera (Law and Faith)* (1912e) aimed to help communities become

legalised as well as to protect their rights. *Kratkoye Ucheniye o Propovedi* (Brief Teaching on Preaching) (1989) was designed to help preachers prepare vibrant biblical messages.

Prokhanov's extensive publications, where he frequently serves as either the author or editor, are crucial primary sources. These include newspapers such as *Utrennyaya Zvezda* (Morning Star), *Khristianin* (Christian), *Bratskiy Listok* (Brotherly Bulletin) and *Molodoy Vinogradnik* (Young Vineyard), offering valuable insights into his perspectives and activities. These sources constitute the foundation for comprehending Prokhanov's multifaceted contributions to evangelical and missionary endeavours in Russia.

1.6.6. Identifying the gap and rationale of the thesis

Despite extensive scholarship on Ivan S. Prokhanov and the evangelical movement in Russia, there remains a notable gap in understanding the nuanced intersections of his theological contributions, leadership strategies, and their enduring impact on the missional movement in Russia. While existing studies have highlighted Prokhanov's vital role within evangelical circles, few have comprehensively examined the specific mechanisms through which his theological doctrines and leadership principles shaped the missional movement in early 20th-century Russia.

1.7. Methodology

This study utilised a comprehensive critical literature review as its primary methodology. The main sources included Prokhanov's autobiography, as well as his articles, books, songs, poems, and letters. Additionally, archival letters directly related to Prokhanov's missionary activities were examined. These documents were analysed to gain insights into his theological and missional thinking, as well as his leadership and personality traits.

To analyse Prokhanov's theology of mission, this study employed David Bosch's (1991) *transforming mission* framework. Within this framework, the hypothesis proposed by J. Reimer – that Prokhanov's missiology anticipated many aspects of Bosch's missiology – was critically examined.

For the examination of Prokhanov's leadership and personality traits, the concepts of 'transformational leadership' and 'authentic leadership' models were utilised. These frameworks facilitated an assessment of the influence and effectiveness of Prokhanov's leadership style within the historical context of his missionary activities.

1.8. Research Question and Sub-Questions

The central research question guiding this study was:

“In what ways can I.S. Prokhanov be considered a missional leader who embodied transformational and authentic qualities, and how are his missional paradigm and leadership qualities connected to his achievements in founding the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia?”

Research sub-questions:

- 1) “In what ways did the historical context and events of Prokhanov's life shape him as a missional leader?”

This sub-question examines how the specific historical events and personal experiences of Prokhanov's life contributed to his development as a missional leader.

- 2) “In what ways can I.S. Prokhanov be considered a transformational and authentic leader, and how are these leadership qualities connected to his achievements in founding the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia?”

This sub-question identifies and analyses Prokhanov's transformational and authentic leadership qualities and explores the relationship between these qualities and his notable achievements.

- 3) “In what ways can Prokhanov's missional convictions be identified within the framework of the 'transformative mission' paradigm?”

This sub-question explores the alignment of Prokhanov's missional convictions with the 'transformative mission' paradigm, as defined by David Bosch, and evaluates how these convictions influenced his mission strategy.

- 4) “How can the leadership qualities and missional ideas of I.S. Prokhanov inform contemporary missionary practices and theological education in post-Soviet contexts?”

This sub-question aims to apply the findings of the study to modern contexts, particularly focusing on how Prokhanov’s leadership qualities and missional strategies can be used to enhance contemporary missionary practices and theological education in Belarus, Russia, and other post-Soviet countries. The application of these ideas will be presented as tentative proposals, which would require further development in future research.

1.9. Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction

This opening chapter establishes the foundation for the study by providing a comprehensive introduction that outlines the socio-political background relevant to the research, along with a brief biography of Prokhanov. It discusses the necessity of the study, clearly defines its purpose, and highlights its significance. Additionally, the chapter explores the researcher’s personal interest in the topic, offering insights into the motivations behind the study. A thorough literature review is included, showcasing previous studies and identifying the gaps this research aims to fill. The chapter also details the methodological approach, describes the sources utilised, and explains the rationale for their selection. It concludes with a summary of each subsequent chapter, offering a roadmap of the study’s structure and content, and outlines the expected contributions of the research, emphasising its potential impact.

Chapter 2: Historical Context and Events Shaping Prokhanov as a Transformational Missional Leader (1869–1928)

This chapter analyses Prokhanov’s development as both an individual and a missionary leader within the historical context of Russia from the mid-1870s until his departure from the country. It explores the significant socio-political, socio-economic, and religious environments that influenced his life and work. Additionally, it examines how his family

background played a foundational role in shaping his values and aspirations, discussing the familial influences that contributed to his character and leadership style.

Key events and influences that further shaped Prokhanov's leadership include his interactions with the St. Petersburg intelligentsia and the Pashkovites, his acquaintance with the Mennonite Brethren, particularly German Fast, and his theological education abroad. Each of these experiences is analysed to understand their essential role in his development as a transformational leader in the missionary movement.

Chapter 3: Prokhanov as Authentic Transformational Leader and the Evangelical Movement in Russia

This chapter focuses on developing Prokhanov's leadership profile using transformational and authentic leadership frameworks, along with the theory of positive psychological attributes. It aims to systematically identify and analyse the correlations between Prokhanov's activities, achievements, and his distinct leadership qualities.

Chapter 4: Prokhanov and Emerging Missional Paradigm

This chapter presents an analysis of Prokhanov's theological and missiological paradigm through the lens of David Bosch's transformational paradigm. It evaluates J. Reimer's hypothesis that Prokhanov anticipated many elements of Bosch's paradigm decades earlier. The chapter offers a detailed comparison of the critical components of both paradigms, exploring their similarities, influences, and Prokhanov's foresight in missional thinking.

Chapter 5: Conclusion – Lessons from the Life and Ministry of Prokhanov

The concluding chapter provides a concise summary of the research and draws from the findings to articulate key lessons for the contemporary evangelical church in initiating missional movements. These conclusions, though provisional, highlight the ongoing complexity of missionary movements in the modern context and underscore the need for further scholarly exploration.

1.10. Contributions of the Study

This research significantly contributes by uncovering the leadership qualities and missional ideas that enabled I.S. Prokhanov to establish the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia. By analysing these factors, the study provides historical insights that contemporary evangelical churches can leverage to develop effective leadership strategies and enhance their missional approaches.

Academically, this study addresses gaps in the literature on religious leadership and mission history, offering a nuanced understanding of Prokhanov's role and impact. It enriches theoretical frameworks related to transformational and authentic leadership in missiological contexts.

Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for religious leaders and institutions in Russia and other post-Soviet countries. By learning from Prokhanov's example, they can adapt and apply effective leadership principles to strengthen their missionary activities and leadership development initiatives.

Overall, this research aims to provide valuable historical, theoretical, and practical contributions that can inform and empower contemporary evangelical movements in their mission endeavours.

1.11. Scope of the Study

This study examines the transformational leadership and missional strategies of Ivan Prokhanov from 1905 to 1928, focusing on his activities within the Russian Empire. It explores his interactions with key religious groups and figures, analysing how these relationships influenced the evangelical and missional movements in Russia. The geographical scope is limited to Russia.

The study delves into the historical period of Prokhanov's birth and youth to provide context for his later activities and to understand the formative influences that shaped his leadership and missional strategies. However, it does not extensively explore the

historical context of his mature years, as by 1906, Prokhanov had largely established himself as a missional leader.

The study is delimited by excluding an in-depth analysis of Prokhanov's personal life unless it directly relates to his missional and leadership roles. It also does not extensively cover the period after his emigration, as the focus is on his contributions within Russia.

Methodologically, this research relies primarily on qualitative analyses of historical texts and personal correspondence, excluding quantitative measures of his impact.

1.12. Limitations of the Research

This section acknowledges the limitations of this study.

(1) Bias Due to Reliance on Prokhanov's Writings: One limitation of this research is its heavy reliance on the writings of Ivan Prokhanov himself. Since Prokhanov served as the editor of many of the sources used, there is a potential for bias, as these materials may predominantly reflect his personal viewpoints and interpretations. Consequently, the objectivity and critical analysis of his leadership and missional strategies could be impacted. To mitigate this bias, the study also incorporates secondary sources and independent historical accounts in order to present a more balanced perspective

(2) Impact of Personal Admiration on Objectivity: Furthermore, my personal admiration for Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov and his work introduces an additional potential bias in this study. While I am committed to maintaining academic rigor and objectivity, my positive perception of Prokhanov may inadvertently influence my analysis and interpretation of his leadership and missional strategies.

(3) Subjectivity Stemming from a Shared Evangelical Background: In addition, being a member of the same evangelical group as Prokhanov raises the possibility of subjective views influencing my research. Our shared religious and cultural background could impact my perspective. To address these potential biases, I have employed various

methodological approaches, including critical analysis and peer review, to ensure a comprehensive and balanced examination of Prokhanov's impact.

1.13. Conclusion

In summary, Chapter 1 established the foundation for this study by providing a comprehensive introduction to the research topic, which focuses on the role of I. S. Prokhanov in initiating a missional movement in early 20th-century Russia. It outlined the socio-political background relevant to the study and provided a brief biography of Prokhanov, highlighting the necessity of the research, its purpose, and significance. The chapter also included a thorough literature review, identifying gaps in existing studies and detailing the methodological approach and sources used. The expected contributions of the research were emphasised, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of Prokhanov's impact.

To better understand the foundational influences on Prokhanov's leadership and missional strategies, Chapter 2 reviews the historical context and events that shaped his development as a transformational missional leader, to which attention now shifts.

CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND EVENTS SHAPING PROKHANOV AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL MISSIONAL LEADER (1869–1928)

2.1. Introduction

This chapter does not aim to provide a comprehensive biography of Prokhanov, as such an endeavour would exceed the scope of this study. Instead, it proposes a hypothesis that Prokhanov exemplified the characteristics of an authentic transformational missionary leader, dedicated to catalysing a spiritual revolution as the foundation for social transformation in Russia.

This hypothesis prompts an inquiry: are there discernible connections between Prokhanov's emergence as a missionary leader and the historical milieu that shaped his era? Furthermore, how did specific events in his life contribute to his development as a missional leader?

The central objective of this chapter is to establish correlations between Prokhanov's evolution as a transformational missionary leader and the broader historical context encompassing *political*, *socio-economic*, and *religious* dimensions that significantly influenced his development trajectory. Additionally, it aims to scrutinise specific life events and influential factors pivotal to shaping his growth as a missional leader.

The analysis of the historical backdrop will focus primarily on the period from the 1860s to the early 20th century, concluding around 1906. This timeframe is chosen based on the assumption that by 1906, Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov had already established himself as a missionary leader, possessing the authenticity and potential to effect transformative change. As Kuznetsova remarks (2009:249), "By 1905 Prokhanov was an accomplished leader who had a theological education, experience in living in other countries, and great ambitions."

However, a brief historical survey of some events from 1906 to 1928 is necessary to provide a deeper understanding of how Prokhanov's leadership qualities were manifested and exercised.

Furthermore, it is postulated that Prokhanov's leadership was characterised by authenticity, demonstrated by the consistency of his actions with his professed objectives and personal values. From his formative years, Prokhanov witnessed the sufferings of the Russian populace, an experience that profoundly influenced him and motivated his efforts to provide assistance. This enduring empathy and determination to alleviate suffering are evident throughout his life and ministry.

In his autobiography, Prokhanov candidly acknowledges the profound influence of Dostoevsky's literary works on his empathetic worldview, noting, 'Dostoevsky captivated my mind, for he was the greatest of the poets describing the suffering of the people' (Prokhanoff 1933:36). He specifically cites novels such as *Notes from the Dead House*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Demons*, and *The Brothers Karamazov* as particularly influential in shaping his perspective (Prokhanoff 1933:36).

Prokhanov asserts that Dostoevsky's works vividly portray the various manifestations of evil prevalent in their contemporary society. Having personally experienced an existential crisis and subsequently undergone a transformative conversion process (Prokhanoff 1933:42-47), Prokhanov made a resolute decision to dedicate his life to serving God and the Russian people, with the goal of effecting transformative change. This study aims to elucidate how all of Prokhanov's endeavours, life objectives, and undertakings were intricately linked to this overarching mission.

Additionally, it is hypothesised that Prokhanov emerged as a transformational leader who actively pursued change and transformation, rejecting complacency with the status quo. The tension between Prokhanov and the more conservative faction of the evangelical church, notably the Baptists, stemmed from their divergent interpretations of the goals of the Christian evangelical mission. While some influential Baptists emphasised individual

salvation, Prokhanov espoused a broader perspective, advocating for societal transformation alongside personal salvation. This disparity in vision and approach contributed to tensions between Prokhanov and the Baptist community (VSEKhB 1989:158).

Lastly, Prokhanov exemplified the qualities of a missional leader (Reimer 2013:138-142), drawing from his evangelical upbringing in both Molokan and Baptist families. He recognised that genuine societal transformation required not only external change but also spiritual renewal. Firmly believing that a spiritual revolution served as the fundamental bedrock upon which substantial and meaningful transformation could be built (Prokhanoff 1933:119-120), Prokhanov advocated for a holistic approach to effecting change.

2.2. Socio-Political Context

2.2.1. Society's realisation of the need for reforms

Prokhanov's life unfolded during a pivotal period in both Russian and global history. Born in 1869 during the reign of Alexander II (1818–1881), he witnessed the rapid evolution of Russia's economy, social structures, and educational systems (Prokhanoff 1933:14-15).

The need for reform became glaringly apparent to Russian society following their defeat in the Crimean War (1853–1856), where the Russian Empire clashed with a coalition comprising the British, French, Ottoman, and Sardinian kingdoms (Heier 1970:1). This defeat exposed not only the inadequacies of the Russian Empire's domestic and foreign policies but also catalysed a realisation of the urgent need for reform. As Heier (1970:1) observes, 'The defeat was not merely a setback for the Russian military; it was a blow to the very foundational principles upon which the Russian state rested'.

This realisation resonated deeply with intellectuals, both Western-leaning and Slavophile, as well as with many proponents of the monarchy, particularly Alexander II himself. It became evident that Russia could not sustain internal peace or assert itself as

a modern great power within the confines of its archaic system characterised by serfdom, repression, and entrenched conservatism.

Consequently, this pivotal moment prompted Russia to embrace progressive social ideas emanating from Europe, providing a roadmap for the transformation of the social and administrative landscape of the Russian Empire (Heier 1970:1-2).

2.2.2. The great reforms of Alexander II and their dual implications

One of the significant reforms enacted during Alexander II's reign was the emancipation of peasants from serfdom. On March 3, 1861, Alexander II issued a manifesto that abolished serfdom, a pivotal event in Russian history. While this reform did not completely resolve the longstanding peasant issues, it laid the groundwork for addressing other aspects of the state and society. As Milov and Tsimbaev (2006:602) noted, February 19, 1861, was a watershed moment in 19th-century Russia.

The dissolution of the serf system brought profound changes to the traditional foundations of Russian statehood. The emancipation of peasants led to a transformation in socio-economic relations, restructuring of the social fabric, and revisions of legal frameworks, paving the way for further reforms under Alexander II's leadership (Milov & Tsimbaev 2006:602).

On January 1, 1864, Emperor Alexander II enacted the *zemstvo*¹ reform, introducing triennial elections for *zemstvo* institutions and significantly revitalising social life in Russia. According to Tyukavkin (ed. 2001:45-46), *zemstvos* were responsible for managing local public affairs, including overseeing property, capital, *zemstvo* dues, and charitable activities. They also handled food provision, supported trade, industry, and agriculture, promoted public education and healthcare, and managed fiscal functions such as tax distribution and compliance with specific obligations.

¹ The 'Zemstvo' was a local self-government system in the Russian Empire (1864–1919), established to manage community needs and foster local administration.

The establishment of zemstvos significantly improved education and healthcare, raising living standards in rural areas. Additionally, it spurred the growth of the liberal movement in Russia (ed. Sakharov 1997:397).

Judicial reform, introduced alongside the creation of zemstvos in 1864, aimed to establish an impartial, transparent, and adversarial court system independent of administrative control (ed. Sakharov 1997:398). Public attendance at court sessions was permitted, and jury trials were introduced for certain criminal cases (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:62).

Educational reform was a key component of the liberal reforms between 1861 and 1866, impacting primary and secondary education and significantly influencing university life. The University Statute, approved on June 18, 1863, marked a progressive stride during this era of significant reforms (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:88). Universities gained autonomy through self-governing bodies like the University Council, which oversaw scientific and practical matters. Positions such as rectors, vice-rectors, deans, and professors were elected, subject to the Minister of Education's approval (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:88). Additionally, efforts were made to advance higher education for women.

In 1865, Emperor Alexander II introduced censorship reform, aiming to relax censorship restrictions within the Russian Empire. These reforms marked a shift from preliminary censorship to punitive censorship. Books had to undergo inspection by censorship committees at least three days before printing, while periodicals had to be submitted at least two days before distribution or sale (Zhirkov n.d: 2004-2017). Unlike prior approval, violations were penalised after publication, with decisions made by the courts based on the law, allowing for a defence. Despite its limitations, these initiatives represented a step toward progressive reform in the realm of printed publications.

In 1870, city government underwent reform, introducing city dumas and councils similar to the zemstvo model. These bodies played a vital role in improving urban infrastructure, healthcare, charity, and addressing food and public health concerns, thereby fostering economic development in cities (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:53-54).

The reforms of the 1860s and 1870s profoundly reshaped the social, economic, and political landscape of the Russian Empire (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:93). These initiatives ignited a burgeoning enthusiasm for civic engagement and nurtured the emergence of civil society (Heier 1970:1). By expanding educational opportunities, they empowered the youth to actively participate in societal advancement and influence the nation's course. Overall, these reforms fostered an atmosphere of optimism and anticipation for a promising future within the Russian Empire, epitomising a surge in public spiritedness (Heier 1970:1).

However, historians often emphasise the partial nature of Alexander II's reforms, despite their progressive intent. While these reforms brought significant changes to Russia, they also engendered a 'dichotomy' within Russian society, leading to 'paradoxical consequences' (Wood 1993:15).

Instead of uniting society, these reforms paradoxically exacerbated existing divisions. Many progressives viewed Alexander II's reforms as insufficient, as they did not adequately address the deep-seated contradictions inherent in Russian state and society during the early 1860s (Heier 1970:3). Despite the emergence of new progressive institutions, they operated within the constraints of a robust autocratic government. The tsar, in implementing reforms, rejected noble advice to 'crown his reforms with a constitution' (Wood 1993:16), leading to profound disillusionment among segments of the intelligentsia.

Rudnitskaya (ed. 1997:11) contends that the half-hearted nature of peasant reform deepened the rift between authorities and radicals, paving the way for an 'uncompromising struggle'. The enactment of the February 19, 1861, Statute, as noted by Rudnitskaya (ed. 1997:11-12), undermined the prospect of a civilised resolution to national issues, fuelling a divide within the liberation movement itself, with liberalism and revolutionary tendencies becoming distinct in Russian political life.

Moreover, Wood (1993:16) highlights the growing attraction of radical intellectuals to the notion of a popular revolution as the sole means for the Russian people to achieve true 'land and liberty' (*zemlya i volya*). These words later became the rallying cry of the Russian revolutionary populist movement, representing the primary opposition to the policies of the 'Tsar-Liberator'.

The 1860s were marked by both enthusiasm and discontent, as an emerging civil society grew amid increasing frustration. Within this milieu, various liberation movements arose, poised to shape Russia's historical trajectory. This prevailing sentiment forms the backdrop for Prokhanov's birth in 1869.

2.2.3. The rise and evolution of the Russian populist movement (Narodnichestvo) and revolutionary sentiment

In his autobiography, Prokhanov (1933:36) recounts his exposure to banned authors and ideological leaders such as Herzen, Lavrov, Kropotkin, and Chernyshevsky. He describes the radical wing of this movement, characterised by nihilists who, like the characters in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, rejected societal institutions and advocated terrorism (1933:37-38). While Prokhanov admired the courage of his contemporaries who sought to assist suffering peasants (1933:74-75), he differed in his approach to societal change.

Alexander Herzen (1812–1870) is considered the founder of the Russian Populist movement (Wood 1993:17). Disillusioned with European bourgeois civilisation after 1848, he embraced Slavophile² ideas and viewed the peasant commune as a model for

² Slavophilia, or Slavophilism, emerged as an intellectual movement in the 19th century. Its proponents sought to influence the development of the Russian Empire based on values and institutions rooted in its early history. Slavophiles rejected Western European influences and advocated for a distinct path for Russia, emphasising the preservation of traditional Russian culture and society. According to Wardin (2013:loc. 159-166), Slavophiles idealised their past - their institutions, commune, and the Orthodox Church – while Westernisers looked down upon Russia. Some advocated for liberal constitutionalism, others idealised socialism, and a faction inclined towards radicalism supported revolutionary change.

a future socialist society in Russia. This fusion of Western socialism with Russian peasant collectivism is seen as the foundation of Russian Populism (Wood 1993:17). Petr Lavrov (1823–1900) exerted significant influence on the younger generation of the 1870s and 1880s. Sedov (1969) cites Lavrov's statement in *Vpered* (1874:186), where Lavrov argues that Russians possess revolutionary potential but lack awareness of their power (see also Lavrov 1965). Lavrov advocates for the intelligentsia to lead the people in their struggle, expressing optimism about overcoming oppression (Sedov 1969).

According to Tyukavkin (ed. 2001:101), government reforms and anticipated peasant unrest were significant influences on the Russian Populist movement. The Russian Populists (Narodniks), varied in their approach to revolution. Herzen and Ogarev (1813–1877) preferred peaceful reforms and viewed peasant revolution as a last resort (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:102). In contrast, Chernyshevsky believed revolution was essential for societal change, contingent on political, economic, and financial readiness (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:102). Extremists within the movement advocated for revolution at any cost, believing that even failure could provide valuable lessons (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:102).

Chernyshevsky and the supporters of *The Contemporary* (Sovremennik) magazine represented another faction within the Narodnik Movement in the 1860s (Shub 1969:17). They firmly believed that revolution was the 'sole viable means to bring about societal transformation' (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:102). They viewed the *peasant commune* as a suitable and familiar structure for socialist change, but only if power was transferred to representatives of the people. However, they also recognised that a successful revolution depended on the readiness of various factors, such as political, economic, and financial conditions (ed. Tyukavkin 2001:102).

Petr Zaichnevskiy's proclamation for Young Russia (Molodaia Rossiia) epitomised Narodnik radicalism. Released in May 1862, it divided society into the oppressed and oppressors, advocating for the complete extermination of the tsar and his family, even if immense bloodshed was necessary (Zaichnevskiy 1997:143-146). Zaichnevskiy called for an unrestrained dictatorship and criticised religion and the family as artificial constructs (Zaichnevskiy 1997:143).

Radicalism surged in the late 1860s, highlighted by Dmitry Karakozov's 1866 assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander II. Following this, Karakozov was executed, and others were exiled (Fedorov, Moryakov & Shchetinov 2015:271). Petr Tkachev and Sergey Nechaev subsequently formed the 'People's Revenge' (Narodnaia Rasprava) Circle, distributing radical proclamations until curtailed by police intervention. Nechaev and Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) co-authored the Catechism of the Revolutionary (Katekhezis Revoliutsionera), which rejected traditional morality in favour of revolutionary interests (Fedorov et al., 2015:271).

A key document for the Russian Populist Movement was Nechaev's 1869 address to the 'Students of the University, Academy, and Technological Institute in St. Petersburg'. In this address, Nechaev emphasised the hardships endured by the common people and urged students to prioritise communal welfare over personal comfort. He advocated for immersing themselves in the lives and interests of the people, suggesting that those who disregard this call should be censured as 'scoundrels'. This appeal instilled a sense of obligation among students, leading to the practice of 'going to the people' (Nechaev 1997:208).

In the 1870s, the Narodnik movement held significant influence, particularly regarding 'active' revolutionary actions (Fedorov et al., 2015:272). In the summer of 1874, the Narodniks launched a campaign known as 'going to the people' (khozhdenie v narod) to convince the common people to rise up in rebellion. Several thousand young propagandists participated. However, they were disappointed to find that the people were not ready to oppose the tsar. While peasants showed interest in discussions about tax abolition and land seizure, they were cautious about revolutionary ideas, and calls for rebellion were often met with hostility. Many peasants even reported these propagandists to the authorities (Fedorov et al., 2015:276).

After the initial failure of the 'going to the people' (khozhdenie v narod) campaign, the Narodniks tried a different approach. Young individuals left their institutions and families to acquire practical skills, such as trades, or becoming doctors or teachers, to integrate

themselves among rural peasants (Fedorov et al., 2015:276). Despite their efforts, this attempt also failed to incite revolt.

According to Fedorov, the failures of the campaign had significant implications for the liberation movement in Russia. It led to the realisation that the Narodniks needed to evolve into a centralised organisation with a clear structure and programme. In 1876, the 'Northern Revolutionary People's Group' (Severnaia Revoliutsionnaia Narodnaia Gruppy) was established, later renamed 'Land and Will' (Zemlia i Volia) in 1878, led by a central circle of 30 individuals (Fedorov et al., 2015:277).

In 1879, 'Land and Will' split into two factions. 'Black Repartition' (Chernyi Peredel) opposed violence, seeing it as counterproductive and a betrayal of populist principles (Wood 1993:20). 'People's Will', on the other hand, supported terrorism to undermine the state and hasten the revolution. On August 26, 1879, the executive committee of 'People's Will' (Narodnaia Volia) sentenced Alexander II to death, and after several attempts, the tsar was assassinated on March 1, 1881 (Wood 1993:21).

Prokhanov had a deep understanding of the political and social processes among the intelligentsia and students. His time at the Technological Institute, where he studied from 1888 to 1893, was crucial in shaping his ideas about socio-political reform in Russia. He observed that the Institute's students were known for their political activities, which greatly influenced his outlook on social and political transformation (Prokhanoff 1933:74-75).

2.2.4. The reactionary period of anti-reforms

The Narodniks aimed to incite a revolution through the assassination of the tsar, hoping to expedite social change (Wood 1993:20-21). However, Emperor Alexander III's accession in 1881 led to a defensive stance against revolutionary violence. He executed the conspirators and disbanded 'People's Will', quelling its activities.

Alexander III strengthened autocratic rule with support from The Kitchen Cabinet, Konstantin Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), Dmitry Tolstoi (1823–1889), Michail Katkov (1818–1887), and Vladimir Meshcherskii (1839–1914) (Whelan 1982:60). Their common agenda was recentralising autocratic power.

On April 29, 1881, the tsar signed a manifesto urging loyal subjects to serve the State faithfully, eliminate conspiracies, uphold morals, educate children, and establish order and truth (ed. Kukushkin 1996:233-235). Authored by Pobedonostsev, a critic of constitutional monarchy, it aimed to reinforce autocratic power, a view supported by Alexander III (Tyukavkin 2001:226-227).

On August 14, 1881, Alexander III issued regulations (Polozhenie o merakh 1881) granting authorities powers such as expulsion, school closures, military court jurisdiction, and press censorship (ed. Sakharov 1997:438). These measures, lasting until the collapse of autocracy, negatively impacted the evangelical movement, leading to the imprisonment and exile of many evangelicals.

On August 27, 1882, Alexander III approved measures to control the periodical press (Vremennye Pravila o Pechati 1882), developed by Valuyev, Pobedonostsev, and Stroganov after Alexander II's assassination. These measures, in place until 1905–1906, aimed to protect society by citing the press's harmful influence on youth. Publications faced mandatory censorship after the third warning and could be shut down after consultation among key ministers (Volkov 1910:208-209).

On August 23, 1884, significant amendments to the university charter reduced the autonomy and self-governance of the professorial board, reversing the 1863 reforms (Volkov 1910: 4).

Wood (1993: 23) notes that Alexander III's government sought to reverse or weaken the reforms of his predecessor, affecting the legal system, *zemstvo*, and censorship.

By 1886, the 'People's Will' Movement had disintegrated, with its members either exiled or arrested. The failed assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander III by Alexander Ulyanov led to the execution of conspirators on May 8, 1887 (Offord 2010:72).

The tsarist autocratic regime effectively suppressed revolutionary movements by the late 1880s. However, the notion of revolution persisted, gaining momentum into the early 1900s and ultimately culminating in the two revolutions of 1917: the bourgeois-democratic and the Bolshevik revolutions.

In the late 19th century, a strong desire for selfless service to society emerged, especially among the intelligentsia and youth. Many students and young individuals, aware of Russia's socio-economic and political issues, aspired to serve their fellow citizens and effect change, often inspired by the Narodnik movement.

Russian philosopher Frank (2009a:350) notes that various ideological groups, including moderate liberals, socialist Narodniks, and Marxists, prioritised the 'good of the people'. They viewed the working class as noble but oppressed victims of exploitation, poverty, and crime.

Intellectuals, burdened by guilt about their privileged status, believed in selfless service to alleviate their conscience. They adhered to Rousseau's idea that humans are inherently good, and societal flaws cause evil. This guilt drove them to advocate for selfless service as a form of redemption (Frank 2009a:350).

According to Frank (2009b:444), starting from the 1840s and especially during the 1860s, Russian intellectuals sought a clear solution to historical conditions by improving political and social systems, dismantling the flawed order, and establishing a new system for truth and happiness.

Frank observed that many Russians were committed to the revolutionary overthrow of the old order, envisioning the creation of a new, democratic, and socialist system that would establish these ideals permanently.

This belief was revolutionary, blaming the autocratic tsarist regime for Russia's woes. Frank (2009a:345-346) notes: 'The Russian people suffer under the oppression of an obsolete, evil, selfish, arbitrary power. The system of autocratic power, headed by the tsar, is blamed for poverty, ignorance, cultural backwardness, and crimes'.

Frank (2009a:346) also asserts that questioning the greatness of figures like Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, and Chernyshevsky was considered blasphemy, highlighting their profound influence among the intellectual elite.

In the latter half of the 19th century, a fervent desire for sacrificial service to the people emerged, especially among the intelligentsia and youth. Many young individuals, aware of Russia's socio-economic and political challenges, aspired to serve their fellow citizens, effect change, and even sacrifice their lives. This sentiment was notably pronounced within the Narodnik Movement.

Frank (2009a:350) notes that various ideological factions, including moderate liberals, socialist Narodniks, and Marxists, believed that serving the 'good of the people' was essential. They viewed the working class as noble yet oppressed by circumstances that perpetuated poverty, powerlessness, alcoholism, and criminality.

Frank (2009a:350) contends that intellectuals, burdened by guilt over their elevated status, felt a moral imperative to engage in selfless service. They unwittingly subscribed to Rousseau's maxim that 'All men emerge inherently good from the hands of the Creator,

with evil being a consequence of a flawed social order'. This sense of guilt drove intellectuals to advocate for selfless service as a form of redemption (Frank 2009a:350).

Stepnyak-Kravchinsky (1851–1895), a Narodnik revolutionary writer, vividly describes the atmosphere of his time and its origins (1960:24). He links the awakening of the people's spirit to the French Revolution of 1871. Through the telegraph and newspapers, Russian society followed the events in France closely, witnessing people shedding blood and women and children suffering to protect the rights of the common people. 'They are dying for the emancipation of the worker—for the great social idea of our era', he writes. The author continues, stating that the young Russian hears the song of the peasant, born from centuries of 'suffering, misery, poverty, oppression'. To provide a vivid picture of the atmosphere of the time, Stepnyak-Kravchinsky offers a detailed description of the peasant's situation (Stepnyak-Kravchinsky 1960:24):

Here he stands before him, this "sower and keeper" of the Russian land, depressed by hopeless toil and want, an eternal slave to the bar, to the officials, to his own brother the kulak. The government deliberately keeps him in ignorance, and everyone is robbing him, everyone is trampling him in the mud, and no one will give him a helping hand. No one? 'So no, no!' But now, the young man who observes all this, who hears the song 'knows now what he must do. He will extend his hand to the peasant. He will show him the way to freedom and happiness. His heart overflows *with love for this poor sufferer*, and with a glowing eye he pronounces in the depths of his soul a solemn vow to *devote all his life*, all his strength, all his thoughts to free his native people, who endure everything, just to give him, a spoiled brat, the opportunity to live in contentment and luxury, to study, to enjoy the arts. He will throw off his lord's garb, the touch of which burns his body, put on a rough peasant cloak and boot, and, leaving the rich home of his relatives, where it is stuffy as a prison, he will *go to the people*, to some lost village in the middle of nowhere, and there, weak and pampered bourgeois, he will perform hard peasant work, will subject himself to all sorts of 'deprivations, just to bring to this miserable environment the word of consolation, the gospel of our days - socialism. *What for him is exile, Siberia, death?* All absorbed in his great idea, radiant, life-giving as the fertile sun of the south, he despises suffering and is ready to meet death itself with a smile of bliss on his face. Thus, was born a socialist revolutionary in 1872-1874...

Revolutionaries do not live for themselves - they live for the happiness of others. *They sacrifice their own happiness.* The ideal of the revolutionary is a life full of suffering and the death of a martyr.

Therefore, although the tsarist autocratic regime suppressed the revolutionary movement, the idea of regime change through revolution remained extremely popular. The reactionary era likely fuelled a spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice within certain circles of the intelligentsia and student body. On the one hand, they felt guilty for the suffering of the people; on the other hand, they were willing to make sacrifices for the idealised common folk. It is evident that, in the minds of the people, the cause of suffering lay not in human nature, but in the tsarist regime, which they believed needed to be replaced through revolution.

As for Prokhanov, he aligned with much of the intelligentsia's advocacy for fundamental reforms in Russian society. However, he diverged from many of his contemporaries on one crucial aspect: the means to achieve prosperity for the Russian people. The following excerpt from his autobiography (1933:38) illustrates this perspective:

While hailing with all my heart the liberation movement, I instinctively felt, and afterward expressed in clear written form, my conviction that the cardinal and final solution of the question lies not in revolution only, although that might take place as act of necessity, but in a great spiritual reformation.

2.2.5. Better times are coming soon

Following the death of Tsar Alexander III in 1894, his son Nicholas II (1868-1918) ascended to the throne, maintaining the status quo in Russian socio-political affairs. Historian Sakharov (ed. 1997:480) notes that Nicholas II initially upheld his father's conservative principles, showing little inclination for change.

However, the early 20th century marked a significant shift in Russian history, characterised by growing unrest among students, workers, and the liberation movement.

In his autobiography, Prokhanov (1933:129) describes the years from 1903 to 1905 as a period of 'Signs of Better Times' and 'The beginning of spring in the state life of Russia'.

During this time, public pressure compelled Emperor Nicholas II (Nikolay II 1903) to issue the Manifesto of February 26, 1903, which guaranteed freedom of religious belief and practice for all faiths and denominations. Although the manifesto acknowledged some unrest influenced by Western ideas, it reaffirmed the Orthodox Church's dominant role in Russian society.

The manifesto's primary objective was to promote religious tolerance and ensure freedom of worship for all subjects, regardless of their beliefs. It sought to address societal discontent while preserving the Orthodox Church's central position in Russian life (Nicol'skaya 2009:26).

Unfortunately, the manifesto did not lead to significant changes in religious freedom. Prokhanov (1933:130) notes that old laws remained in effect, forbidding separation from the Greek Catholic Church, severely punishing proselytising, and restricting religious meetings to Greek Orthodox services.

Printing religious literature outside the spirit of Orthodoxy was banned, evangelical gatherings were held underground, and hundreds were exiled for their faith. Thus, the prediction of the manifesto's futility by the Workers' Social-Democratic Party in St. Petersburg proved correct (Komitet RSDRP 1903).³

The tsarist regime's influence waned as societal discontent grew. Prokhanov linked this decline to the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), which weakened the regime and emboldened the liberation movement (Prokhanoff 1933:129). The first Russian

³ The RSDLP, precursor to Lenin's Bolshevik party, issued a scathing leaflet critiquing the Tsarist Manifesto of February 26, 1903. Written in an aggressive and mocking tone, the leaflet dismisses the manifesto's promises of religious and political freedoms as mere 'idle talk'. It accuses the tsar of inconsistency, questioning the need for religious tolerance if Russia had already claimed to be the most tolerant country. The RSDLP sympathised with non-Orthodox movements and condemned the tsarist regime's persecution of believers. This solidarity may have contributed to evangelical believers enjoying relative freedom in the years following the Bolshevik party's rise to power in 1917.

revolution began on January 9, 1905, with 'Bloody Sunday', when a peaceful workers' march to present a petition to the tsar was violently suppressed. Historians continue to debate the justification for the excessive police brutality exercised at that time (ed. Zubov 2010:164-165).

The aftermath ignited widespread public outcry, leading to strikes, demonstrations, and protests, including violent clashes in Riga and Warsaw. Unrest spread to the countryside, where livestock was destroyed and churches were desecrated, eroding faith in both the tsar and clergy (ed. Zubov 2010:165). This highlighted the urgent need for socio-political reform in the Russian Empire.

On April 17, 1905, Emperor Nicholas II signed (Nikolay II1905a) the Manifesto 'On Strengthening the Principles of Religious Tolerance' (*Ob ukreplenii nachal veroterpimosti*), also known as the Manifesto of April 17 (Savinskiy 1999:249). This landmark event had significant implications for non-Orthodox denominations. Comprising 17 points, the Manifesto recognised individuals' right to freely convert from the Orthodox faith to another Christian confession or creed without fear of persecution or adverse consequences to their personal or civil rights. Additionally, it introduced measures aimed at fostering religious tolerance.

Prokhanov's biography highlights Prince Sviatopolk-Mirsky's brief yet pivotal role as Minister of Interior Affairs. Despite his short tenure, Sviatopolk-Mirsky worked to liberalise the treatment of non-Orthodox denominations, initiating legislative reforms by gathering information on various religious societies. Prokhanov contributed to this effort by authoring 'The Report to the Ministry of Interior Concerning the Legal Condition of Evangelical Christians, Baptists, and Others in Russia' (1933:130), which influenced the content of the manifesto (Redaktsiya 1922a:4).

In response to growing societal demands for broader reforms, the tsar issued a Manifesto on August 6, 1905, establishing the State Duma with deliberative voting rights, though the tsar retained the authority to convene it. The complex election process excluded workers, pupils, servicemen, and those under 25. Historian Zubov (ed. 2010:168) notes

that the Duma's jurisdiction included the preliminary examination of bills before submission to the monarch.

On October 17, 1905, Tsar Nicholas II (Nikolay II 1905b) signed the 'Manifesto for the Improvement of State Order' (*Manifest ob usovershenstvovanii gosudarstvennogo poryadka*). Signed under duress, it aimed to end turmoil and restore order, guaranteeing civil liberties such as personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly, and association. It also expanded voting rights and required State Duma approval for laws to take effect (ed. Chistyakov 1994:41).

2.2.6. Church and State: Tsarism, Bolshevism, and Missionary Work (1906–1928).

2.2.6.1. *Evangelicals in Late Imperial Russia (1906–1917): Legal Challenges, National Identity, and the Struggle for Religious Freedom*

A significant legal issue for Russian evangelical communities in 1906–1907 was the decree issued on October 17, 1906. This legislation granted evangelical communities formal rights to construct church buildings, elect pastors and other leaders, and collect tithes from members. However, these rights were contingent upon the mandatory registration of pastors with state authorities and the submission of detailed information about community members (Coleman 2005:33). Evangelical believers expressed dissatisfaction with the decree's restrictions on proselytism and the requirement for state approval of presbyters. Despite their efforts to contest these conditions, their appeals were unsuccessful, and the provisions of this law remained in effect until 1917 (Coleman 2005:34).

The restriction of religious freedom, as previously noted, stemmed from a particular view of national identity in Imperial Russia, one closely tied to Orthodox Christianity. By the mid-19th century, Russia began to engage with "more modern conceptions of religious affiliation, which emphasized individual belief over communal and hereditary religious identity" (Werth 2014:5). These emerging ideas introduced the concept of "freedom of conscience," a notion that stood in stark contrast to the traditional framework of toleration, which was seen as a privilege granted by the state. Unlike toleration, which was regarded

as a concession from the ruler, freedom of conscience was framed as an inherent human right that the state was duty-bound to protect. However, this ideal was never fully implemented in Imperial Russia, largely due to entrenched fears of proselytism—a concern so profound that even the liberal elite found it unacceptable (Werth 2014:125–126, 134).

While the Russian nation increasingly adopted a political framework of identity, religion remained a central element of imperial identity (Werth 2014:150–152). Despite emerging alternatives, such as ethnicity, by the early 20th century, the Russian elite continued to view religion, particularly Orthodoxy, as foundational to national identity. The bond between the tsar and the people under "popular autocracy" rested on the spiritual unity of Russianness and Orthodoxy. In 1894, Russian Baptists were denounced as a "harmful" sect for threatening both the Orthodox faith and national identity. Nicholas II reinforced this connection by declaring that Russians had always been and would remain Orthodox (Werth 2014:170). This tension between the emerging ideals of religious freedom and the state's deep investment in Orthodoxy was reflected in the restrictions placed on evangelical communities.

However, the relative freedoms gained after 1906 stimulated vigorous proselytising efforts. Operating as though they enjoyed full religious liberty, evangelical communities displayed a radical commitment to freedom of conscience. Yet, the legal framework of the Russian Empire often constrained their missionary activities, leading to frequent instances of non-compliance (Coleman 2005:32–33). Their evangelical zeal provoked strong opposition from conservative elements in society and governmental institutions. As Coleman (2005:67) notes, "The Baptists' vibrant activity seemed to threaten not just the national identity of the Russian state but also the very conception of society and power that imperial institutions embodied."

Another significant concern, shared by both the authorities and society at large, was the evangelical movement's strong association with Western influence. From its inception, the movement was perceived as a foreign import. In the north, it emerged through the efforts of the English preacher Lord Radstock (VSEKhB 1989:82). Prominent leaders, such as Ivan Prokhanov and Vasily Fetler, received their religious training in England. In

the south, evangelical groups were often referred to as “shtunda,” a term of German origin. The Hamburg Seminary also played a key role, with leaders like Vasiliy Pavlov studying there and translating the Hamburg Confession of Faith into Russian (Pavlov 1906).

These Western ties, combined with their critical stance toward Orthodoxy, influence on public order, and the potential political implications of their activities (Coleman 2005:70), presented significant challenges for evangelical Christians. In a context where Russian identity was closely intertwined with Orthodoxy, evangelicals were often perceived as foreign agents, facing societal and governmental suspicion. To counter these perceptions, evangelical leaders prioritised the contextualisation of their faith, striving to dispel the notion that evangelicalism was inherently Western. For example, Prokhanov sought to adapt evangelical beliefs to Russian culture. Evangelicals also made concerted efforts to demonstrate their patriotism. For instance, portraits of the Tsar were displayed in homes hosting prayer meetings, accompanied by the phrase "God Save the Tsar" (Coleman 2005:108).

In response, the state began imposing increasingly stringent restrictions. For example, in 1909, a ban was enacted on the distribution of printed materials, such as brochures and leaflets, and special permissions became mandatory for conducting baptisms (Coleman 2005:71).

In 1910, two major restrictions were introduced. First, organising conventions required advance approval from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, necessitating a formal request from delegates representing at least 12 registered communities. Attendance at such conventions was limited to adults, and foreigners faced additional restrictions. Convention agendas required prior approval, and government-appointed observers were mandated to monitor all sessions. Each community was limited to one business and one spiritual convention annually (Coleman 2005:71).

Another significant restriction prohibited minors from attending meetings and imposed limits on the content of gatherings, explicitly banning discussions. Police surveillance increased, and children's and youth meetings were forbidden without explicit permission. Supervisory authorities had the power to close meetings if business matters were

discussed or if participants called for abandoning the Orthodox Church. Outdoor gatherings, including funerals, required special authorisation (Coleman 2005:72).

The war years were a severe trial for evangelical communities. State pressure intensified significantly: Baptist and Evangelical Christian congresses were banned, numerous congregations and churches were closed, and evangelical periodicals were shut down. Criminal cases were initiated against ministers, and slander against them became widespread.

This persecution persisted despite the active patriotism displayed by many believers, who served either on the battlefield or on the home front, supporting their country in its time of need (Mitskevich 2007:174–176; VSEKhB 1989:162–163). Evangelical leaders worked to challenge the deeply rooted stereotype that equated Russian identity with Orthodoxy. They sought to demonstrate that it was possible to be both Russian and a Baptist or Evangelical Christian.

However, as Coleman (2005:122) notes: "The Baptists' experience during World War I demonstrated the failure of their pluralistic vision of a Russia where Orthodoxy would no longer be the measure of national belonging and political reliability."

Despite their patriotic efforts, evangelical communities continued to face severe challenges, revealing the extent to which Orthodoxy remained entrenched as the cornerstone of Russian national and political identity.

Thus, the challenges faced by evangelical communities in Late Imperial Russia from 1906 to the First World War and later highlight a complex interplay between state policies, societal attitudes, and the struggle for religious freedom. The state's commitment to Orthodoxy as a cornerstone of Russian national identity created an environment of systemic discrimination, where evangelical believers were viewed not only as religious dissenters but also as threats to the unity of the empire. Despite legislative changes that appeared to offer limited freedoms, such as the 1906 decree, the persistent imposition of restrictions reflected the state's deep-seated fears of proselytism and its resistance to pluralistic expressions of faith. It was within this historical context that Prokhanov pursued the realisation of his vision.

2.2.6.2. Evangelicals in Transition: From the February Revolution to the Bolshevik Era and Early Soviet Policies (1917–1929)

The February Revolution of 1917 was welcomed with widespread enthusiasm, as it heralded significant political and social changes. As Nikol'skaya (2009:50) notes, the revolution "brought Russian religious minorities complete, albeit short-lived, freedom and stripped the Russian Orthodox Church of its privileged position within the state." This transformative moment led to the amnesty of both political and religious dissenters, creating unprecedented opportunities for minority groups, including evangelical believers.

The Provisional Government facilitated these changes through critical legislative reforms. Two key decrees were particularly influential: the *Decree on the Abolition of Religious and National Restrictions [Postanovlenie ob otmene veroispovednykh i natsional'nykh ogranichenii]* (March 20, 1917) and the *Decree on Freedom of Conscience [Postanovlenie o svobode sovesti]* (July 14, 1917) (Nicol'skaya 2009:51). These measures allowed evangelicals to renew and expand their activities with greater legal protection. However, this period of relative freedom was abruptly disrupted by the Bolshevik Revolution on October 25 (November 7), 1917. Shortly thereafter, the Council of People's Commissars issued the *Decree on the Separation of Church from State and School from Church [Otdelenii tserkvi ot gosudarstva i shkoly ot tserkvi]* on January 20 (February 2), 1918 (Nicol'skaya 2009:60). While this legislation aligned with the political and religious aspirations of Baptists and Evangelical Christians, it denied religious communities the status of legal entities, significantly limiting their institutional development (Sannikov 1996:337). Simultaneously, the decree undermined the dominant position of the Russian Orthodox Church, further altering the religious landscape (Nicol'skaya 2009:60).

The adoption of the first Soviet Constitution on July 10, 1918, during the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, seemed to reinforce these principles by guaranteeing freedom of conscience and recognising the right of all citizens to engage in both religious and anti-religious propaganda (Nicol'skaya 2009:59). However, in practice, local authorities

frequently enacted repressive policies that contradicted these guarantees, stifling the evangelical movement's growth (Sannikov 1996:337).

The Bolsheviks' approach to religion was deeply shaped by their ideological commitment to class struggle. They viewed religion as fundamentally incompatible with the goals of a communist society and sought to weaken religious organisations, particularly targeting the Russian Orthodox Church (Nicol'skaya 2009:59–60). These policies often created a complex dynamic for evangelical believers, who experienced both opportunities and challenges under the new regime.

The Bolshevik Revolution elicited mixed reactions among evangelicals. On one hand, they enjoyed a relatively favourable position compared to Orthodox Christians, whose institutional privileges had been dismantled (Nicol'skaya 2009:58). Additionally, the redistribution of land to local land committees and peasant households garnered significant evangelical support, as many feared that a return to the Provisional Government would reverse these gains (ed. Zubov 2010:492). On the other hand, the Bolsheviks' radical measures—such as dissolving the Constituent Assembly, fostering class enmity, instigating the Civil War with its accompanying devastation, and implementing the policy of Red Terror—alienated many evangelical believers (ed. Zubov 2010:490–491).

In October 1918, the United Council of Religious Communities and Groups, led by Tolstoyan V.G. Chertkov, was established in Moscow. This council advocated for the exemption of pacifist Christians from military service. Although the Bolsheviks did not fully accommodate this request, they issued the *Decree on Exemption from Military Service for Religious Beliefs [Ob osvobozhdenii ot voinskoj povinnosti po religiozным ubezhdeniiam]* on January 4, 1919. This suggests that, in the early years of their rule, the Bolsheviks sought to cultivate alliances with evangelical believers. This decree allowed for alternative service or complete exemption, contingent upon court approval and an expert commission's evaluation, which included representatives from the council (Nicol'skaya 2009:64).

Although pacifism was not a central tenet of Baptist and Evangelical Christian theology, the horrors of World War I and the Civil War likely contributed to its growing appeal among believers. The Bolsheviks' decision to accommodate pacifist convictions, unprecedented even internationally, was likely a strategic effort to secure evangelical support during their regime's early years (Savinskiy 2001:28). However, this measure had unintended consequences. As Coleman (2009:180) observes, the decree proved to be "a mixed blessing," as churches saw an influx of individuals motivated not by faith but by a desire to avoid military service. This trend negatively impacted the spiritual vitality of congregations (Savinskiy 2001:31) and likely undermined their reputation with the state (Coleman 2009:185).

In response to these challenges, leaders of the Evangelical Christian and Baptist unions eventually called for a return to their earlier stance on pacifism. The Evangelical Christian Union initiated this shift in 1923, followed by the Baptist Union (VSEKhB) shortly thereafter (VSEKhB 1989:178). This reversal caused internal tensions and divisions within the evangelical movement, as will be explored in subsequent sections of this study.

During the early 1920s, the Bolshevik government launched a program to resettle sectarian groups on vacant lands, providing evangelicals with opportunities to establish communities in Siberia, the Caucasus, and other regions. Recognising the communal lifestyles preferred by many sectarian peasants, the government supported the establishment of evangelical communes (Nikol'skaya 2009:70).

At the same time, the government imposed significant restrictions on religious education. A decree prohibited the teaching of religion in schools and limited private instruction to no more than three children at a time in private homes (Nikol'skaya 2009:65). Evangelical churches responded by intensifying their efforts to cultivate home-based religious education for children (VSEKh 1925:44–45).

By the late 1920s, the Soviet state intensified its anti-religious campaigns. On April 8, 1929, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee adopted the resolution *On Religious Associations [O religioznykh ob'edineniakh]*, which severely restricted the rights of

religious believers, confining their activities to prayer houses. Subsequently, on May 18, 1929, the 14th All-Russian Congress of Soviets amended Article 4 of the Constitution, replacing the phrase "freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda" with "freedom of religious practices and anti-religious propaganda" (Savinskiy 2001:116). This shift marked the culmination of the Soviet state's increasingly repressive stance toward religious communities.

In conclusion, the early Soviet period was a time of both promise and peril for evangelicals. While it provided short-lived opportunities for growth and institutional development, it ultimately set the stage for prolonged struggles under a regime committed to the eradication of religion. These events shaped the trajectory of evangelicalism in Russia, leaving a legacy of resilience, adaptation, and faith under adversity.

2.2.6.3. Ivan Prokhanov and the Challenges of Bolshevik Russia (1917–1929)

The February Revolution of 1917 brought widespread enthusiasm and significant changes to Russia's political and social landscape. Ivan Prokhanov, like many other evangelical leaders, welcomed these developments, seeing them as a divine opportunity for the renewal of both church and society (Prokhanov 1917b:6-7). The Provisional Government's legislative reforms, particularly the Decree on the Abolition of Religious and National Restrictions (March 20, 1917) and the Decree on Freedom of Conscience (July 14, 1917), enabled evangelicals to operate with unprecedented freedom. Prokhanov seized this moment to expand his vision for evangelical Christianity in Russia. Among his notable initiatives was the establishment of a political party aimed at promoting religious freedom and advocating for social, political, and economic reforms (Prokhanov 1917a:7-8).

However, the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917 brought a more complex set of challenges. While Prokhanov was less enthusiastic about the Bolsheviks' radical measures, he sought ways to adapt to the new ideological environment. His initial response was pragmatic: recognising the opportunities presented by the Soviet government's early tolerance of alternative religious perspectives, he adopted pacifism.

This shift aligned with Bolshevik decrees, such as the 1919 law on exemption from military service for religious beliefs, which opened avenues for evangelicals to engage with the new regime. Nevertheless, under increasing state pressure, Prokhanov eventually abandoned pacifism as it will be demonstrated further.

Prokhanov also turned his attention to practical initiatives. He spearheaded the creation of agricultural communes, which aligned with the Soviet emphasis on collectivisation while providing a platform for evangelical fellowship and outreach (ed. Dubrovskiy 1922:13). These communes represented a strategic effort to integrate evangelical values with the socio-economic realities of Bolshevik Russia while addressing the problem of hunger. By the early 1920s, Prokhanov withdrew from direct political engagement, recognising the limitations of influencing a regime increasingly hostile to religious organisations. Instead, he focused on strengthening the internal life of the evangelical church and expanding its spiritual and social influence in society. Under his leadership, home-based religious education flourished as a response to the Soviet restrictions on formal religious instruction (ed. Prokhanov (1922a:7). He continued to champion the contextualisation of evangelical beliefs, composing and translating hymns that resonated with Russian cultural sensibilities and promoting a distinctly Russian evangelical identity.

Despite these efforts, the late 1920s marked the beginning of intensified repression. The Soviet state enacted restrictive laws, such as the 1929 resolution "On Religious Associations" [O religioznykh ob"edineniiakh], which confined religious activities to prayer houses and curtailed public engagement. Prokhanov's vision for a "people's church" faced severe challenges as the government's anti-religious campaigns escalated.

Through these turbulent years, Prokhanov exemplified a dual strategy of adaptation and resistance. While he sought to align evangelical initiatives with certain aspects of Soviet ideology, he remained unwavering in his commitment to the spiritual and communal vitality of evangelical believers. His work during this period highlights both the opportunities and limitations of navigating a profoundly transformative and often adversarial political context, as will be shown in this study.

2.2.7. Conclusion

2.2.7.1. The emergence of the idea of spiritual revolution

Prokhanov's (1933) reflections suggest that his early experiences profoundly shaped his socio-political perspective. The transition from Alexander I's reforms to Alexander II's conservative policies fuelled widespread disillusionment and stagnation (Heier 1970:8; Wood 1993:24), which Prokhanov (1933:23-25) described as a 'dark night' marked by political oppression, intellectual pessimism, and religious disillusionment.

However, Prokhanov's existential crisis led to a transformative conversion to Christianity, igniting a fervent desire to share the gospel's message of hope (1933:45). Despite the prevailing societal gloom, dissent and radicalisation brewed with socialist revolutionary ideas gaining ground (Frank 2009a:347), often alongside hostility towards religion – a stance Prokhanov found illogical given their roots in Christ's teachings (1933:37). His education at an activist institute (1933:74) and exposure to influential liberation thinkers (1933:36) further shaped his beliefs, aligning him with democratic socialism while diverging on religious matters.

Prokhanov vehemently rejected violence as a tool for societal change, advocating instead for spiritual revolution and individual moral growth (1933: 75, 126, 174). His vision for a renewed Russia, forged in the revolutionary fervour of his youth, centred on spiritual renewal rather than a Christ-less socialist revolution.

2.2.7.2. The ethos of sacrificial service to the people

In the late 19th century, a prevailing ethos emerged among intellectuals and students, characterised by a profound willingness to engage in sacrificial service for societal betterment. This spirit is exemplified in Prokhanov's biographical narrative, which embodies and celebrates this dedication. He venerates the unwavering resolve of the Narodniks, praising their readiness to confront the established order, despite imminent peril (Prokhanoff 1933:75).

Driven by idealistic fervour and altruistic zeal, these individuals embraced incarceration, exile, and martyrdom. They championed the cause of emancipation of their compatriots,

idealising the humble yet resilient peasant ('moujik') as a paragon of endurance amid centuries of adversity.

Prokhanov's assessment of the self-sacrificial climate among the youth is grounded in empirical realities, aligning him with their ideological convictions and shared experiences. A pivotal moment in Prokhanov's life is captured in a revelatory dream where he perceives Jesus bestowing coins upon him, which he redistributes to the masses.

This experience profoundly shaped his vocational aspirations, compelling him to dedicate his life to serving both deity and humanity by disseminating Christ's teachings (Prokhanoff 1933:40-41). Rejecting external financial patronage, Prokhanov resolves to support his ministry through self-sustained means, steadfastly adhering to his goal of effecting a spiritual revolution.

Prokhanov remained committed to his cause throughout his life, diverging from contemporary paradigms in his approach. His primary pursuit was the propagation of a spiritual renaissance and ethical transformation, underpinned by the transformative potential of the gospel of Christ, envisioned as the cornerstone for Russia's societal regeneration.

Prokhanov's vocational calling must be understood within the context of his formative years as a student. His decision to embrace the role of a gospel preacher until the end of his life reflects a confluence of mystical revelation and societal imperatives, particularly the prevailing ethos of sacrificial service among the intelligentsia and youth of his era.

2.2.7.3. Conceptualising an agrarian-socialist society rooted in collectivist traditions

In late 19th-century Russia, the liberation movement was diverse, yet populists (*narodniki*) shared a unified vision: dismantling Tsarist Russia's social and political framework in favour of an agrarian-socialist order based on peasant communal traditions.

Central to this vision was the belief that Russia should follow a distinct socio-economic path, avoiding the pitfalls of Western capitalism. The *obshchina*, or peasant commune, was pivotal, being seen as a bastion of communal solidarity and a defence against capitalist exploitation (Wood 1993:16). Although not purporting to be against industrialisation, the populists opposed the harmful effects of capitalist production, such as exploitation, proletarianisation, and pauperisation (Wood 1993:16).

Prokhanov sympathised with an agrarian-socialist society rooted in peasant collectivism, influenced by his Molokan heritage and contemporary ideological currents. After completing his education, he helped establish the 'Vertograd' (Vineyard) agricultural commune, envisioned as a utopian settlement governed by gospel principles (Redaktsiya 1922a:3). Citing Acts 4:32 (Prokhanoff 1933:88), he aimed to infuse his venture with spiritual values. His enthusiasm for socialist agricultural communes grew, especially after the revolution, a theme explored further in this dissertation.

2.2.7.4. The unfolding prospects for manifesting Prokhanov's vision

Consequently, in the wake of the legislative reforms of 1905, Prokhanov discerned a propitious moment to commence the realisation of his agenda, which centred on the propagation and advancement of the Evangelical movement within Russia. His overarching objective was to catalyse a paradigmatic shift through a spiritual renaissance, an endeavour that will be meticulously examined in subsequent sections of this study.

2.3. Socio-Economic Context

2.3.1. Industrial expansion in Russia

Alan Wood's (1993:24) analysis of 1880s Russia portrays an era marked by stagnation, mediocrity, and repression. Yet, despite these challenges, significant strides in industrial development laid the foundation for future growth.

The 1890s saw an industrial boom, propelling Russia into the ranks of the world's leading industrial powers alongside the USA, England, Germany, and France (ed. Zubov

2010:77). This surge was primarily driven by the expansion of the railway network, particularly the construction of the Great Siberian Way between 1891 and 1916, spanning 7,000 versts⁴ and connecting central Russia with the Far East.

The Great Siberian Way played a crucial role in exploring and exploiting Siberia's vast resources. It improved communication and transportation between industrial hubs, fostering industrial growth. Railway expansion stimulated demand for materials, boosting industries such as metallurgy, woodworking, and coal mining. By the early 20th century, Russia had the world's second-longest railway network, with significant investments totalling 4.7 billion roubles by 1900 (Kolupaev 2018:227).

The railway industry attracted many skilled professionals (ed. Zubov 2010:78). Despite this industrial expansion, Russia lagged behind Western nations in per capita production, trailing Germany and the United States by threefold and fivefold, respectively.

From 1900 to 1903, Russia faced a crisis and subsequent stagnation until 1909. The standard of living for ordinary Russians remained lower than that of their European and North American counterparts during this period.

2.3.2. The harsh working conditions of industrial labourers

The rapid industrial expansion in late 19th-century Russia brought significant social challenges for urban labourers, known as the 'labour question' (ed. Zubov 2010:82).

Vyacheslav Konstantinovich Plehve, State Secretary, reported to Alexander III about widespread worker exploitation, where employers often ignored agreements and prioritised profit. This exploitation left workers indebted and struggling to meet basic needs (ed. Zubov 2010:82).

Without education or legal recourse, workers turned to riots and strikes. Engineer Golgofsky observed a stark contrast between clean factory environments and the

⁴ A versta is a unit of length equal to 1.07 kilometres or about 0.66 miles.

workers' deteriorated condition, often described as 'old children' or 'young old men' (Pazhitnov 1908:203).

Labourers faced long, gruelling hours and poor living conditions. Many worked 12-hour shifts with minimal rest, and factories lacked hygiene measures, causing diseases and hearing loss among workers (Pazhitnov 1908:203-204). Living conditions were overcrowded and unsanitary, with men, women, and children sharing minimal privacy. Infestations of cockroaches and bedbugs were common (Pazhitnov 1908:218).

These harsh conditions fuelled revolutionary sentiments, leading to the Bolshevik Revolution. The collective suffering and desire for change among the working class were pivotal to its success.

2.3.3. Prokhanov's academic journey during Russia's industrial expansion

In 1888, Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov enrolled in the mechanical department of the St. Petersburg Technological Institute. By 1893, he successfully completed his studies, earning a technologist diploma of the XII degree from the Sankt-Peterburgskiy Tekhnologicheskii Institut (SPb Tekhnologicheskii Institut 1893).

This diploma certified his professional aptitude, authorising him to oversee the construction of factory and industrial facilities, including associated residential structures, as well as to manage construction endeavours under the purview of the Ministry of Railways.

After completing his studies and obtaining his diploma, Prokhanov engaged in various railway-related roles throughout his career (Prokhanoff 1933:117-118).

According to the biography published in the Morning Star (Utrennyaya Zvezda) (Redaktsiya 1922a:4), 'He always said that he saved people in two ways: 1) by the Westinghouse brake from bodily death and 2) spiritual pilgrims by the word of God from eternal death'.

2.3.4. Agricultural hardships experienced by peasants

In 1897, the peasant class constituted the largest demographic group in Russia, representing 86% of the population (excluding Finland and Poland). Despite the abolition of serfdom in 1861, which granted them freedom, peasants remained tied to their communities, owning land within those boundaries. Departing from these communities posed a formidable challenge, permitted only once every 12 years, with few being able to capitalise on this opportunity (ed. Zubov 2010: 69-70).

Analysts attribute the inefficiency of Russian agriculture primarily to the communal nature of land ownership and the absence of private land tenure. This inefficiency is starkly illustrated by the per capita grain yield in the 1990s, which stood at 14 poods (puds)⁵, falling short of the consumption rate of 17.4 poods, indicating insufficient bread supply resulting from communal land ownership.

The peasants' predicament was further exacerbated by objective factors such as low global bread prices and excessive land rents. However, as Zubov (ed. 2010: 72) notes, 'The scarcity of land worsened due to subjective factors stemming from the peculiarities of the Russian peasantry's agricultural practices'. Agricultural labourers suffered from inadequate education and lacked the requisite knowledge and skills for efficient agricultural production (ed. Zubov 2010:72-73).

2.3.5. Urban development

The rapid industrialisation of the Russian Empire profoundly influenced urban development. By the early 20th century, the empire boasted approximately 1,000 cities, accommodating roughly 17% of its population. Zubov (ed. 2010:80) notes that 33% of the urban populace resided in 20 cities with populations exceeding 100,000 inhabitants.

Among these urban centres were prominent cities such as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Odessa, Kyiv, Lodz, Riga, Baku, Kharkov, Tiflis, Tashkent, and Vilna. It is

⁵ One pood (pud) is equal to 16.38 kg.

noteworthy that alongside the proliferation of large-scale industrial enterprises, small-scale ventures like bakeries, shoe shops, and watchmakers also flourished.

During the winter season, up to 4 million individuals found employment in various handicraft sectors, suggesting a seasonal migration of agricultural labourers to urban areas in pursuit of supplementary income (ed. Zubov 2010:79).

This demographic, detached from their customary social milieu, potentially exhibited greater receptivity to religious influences, thus being more amenable to embracing the gospel faith.

2.3.6. Conclusion

2.3.6.1. Transformational initiatives: Catalysing positive change

By examining the socio-economic conditions of late 19th-century Russian people and comparing them with Prokhanov's perspectives, it is clear that his assessments were grounded in reality. Prokhanov's personal experiences and literary interests reveal his understanding of the adversities faced by the Russian people.

His admiration for authors like Dostoevsky and Nekrasov (Prokhanoff 1933:36) highlighted his preference for literature that depicts the struggles of ordinary people. Nekrasov's portrayal of the burlaki, labourers hauling boats along the Volga River, resonated with Prokhanov, emphasising his recognition of the hardships experienced by the working class. His compassion and reverence for every suffering individual, viewing the entire Russian populace as a 'martyr nation' (1933:36), reflect his empathetic nature and understanding of widespread hardships.

The core of this discourse lies in Prokhanov's proactive approach. Not content with mere empathy, he dedicated his life to alleviating suffering. His March 1917 political manifesto (Prokhanov 1917a:7-8) prominently featured initiatives to improve the plight of the working class.

He was also deeply concerned about the peasantry, as noted in his biography (1933: 36). His idealisation of the simple Russian peasant and involvement in founding agricultural communes, such as Vetrograd (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:87-90), demonstrate his commitment to the peasant welfare.

Prokhanov's deep empathy for the hardships of ordinary Russians, combined with the intellectual milieu of social thinkers, gave rise to an authentic transformational leadership paradigm. This paradigm aimed not only to help individuals reconnect with divinity but also to achieve profound societal transformation toward greater prosperity and progress.

2.3.6.2. Prokhanov's secular education in light of his spiritual calling

In the context of the industrial expansion of his time, Prokhanov's educational trajectory positioned him within a profession highly esteemed for its role in advancing industrial production. Particularly, he steered his professional aspirations towards the railway sector, recognising its pivotal significance for the Russian economy. In his autobiography, Prokhanov (1933:119) elucidates his rationale for pursuing engineering, stating, 'After my conversion... I made a program for my life's work, including acquiring of an engineering education and also of a theological education, planning to support myself by my own labour'.

Evidently, Prokhanov aimed to actively engage in spiritual endeavours without relying on external financial support, necessitating a solid profession to sustain himself and his family while allocating time for spiritual service. His choice of institution aligns astutely with these life plans.

Furthermore, Prokhanov specialised in construction technology at the Institute of Technology. This expertise in structural construction likely played a pivotal role in advancing the evangelical movement in Russia, affording him strategic acumen in planning and goal achievement.

2.3.6.3. Prokhanov's vision in the face of urbanisation

Prokhanov recognised the crucial role of urbanisation in advancing evangelical movement. Upon establishing the Union of Evangelical Christians, he devised a strategic

motto that encapsulated his approach to spreading the gospel: 'From city to city, from town to town, from village to village, from farm to farm, from man to man, day by day and hour by hour' (Prokhanoff 1933:23). Urban centres were central to Prokhanov's evangelistic strategy, serving as key hubs for spreading the gospel. He was deeply committed to his vision of reaching individuals with the message of faith, actively working to fulfil it.

Before leaving Russia in 1928, Prokhanov embarked on an ambitious project known as the City of the Sun. His vision was to create a city that embodied ideals of renewal, with meticulously planned urban and rural areas that seamlessly integrated agricultural and industrial sectors (Prokhanoff 1933:231-232). The proposed site for this city was in the Altai Mountains, at the confluence of the Bya and Cautun Rivers in Siberia, an area renowned for its rich mineral resources. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond his control, Prokhanov was unable to bring this ambitious endeavour to fruition (Savin 2009:45-49).

2.4. Religious Context

The evangelical revival in Russia and its historical backdrop have been extensively analysed by scholars of Evangelical Baptist Christianity (VSEKhB 1989; Savinskiy 1999; Sannikov 1996). The evangelical awakening in Russia is generally dated from the 1860s to the late 1920s, a period that closely corresponds with much of Prokhanov's life and activities.

This research does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of the religious landscape of the Russian Empire in the latter half of the 19th century. Instead, it focuses on examining aspects of the historical context directly relevant to Prokhanov's development as an influential and transformative missionary leader.

This section explores how the traditions of Molokanism, the Baptist-Mennonite tradition, and the stance of the Orthodox Church may have influenced Prokhanov's values and life objectives.

2.4.1. The influence of family of origin and Molokanism on the formation of Prokhanov

The origin of the evangelical movement in Russia sparks debate among scholars regarding its originality and the extent of Western influence. Kuznetsova (2009:63) questions the impact of foreign religious ideas on Russian evangelicalism, proposing that it integrated Western theology into the Russian context. On the other hand, Klibanov (1973:72) highlights two key factors: the existence of traditional Russian sects and the influence of Western thought. He argues that while movements like Baptism, Evangelicalism, and Adventism thrived in Russia, they also reflected foreign ideas.

Among the indigenous sects, Molokanism notably influenced Russian evangelicalism. Kuznetsova (2009:62-63) highlights this influence, observing that Molokans, while dissenting from the Russian Orthodox Church independently, exhibited evangelical traits. Prominent Christian leaders such as Pavlov, the Mazaev brothers, Prokhanov, and the Kazakovs, nurtured by the Molokan movement, left a lasting impact on Russian evangelicalism. Their leadership and teachings infused the movement with essential principles and organisational frameworks vital for its growth.

By illuminating the interplay between indigenous traditions and external influences, these perspectives enrich our understanding of the complex tapestry of Russian evangelicalism.

Prokhanov was born into a Molokan family, and his parents relocated to Vladikavkaz from the Saratov region in 1862. In his autobiography, Prokhanov explains that persecution by Orthodox priests and police prompted the move, as they sought religious freedom in Vladikavkaz (Prokhanoff 1933:29).

Prokhanov (1933:33) candidly acknowledges the profound impact of Molokanism on his life, stating, 'While various influences contributed to shaping my character and worldview, the foremost among them must be credited to my father and the Molokan community'.

2.4.1.1. The influence of family of origin on Prokhanov's formation

As noted earlier, Ivan Prokhanov's character and worldview were profoundly influenced by his father, Stepan. His profound respect and admiration for Stepan are apparent when he describes him as 'a man of outstanding qualities' and affirms, 'I loved and highly esteemed my father' (Prokhanoff 1933:160).

Stepan's early life was marked by hardship. After the premature death of his own father, and without paternal guidance, he faced significant challenges. His mother, a devout Molokan, endured severe persecution and imprisonment for her beliefs. This adversity compelled Stepan, at just 20 years old, to embark on a perilous 2,000-kilometre journey from Saratov to Vladikavkaz with his young family and relatives, traveling by a single horse and cart (Prokhanoff 1933:160).

Upon settling in Vladikavkaz, Stepan's resilience and industrious nature led him to become prosperous, owning a flour mill and land (Prokhanoff 1933:160). He earned considerable respect within the community and was elected to the City Council. Demonstrating his commitment to his son's upbringing, Stepan brought Ivan to a City Council meeting, introducing him to civic responsibilities (Prokhanoff 1933:33). He also shared biblical narratives with Ivan (Prokhanoff 1933:34) and maintained an active role in Molokan gatherings, reinforcing his influential status in the community.

In 1876, a significant transformation occurred in Stepan's life when he encountered the gospel and subsequently joined the local 'congregation of the Brethren' (Prokhanoff 1933:160). His commitment to his faith ultimately led to his exile in 1894 (Prokhanoff 1994:161). Reflecting on these profound experiences, Prokhanov noted, 'During all the time I was with my father, whether at home with his family, in public or in exile, I admired him for his humbleness, gentleness, and wisdom, and especially for his Christian character' (Prokhanoff 1933:161).

The significant influence of Stepan Prokhanov on his son Ivan is evident, particularly in the spiritual dimensions of his life. Ivan Prokhanov's adoption of evangelical beliefs and his subsequent role within the religious community echo the spiritual journey and

commitments of his father. It is likely that Ivan inherited from Stepan not only a deep-seated resilience and determination but also the virtues of hard work and humble wisdom. These traits, which were pivotal in Stepan's life, undoubtedly shaped Ivan's personal and spiritual ethos.

2.4.1.2. *The persecution and harassment of the Molokans*

Prokhanov (1933:35) reflects on his childhood, recounting how his father and grandmothers narrated the persecutions endured by Molokans in Russia. He vividly describes the poignant tales of Molokans' suffering in the Saratov province, where they faced arrest and imprisonment – stories that deeply affected him (1933:35). These accounts of righteous individuals enduring persecution stirred profound emotions within him, resonating with his strong sense of justice and compassion (1933:35). Despite facing hostility from peers due to his affiliation with the Molokan sect, Prokhanov remained steadfast in his faith, undeterred by persecution.

Prokhanov's account of Molokan persecution sheds light on the challenges faced by non-Orthodox Christians in Russia.⁶ Initially labelled as 'particularly harmful heretics' before

⁶ Evangelical churches in the Russian Empire experienced persecution throughout most of their history. A brief relaxation of persecutions occurred only during the period from 1906 to 1910 and was associated with the adoption of the 'Manifesto on the Improvement of the State Order' on October 17, 1905. However, even during this period, local authorities often continued to oppress non-Orthodox believers, as will be shown in the following part of the study. Persecutions were particularly severe during the tenure of Konstantin Pobedonostsev as Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod from 1880 to 1905. Pobedonostsev aimed to 'break the backbone of Russian Baptism, Stundism, and Radstockism (Pashkovism)' (Savinsky 1999:171). Even before assuming the position of Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobedonostsev opposed social and political reforms. He advocated for 'unlimited autocracy based on the Orthodox Church' (Savinsky 1999:171). To better understand Pobedonostsev's motives, it is necessary to consider at least two factors. Firstly, the state ideology of the Russian Empire, which was formulated by Colonel S.S. Uvarov (1786-1855) during the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1855). This ideology was based on three principles: 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality' (Kuznetsova 2009:46). It had a religious foundation, encompassing the Orthodox teaching of love for God, monarchy, nation, as well as family and individual. The first three aspects of this teaching became the basis of the 'official nationality' ideology and were soon transformed into the state motto: 'For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland' (Asonov 2011:270). Pobedonostsev was a defender of this theory (Asonov 2011:271). Therefore, any encroachment on the Orthodox Church was perceived by him as the destruction of the state and an attack on the national identity of the Russian people. It seems that in his understanding, revolutionaries who engaged in subversive activities against the tsarist regime and gospel preachers who 'corrupted' the Orthodox believers belonged to the same category of people undermining the foundations of the unity of the Russian state. On the other hand, Pobedonostsev opposed the theory of 'official nationality' to liberal tendencies that were coming to Russia from the West (Asonov 2011:271-272). He seemed to anticipate the impending danger to Russia and tried to 'freeze' the existing

1805, Molokans gained some freedom, allowing them to establish colonies in designated areas. However, under Nicholas I's reign, restrictions tightened, curtailing their movement and economic activities (Semenov 2001:20). They faced increased persecution, including exile and imprisonment, as secret decrees specifically targeted them, forbidding congregational activities and employment by Orthodox Christians.

In 1830, sectarian settlement in southern Russian provinces was prohibited, pushing them towards Transcaucasia to distance them from the Orthodox population (Semenov 2001:20). This forced migration, described vividly by Semenov (2001:20), saw families traveling under government supervision, enduring hardships for months.

Prokhanov was well aware of the hardships the Molokans had endured for their faith. He fully recognised their resilience in maintaining their faith despite persecution. Their steadfastness and heroism likely played a significant role in shaping Prokhanov's own resilience, courage, and perseverance.

2.4.1.3. *The origin and features of Molokanism: Theological and liturgical aspects*

Semyon Uklein (1733–1809), the founder of Molokanism, diverged notably from the Dukhobors. The term 'Molokans' has diverse interpretations: Orthodox observers claimed it referred to their consumption of milk during Lent, while Molokans trace it to 1 Peter 2:2, symbolising spiritual nourishment from the Word of God (Kutepov 1981:29). This aligns with Molokanism's emphasis on the Bible.

Uklein structured Molokan doctrines around Scripture (Semenov 2001:15), viewing the ideal church as representing pure Christianity, free from ecumenical council distortions. He argued, as noted by Kutepov (1891:31), that the 'true Church of Christ' existed only

state of affairs to delay this impending catastrophe. Therefore, he fought against anything that he perceived as a disruption to the established order.

Pobedonostsev opposed this theory to liberal tendencies (Asonov 2011:271). Therefore, according to Pobedonostsev, evangelical believers who propagated their faith and 'corrupted' Orthodox Christians were seen as undermining the state.

until the fourth century before being corrupted by subjective interpretations and pagan elements.

Molokans revered the Bible as the supreme authority for faith and enlightenment (Kilbanov 1965:123). Consequently, they rejected sacred traditions, advocating strict adherence to biblical teachings (Kutepov 1891:31). This led Molokans to scrutinise the Orthodox Church, which they perceived as straying from Jesus Christ's precepts (Semenov 2001:15). Kutepov notes their disdainful attitude toward Orthodox adherents, whom they regarded as 'ignorant people, devoted to gross superstition and idolatry' (Kutepov 1891:36). Refusing to acquiesce to Orthodox practices such as processions with crosses or icons, Molokans demonstrated their disregard for Orthodox rituals (Kutepov 1891:36).

Uklein advocated for worship centred on 'reading and singing psalms, and interpreting Scripture' (Kutepov 1891:37), promoting simplicity in worship (Semenov 2001:16). His theology was based on Christ's exhortation to worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:23). Molokans believed spiritual perfection and salvation came from inward reception of the Holy Spirit, not outward signs. Thus, sacraments were seen as primarily spiritual. Baptism involved repentance and forgiveness, while true communion meant embracing Christ's teachings (Kutepov 1891:31-32). They viewed Christ's flesh and blood symbolically, representing his teachings (Kutepov 1891:32).

While acknowledging the role of rituals, Molokan leaders developed certain practices, such as mutual bowing or reciting the Lord's Prayer with outstretched hands (Kutepov 1891:37). These practices addressed spiritual and emotional needs without compromising Uklein's principles. Uklein rejected 'monasticism and the external temple cult with its relics, crosses, icons, and dramatic worship' (Semenov 2001:15).

Uklein also instituted dietary laws based on Mosaic law, condemned military activities, and advocated for egalitarianism (Semenov 2001:15). Molokans abstained from tobacco, card playing, dancing, secular music, profanity, and alcohol, although there were instances of hypocrisy (Vereshchagin 1990:137). Uklein, adhering to Orthodox doctrine, affirmed belief in the Trinity (Semenov 2001:15).

2.4.1.4. Molokan social dynamics: Communal life and activism

Semenov (2001:21) notes that during resettlement, Molokan communities embraced the belief that 'the true church is a civic dormitory of evangelical Christians,' fostering relationships based on love and equality. This led to the formation of communes focused on joint production. Drawing from their Volga region experience, where joint fishing ventures were common, Molokans applied this collectivist labour approach. However, this communal approach began to wane over time.

Klibanov (1973:67) concurs with Semenov's observation regarding the Molokans' inclination toward communal living. He highlights that Molokans, along with Dukhobors, united in religious communes to realise their social ideals. For instance, in the 1830s, the affluent peasant Mikhail Popov established a Molokan commune in Saratov Province. Klibanov characterises these endeavours as 'organizations of religiously coloured petty-bourgeois utopian socialism', describing the Molokan communes as attempts to embody their highest religious-social ideals (Klibanov 1973:68).

Semenov (2001:8), whose research focused on the Molokan movement in Transcaucasia – where Prokhanov spent his childhood and youth – argues that during the 1860s, Molokans and Dukhobors actively sought to challenge the harsh realities of their surroundings and revive what they perceived as the 'divine truth' distorted by society. This proactive stance garnered them widespread understanding and support among the oppressed peasantry of Tsarist Russia.

2.4.1.5. Work ethics and moral values of Molokans

Researchers, including Semenov (2001:5), highlight that sectarian groups like the Molokans often pioneered agricultural practices and advanced techniques in livestock and crop cultivation. Semenov (2001:6) notes that religious communities regulated both the spiritual and daily lives of their members, encouraging diligence, prudence, and activity.

These congregations fostered a culture of hard work and discipline. This aligns with Max Weber's (1992) analysis in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, in which he

argues that Protestantism, especially Calvinism, promoted economic success through industriousness and thrift. Some researchers attribute this work ethic to the religious aspects of pro-Protestant movements, while Marxist scholars link it to the transition from feudalism to bourgeois-capitalist systems.

Klibanov (1965:129) attributes the Molokans' work ethic to changes in production relations, aligning with the interests of those striving for independence as commodity producers within bourgeois management structures. These new economic structures necessitated a redefined work ethic.

Although the origins of Molokans' industriousness are beyond this study's scope, Semenov (2001:6) asserts their diligence and moral purity attracted admiration from many progressive individuals, including V.T. Korolenko, V.V. Vereshchagin, L.N. Tolstoy, and others.

2.4.1.6. Conclusion

Comparing various aspects of the Molokan tradition with Prokhanov's theological inclinations, values, and activities reveals intriguing connections.

Firstly, a profound reverence for Scripture was central to Prokhanov's spiritual values. He advocated for regular Bible reading, believing it could catalyse significant transformations in both individual lives and society as a whole (Prokhanoff 1933:106). This emphasis on Scripture might have roots in the Molokan tradition.

Secondly, Prokhanov's critique of the Orthodox Church was severe, aiming for reform. This critical stance may have been influenced by the Molokan tradition's recognition of Orthodoxy's deep crisis.

Thirdly, Prokhanov's human rights activism reflected his childhood experiences within the marginalised Molokan community. His efforts aimed to defend the rights and freedoms of non-Orthodox believers.

Fourthly, as an adherent of the evangelical tradition, Prokhanov was socially active. His aspiration for change, seen in his efforts to establish communes, may reflect his inheritance of a socially active evangelical tradition from Molokanism.

Fifthly, Molokan culture emphasised a strong work ethic, diligence, and courage. Prokhanov likely inherited these qualities from his upbringing within the Molokan community.

Lastly, Prokhanov's interest in establishing agricultural communities may have roots in his family's Molokan heritage.

2.4.2. Evangelical revival in Russia and its influence on Ivan Prokhanov

Historians within the Evangelical Baptist confession trace the origins of Evangelical-Baptist congregations in Russia to four distinct regions, starting in the 1860s. The provinces adjacent to Ukraine's Dnieper River – Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, and Kiev – witnessed complex developments in establishing Baptist congregations. Influences from Stundism, the Mennonite brotherhood, and early Baptist Russian Germans significantly shaped the Evangelical-Baptist movement in these areas (VSEKhB 1989:52).

In the Transcaucasus, the Molokans, known for their baptismal rites and communal gatherings, laid the groundwork for the Evangelical movement. This led to the formation of the Zakharov movement of Evangelical Christians in the Taurian Province.

A notable spiritual renaissance in St. Petersburg began with the conversion of two aristocratic women, predating Lord Radstock's arrival, who later played a catalytic role in the revival (VSEKhB 1989:52, 79).

This study does not aim to provide a comprehensive history of the origins of the evangelical movement, as that has already been well-documented by confessional historians. Instead, it seeks to explore the influence of the movement on Ivan Prokhanov's development as a transformative missionary leader.

The rise of the Evangelical movement presented a significant challenge to the Russian Empire's Orthodox Church, which was perceived as undermining the foundations of the state: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality, as formulated by Sergey Uvarov in 1832 (Wardin 2013:loc.155; Kuznetsova 2009:46, 53).

Despite systemic opposition, figures like Nikolai Berdyaev and Nikolai Leskov documented a sympathetic attitude towards these sectarian movements within the intelligentsia. Berdyaev noted the devout commitment of diverse religious groups at Moscow's Yama Inn, contrasting them with the Orthodox missionaries' bureaucratic nature (Berdyaev 2008:240, 241). In his narrative 'Unbaptized Pop', Leskov portrayed the figure of Ohrim Pidnebesny, who rejected clerical authority in favour of direct

scriptural engagement, fostering a community characterised by literacy, labour, and charity (Leskov 1877b:38).

Evangelical believers were sometimes referred to as Stundists. When people joined the Stundists, they abandoned harmful habits like drinking and smoking, improved their treatment of others, and sent their children to school (Zhuk 2004: 218–220). Stundism appealed particularly to women. Zhuk (2004: 221) quotes a woman who refused to leave Stundism because it transformed her husband's life. Before joining, he drank heavily, abused his family, and caused them to lose land and possessions. After joining, he began a new life.

Such evangelical efforts also resonated in St. Petersburg, where figures like Lord Radstock influenced high-status individuals, including Colonel V.A. Pashkov and Count A.P. Bobrinsky, contributing to significant spiritual revivals (VSEKhB 1989:79-80). Dostoevsky and Leskov, despite their reservations, acknowledged the evangelical movement's profound community impact, especially its encouragement of charity and spiritual engagement (Dostoevsky 2018:153; Leskov 1877a:160, 252, 262, 266).

2.4.2.1. Conclusion

Given the evangelical movement's transformative impact, it is not surprising that Ivan Prokhanov, aligned with the intelligentsia, was drawn to these teachings. Initially joining the Baptists, Prokhanov later embraced the St. Petersburg evangelical tradition, influenced by figures like Radstock and Pashkov. His spiritual journey was marked by significant encounters with doctrines of conversion and the work of the Holy Spirit, primarily through Baptist and evangelical channels, rather than Molokanism.

2.4.3. The Baptist tradition's influence on the Russian Evangelical Movement and Prokhanov's formation

2.4.3.1. The emergence of the Baptist tradition and its influence on Prokhanov's formation

The Evangelical Free Church Movement in the Russian Empire was profoundly influenced by the Baptist tradition, which traces its roots to Johann Gerhard Oncken (1800–1884) in Germany. Known as 'the father of Continental Baptists', Oncken was instrumental in promoting believer's baptism by immersion and establishing biblically disciplined churches independent of the state church. His *Fifteen Articles of Faith*, formulated in 1847, provided a doctrinal foundation for Baptist congregations across Eastern Europe, detailing core Christian doctrines such as the divine inspiration of the Bible, salvation through Christ, and Reformed perspectives on election (McGlothlin 1911:334-353).

These articles regulated practices such as conversion, baptism by immersion, the Lord's Supper (reserved for converted, baptised believers), and church structure, including the roles of elders and preachers. They also covered topics like sanctification, Sabbath observance, marriage, and the Christian stance on warfare, which allowed for the use of weapons while upholding individual freedom in this regard.

The Hamburg Confession of Faith, authored by Oncken, was introduced to the Russian Empire through the efforts of V.G. Pavlov (1854–1924), a notable Baptist leader who was deeply influenced by Oncken. After studying under Oncken in Hamburg and being ordained by him in 1876, Pavlov translated the Hamburg Confession into Russian, which became the theological cornerstone for the Evangelical-Baptist Fellowship in Russia (Savinskiy 1999:314).

Pavlov's leadership was affirmed when he was elected as a presbyter by the Tiflis congregation (now Tbilisi) in 1880, which formally adopted the Hamburg Confession of Faith as their theological framework (VSEKhB 1989:78). This congregation influenced

surrounding regions, including Vladikavkaz, where Pavlov conducted evangelistic work and baptisms in 1879, establishing a strong Baptist presence (VSEKhB 1989:77-78).

Ivan Prokhanov joined the Vladikavkaz congregation in 1887, influenced by his father, who had converted in 1876 after interacting with members from the Tiflis church. Prokhanov's admiration for his father's Christian virtues likely reinforced his engagement with the Baptist church in his formative years (Prokhanoff 1933:160-161). The doctrinal and cultural values of the German Baptists, as mediated through Pavlov and the Tiflis and Vladikavkaz congregations, played a significant role in shaping Prokhanov's beliefs and his future as a key figure in the Evangelical movement in Russia.

2.4.3.2. Conclusion

Oncken's Confession of Faith was instrumental in shaping communities with a distinct theological framework, robust institutional structures, and stringent discipline. This document not only articulates foundational theological beliefs but also sets clear expectations for followers of Jesus Christ, notably advocating believer's baptism over infant baptism, which it stipulates as a prerequisite for church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper.

Historical records indicate that Prokhanov, raised in a Baptist family, was intimately familiar with Baptist congregational dynamics. This background significantly shaped his efforts to establish a congregation in St. Petersburg that adhered closely to Baptist principles (Savinsky 1999:243).

In his ministry, Prokhanov introduced values such as a distinct theological framework, structured ecclesiology, and rigorous church discipline to the St. Petersburg evangelical movement, influenced by his Baptist upbringing. However, his theological orientation also showed notable divergence from traditional Baptist beliefs by incorporating elements of Pashkovite theology. A primary area of difference was in soteriology, where Evangelical Christians in Russia tended towards the inclusivist views of General Baptists, while Russian Baptists adopted a more selective, Reformed approach, similar to that of

Particular Baptists (Mitrokhin 1997:231). Further nuances between Evangelical Christians and Baptists will be explored subsequently.

Despite these theological differences, Prokhanov consistently advocated for unity with the Baptists throughout his ministry. This was largely driven by his belief in the transformative power of unity, which aligns with the missiological approach of Baptists that, unlike the Orthodox tradition, shares the transformative potential found in evangelical paradigms encompassing the Bible, Christ and the cross, conversion, evangelism, the Holy Spirit, and the church. This assertion is supported by an analysis of Article 7 of Oncken's Hamburg Confession of Faith by McGlothlin (1911:339), and Prokhanov's own writings on conversion in 'New or Evangelical Life' (Prokhanov 1925a). Moreover, the theoretical reformist exclusivism of the Baptists did not adversely affect their missionary endeavours.

2.4.3.3. Comparative analysis of ecclesiological orientations: Radstock-Pashkov and Prokhanov

The ecclesiastical tension that surfaced upon Prokhanov's arrival in St. Petersburg is rooted in his Baptist upbringing. Following the expulsion of key figures like Pashkov, Korff, and Bobrinsky, differing perspectives emerged among the faithful regarding church admission. While some adherents believed that water baptism through faith was essential for membership, others contended that those baptised as infants merely needed to profess faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice and experience spiritual rebirth. Despite these doctrinal divergences, they maintained shared communion and fellowship (Mitskevich 2007:110-111).

In matters of the Lord's Supper, there was a pronounced freedom; all believers, regardless of baptismal status, were welcomed to partake. Kargel, who joined the Evangelical-Christian church, upheld the inclusivity initiated by his predecessors. As Mitskevich (2007:111) notes, 'In this way, he united all believers into one fraternal family'. Prokhanov, however, sided with those from other congregations who insisted that only those baptised upon confession of their faith should be admitted as congregation members (Mitskevich 2007:110; Liven 1990:104).

Prokhanov's views on baptism and church membership were clearly influenced by his Baptist background. In his 1910 *Confession of Faith*, he asserts that water baptism should be reserved for those who genuinely profess faith in Christ, explicitly rejecting infant baptism. He further distinguishes between joining a local congregation and the universal church; while baptism is not a requirement for membership in the universal church, it is essential for joining a local congregation. Moreover, according to his doctrinal stance, only those who are regenerated and baptised are eligible to participate in the Lord's Supper (Prokhanov 1910a:XIV).

Thus, upon his arrival in St. Petersburg, Prokhanov introduced a Baptist ecclesiology that sharply contrasted with the theological and ecclesiological framework previously established by the movement's founders in the city, as well as diverging from Kargel's approach, which continued the traditions of Radstock and Pashkov.

2.4.4. The influence of Pashkov and his followers on Prokhanov's development

This section examines the influence of Vasilii Pashkov (1831–1902) and his followers on Ivan Prokhanov, focusing on how their activities shaped Prokhanov's development as a missional leader. The objective is to explore the connection between Pashkov's actions and Prokhanov's growth within this research context.

V.A. Pashkov played a crucial role in the St. Petersburg revival in Russia. Born in 1831, Pashkov received a prestigious education, served in the cavalry, and retired as a Colonel. He was reputedly one of the wealthiest individuals in Russia (Heier 1970:109). Pashkov led the religious movement established by Lord Radstock (Nikitin 2020b:99) and expanded it, attracting diverse segments of Russian society (Nikitin 2020b:100). As Heier (1970:109) remarks, 'Critics maintained that the success or failure of the movement depended initially on Pashkov's energetic personality and wealth'.

In 1884, Russian authorities expelled Pashkov due to his religious activities (Nikitin 2020a:143). Despite his exile, Pashkov remained dedicated to supporting social and

religious initiatives in Russia. In a letter written in November 1884, Pashkov expressed his ongoing commitment:

Although it pleases the Lord to currently remove me from my homeland and from the fellowship of brethren, He still holds each and every one of you dear, so that the concern for everything happening not only in Petersburg but throughout Russia never leaves me (Nikitin 2020a:143).

After Pashkov and Korff's forced emigration, the movement lost momentum, but Prokhanov became acquainted with the Evangelicals, heirs to the Radstock and Pashkov tradition, during his years at the Institute of Technology. Upon entering the Institute in 1888, Prokhanov began planning his spiritual work in the city (Prokhanoff 1933:62). He attended secret gatherings of believers in St. Petersburg and frequently preached (Prokhanoff 1933:63).

Sofia Liven's (1990:99) memoirs mention Prokhanov's occasional attendance at their meetings, but more frequently at gatherings elsewhere in the city. However, Puzynin argues against the notion that Prokhanov's familiarity with the St. Petersburg tradition began only with his studies in the city (Puzynin 2010:245). Correspondence between Prokhanov's father, S.A. Prokhanov, and Pashkov dates back to 1881, suggesting Prokhanov Jr. could have communicated with Pashkov before arriving in St. Petersburg.

Prokhanov's years at the Institute and his interactions with the Christian intelligentsia in St. Petersburg were likely formative. Pashkov's influence on Prokhanov's perspectives on religious and social work in Russia was significant. Communication between Prokhanov and Pashkov continued when Prokhanov arrived in Britain in 1895, evidenced by Prokhanov's letter to Pashkov (Puzynin 2010:245). Pashkov served as a crucial contact for Prokhanov, providing financial support and literary contributions to Prokhanov's magazine, *Beseda* (Puzynin 2010:246).

Similarities in views and approaches to socio-religious activities between Pashkov and Prokhanov indicate continuity. Puzynin asserts that under Prokhanov's influence after

1905, the Evangelical Christian tradition continued to evolve without drastic changes. As Puzynin (2010:233) states,

The Protestant paradigm was not revolutionized by the social and political changes in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, nor by the emergence of new leaders. On the contrary, the tradition evolved and developed progressively in the direction set by Radstock and V.A. Pashkov.

This succession was observed in the following areas:

- Transformation of Russia.

Both Pashkov and Prokhanov shared a vision of transforming Russia through evangelical preaching. This vision is exemplified in Pashkov's letter to the Emperor on May 19, 1880, where he emphasised the need for spiritual renewal, stressing that only the living and enduring Word of the Lord could accomplish this (Nikitin 2020a:75).

The Pashkov movement emerged from a group of aristocrats committed to solving Russia's challenges through evangelical Christianity, aiming for moral and religious transformation (Heier 1970: VIII). Described as a 'socio-religious movement' by Heier, its goal was religious renewal leading to ethical transformation (Heier 1970:VII).

Nikols suggests that Pashkov expanded Radstock's ministry to include the lower classes (Nikols 2011: loc.1778). Ellis and Jones (1996:131) note that the Pashkovite movement aimed not only for spiritual reform but also for societal renewal, advocating for equality and opposing violence with love.

Kuropatkina (2020:30) posits that the Pashkov movement transcended mere religious concerns, advocating for national and cultural revival alongside spiritual renewal. Pashkov viewed national and spiritual revival as inseparable, requiring broad support and emphasising the role of education (Kuropatkina 2020:31). Both Pashkov and

Prokhanov championed universal education and were actively engaged in founding schools (Prokhanoff 1933:237-238).

- Unity of Believers.

Unity among evangelical believers was a cornerstone of Pashkov's theology, particularly for effective evangelism. Pashkov and Korff emphasised that 'Christ died so that the scattered children of God could be gathered into one flock, under one Shepherd' (Corrado 2005:Preface). In 1884, Pashkov attempted to establish a branch of the Evangelical Alliance in Russia (Puzynin 2010:173; Lieven 1990:56), although this vision was not realised during his lifetime (Puzynin 2010:188).

Pashkov's understanding of unity evolved over time. Initially, he believed that joint Bible study would lead to unanimous conclusions among believers. However, later he adopted a more realistic perspective, recognising that uniformity in interpretation was not always achievable. Instead, he came to see communication among believers as essential for edification and broadening perspectives (Puzynin 2010:198). Pashkov distinguished between internal unity of spirit and external unity, asserting that true believers are united in their love for the Lord despite differing interpretations (Puzynin 2010:193).

Pashkov opposed denominational education that could hinder unity, such as the formation of 'the spirit of the Baptist tradition' at the Hamburg Baptist Seminary (Puzynin 2010:195). As Puzynin (2010:197) notes, Pashkov was influenced not only by the Evangelical Alliance but also by the Open Brethren and Keswick Convention, through his connection with Radstock. This non-denominational approach shaped Pashkov's thinking, making the denominational narrowness of Baptism unacceptable to him.

Ivan Prokhanov, in contrast, was deeply rooted in denominational traditions from his childhood, first with the Molokans and later with the Baptists, following in the footsteps of his father, S.A. Prokhanov, who joined the Baptist group in 1885 (VSEKhB 1989:149). Despite his denominational background, Prokhanov, like Pashkov, believed that unity among believers was crucial for the success of the Christian mission. From the outset of

his work, he actively sought to promote collaboration and foster meaningful relationships with believers from various religious movements.

This commitment to unity as a cornerstone of a successful mission was a central element of Prokhanov's missional approach – a theme that will be explored in greater detail in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation. In this respect, Prokhanov perpetuated Pashkov's 'tradition of unity', as will be demonstrated in the fourth part of this study.

- Role of Women.

Pashkov and Prokhanov both held progressive views on the role of women in ministry. According to Stepanov, the advancement of women's evangelical ministry in St. Petersburg was influenced by theological, social, and cultural factors (Stepanov 2020:127). Pashkov regarded women as equal partners in ministry, entrusting them with leadership roles and ministries of compassion (Corrado 2000:54-55).

After Pashkov's expulsion, women like N.F. Livens and E.I. Chertkova continued to lead meetings (VSEKhB 1989:103), maintaining their influential roles. Prokhanov also championed women's ministry, writing a booklet on the subject and advocating for their significant service in churches (Prokhanoff 1933:156). During the second congress of the Union of Evangelical Christians, a document on women's ministry authored by Prokhanov was approved (Stepanov 1920:133), further solidifying his support for women's roles in the church.

- Publishing Activities.

Both Pashkov and Prokhanov were deeply involved in literary and publishing endeavours. In 1876, Pashkov, alongside Gagarina, Korff, and Chertkova, founded the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Moral Reading. This society published 200 books and pamphlets until its closure in 1884 (Corrado 2000:127). One of the most popular and significant works published by the Pashkovites was the monthly eight-page newspaper, *The Russian Workman* (Corrado 2000:132).

Following in Pashkov's footsteps, I.S. Prokhanov continued this tradition, actively contributing to the publication of spiritual literature across various genres and producing periodicals. As early as his second year of study in 1889, he co-founded the magazine *Beseda* with his brother Alexander and Gertmann Fast. In 1906, he published the magazine *The Christian*, and in 1908, he partnered with the Mennonite Brethren Printing House and publishing house Rainbow (Redaktsiya 1922a:6). In 1910, he began publishing a weekly religious newspaper called *The Morning Star* (Kahle 1978:10).

- Orthodox Church Reformation.

Both Pashkov and Prokhanov sought to reform the Orthodox Church, albeit with different approaches. Pashkov began his reform efforts in 1874 without initially intending to create a schism within the Orthodox Church; in fact, the society he formed in 1876 gained approval from the Holy Synod. Despite this, the movement began exhibiting sect-like tendencies, though it did not advocate for complete separation from the church (Heier 1970: 56). As Frierson notes, Pashkov aimed to reform the church to revitalise faith among the populace, not to sever ties with it (Frierson 2018:149). However, by 1882, Pashkov no longer viewed his movement as part of the Orthodox Church, a stance that was solidified by his baptism by George Müller in 1883 (Dik 2017:106).

Prokhanov continued Pashkov's reformist legacy but took a different approach. While Pashkov sought internal reform, aiming for a revival similar to that within the Anglican Church, Prokhanov advocated for reform from outside the Orthodox framework (Prokhanov 1917a:8; 1917b:7).

- Social Work.

The social endeavours of Pashkov and Prokhanov also demonstrate a continuity in mission (Karasev 2020:83). Pashkov established a public charity canteen in his home, where affordable meals were served under the gaze of biblical texts, until the government

intervened (Liven 1990: 46). He also opened sewing shops in St. Petersburg to aid destitute women, combining charity with evangelism.

Similarly, Prokhanov was actively engaged in social work, as will be shown in the next chapter of this study (Prokhanoff 1933: 186-187; Raber 2014:196).

- Human Rights Activities.

Pashkov was actively engaged in human rights advocacy, particularly in relation to religious freedoms. Puzynin reports that Pashkov contributed to a joint petition from Evangelical churches in Britain and America to Tsar Alexander III and the Synod, highlighting the persecution of Evangelicals in Russia (Puzynin 2010:162). Similarly, Prokhanov invested considerable effort into human rights activities, a topic that will be further discussed later.

- Patriotism and Russia's Messianic Role.

Both Pashkov and Prokhanov exhibited profound patriotism and a belief in Russia's special role in the religious realm (Puzynin 2010:259). Nikitin emphasises Pashkov's deep love for his homeland, the emperor, and the Russian people, a sentiment evident in his correspondence (Nikitin 2020a:10).

Pashkov saw Russia as a unifier of Christians, fulfilling Jesus Christ's prayer for unity. In correspondence (1884) with Mennonite minister I. Willer, Pashkov highlighted the significance of visible Christian unity in Russia, which he believed would inspire global recognition of their discipleship and affirm Christ's divine mission (Puzynin 2010:192). He asserted that Russia, by being the first to achieve this unity, could bless the world and serve as a testament to divine will: 'The world hopes that Russia will be the first to carry out this cherished desire of Christ. What blessing can we expect when this unification comes true?' (as quoted in Puzynin 2010:192)

Similarly, Prokhanov expressed pride in Russia's vast territories, its contributions to science, arts, governance, and its abundant natural resources (Prokhanoff 1933:12). Analysing Western perspectives on Russia, he concluded that, despite differing opinions, there was consensus on Russia's potential to play a significant global role (Prokhanoff 1933:13): 'Russia will play such a worldwide role in the destiny of humanity that it may surpass any other country on the globe'.

Through his interpretation of the bylina about Ilya Muromets, Prokhanov compared Russia to Muromets – a nation currently perceived as weak but destined to rise with extraordinary strength and impact the world (Prokhanoff 1933:14).

In a letter to his wife in February 1902, Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov referred to his son Yaroslav as "Yaroslav the Wise," clearly alluding to the influential Grand Prince of Kyiv, Yaroslav the Wise (c. 978–1054) (Prokhanov 1902). Together with his wife, he decided to name their sons after ancient Kyiv princes (Popov 1996:52). Their youngest son was named Vsevolod, in honour of another Grand Prince, Vsevolod (1030–1096).

In a letter to his children, Yaroslav and Vsevolod, in 1918—a year fraught with political turmoil—he wrote (Prokhanov 1918): "Whatever views you may adopt, I am fully confident that you will never depart from the principles instilled in you since childhood—principles of deep and selfless love for Russia, for the people, for their rights and freedoms, for peace, and for justice...".

Although deeply aware of the repressive nature of the tsarist regime, Prokhanov's love for his country and pride in its people remained undiminished. His commitment to Russia transcended political systems, rooted instead in a profound affection for its culture, history, and transformative potential. Even the Bolshevik Revolution, with its upheavals and threats to freedom, could not shake his enduring love for his homeland. His ability to critique political structures while remaining devoted to the nation as a whole exemplifies his steadfast patriotism and unwavering belief in justice and peace.

In his autobiography, written during his forced exile, Prokhanov reflected on his observations of Russian society under the Bolshevik regime. Despite these challenges, he maintained a steadfast belief in Russia's potential to fulfil its special role by embracing Christ and His gospel, and restoring primitive apostolic Christianity (Prokhanoff 1933:14). His enduring patriotic sentiment was highlighted during a speech in England where he initially declared England 'the best country in the world', which was met with applause. After a brief pause, he added, 'after Russia!' (Prokhanoff 1933:14).

Thus, both Pashkov and Prokhanov shared a strong patriotic sentiment and a conviction of Russia's unique spiritual mission. This belief was intertwined with their broader theological and missional perspectives, which foresaw the future of Russia as intrinsically linked to a spiritual renewal among its people. Moreover, Prokhanov likely believed that Russia could serve as a catalyst for spiritual awakening in other countries as well. It is no coincidence that the magazine *Christian* published a prophecy by Hudson Taylor, which stated that the spiritual awakening beginning in Russia would spread to other nations (ed. Prokhanov 1906j:69).

Vasiliy Pashkov's influence on Ivan Prokhanov was foundational, shaping his theological vision, commitment to social and religious reform, and advocacy for human rights. Their shared belief in the transformative power of evangelical work and a strong sense of national identity deeply impacted Prokhanov's approach to leadership within the Russian evangelical movement. This legacy is evident in Prokhanov's efforts to continue and expand upon Pashkov's initiatives, further integrating them into the fabric of early 20th-century Russian society.

2.4.5. The influence of Mennonite tradition on the formation of Prokhanov

2.4.5.1. Prokhanov and Mennonite Brethren

The Mennonite Brethren tradition significantly influenced the development of the Evangelical-Baptist movement as a whole (Kahle 1978:51-64) and particularly influenced Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov. Originating in the early 1860s as a group that separated from mainstream Mennonites (Dik 2017:58-59), the Mennonite Brethren shared many similarities with Evangelical Christians. Prokhanov frequently praised the Mennonite Brethren for their spiritual practices (Prokhanoff 1933:148; Kahle 1978:64).

Throughout his career, Prokhanov engaged extensively with Mennonite representatives. While studying in SPb (Sankt-Peterburg), he collaborated with Mennonite brother German Fast to publish the journal 'Conversation' from Fast's home (VSEKhB 1989:104). After his graduation in 1893, Prokhanov worked with Fast again to establish the Christian agricultural commune Vetrograd (Redaktsiya 1922a:3). His travels also brought him into contact with other influential Mennonite leaders like Jacob Kroeker and Heinrich Braun in Hamburg in 1895, whom he later recognised as key figures in his biographical writings (Prokhanoff 1933:96).

In 1905, Prokhanov co-signed the 'Political Platform of the Union of Freedom, Truth, and Peace' with Baptist N.V. Odintsov and Mennonite P.M. Friesen (1849–1914) (Mitrokhin 1997:252; Lyalina 1966:319). Their collaboration continued, with Friesen supporting Prokhanov's idea of creating the Russian Evangelical Union (Savinsky 1999:284). This partnership extended to the publishing sector, where, together with Mennonite colleagues, Prokhanov opened a Christian literature store in St. Petersburg. One of their publications, 'The Family Friend' calendar, gained significant popularity (Redaktsiya 1922a:5; Prokhanoff 1933:149).

The collaboration with the Mennonites was further exemplified when A.A. Reimer, a prominent leader of the Mennonite Brotherhood, served as a teacher at the theological school established by Prokhanov in 1913 (VSEKhB 1989:168; Prokhanoff 1933:166-

168). This involvement of Reimer underscores the deep cooperative ties and mutual influence between Prokhanov and the Mennonite community.

Prokhanov's relationship with the Mennonites was so integral that during travel disruptions from Petrograd⁷ to the Caucasus, his family stayed with Mennonite collaborators, whom he referred to as 'good friends and companions of 'The Rainbow', a nod to their joint publishing efforts (Prokhanoff 1933:183).

Collaboration with the Mennonites continued with notable initiatives. The 'Light in the East' mission, directed by Jacob Kroeker, played a significant role in distributing Bibles until 1924 (Prokhanov 1929:20). Furthermore, Kroeker spearheaded the creation and publication of the brochure 'Successes of the Gospel in Russia', which sought to engage Western audiences to support the Bible school in Leningrad, print Bibles, and aid missionaries (Kroeker 1929:1).

The influence of the Mennonite Brethren on Prokhanov is undeniable. They were not only partners and friends but were also connected by shared spiritual and theological values. It is likely that they also shared strategic views on achieving their mutual goals.

2.4.5.2. Some Mennonite Brethren distinctives

This section does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the theological and ecclesiological features of the Mennonite Brethren. Instead, it focuses on specific characteristics that likely influenced Prokhanov's theological and ecclesiological orientation.

Rooted in the 16th-century Anabaptist tradition, the Mennonite movement is well-known for advocating freedom of conscience and the separation of church and state, significantly contributing to modern democratic societies (Bender 1944:8). Historically,

⁷ On August 31, 1914, the city's name was changed from St. Petersburg to Petrograd. This decision was made in the context of anti-war sentiments that arose at the beginning of World War I and was related to the city's original German name. Later, on January 26, 1924, the city was renamed in honour of the leader of the October Revolution, Lenin, and became known as Leningrad.

Evangelical Anabaptists and Mennonites have consistently opposed state interference in church affairs, maintaining their spiritual integrity independent of political influences.

The Anabaptist movement aspired to more than just freedom of conscience; it sought to fulfil the Reformation visions of Luther and Zwingli by aligning the church with New Testament principles. Anabaptists emphasised personal conversion, spiritual regeneration, and a return to the early Apostolic Church as models for authentic Christianity (Horsh 1942:298). They envisioned the church as a body separate from secular influences, embodying principles of brotherhood and love, which led to their concept of the church as a suffering entity detached from worldly conformities (Bender 1944:19-20; Simons 1984:679).

Unlike reformers, who focused on doctrinal faith, Anabaptists prioritised discipleship, highlighting the spiritual importance of emulating Jesus Christ in daily actions (Murray 2015: Ch. 3; Friedman 1940:357). Such ecclesiology presupposes voluntary church membership, opposing infant baptism and viewing baptism as a 'covenant of good conscience toward God' (1 Pet. 3:21), a pledge of obedience to Christ (Bender 1944:14-18).

Anabaptism also espoused a strong ethic of love and non-resistance. This principle extended to all human relationships and called for the complete renunciation of warfare, strife, and violence (Bender 1944: 21). Moreover, the development of Anabaptism was shaped by its active engagement in social, economic, and political justice movements. It addressed issues such as mandatory fasting, clerical celibacy, and financial exploitation through continuous critiques that influenced socio-economic and political discussions (Snyder 2006:504, 643).

A notable aspect of Anabaptist ideology was its critical stance on private property. For example, the Moravian Hutterites advocated for communal property ownership, basing their practices on biblical texts, particularly Acts 2–4 (Murray 2015:ch. 8). This stance was so radical that the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion explicitly countered it, stating, 'The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and

possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast' (Church of England 1571). Yet, it is important to note that the majority of Anabaptists did not subscribe to the Hutterite belief in mandated communal sharing of goods (Snyder 2006:644).

In the Russian Empire context, the Mennonite community's identification as a brotherhood characterised by egalitarianism significantly impacted evangelical believers, as demonstrated by Johann Wieler's role in shaping the Baptist fellowship (Dik 2017:19). This brotherhood went beyond clerical hierarchies and involved all members in decision-making, reflecting a commitment to equality and interpersonal warmth within the church body. This commitment was crucial in light of the authoritarian political system and the suspicion towards alternative views that were prevalent in the Russian Empire (Dik 2017:26, 130, 146).

In conclusion, the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition's advocacy for freedom of conscience and the separation of church and state underscores its significant historical impact. However, the tradition's ultimate goal extends beyond mere freedom of conscience to the restoration of the early Apostolic community – a community characterised by brotherhood, love, and holiness. This vision supports voluntary, committed, and conscious church membership, contrasting sharply with the magisterial Reformation's emphasis on doctrinal faith.

Furthermore, the Anabaptist principles of non-resistance, a proactive stance against social injustice, and a critical view of private property further distinguish its approach to Christianity. These elements reflect a deep commitment to transforming both spiritual and societal structures in accordance with biblical teachings.

2.4.5.3. Tracing Anabaptist/Mennonite influences on Prokhanov

An examination of Prokhanov's theological and ecclesiological beliefs demonstrates a significant influence of Mennonite theological ideas on his perspectives. This influence is evident in several key aspects of his doctrine and practice.

- Freedom of Conscience.

Prokhanov embraced the Anabaptist tradition's emphasis on freedom of conscience, a principle he highlighted in his writings, notably in the eleventh chapter of his doctrine, 'On the Freedom of a Christian and Freedom of Conscience'. Here, Prokhanov (1910a: 10) asserts, 'The freedom of a Christian includes freedom of conscience. God is the judge and master of human conscience, and no one has the right to subject another person to violence or constraints for following the dictates of their conscience or for obeying it according to any human commandments or teachings'. This belief underscores his commitment to protecting this freedom within the religious landscape.

- Separation of Church and State.

Prokhanov emphasises the necessity of separating church and state, dedicating Chapter XVI of his doctrine to discussing their relationship (Prokhanov 1910a:16-17). He clearly contrasts the Church of Christ with state power, insisting on their complete independence from each other. The church's dependence on the state and its lack of ecclesiastical autonomy compromise both the church's integrity and the effectiveness of state governance. Additionally, in the Gospel Call, he asserts that 'Christ's Church is not of this world', advocating for the church to avoid political involvement and instead focus on spiritually enriching people's lives (Prokhanov 2009m:92).

- Restoration of the New Testament Church.

Prokhanov sought to restore the early Apostolic Church, advocating for a 'living church' comprised of active, spiritually reborn members. His views on church membership emphasised faith in Christ, repentance, conversion, and spiritual rebirth, culminating in baptism as a symbol of joining the community of believers (Prokhanov 2009p:76-77; 1910a:7-8).

For Prokhanov, the early Apostolic Church serves as an epistemological foundation. In 1922, he addressed the reformist wing of the Orthodox Church through his 'Gospel Calls'. Subsequently, in summarising the key themes of these addresses, Prokhanov emphasised that the principles of Evangelical faith he articulated are essential for restoring the early Christian church (Prokhanov 2009p:72).

- Transformed Life versus Doctrines.

Prokhanov underscores the significance of doctrines in church and movement development, establishing a specific doctrine at the second congress of his union. Despite this doctrinal foundation, Prokhanov, possibly influenced by Anabaptist traditions, prioritises personal transformation in his activities. He critiques an excessive preoccupation with scholastic theology, advocating instead that genuine Christianity is exhibited through spirit and power, as noted in his 1898 writings. Prokhanov further elaborates in his 1898 letter to Pashkov (Prokhanov 1898) that Christian focus should transcend dogmatic confines and instead embrace the broader demands of Christ's love. This perspective informs his emphasis on spiritual growth and discipleship as central components of his theological approach.

- Brotherhood and Equality.

Prokhanov fostered a culture of brotherhood and equality within his community, frequently using familial terms such as 'brothers' and 'sisters' to emphasise the unity among believers. His newsletter was named *Bratskiy Listok* (Brotherly Bulletin) (Prokhanov 1906i:1). In his biography, he frequently uses the word 'brother' when referring to believers (Prokhanoff 1933:62). He highlighted how Christ's love overcomes social distinctions, citing an 1884 conference where believers of diverse backgrounds felt united as family in Christ (Prokhanoff 1933:56).

During a membership meeting on August 15, 1908, aimed at revitalising the community's activities, it was resolved to enhance unity among educated and uneducated church members by eliminating existing barriers (ed. Prokhanov 1908g:9-12). Subsequently, a 'Fellowship Meeting or Love Feast' was scheduled for the following Sunday to promote interaction and familiarity among the congregants.

Prokhanov consistently highlighted the priesthood of all believers, advocating for structural reforms in the Orthodox Church through his 'Gospel Call'. He emphasised that every believer, irrespective of their status, has equal access to the Holy Spirit's grace, as reflected in items 6 and 7 of the document, which state that 'all sons of God are led by the Spirit of God' and advocate for the equal standing of all community members.

Moreover, item 20 specifies that both male and female members have an equal voice in church meetings, ensuring that all decisions are made democratically and affirming the equal rights of all brothers and sisters in Christ (Prokhanov 2009m:92).

Prokhanov's theological stance was grounded in biblical principles of service and equality, opposing any form of elitism within the church, as illustrated by his reference to Christ's teaching in Matthew 20:26 about the importance of servitude over seeking status. This theological approach not only critiqued hierarchical structures but also promoted an egalitarian ethos among all believers.

- The Church and the Social Question.

Prokhanov regards the early Apostolic Church as a blueprint not only for ecclesiastical structure but also for social organisation. In his article 'What Must We Do', he advocates for adopting the Apostolic community's approach to social life. Prokhanov emphasises the fifth item of the apostolic programme, which deals with organising labour and communal life based on eternal principles: 'There was no needy person among them (Acts 4:34), for no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common (Acts 4:32)'. He argues that such communal living addressed issues of need and class disparity, creating an 'island' of equality and sufficiency within the broader context of societal need and injustice, exemplified by the Jerusalem Church. This community, he notes, would have seemed miraculous to outsiders (Prokhanov 1928a:12).

Prokhanov stresses that the church's mission should extend beyond mere proclamation of the gospel. He advocates for '*bringing the Gospel to life*' (emphasis in the original) by fostering diligent labour, equitable distribution of labour's fruits, and eliminating private property.

In practice, Prokhanov dedicated significant efforts to establishing communes, a topic that will be explored further in the next chapter of this study.

Prokhanov's relationship with pacifism was complex. Although not a pacifist in the traditional sense like the Anabaptists and Mennonites, his doctrinal position acknowledged military duty as a civic obligation. Specifically, he stated, 'We recognize military duty as an obligation, but we remain in communion with those who see this issue differently' (Prokhanov 1910a:16). This indicates an acceptance of diverse viewpoints within his community, rather than a strict pacifist stance.

Despite this, Prokhanov's personal demeanour reflected qualities typically associated with pacifism. His contemporaries noted his peaceful nature in times of conflict. Karev observed that Prokhanov maintained unshakeable calmness in emotionally charged situations, describing his presence as calming and his ability to pacify discontent and shame the unrestrained without reproach (Karev 1922:14). Karev emphasised Prokhanov's peace-loving disposition, particularly towards opponents, and Zhidkov admired Prokhanov's restraint in not responding to unjust accusations (Zhidkov 1922:17).

Prokhanov's leadership role in periodicals provided him with a platform to retaliate against personal insults, yet he chose not to, maintaining his commitment to a spirit of non-maliciousness.

In summary, while Prokhanov was not a pacifist in the strictest sense, his behaviour and interpersonal interactions were deeply influenced by a spirit of peace and non-retaliation, likely inspired by Anabaptist-Mennonite values.

- Conclusion

Prokhanov's theological and social frameworks were profoundly shaped by Anabaptist principles, which he skilfully adapted to the Russian religious context. His strong advocacy for freedom of conscience and church-state separation reflects this influence. Likewise, his commitment to practices such as voluntary faith commitments, believer's baptism, and the emulation of the early Apostolic community underscores his alignment with Anabaptist ideals. His characteristically unmalicious spirit further indicates the impact of the Anabaptist/Mennonite ethos.

Additionally, Prokhanov's initiatives to create a community devoid of elitism, his emphasis on equality among believers, focus on personal transformation over doctrinal rigidity, and advocacy for communal living arrangements similar to those of the early Apostolic Church, all highlight the deep imprint of Anabaptist-Mennonite traditions on his approach.

2.4.5.4. Exploring the potential influence of German Fast on Prokhanov's theological and ecclesiological perspectives

German Fast (1860–1935), as a mentor and educator, probably played a pivotal role in shaping Ivan Prokhanov's beliefs and perspectives. Stepanov (2016) highlights Prokhanov's admiration for Fast, who was not only older and educated but also exemplified strong moral character. Their joint commitment to serving God and advocating for Baptist theology brought them into significant conflict with Kargel, leading to their refusal to participate in Kargel's gatherings (Stepanov 2016:27). This rift was partly due to the support Fast received from the Russian Baptist Union, led by Dei Mazai, which contributed to the origins of this conflict (Stepanov 2016:28).

Fast, a German, had a vested interest in nurturing a capable Russian disciple, and Prokhanov perfectly met this criterion. It is plausible that Fast aimed to impart his knowledge and theological insights to Prokhanov, a promising Russian protégé (Val'kievich 1900:160).

Prokhanov's decision to move into Fast's home, occupying a modest room, underscores their deep connection and mutual dedication. Living in close quarters facilitated regular

interactions and an exchange of ideas, likely reinforcing Fast's influence on Prokhanov's theological views (Stepanov 2016:27).

However, Stepanov also sheds light on another dimension of Fast's character through a letter he wrote to his wife, portraying him as aligned with the Evangelical Alliance. Fast maintained extensive ties with various Protestant church representatives and critiqued certain Baptist practices for their emphasis on outward forms and tendencies towards superficiality, exclusivity, criticism, and isolation (Stepanov 2016:28; Val'kevich 1900:159).

During his time in St. Petersburg, Fast was a proponent of unity among all evangelical believers and actively sought dialogue and reconciliation among different evangelical denominations (Stepanov 2016:28). His initiative together with Prokhanov to launch the journal 'Beseda' was intended to unify believers from diverse backgrounds and downplay the significance of Baptist rituals and external worship practices.

In his interactions with Fast, Prokhanov likely assimilated his mentor's critiques of Baptist exclusivity and formalism. This influence potentially moulded him into a leader focused on unifying believers. Prokhanov's engagement with other intellectuals in St. Petersburg also played a crucial role in refining his views, a topic to be explored further.

Thus, Prokhanov incorporated key ecclesiological principles from the Baptist tradition into the evangelical movement in St. Petersburg while also embracing the broader vision shared by Fast, Pashkov, and other local intelligentsia regarding the need for unity among evangelical believers. It appears that Fast's mentorship led Prokhanov to adopt a more inclusive and less dogmatic approach to Baptist ecclesiology.

2.4.5.5. Conclusion

Ivan Prokhanov's theological and ecclesiastical orientations were significantly shaped by the Mennonite tradition, which he creatively adapted in the Russian context. His partnership with notable Mennonite figures and his engagement with their communities not only facilitated shared spiritual and theological values but also influenced strategic

approaches toward mutual evangelical goals. This alignment is evident in his advocacy for key Anabaptist principles such as freedom of conscience, the separation of church and state, and the restoration of the early Apostolic church's communal ethos. Prokhanov's emphasis on personal transformation over doctrinal rigidity, and his efforts to foster an egalitarian community free from elitism, further reflect the profound impact of Mennonite teachings on his life and work. Thus, Prokhanov stands as a bridge between Mennonite ideals and the broader evangelical movement in Russia, embodying the integration of Anabaptist principles into his visionary leadership.

2.4.6. Prokhanov's critique and vision concerning the reform of the Orthodox Church

2.4.6.1. The Orthodox Church in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

In the Russian Empire, the Orthodox faith held paramount importance, enshrined as 'supreme and predominant' by basic laws, with the Emperor exercising authority through the Synod (ed. Zubov 2010:100). This reliance on state patronage was particularly evident during K.P. Pobedonostsev's tenure as Chief Procurator (1880–1905). Pobedonostsev staunchly advocated for protective measures, viewing liberal reforms as destructive. Philosophers such as Berdyaev (1996:1-3) and Rozonov (1996:3) noted that Pobedonostsev lacked faith in human improvement, relying on the state to contain evil and preserve order.

This symbiotic relationship between the Orthodox Church and the state had adverse consequences, as noted by intellectuals, writers, and religious figures. Bishop Evlogiy Georgievsky (1868–1946) lamented the Church's subjugation to state authority, particularly through the influence of the Ober-Prosecutor over the Synod (Manulina 1994:180-181). Dostoevsky also expressed concern about the church's incapacitation due to state intervention, tracing this issue back to Peter the Great's reign (Dostoevsky 1984:49).

Pobedonostsev, despite defending Orthodoxy against Protestant movements, indirectly acknowledged shortcomings within the Orthodox tradition. He recognised accusations of ignorance, superstition, and moral degradation among the populace and clergy but

considered these issues incidental and temporary (Pobedonostsev 1901:252). He lamented inadequate education and limited spiritual guidance provided by the clergy, noting widespread illiteracy and superficial understanding of religious practices (Pobedonostsev 1901:165).

The April 17, 1905, a manifesto on religious tolerance prompted discussion within the Orthodox Church, with Metropolitan Anthony initiating dialogue involving Pobedonostsev and Witte,⁸ Chairman of the Committee of Ministers. Witte proposed changes for church freedom, highlighting internal sluggishness and alienation from the educated class (A.P. 1912:8-13). He advocated for moving from a synodal to sobornost governance, emphasising community autonomy and independence.

Zubov (ed. 2010:102) highlighted the church's lack of funds, caste-based clergy, and material dependence on parishioners, leading to a perception of the Church as a 'shop for clergy'. Disparities in clergy income and widespread illiteracy among believers further exacerbated issues. At the same time, belonging to the Orthodox Church signified loyalty to the state and the tsar. Civil servants were required to attend church services at least once a year, confess, and participate in the sacrament. Some priests paid a bribe, three rubles, and received such a certificate without confessing or participating in the sacrament. This practice did not enhance the authority of the Orthodox Church (ed. Zubov 2010:104).

Evangelical Baptist historians noted the crisis within the Orthodox Church, citing Orthodox hierarchs who sought to rectify the situation. They emphasised the need for accurate depictions from those within the church rather than critics (VSEKhB 1989:48; Rozhdestvenskiy 1889:19-20).

Prokhanov's perspective aligned with many progressive individuals in Russian society, recognising the crisis within the Orthodox Church. This crisis included state dependence, synodal governance, lack of faith knowledge, inherited priesthood, corruption in sacraments, and financial difficulties among priests.

⁸ Sergey Witte (1849–1915), a prominent statesman and political figure of the Russian Empire, Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1905–1906.

2.4.6.2. Prokhanov's evaluation of the Orthodox Church and transformational paradigm

Understanding Prokhanov's perception of the Orthodox Church is crucial for grasping his transformative paradigm. Puzynin (2010:270) summarises Prokhanov's view of the Orthodox Church as 'archaic and impotent', burdened by 'dead historical tradition', ritualism, and authoritarian hierarchism. Puzynin also notes that Prokhanov's assessment is framed within the Protestant evangelical paradigm, contrasting with the Orthodox tradition rooted in the Hellenistic paradigm (Küng 1995:196-240, 524-547).

For a theological and ecclesiological analysis of Prokhanov's evaluation of Orthodoxy, one could employ David Bebbington's concept (Puzynin 2010:261), wherein he characterises the nature of the evangelical movement with four key features: conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism (Bebbington 2005:5-17).

However, it is likely that Alister McGrath's characteristics of evangelicalism better align with Prokhanov's theological and ecclesiological framework through which he evaluated Orthodoxy. McGrath (1994:51) asserts that evangelicalism is characterised by a commitment to six fundamentals:

1. Supreme authority of Scripture as a source of knowledge of God, and a guide to Christian living.
2. The majesty of Jesus Christ, both as incarnate God and Lord, and as the saviour of sinful humanity.
3. The lordship of the Holy Spirit.
4. The need for personal conversion.
5. The priority of evangelism for both individual Christians and the church as whole.
6. The importance of the Christian community to foster spiritual nourishment, fellowship, and growth.

Prokhanov criticises the Orthodox Church for using Old Church Slavonic in its services, a language incomprehensible to most congregants, and for neglecting the preaching of the Word of God. He observes, ‘The services consisted chiefly of ritual, and there was no religious instruction or preaching. *The people did not know the Word of God*’ (Prokhanoff 1933:18, emphasis in the original).

According to Prokhanov, most Orthodox parishioners lacked an understanding of the Bible and the gospel because these were read in Slavonic rather than Russian (Prokhanoff 1933:18). In contrast, his ecclesiological efforts emphasised Bible knowledge through clear preaching and home reading. His travels abroad reinforced his conviction that educating people in Scripture was crucial, as he attributed the moral superiority of Protestant Western nations to their engagement with the Bible (Prokhanoff 1933:105–106).

Prokhanov regarded the Bible as essential for spiritual and moral transformation. Promoting its accessibility—including its publication and fostering a Bible-reading culture—was central to his vision for Russia. He argued that the Orthodox Church's failure to make Scripture widely available and understandable had hindered the nation's spiritual renewal (Prokhanoff 1933:18).⁹

⁹ When Prokhanov claims that the Word of God is not preached in the Orthodox Church, he once again evaluates the Orthodox Church through the lens of the Protestant evangelical paradigm, which centers on preaching through the Word. As Fairbairn (2002:6) states, “In the West, the approach to meaning is oriented (or at least, until the later part of the twentieth century, has been oriented) around a text, whereas the East is more pictorial and image-oriented in its approach to reality.”

Christ and his death.

Prokhanov's theology is Christ-centred, emphasising redemption through Christ's sacrifice. He argues that the Orthodox Church's lack of Bible familiarity leads to religious ignorance. For example, he suggests many Orthodox believers might prioritise St. Nicholas over Christ (1933:18).

Prokhanov highlights a Greek Orthodox Archbishop's admission of deficient understanding of Christ among believers, despite their devotion to icons and saints – a devotion he views as idolatrous. He questions whether this spiritual vacancy contributes to societal decay and moral depravity (1933:18-19).

Central to Prokhanov's discourse is Christ, likened to a 'philosophical stone' capable of transforming human existence (Prokhanov 1925a:4-23). He emphasises Christ's sacrificial death for humanity's sins and criticises the Orthodox Church for neglecting the doctrine of 'purification from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ' (1933:24).

Prokhanov suggests the Orthodox Church's failure to instigate spiritual and moral transformation stems from an inadequate understanding of Christ and His sacrifice.

Holy Spirit and Conversion.

The role of the Holy Spirit in life and conversion (new birth) becomes important components of Prokhanov's evangelical paradigm, as will be demonstrated in the fourth chapter of this study.

In his evaluation of soteriological doctrine in Orthodoxy and contrasting it with the Evangelical doctrine, Prokhanov (1933:24) asserts:

Justification by faith, salvation through Christ's death on the cross, purification from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ, spiritual regeneration (new birth), the forgiveness of sin directly by God, the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men – all this was absolutely omitted and unknown.

The doctrines of spiritual rebirth (new birth) and the work of the Holy Spirit are fundamental to Prokhanov's soteriology and, in his opinion, are absent in Orthodoxy. In addressing Orthodox representatives of ancient apostolic communities, Prokhanov (2009p:77) asserts that only spiritually reborn individuals who possess the Holy Spirit are admitted into the community.

These doctrines, the teachings on the Holy Spirit and conversion, are integral to Prokhanov's transformational paradigm.¹⁰

Evangelism

According to Prokhanov (1933:24), the Orthodox Church is 'A Church Without the Gospel'. As he asserts: 'In a word, the Greek Church omitted and lost the whole Gospel, the source of joy and life, and left its people in the darkness of hopeless life or spiritual pessimism, everlasting fear; no salvation, no eternity'. Prokhanov believes that people without the gospel are people living in darkness.

Prokhanov (1933:119) metaphorically compares the state of Russia to a 'spiritual cemetery' or the allegorical 'valley of dry bones' (Ezek. 37:1-14). But why does Prokhanov perceive Russia in such a bleak light? His explanation is straightforward: 'The

¹⁰ The content of the fourth chapter of *Indication* by Innocent, a text widely read in Russia (Stamulis 2003:106), challenges Prokhanov's remark regarding the Holy Spirit by presenting significant aspects of Orthodox theology concerning the Holy Spirit. The author, Innocent, describes the Holy Spirit as the source of wisdom and guidance for believers on their journey to the Kingdom of Heaven. He emphasises, "The Holy Spirit is not given according to our merits, but is a free gift sent by the mercy of God for the salvation of men" (Indication 1833:22). Faith, spiritual enlightenment, and the comprehension of divine truths are attributed to the Spirit's work. Furthermore, the Spirit is portrayed as cultivating genuine love, helping believers detach from worldly attachments, and protecting them from becoming "worshippers of this world." The fruits of the Spirit include wisdom, joy, humility, and guidance in prayer (Indication 1833:22–24). Such a pneumatology, which emphasises the Spirit's transformative role in guiding and renewing believers, aligns closely with Prokhanov's own theological perspective, as he also stressed the Holy Spirit's role in inspiring faith, love, and spiritual renewal in his missional vision (Prokhanov 1906k:1-2).

Gospel has not been preached to the Orthodox people, and the clergy have diligently worked to prevent any priest from delivering the Word of God' (1933:119)¹¹.

At the heart of Prokhanov's perspective is his unwavering belief in the transformative power of the gospel to enrich lives, bringing light, joy, and optimism. He is convinced that the only path to Russia's spiritual and moral renewal lies in the widespread preaching of the gospel. This why he devotes his life to spreading its message (Prokhanoff 1933:25).

Church

Prokhanov's ecclesiological stance closely mirrors the early apostolic model of church organisation, which serves as the foundation for his critique of the Orthodox Church.

He underscores the importance of the Church's autonomy from the state (Mariukhno 2021:4), viewing their alliance as detrimental to both institutions (Prokhanoff 1933:134). Prokhanov argues that such collaboration fosters atheism and materialism, diverting clergy from their spiritual responsibilities and contributing to the decline of both entities. In his *Confession of Faith* (Prokhanov 1910a:16), he asserts, 'The life of the Church and

¹¹ When Prokhanov claimed that the Gospel was not preached in the Orthodox Church, he was drawing on the evangelical understanding of the Gospel as justification. In contrast, the Orthodox Church defines the Gospel as participation in divine life (Fairbairn 2002:153). The Western soteriological model is framed in juridical categories: how can a person avoid just retribution for sin and restore their relationship with God? Western theology was significantly influenced by figures such as Tertullian, Augustine, and Anselm (Stamoolis 2002:36–38).

The Eastern model of salvation, by contrast, emphasises mystical union with God, through which the process of deification (theosis) takes place (Stamoolis 2002:36–40). In the West, doctrines of sanctification and union with Christ exist, and while they differ from the concept of theosis, they share certain similarities. As the Orthodox theologian Stamoolis states (2002:40–41): "The difference is not great, and it is not the issue." The primary distinction lies in priorities. The Western tradition highlights the idea of atonement, often failing to give proper focus to the concept of union with Christ

A key aspect of deification, using the terminology of evangelicals, is becoming godly—conforming to Christ and growing in godliness (Fairbairn 2002:71). As Bosch observes in his commentary on the Orthodox paradigm, "Christ did not come primarily to put away human sin but to restore in humans the image of God and give them life" (Bosch 2011:loc. 5080). Mission, from the Orthodox perspective, is understood as the proclamation of Christ, the Word of life, so that people may receive life and participate in the life and glory of Christ (Bosch 2011:loc. 5080).

State are fundamentally distinct (1 Cor. 2:6-7). By its nature, the Church, acknowledging Christ as its head, cannot be subservient to secular authority’.

While he may have once considered the Church's political involvement, he ultimately dismissed this notion, as will be further elucidated.

Another significant concern for Prokhanov (1933:17) pertains to the structure of church governance. He criticises the Orthodox Church's practice of bishops appointing priests without considering personal suitability or the preferences of parishioners, arguing that this undermines the integrity of the clergy. As Prokhanov (1933:17) articulates, ‘A priest – drunkard was a common sight in Russia until recent times, and such a clergyman could never be removed from his position, despite the protests of the parishioners’.

Prokhanov advocates for a congregational election model for ministers, contrasting it with the Orthodox approach (Prokhanov 1910a:14). In ‘Success of the Gospel in Russia’, he outlines the governance of evangelical unions, where ministers are elected by congregations and affirmed annually (1929:6). He believes that this electoral system fosters accountability and enhances the community's transformative impact.

Conclusion. It is evident that Prokhanov's critique of Orthodoxy stems from his belief in its failure to effect meaningful change in individuals and society.¹² He highlights the lack of knowledge about fundamental aspects of Christianity such as the Bible, Christ's crucifixion, teachings on the Holy Spirit and conversion, and the absence of active preaching about Christ and the gospel. Moreover, the absence of a vibrant church community that facilitates spiritual growth further strengthens his argument that the Orthodox Church is incapable of transforming lives.

¹² Leonid Mikhovich (2013:13) believes that one of the main criticisms evangelical believers have against the Orthodox Church lies in the realm of liturgical worship. According to Mikhovich, the Orthodox Church is characterised by a ‘separation between ethics and worship, does not impose moral obligations, does not facilitate a connection between life and liturgy, and does not demand holiness. Everything, is reduced to external, ritualistic piety’.

Prokhanov's views are substantiated by his own experiences of immersion and conversion in various religious communities, including Molokan and Baptist groups, as well as exposure to Protestant societies. Notably, he regards the Protestant evangelical tradition as a powerful force for both personal and societal change. In essence, Prokhanov's theology is characterised by a pragmatic approach, wherein he sees pragmatism as the ability to effect transformation on both an individual and societal level (Puzynin 2010:257).

2.4.6.3. Reformist perspectives and the schism within the Orthodox Church

In his December 1902 article in the *Moscow Vedomosti*, Lev Aleksandrovich Tikhomirov (1852–1923) critiques the synodal government of the Orthodox Church, which has been in place since 1721. Tikhomirov (1903:4) highlights the need to address life's challenges within church administration and suggests aligning it with contemporary realities. He argues that while the synodal system initially addressed specific issues, it now requires evaluation and modification to better serve the Church and its followers, contributing to ongoing discussions on reformist ideas and the renewal movement within the early 20th-century.

Tikhomirov proposed a return to the ancient canons of Orthodoxy as a means for the Church to reclaim its independent voice and engage more effectively in social and political matters. He outlined five essential reforms: (1) the regular convening of national councils to establish and implement church policies, (2) the restoration of the patriarchate as the central ecclesiastical authority, (3) reducing the Holy Synod's role to that of a consultative body, (4) redefining the Procurator's position as a legal advisor and liaison with civil authorities, and (5) enabling direct communication between the head of the Church and the head of state. These proposals were rooted in a vision of restoring the Church's autonomy and revitalising its governance to meet the demands of a rapidly changing society (Cunningham 1981:78).

In 1905, the 'Group of Thirty-two St. Petersburg Priests' formed and proposed significant reforms to Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky), becoming known as the 'Union for Church Renewal' (Pospelovskiy 1995:64). This group, which included Christian socialists, demanded several changes to modernise the Orthodox Church. Their demands included

separating the Church from the state, democratising its administration, restoring conciliar principles, adopting the Gregorian calendar, translating worship into the modern language, and allowing bishops to marry. These reforms aimed to make the Church more responsive to societal changes and foster a more inclusive governance model. Debate within the Union also touched on the role of monastic episcopacy, with some members advocating for married bishops, reflecting a broader push towards what could be seen as 'Protestantism of the Eastern Rite' (Florovsky 2009:431).

Later Orthodox Church reformers stressed the Church's need to integrate more with society, especially in protecting workers from capitalist exploitation (Pospelovskiy 1995:64). Archimandrite M. Semenov and thinkers like S. Bulgakov and N. Berdyaev supported these Russian Christian socialist views. Although the activity of the '32 priests' did not initially lead to a formal schism within the Church, it contributed to later divisions. Notably, after the Bolsheviks' involvement, a split occurred that led to the 1917 reinstatement of the patriarchate and the 1922 formation of the Higher Church Administration. This period saw a divide between Patriarch Tikhon's followers, the Tikhonites, and groups such as the Living Church, the Union for Revival, and the Union of the Ancient Apostolic Church (VSEKhB 1989:208).

During this period, Prokhanov reported on the Bolsheviks' manipulation of the 'Obnovlenzi' (renewers), a group of progressive priests, to destabilise the Orthodox Church. These priests urged the Patriarch to relinquish his administrative powers and formed the 'Supreme Council of the Greek Orthodox Church', aiming to align church governance with state interests (Prokhanoff 1933:210). Despite these efforts, the changes they sought were largely unsuccessful. Eventually, churches aligned with the renewal movement reintegrated with the main Orthodox Church, leading to a decline in the movement's influence.

Prokhanov was acutely aware of the reformist sentiments within the Orthodox Church (Redaktsiya 1922c:12) and sought to be a catalyst for these reformative currents. He likely recognised the significant potential that could be harnessed to realise his vision of

spiritual reformation, should the Orthodox Church itself undergo a reformation (Puzynin 2010:279-280).

To this end, Prokhanov authored a proclamation titled 'The Gospel Call', urging Orthodox ministers to initiate a national gospel (New Testament) Reformation (Prokhanoff 1933:211). In this appeal, he also proposed joint prayer meetings for national reformation (Prokhanoff 1933:211).¹³ While this appeal resonated with some of the Renovationists (Prokhanoff 1933:210-215), its broader impact remains debatable. Prokhanov also delivered sermons in several churches associated with the renewal movement and spoke at the Congress of the Ancient Apostolic Church in March 1923, a group within the reformist wing of the Orthodox Church (Prokhanoff 1933:214).

Despite Prokhanov's fervent efforts, his aspiration to further catalyse evangelical reformation within the renewal movement did not fully materialise. His approach to church reform was characterised by directness rather than engaging in dialogue with Orthodox hierarchs (Prokhanov 2009p:70-85; 1917b:6; 1917a:8; Potapova 2018:118).

¹³ In 1922, Ivan Prokhanov published "The Gospel Call", addressed to the Higher Church Administration of the Orthodox Church and the "Living Church" group – one of the reformist wings within the Orthodox Church. The publication had a circulation of 100,000 copies (Mitskevich 2007:214).

The message takes on a tone of condescending admonition, contrasting the evangelical and Orthodox paradigms. In this address, Prokhanov refers to the "Living Church" as "dead." He writes:

"In its current form, unfortunately, the 'Living Church' still does not exhibit true life. It can be said of it what is written in Revelation: 'You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead'" (Prokhanov 2009m:88, italics in the original).

To revive the church, Prokhanov proposes altering its structure and reforming the communities of the "Living Church." His reform program consists of 27 points, which essentially aim to transform Orthodox communities into communities of evangelical Christians (Prokhanov 2009m:88–92).

In March 1923, Prokhanov delivered a speech at the congress of Ancient Apostolic communities – another reformist movement within the framework of the Orthodox Church. Unlike his previous message, the tone of this address was more diplomatic. At the beginning of his speech, he referred to the participants as "beloved by the Lord" (Prokhanov 2009:70). However, the essence of his message remained the same – Prokhanov advocated for a radical reform of Orthodoxy modeled after evangelical communities as he envisioned them (Prokhanov 2009p:70–87).

Additionally, the Baptists did not support Prokhanov's efforts and were critical of his attempts to align with the Orthodox Church (Savinskiy 2001:43).

2.4.6.4. Limitations of Prokhanov's critique of the Orthodox Church

Russian Bible and the Role of Scripture

Prokhanov's critique of the Orthodox Church addresses a significant issue but neglects key historical efforts by the Church to address this problem. In the early 19th century, the Russian Bible Society, established in 1812 under Emperor Alexander I's patronage, played a vital role in making Scripture more accessible (Batalden 2013:29–30). Inspired by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), born out of the evangelical revival in England, the Russian Bible Society drew upon the active participation of Orthodox scholars from leading theological academies to translate and distribute the New Testament.

Modern printing technology, imported from England, significantly reduced production costs, making Scripture increasingly accessible. By the late 1820s, the Society aligned its distribution strategies with population literacy levels, ensuring effective dissemination (Batalden 2013:11). Key figures like Prince Alexander Golitsyn and Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov) spearheaded these efforts (Batalden 2013:29).

However, conservative factions viewed vernacular Scripture as a threat to the Church's authority. They feared that promoting translations other than the Slavonic Bible would undermine the primacy of traditional texts and prompt demands for regional language translations, potentially fracturing the unity of the empire (Batalden 2013:59, 132–133). As a result, Emperor Nicholas I suspended the Russian Bible Society's activities in 1826 (VSEKhB 1989:37).

Despite this setback, informal translation efforts continued. Notably, Professor Pavski at the St. Petersburg Academy and Archimandrite Macarius translated portions of the Old Testament. Official projects resumed in 1856, culminating in the New Testament's publication in 1862 and the complete Bible in 1876 (VSEKhB 1989:45).

Further progress was made with the establishment of the interdenominational Society for the Dissemination of Holy Scripture in Russia in 1866. Led by N.A. Astafyev and in close collaboration with the BFBS, the Society subsidised the distribution of New Testaments for impoverished communities. Over 30 years, it distributed more than 1.5 million copies of the Bible or portions of Scripture (Batalden 2013:185; VSEKhB 1989:46).

Many Orthodox representatives recognised the importance of vernacular Scripture, and their efforts laid a foundation for spiritual renewal in Russia. Without these contributions, the evangelical awakening that Prokhanov deeply valued would have faced significant obstacles. While Prokhanov rightly identifies the inaccessibility of Scripture as a major shortcoming, his critique overlooks the crucial role of Orthodox initiatives in addressing this issue.

Accusations of Indifference Toward Social Conditions and Dependence on the State

The Orthodox Church in Imperial Russia is frequently portrayed in historiography as a *stagnant* institution, subordinate to the state, preoccupied with *ritual* and *otherworldliness*, and either *indifferent* to or *complicit* in social repression, particularly after Peter the Great's reforms (Freeze 1985:82–102; Kenworthy 2006:2). Ivan Prokhanov, as previously demonstrated, appeared to share this paradigm with many of his contemporaries.

As demonstrated earlier in this research, Prokhanov was a vehement critic of the Orthodox Church, accusing it of idolatry and attributing Russia's social problems to a lack of true knowledge of Christ (Prokhanoff 1933:18). He writes:

Under these conditions is it any wonder that the moral and spiritual condition of the people degenerated and that corruption, drunkenness, and immorality were found to be flourishing on a nation-wide scale? Like a sea, vodka was flowing on the plains of Russia, poisoning millions of people and ruining the family, economic, industrial, and social life, and at the same time carrying away to the abyss the Orthodox Church with its priests, bishops, archbishops, and metropolitans (1933:18–19).

Prokhanov further asserted that the Orthodox Church maintained “an attitude of *stolid indifference* to social conditions all around it” (1933:19) and associated its sorrowful state with subordination to the state (Prokhanoff 1933:134).

The Quest for Autonomy and Social Engagement

Prokhanov’s critique also oversimplifies the Orthodox Church’s engagement with social issues in Imperial Russia (Kenworthy 2006:2). By the late 19th century, clergy had begun to advocate for reforms to enhance the Church’s autonomy and societal relevance. Cunningham (1981:11) observes, “The ecclesiastical intelligentsia—priests, prelates, and professors—unanimously believed that the Church’s autonomy was essential for its social, economic, and political relevance in Russia.”

Efforts to transform parishes into hubs of social engagement included literacy programs, vocational training, and initiatives to secure property rights for parishioners. However, synodal and civil authorities were wary of granting clergy the freedom to address social grievances, limiting the scope of these reforms (Cunningham 1981:22).

By the late 19th century, improved clerical education equipped priests with practical skills, enabling them to provide agricultural advice, teach horticulture, and offer medical assistance. These skills proved vital during crises such as the famine and cholera epidemic of 1891–1893 (Cunningham 1981:22–23).

Emergence of a New Theology: Bridging Sacred and Secular

The era of the Great Reforms inspired a theology that sought to bridge sacred and secular realms. Archimandrite Fedor (Bukharev) rejected the strict division between the two, advocating for their unity in addressing both individual and societal needs (Hedda 2008:55). This vision gained traction within the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, leading to a paradigm shift by the 1880s, where clergy increasingly assumed roles as both spiritual and material caretakers (Kenworthy 2006:5).

Agents of Transformation: Social Reform and Church Mission

The Orthodox Church expanded its mission to integrate spiritual care with social reform. Figures like Ioann Sergiev (John of Kronstadt (1829-1908)) exemplified this shift, advocating for accessible worship, addressing social inequities, and founding initiatives such as the House of Industry to assist the impoverished (Kenworthy 2006:6–8). The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was one of the most significant reforms in Imperial Russia. However, this reform gave rise to numerous challenges, such as unemployment and a lack of housing. The initiative of St. John of Kronstadt was a response to these social upheavals (Kolossova 2024:26-27).

The Society for the Spread of Moral-Religious Enlightenment in the Spirit of the Orthodox Church (SMRE), founded in 1881, embodied these efforts. Inspired by American models, SMRE combined religious education with social reform, organising Bible readings, establishing schools and libraries, and founding temperance societies (Hedda 2008:89–92). By 1887, its outreach extended to factory workers, creating a network of community spaces and programmes (Kenworthy 2006:11). However, rapid urbanisation and limited resources constrained its effectiveness (Kenworthy 2006:12).

Temperance Movements and Broader Social Transformation

Efforts to combat alcoholism, a pressing social issue, gained momentum through the establishment of temperance societies. By 1900, 261 such organisations were active, including the influential Alexander-Nevskii Temperance Society, which counted 75,000 members by 1905 (Kenworthy 2006:14).

Reform-minded clergy such as Fr. Grigorii Petrov further championed societal transformation. His widely distributed book, *The Gospel as the Foundation of Life* (published in 17 editions by 1905), articulated a vision of the Kingdom of God as a moral ideal to be realised through justice, love, and mutual care (Kenworthy 2006:18).

Challenges Faced by Orthodox Reformers

Despite their vision, Orthodox reformers faced systemic challenges, including state control and restrictive policies. For instance, priests were legally obligated to report

confessions critical of the government. Urbanisation exacerbated these difficulties, straining parish resources and disrupting traditional community structures (Kenworthy 2006:12).

Thus, while Prokhanov's critique highlights issues such as limited scripture access and social indifference, it neglects the significant contributions of Orthodox reformers, who were constrained by systemic challenges. Initiatives like Bible translation, temperance movements, and practical education reflect the Church's commitment to social engagement, despite state-imposed limitations and rapid urbanisation.

Ironically, many of Prokhanov's own practices mirrored those of the Orthodox reformers he critiqued. His efforts to integrate faith with societal transformation, including literacy programmes, hymn writing, and social projects, align with the vision of reformers like Ioann Sergiev and Fr. Grigorii Petrov. These parallels underscore a shared recognition of the Church's dual role in addressing both spiritual and social needs, albeit through differing theological frameworks.

Prokhanov's reluctance to credit others may reflect his character, marked by excessive self-regard, as Puzynin (2010:242) suggests. Nonetheless, he fostered a culture of appreciation for collaborators within his union, as explored in the following section on his leadership qualities.

Orthodox Mission in the 19th Century

The 19th century marked a period of significant success for the Orthodox Church in the dissemination of the Christian faith. One prominent example of effective missionary activity during this era is the life and ministry of Macarius Gloukharev (Glukharev) (1792–1847). Together with two coworkers, he ministered among the nomadic peoples of the Altai region. After acquiring proficiency in their language, he translated the Scriptures into their native tongue. From the outset, he actively preached the Gospel; however, the local population initially resisted his message (Stamoolis 2002:96).

Faced with limited success in direct evangelism, Macarius redirected his efforts toward social ministry, emphasising medical care and hygiene. He established hospitals and schools (Stamoolis 2002:98) and even performed menial tasks, such as cleaning the homes of local residents. His commitment to preparing converts for baptism was evident, as he encouraged new believers to settle in newly formed Christian villages (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5421).

By the close of the 19th century, the Altai mission had expanded considerably, comprising 25,000 adherents, 188 Christian villages, 67 churches, and 48 schools offering education in local languages (Stamoolis 2002:100).

Another significant figure in the history of Orthodox missions was John (Innocent) Veniaminov (1797–1879), who later became Metropolitan of Moscow (Stamoolis 2002:106). In 1822, Veniaminov travelled with his family to the Aleutian Islands, where he mastered the local language, devised an alphabet, and translated the Gospel of Matthew (Kolosova 2022:148). In addition to constructing a church, he established a school (Stamoolis 2002:106). Later, his missionary efforts extended to Alaska, where he achieved remarkable success (Stamoolis 2002:107; Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5435).

Orthodox missions during the 19th century were characterised by an incarnational and holistic approach. Missionaries sought to immerse themselves in local cultures, prioritising the development of indigenous leadership and addressing both the social and spiritual needs of communities. While direct evangelism was practiced when possible, Orthodox missions were at times intertwined with Russia's political objectives, as exemplified by the mission to China (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5455).

In this regard, Orthodox missionary endeavours paralleled broader trends in Catholic and Protestant missions of the period, which often emphasised holistic engagement, cultural adaptation, and the cultivation of local leadership (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5455). As noted earlier, Ivan Prokhanov, a prominent leader in Russian evangelicalism, frequently criticised the Orthodox Church for its perceived neglect of Gospel

proclamation and its indifference toward social issues. While this critique holds merit, examples such as the ministries of Macarius Gloukharve and John Veniaminov demonstrate that some Orthodox missions effectively combined social action with evangelistic outreach.

Moreover, both the Catholic and Protestant churches in the West began recognising the importance of social work around the mid-19th century, while Russia reached this realisation only by the late 19th century (Freeze 1985: 94). From a historical perspective, the difference is not particularly significant.

Notably, Prokhanov's own missional methodology bore significant similarities to the Orthodox emphasis on holistic and incarnational ministry. He aimed not only to preach the Gospel but also to address societal needs and engage deeply with Russian culture, as this study highlights.

Prokhanov's Reform of the Orthodox Church: Utopian Vision, Rigidity, and Missed Opportunities

Ivan Prokhanov's attempt to reform the Orthodox Church ultimately failed, partly because it was utopian in nature and undermined by his overly direct approach. While his vision of transforming such a deeply rooted and historically entrenched institution was ambitious, it underestimated the complexity and resilience of centuries-old theological traditions. Furthermore, the theoretical and practical principles he advocated for promoting unity among evangelical Christians were not consistently applied in his engagement with the Orthodox Church. Instead of fostering dialogue and seeking common ground, Prokhanov adopted a direct and uncompromising strategy, aiming to reshape Orthodox theology in alignment with evangelical principles while avoiding deeper theological engagement (Puzynin 2010:259). This combination of idealism and rigidity ultimately proved ineffective.

Common Ground

Despite Prokhanov's shortcomings in fostering dialogue, significant points of convergence between the Orthodox and evangelical churches could have provided a

foundation for constructive engagement. While this subject warrants further investigation, it is evident that Prokhanov shared certain aspects of missional theology with Orthodoxy, as will be demonstrated in the missiological section of this research.

God's Love as the Foundation of Mission

In Orthodox tradition, the foundation of mission is God's love, with John 3:16 serving as a central missiological text (Stamoolis 2001:81–82). As David Bosch (2011:loc. 5152) observes, "The grounding of mission in the love of God rather than in his justice was a revolutionary message in a world where the gods were ultimately apathetic and unconcerned". Similarly, Prokhanov combined an emphasis on God's justice with a profound focus on His love, demonstrating alignment with this Orthodox perspective.

Theosis

In Orthodoxy, the goal of mission is *theosis*—the restoration of the image of God in humanity (Bosch 2011: loc. 5080). This entails becoming godly and conforming to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29) (Fairbairn 2002:70). *Theosis* refers to union with God, achieved through prayer, thanksgiving, petition, and meditation (Bosch 2011:loc.5080). While differences exist between the Orthodox concept of *theosis* and the evangelical doctrine of spiritual sanctification, Prokhanov also emphasised the transformation of individuals as the ultimate goal of Gospel preaching. For him, abiding in Christ through prayer, meditation, and thanksgiving was not only central to his theology and practice but also both the goal and the means toward holiness.

Unity as a Prerequisite for Mission

In Orthodox theology, mission and unity are inseparable (Bosch 2011:loc. 5048). Stamoolis (2001:110) asserts, "Without unity, the church dishonors its Lord." Division among believers is a scandal that undermines the "United Witness of the Church" (Bria 1986:69). However, unity does not necessitate the creation of a single organisational structure. Instead, "The unity of the church is the unity in Christ, by the Spirit, with the Triune God" (Bria 1986:69). Prokhanov shared a similar vision, as evidenced by his efforts to unify evangelical Christians.

Ecclesiocentric and Holistic Mission

In Orthodox theology, as Alexander Schmemmann writes, “The whole life of the Church is rooted in the Eucharist” (Schmemmann 1961:253). The Eucharist embodies two movements: “the movement of ascension and the movement of return” (Schmemmann 1961:255). Ascension signifies approaching the throne of God, while return denotes re-entry into the world. Mission encompasses both humanity and creation (Schmemmann 1961:255).

The Role of Persecution in Prokhanov’s Approach

Despite these potential points of convergence, Prokhanov failed to pursue them effectively. One possible reason for this shortcoming lies in the lack of deep theological reflection stemming from his brief and fragmented theological education (Puzynin 2010:243). Additionally, his personal experiences of persecution and his family’s history shaped a direct and uncompromising approach that limited his effectiveness in fostering unity and reform.

The persecution of believers in the Russian Empire, and later in Soviet Russia, deeply influenced Prokhanov’s worldview. His family, being Molokans, also endured significant pressure for their faith, which fostered in him a profound distrust of the Orthodox Church, closely aligned with the state system. This experience of suffering may explain his rigid approach to dialogue and reform efforts.

2.4.6.5. Conclusion

Ivan Prokhanov approached the Orthodox Church as a critical reformer, deeply concerned with its perceived inability to meet the spiritual and moral needs of its followers. He identified structural flaws, spiritual stagnation, and a lack of responsiveness to societal change as key obstacles to the Church’s renewal.

Prokhanov championed a return to apostolic Christianity, emphasising personal conversion, the authority of Scripture, and active evangelism—hallmarks of evangelicalism. He envisioned a governance model that was inclusive and accountable, advocating for the election of church ministers by congregations to foster integrity and responsiveness. His critique echoed the sentiments of many contemporaries, including

reform-minded clergy and members of the intelligentsia, who also sought to modernise the Church.

Despite his efforts, Prokhanov's attempts to catalyse a reformation within the Orthodox Church were ultimately unsuccessful. His highly critical view of Orthodoxy, coupled with a lack of diplomatic tact and flexibility, limited his ability to engage constructively with reformist factions within the Church. Nonetheless, Prokhanov demonstrated a profound understanding of the reformist sentiments emerging in Orthodoxy, recognising their potential to align with his vision of spiritual renewal and societal transformation.

It is important to acknowledge that Prokhanov's failure to achieve his goals does not diminish the significance of his reformative aspirations. His critique reflected genuine concerns. While history did not favour his specific approach, his efforts remain a testament to his visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to fostering a Christianity that was both spiritually vibrant and socially engaged.

2.5. Life Outside Russia and Theological Education

Ivan Prokhanov's time abroad and theological education were transformative, shaping his religious and societal views significantly. He began his studies at the Baptist College in Bristol, spending a year there before transferring to the New Congregational College, as noted in his own writings (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:97). His academic journey continued with six-month stints at both Berlin University and Paris University (Prokhanoff 1933:100). These varied educational experiences, Prokhanov asserted, stemmed from his desire to understand the diverse landscape of Protestant denominations (Prokhanoff 1933:97).

While in the West, Prokhanov was particularly impressed by the political freedoms he encountered, which he perceived as closely linked to religious freedom – the liberty to interpret the Bible in various ways (Prokhanoff 1933:98, 105). He saw this freedom as a catalyst for the flourishing of different denominations, a diversity he described as 'charming'. This perspective was supported by his interpretation of passages from the

Apostle Paul's letters, notably 1 Corinthians 11:19 and Philippians 1:18 (Prokhanoff 1933:105).¹⁴

Prokhanov observed that the high moral standards in Western Protestant countries could largely be attributed to their adherence to the Apostles' Creed and their commitment to 'practicing primitive Christianity' (Prokhanoff 1933:104). Despite the diversity among Protestant churches, he observed a common foundation: a belief in the Scriptures, the doctrine of God as Father, the mission of Christ, atonement, and salvation.

Reflecting on these insights, Prokhanov concluded that 'only the Bible and the Gospel, freely distributed and accepted, could create the highest welfare for my fatherland and make it a foremost country in all senses' (Prokhanoff 1933:106).

His experience in the West also highlighted the unity and love maintained among different denominations despite doctrinal differences, a theme he revisited in an 1898 letter to fellow believer Pashkov (Prokhanov 1898). In his words:

Here, I was struck by the fact that diversity of opinions on secondary matters does not destroy but rather adds a special charm to the spiritual unity of various evangelical Christian societies. This opened my eyes to the truth that the forefront of Christian activity should not be placed on dogmatic definitions of faith that can build boundaries, but on the requirement of Christ's love, which is above all and transcends all divisions in the world and which alone is the source of the Church's power on earth.

Prokhanov's experiences abroad and his education in the West deepened his conviction that religious freedom was fundamental to political liberty. He linked the high moral standards in Protestant countries to their commitment to early apostolic Christianity. Prokhanov was convinced that broad access to the Bible and the preaching of the gospel could profoundly transform life within the Russian Empire. Furthermore, his observations

¹⁴ In these passages, Apostle Paul acknowledges that disagreements within the church are natural; simultaneously, he expresses joy that Christ is being preached, even if the motives behind the preaching are not always transparent.

of the interactions among various evangelical denominations underscored the importance of elevating Christian love and fostering unity among believers above the doctrinal differences that often divide them. This insight became a cornerstone of his subsequent efforts.

2.6. Conclusion

This study asserts that Ivan Prokhanov exemplified transformational missionary leadership, shaped by his socio-political, religious, and economic environment. This chapter focused on these influences and other factors that shaped his leadership style.

The socio-political and religious reforms of Alexander II in the early 1860s, while revitalising Russian society, also led to unrest and dissatisfaction. This period of radical political tensions, culminating in Alexander II's assassination, resulted in a severe authoritarian backlash, stifling freedoms and deepening national stagnation and apathy. This environment, characterised by a call for drastic changes and a rise in youthful heroism, framed Prokhanov's early experiences and ideological formation. A societal consensus emerged on the need for radical changes in Russia, and the idea of revolutionary transformations gained traction. Moreover, many youths were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the public good, marking an era of heroism and dedication to lofty human ideals.

Raised in a Molokan family, Prokhanov was deeply influenced by their communal living, hard work, and critical stance towards the Orthodox Church. These early influences, particularly the communal and critical ethos, were mirrored in his later leadership.

Prokhanov deeply respected his father, a wise, industrious man and a successful entrepreneur. His father was actively involved in the religious communities to which he belonged and was a social activist in the city. Prokhanov followed in his father's footsteps, converting to the Evangelical Baptist faith, experiencing a conversion from pessimism and apathy to a life of purposeful optimism dedicated to serving Christ for the benefit of society.

Prokhanov's childhood passion for poetry and literature influenced him, particularly the literature of suffering by authors like Nekrasov and Dostoevsky, as shown earlier in the study. His exposure to socialist revolutionary thinkers and his education at the politicised St. Petersburg Technological Institute helped crystallise his political ideology. Although he shared many socialist convictions, he rejected their methods of implementation. Instead of societal transformation through violent revolution, Prokhanov advocated for a spiritual revolution, a transformation of human nature through conversion by the Holy Spirit and faith in Jesus Christ. He believed that only a new person could change the existing order.

Prokhanov's critique of the Orthodox Church was based on its perceived failure to effect positive socio-political change. He envisioned a vibrant evangelical church that could transform individual lives and society. His relationships with figures like Pashkov and Fast, and his education abroad, helped him transcend a narrow Baptist viewpoint, fostering a broader evangelical unity and influencing his theological contributions to evangelical churches.

Through these varied influences – his upbringing, personal convictions, educational experiences, and critical engagement with Orthodox practices – Prokhanov championed a form of leadership that emphasised spiritual renewal and societal transformation, leaving a lasting impact on the evangelical movement. From 1906 onwards, Prokhanov began to actualise his vision, significantly impacting the evangelical movement in Russia. This influence and its relation to the paradigm of authentic transformational leadership will be further explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3:

PROKHANOV AS AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER AND THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

3.1. Introduction

This study sought to determine whether Ivan Prokhanov embodied the characteristics of a missional leader using an authentic transformative approach, with the primary goal of fostering spiritual renewal in Russian society by spreading the gospel. This chapter serves a dual purpose: first, to outline the characteristics of an authentic transformative leader; and second, to establish the correlation between Prokhanov's leadership – characterised by authenticity and transformative qualities – and his constructive initiatives, which presumably contributed to the emergence of a missional movement.

3.2. The Role of Prokhanov in the Establishment of the Missional Movement in Russia

Scholars have extensively highlighted Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov's pivotal role in shaping the evangelical missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia. Kahle (1978:16, 37) emphasises the importance of understanding Prokhanov in contrast to his contemporaries, asserting that such understanding is crucial to grasping the trajectory of the evangelical movement as a whole, positioning him as a seminal figure in Russian Protestantism.

Similarly, Savinsky (1995:74, 77-78) underscores Prokhanov's leadership in establishing the evangelical Christian branch within the Russian-Ukrainian Baptist movement, emphasising his unwavering authority within the evangelical Christian brotherhood. Moreover, church historians (VSEKhB 1989:147-150) attribute the organisation of the Union of Evangelical Christians to Prokhanov's visionary leadership.

Puzynin (2010:238, 334) accords Prokhanov a dominant role in shaping the theological landscape of the Russian evangelical movement during its formative years, highlighting his national-scale leadership and profound authority. Kuznetsova (2009:228) further underscores Prokhanov's dynamic leadership style, particularly resonant with the younger generation seeking engagement. Corrado (2000:179) situates Prokhanov among the leaders whose actions laid the groundwork for the Pashkovist movement. Ellis and Jones (1996:173) attribute a rejuvenation of the evangelical movement to Prokhanov's leadership, noting his consolidation of disparate factions into a cohesive denomination. Mitskevich (2007:140) echoes these sentiments, crediting Prokhanov with revitalising spiritual fervour and gospel dissemination in St. Petersburg and beyond. Popov (1996:54) further underscores Prokhanov's central role in steering the Russian evangelical movement, as reflected in the title of his chapter dedicated to Prokhanov's leadership.

Mitrokhin (1997:259) acknowledges Prokhanov's political intuition and his ability to articulate a socio-political vision rooted in Christian principles. He regards Prokhanov's establishment of the 'Christian-Democratic Party 'Resurrection' in March 1917 as a landmark event, marking the emergence of the first religious political party in Russia. Mitrokhin contrasts Prokhanov's project with subsequent attempts to form Christian parties during the 1990s restructuring period, noting its comparatively robust foundation. He credits Prokhanov as the progenitor of a tradition with modest yet tangible prospects for the future.

Mitskevich (2007:153) states that Prokhanov was elected Vice President of the World Baptist Union 'for his blessed work, which was well known to many global Baptist leaders'.

Zhidkov, a coworker of Prokhanov and eyewitness to many events, attributes a key role to Prokhanov in the creation of the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians (ARUEC, Vserossiyskiy Soyuz Yevangel'skikh Khristian). He asserts that Prokhanov began uniting disparate communities at the All-Russian Congress of Evangelical Christian (ARCEC) in

1908. Initially, the Union of Evangelical Christians consisted of only 8 communities (Zhidkov 1922:17).

These assessments collectively underscore Prokhanov's exceptional leadership, which extends beyond the confines of the evangelical movement into broader socio-political realms. Consequently, Prokhanov's foundational contributions to the missional movement in Russia are widely recognised among historians and scholars. Renowned for his organisational prowess, Prokhanov significantly propelled the progress of Protestantism in Russia.¹⁵

Given the established recognition of Prokhanov's contributions, the focus of this research is not to ascertain his role but to scrutinise it through the lens of the authentic-transformative leadership paradigm. By means of this perspective, the aim is to gain a deeper understanding of Prokhanov's leadership style and its impact on the evangelical missionary movement in Russia.

3.2.1. Rationalising the comprehensive leadership profile

This section examines the rationale behind adopting a comprehensive approach to leadership profiling, integrating elements from multiple leadership models. The chosen approach aims to address the limitations of individual paradigms and provide a more nuanced understanding of leadership dynamics, particularly in the context of mission-oriented Christian leadership exemplified by Prokhanov.

The transformational leadership model, while emphasising intrinsic motivation and follower development (Bass & Riggio 2006:XI), does not fully capture the inner dimensions of leadership. In contrast, the New Testament highlights the significance of moral, ethical, and spiritual qualities in Christian leadership, as articulated by the Apostle Paul in his letters to Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9).

¹⁵ Ignatenko (2020:5), the deputy chairman of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, while listing the outstanding leaders and founders of the Evangelical Baptist movement, asserts that Prokhanov stands out among them in a prominent way.

To address this gap, this study incorporates the paradigm of authentic leadership, which delves deeper into the inner world of leaders. Specifically, Bill George's practical approach to authentic leadership is employed, aligning closely with Christian values such as passion, compassion, and self-discipline¹⁶ (George 2003).

Considering the historical context of Prokhanov's era – marked by periods of restricted freedom for missionary activities under Tsarist and Soviet rule – understanding the psychological state of the leader becomes essential. Therefore, elements of positive psychological attributes are integrated into the leadership paradigm, emphasising qualities such as confidence, hope, and resilience, which resonate with both organisational behaviour theory and biblical principles (Luthans & Avolio 2003).

3.2.2. Transformational leadership theory

In the late 1970s, the concept of 'transformational leadership' emerged, attributed to James MacGregor Burns, who contrasted it with transactional leadership (Burns 2007:66-67; Johnson & Hackman 2018:106). Transactional leaders focus on meeting physiological, safety, and belongingness needs, often as rewards for employee performance.

In contrast, transformational leaders address these needs while emphasising significance and self-actualisation, aligning with Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1970:35-46).¹⁷

¹⁶ The text Romans 12:11 calls for diligence and fervent service, while the text Ephesians 4:32 calls for compassion and kindness among people while in Galatians 5:23 Paul writes about self-discipline as an expression of Holy Spirit Fruit.

¹⁷ Maslow's hierarchy of needs posits that human needs follow a hierarchical structure. Initially, physiological needs like hunger dominate one's thoughts and actions. Once these are met, safety needs take precedence, followed by the need for love and belonging. Subsequently, esteem needs for achievement and recognition arise, leading to self-confidence. Finally, self-actualisation emerges, where individuals seek fulfilment by aligning with their true nature and purpose. This theory suggests that individuals prioritize fulfilling these needs sequentially to achieve personal growth and satisfaction.

Transformational leadership gained prominence in the early 2000s due to its emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development (Bass & Riggio 2006:XI). Unlike transactional leadership, which can feel transactional or ‘cold’, transformational leaders inspire commitment and involvement, motivating followers to exceed their perceived limits (Bass & Riggio 2006:4). While transformational leadership shares some traits with charismatic leadership, it encompasses a broader range of qualities (Bass & Riggio 2006:5).

However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential dark side of transformational leadership. Some leaders misuse their influence for destructive ends, earning the label of ‘pseudo-transformational leaders’ (Bass & Riggio 2006:5). Notable examples include Adolf Hitler and Osama Bin Laden.

Four key components

Transformational leadership comprises four key components (Bass & Riggio 2006:5), namely:

Idealised Influence (II): Leaders serve as positive examples, earning respect and admiration from followers who seek to emulate them. They exhibit extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and high moral standards (Bass & Riggio 2006:6).

Inspirational Motivation (IM): Transformational leaders inspire enthusiasm and optimism by communicating a compelling vision of the organisation’s future. They set clear expectations and demonstrate commitment to goals, fostering a sense of purpose and significance among followers (Bass & Riggio 2006:6).

Intellectual Stimulation (IS): Leaders encourage creative problem-solving and challenge established thinking paradigms. They cultivate a culture where new ideas are welcomed, and employees are encouraged to contribute to problem-solving processes (Bass & Riggio 2006:7).

Individualised Consideration (IC): Transformational leaders focus on developing the potential of each employee, taking into account individual differences. They provide personalised support, mentorship, and coaching, fostering open communication and a sense of individual recognition (Bass & Riggio 2006:7).

These components collectively define transformational leadership, characterised by leaders who inspire, motivate, and develop their followers to achieve common goals.

This approach to leadership analysis is particularly effective when using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass in the 1980s. However, conducting such a study is not feasible for the current investigation, which focuses on the first quarter of the past century.

Five common characteristics

Referencing the works of Tom Peters and Robert Waterman (1982), Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (2003), James Kouzes and Barry Posner (2007), and Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass (2001), Johnson and Hackman argue that five common characteristics are identified among transformational leaders:

- Creativity:
They are innovative and foresighted, constantly seeking new ideas to grow and develop the organisation (Johnson & Hackman 2018:111).
- Interactivity:
Excelling in communication, they understand the needs and motivations of their followers, fostering a collaborative environment (Johnson & Hackman 2018: 114).
- Visionary:
Possessing a clear sense of direction, they can articulate it concisely for individuals, groups, or organisations they lead (Johnson & Hackman 2018:117).

- **Passion:**
They exhibit genuine enthusiasm and love for their work, approaching tasks with zeal and dedication (Johnson & Hackman 2018:122).
- **Empowerment:**
By promoting participation and engagement among followers, they delegate tasks and provide necessary resources to foster growth and development (Johnson & Hackman 2018:122).

These dimensions form the foundation for creating a leadership profile to analyse Prokhanov's leadership. A comprehensive analysis of these aspects of transformational leadership will be conducted later in this research.

3.2.3. Authentic leadership theory

3.2.3.1. Definition of an 'authentic person'

Harter (2002:382) defines an 'authentic person' as someone who owns their personal experiences: 'One acts in accord with the true self, expressing oneself in ways that are consistent with inner thoughts and feelings'. An authentic person is genuine and real, with behaviour that reflects their thoughts, emotions, and beliefs (Harter 2002:382; Luthans & Avolio 2003: ch. 16). As Luthans and Avolio (2003:ch. 16) state, 'the above meaning of authenticity best depicts the type of positive leadership needed in contemporary times'.

3.2.3.2. Several approaches

Authentic leadership theory encompasses several approaches:

One of these is the *intrapersonal* approach, which focuses on the inner world of the leader, including self-knowledge, self-regulation, and self-concept. Shamir and Eilam (2005:396) describe authentic leadership as genuine leadership – leaders who lead from their convictions, who are original, not copies. As Northouse (2016:196) remarks, 'This

perspective emphasizes a leader's life experiences and the meaning he or she attaches to those experiences as being critical to the development of the authentic leader'.

The second approach is *interpersonal*, emphasising the relational aspect of leadership. Authenticity emerges from interactions with one's followers, where influence flows both ways – leaders shape their followers, and followers, in turn, influence their leaders.

The third approach is *developmental*, suggesting that authentic leaders are shaped by various life experiences and events, such as illness or a new career (Northouse 2016:196).

Building on the developmental approach, Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson (2008:94) highlight that authentic leaders 'promote both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate'. As Northouse (2016:196) explains,

They suggest that authentic leadership is composed of four distinct but related components: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber 2009). During their lifetime, grow and develop these four types of behavior.

3.2.3.3. Practical approach to Authentic Leadership by Bill George

Bill George presents a practical approach to authentic leadership, delineating five key dimensions.

1. Purpose: Authentic leaders are driven by a clear sense of purpose, which fuels their passion for their endeavours (George 2003:19). This purpose-driven mindset imbues their leadership with significance and vitality (George 2003:36-37).

2. Values and character: Authentic leaders adhere to solid values and uphold strong character. Their leadership is defined by an unwavering commitment to ethical principles, which guide their actions and decisions (George 2003:20).

3. Empathy and compassion: Authentic leaders lead with empathy and compassion, actively engaging with their employees on a personal level. They prioritise understanding

and caring for the well-being of their team members, fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment (George 2003:23).

4. **Connected relationships:** Authentic leaders prioritise building connected relationships with their team members. They recognise the importance of establishing trust and rapport, which are essential for fostering employee dedication and engagement (George 2003:23).

5. **Self-discipline and resilience:** Authentic leaders demonstrate self-discipline (Northouse 2016:18) and resilience, like that of long-distance runners. They maintain consistent focus on their goals (Northouse 2016:199) and possess the ability to regulate their emotions and impulses effectively (George 2003:18).

A comprehensive exploration of these qualities of authentic leadership will be undertaken later in this study.

3.2.3.4. Four primary attributes

The theory of authentic leadership incorporates the concept of positive psychological attributes, which are a crucial component of authentic leadership. These attributes are essential in predisposing or enhancing a leader's ability to develop authentic leadership qualities (Northouse 2016:204). They include both trait-like qualities, inherent to an individual's personality, such as extraversion, and state-like qualities that can be cultivated through training and coaching (Northouse 2016:204). Within this framework, are identified:

1. **Confidence** is foundational in authentic leadership, encapsulating the perception of oneself as capable of successfully accomplishing specific tasks. It aligns with the concept of self-efficacy, defined as 'the belief that one has the ability to successfully accomplish a specified task' (Northouse 2016:204). Confident leaders demonstrate greater motivation to achieve their objectives and exhibit resilience, persisting in their endeavours despite obstacles and challenges.

2. **Hope**, another vital attribute, represents a positive motivational state rooted in willpower and goal-setting. Authentic leaders who possess hope set achievable goals, inspiring trust and belief in their vision among their followers (Northouse 2016:204).

3. **Optimism**, a 'cognitive process of viewing situation from a positive light and having favourable expectation about the future' (Northouse 2016:204).

4. **Resilience**, integral to authentic leadership, denotes the capacity to recover from and adapt to adverse circumstances. It encompasses the ability to navigate hardships and suffering with a positive outlook (Northouse 2016:204).

A comprehensive analysis of each of these psychological components of leadership will be undertaken later in this study.

3.2.4. Conclusion

As a synthesis of various leadership models, authentic-transformational leaders exhibit the following traits:

Vision – While transformational leadership emphasises 'vision', authentic leadership emphasises 'purpose'. Despite nuanced differences between these terms, in leadership contexts, 'vision' and 'purpose' are considered conceptually similar.

Passion – Passion is a characteristic emphasised in transformational leadership, whereas authentic leadership views passion as an outcome of having a significant purpose.

Additionally, these leaders possess:

- Effective *communication* skills (from the transformational leadership model).
- Proficiency in building *relationships* (from the authentic leadership model).
- Demonstrated *self-discipline* (from the authentic leadership model).
- *Creativity* (from the transformational leadership model).

- *Empowerment* of employees (from the transformational leadership model).
- *Compassion* towards individuals (from the authentic leadership model).
- Solid *values* (from the authentic leadership model).
- Additionally, they exhibit optimism, resilience, hope, and confidence.

These traits collectively enable authentic-transformational leaders to inspire, motivate, and develop their followers effectively. By merging the principles of transformational and authentic leadership, such leaders are well-equipped to foster a positive organisational culture and drive sustainable success.

3.3. Vision: Theoretical Assumptions

The importance of having a clear vision for a leader cannot be overestimated (Maxwell 1993:139). Johnson and Hackman (2018:117) define “vision” as a ‘concise statement or description of the direction in which an individual, group, or organization is headed’. Both scholars and practitioners emphasise its critical role in successful leadership endeavours. John Maxwell (2017:ch. 8) asserts that vision is an indispensable quality of leadership, like a roadmap guiding both the leader and the team towards shared objectives.

Greenleaf (1970:18) underscores the importance of foresight, suggesting that losing sight of a compelling vision diminishes one’s capacity for leadership. A leader’s ability to envision a future state for the organisation precedes decision-making. This mental representation, whether abstract or specific, must offer a realistic and enticing future, surpassing the current state significantly (Bennis & Nanus, 2003:82). It is this compelling vision that instils a sense of purpose and commitment among followers (Johnson & Hackman 2018:117).

Exemplary leaders, as posited by Kouzes and Posner (2007:105), possess the ability to envision an ideal future for the common good. Andy Stanley (2016:ch.1) emphasises that vision stems from dissatisfaction with the status quo and is not merely an abstract concept but a *tangible* conviction of what could and should be.

To maintain leadership, Greenleaf (1970:18-19) suggests that leaders must navigate between two worlds: the present reality and a long-term perspective, allowing them to foresee the unforeseeable. Burt Nanus, as cited in Johnson and Hackman (2018:117-118), identifies four characteristics of effective visions: inspiring commitment to a noble mission, creating meaning for followers, establishing standards of excellence, and bridging the present and future.

Communicating this vision effectively is paramount for transformational leaders (Johnson & Hackman 2018:117), but it necessitates a compelling vision to begin with.

It is important to note the key differences in both the goals of leadership and the formation of vision between secular leaders and missional leaders. Niemandt (2019:111) defines leadership as following God, stating, 'The direction and initiative come from God'. Leadership, therefore, is framed by God's mission and requires participation in it.

Blackaby and Blackaby (2001:119) describe the goal of spiritual leadership as influencing people to 'move them onto God's agenda'. This entails guiding individuals to spiritual maturity (2001:127), developing other leaders (2001:134), and glorifying God (2001:141). The task of missional leaders is influencing others to participate in God's mission through 'meaningful relations and in the power of the Spirit' (Niemandt 2019:73). As Niemandt (2019:73-74) emphasises, 'Leadership is never in isolation or an individualistic endeavour, nor is it a kind of superhero saving the world. It is always in relation with the Triune God and the community of disciples'.

Christian leadership should be understood within the context of the doctrine of God and theology, with Holy Scripture playing a pivotal role (Negrov 2016:15, 19). Negrov (2016:20) asserts that 'the knowledge of God is the key foundation in the formation of Christian leadership'. When forming a vision, leaders must avoid replicating other successful church projects, recognising that God may act differently in various contexts. The leader's vision should align with God's will, as revealed through Scripture (Blackaby & Blackaby 2001:59), and leaders should cultivate a close relationship with God (2001:59). God reveals His will through prayer, and the Holy Spirit should be the leader's

guiding force (Blackaby & Blackaby 2001:150, 61). Discernment of what God is doing and where the Spirit is leading is an important function of leadership (Niemandt 2019:112-113).

Prayer not only helps a spiritual leader gain vision but also influences others (Sanders 1994:90; Blackaby & Blackaby 2001:148-153). Sanders (1994:91) underscores this by stating, 'To move people, the leader must be able to move God, for God has made it clear that He moves people in response to prayer'.

A compelling vision is integral to successful leadership, arising from dissatisfaction with the status quo and the desire to transform the present into a more beneficial future. In Christian leadership, however, it is not merely dissatisfaction with the status quo but the discernment of God's mission and the commitment to participate in it.

The question arises: Did Prokhanov possess such a compelling vision from God, one capable of challenging the prevailing Russian reality and inspiring meaningful change?

3.3.1. Prokhanov as a visionary leader

This analysis explores Prokhanov's transformative leadership and his vision for Russia's spiritual revival. According to the central hypothesis of this study, Prokhanov epitomised the authentic-transformational leadership archetype, driven by a profound dissatisfaction with the status quo and a fervent desire for change. As a catalytic force for transformation, Prokhanov meticulously formulated and articulated a *compelling vision* for the future of Russia.

At the core of Prokhanov's vision was the concept of the 'spiritual awakening of the Russian nation' (Prokhanoff 1933:119), which focused on the spiritual reformation of individuals as the key to the overall well-being and prosperity of Russia. Scholars such as Kuznetsova (2009:241) and Mitrokhin (1997:262) affirm Prokhanov's advocacy for reforming Russia through spiritual awakening, while Sinichkin (2011:132) suggests that his ambition for a large evangelical union was central to initiating this change.

Prokhanov's vision likely began to take shape during his formative years, including his youth and his time at the technological institute (1888–1893). During this period, his exposure to the works of Russian writers and poets, along with his experiences with religious persecution, deeply influenced his worldview (Prokhanoff 1933:36, 41). While Prokhanov was drawn to liberal ideals of democracy and justice, he found their exclusion of the Christian faith illogical (Prokhanoff 1933:37). He believed that genuine societal transformation necessitated spiritual renewal at the individual level, a conviction rooted in his understanding of Christianity. Prokhanov states (Prokhanoff 1933:38):

Political and social workers can work out ideal reforms for the outward life of men, but they cannot change a wicked man into a good one. This can only be done by religion. *In rejecting religion, leaders of the liberation movements in Russia have rejected the only power by which their purpose could be attained* (emphasis in the original).

While hailing with all my heart the liberation movement, I instinctively felt, and afterward expressed in clear written form, my conviction that the cardinal and final solution of the question lies not in revolution only, although that might take place as an act of necessity, but in a great spiritual reformation.

Prokhanov's reflections likely stem from ideas that began forming in his youth and were particularly shaped during his student years. His description of the discourse prevalent at the time within his institute seems credible, considering the political engagement of the students at the Technological Institute and the relevance of socio-political transformations at that time, as outlined earlier in the historical section of this study.

In his endeavours, Prokhanov envisioned disseminating the Evangelical message among Russians through print media and engaging with various societal strata, including the clergy and intelligentsia (Prokhanov 1898).¹⁸

¹⁸ In January 1898, as Prokhanov's studies abroad were nearing completion, he wrote a letter to Pashkov, reflecting on his future plans. It is evident that Prokhanov was shaping both a vision and a strategy for its realization:

In his 'Main Need of Russia' letter, Prokhanov highlighted moral decay as the root issue, advocating for a spiritual awakening and the centrality of gospel teachings in Russian society (Prokhanov 1908a:1-3). He believed that societal transformation hinged on transformed spiritual life, envisioning a Russia free from oppression and poverty. He envisioned salvation not merely as personal redemption but as a holistic reformation of political and social realities, shaping a better future for Russian society.¹⁹

I feel the Lord's calling to dedicate my entire future life to spreading the Good News among the Russian people through the medium of print. The publications—books as well as periodicals—should be of four types:

1. For the Russian clergy;
2. For the Russian educated class;
3. For the Russian common people;
4. For Russian evangelical Christians, with a potential influence on other branches of the schism.

The content of the first three types of publications will be the same: the proclamation of salvation to the lost. The purpose of the fourth type should be the unification, strengthening, and encouragement of the peaceful workers of the Kingdom of God. The issue of distribution and related matters can be easily resolved.

¹⁹ In August 1906, Prokhanov sent out a letter titled *Russian Evangelical Union. The Greatest Need of Russia*:

And there shall be one flock and one Shepherd» (John 10:16)

Russia at present is like a man described in verse 30 of the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, who was "wounded and left half dead." The political and economic turmoil that Russia is experiencing before our very eyes is horrifying and unprecedented. However, her main wound lies not in political or economic troubles but in the disarray of her moral foundations, as secular newspapers would say, or, as we would put it, in the absence of true spiritual and religious life.

Despite a certain degree of already achieved political and economic freedom, the soul of the people does not find full satisfaction in their religion, which has become largely incomprehensible to them. And as long as there is no true and free religion, there can be no true and free family, society, or state. A people who do not have a proper understanding of God and have not laid the teachings of the Gospel as the foundation of their entire life cannot create a proper, free, and balanced state life.

The first and greatest need of such a people is the healing of their spirit, religious liberation, spiritual awakening, or the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit." The history of Western nations shows that in all countries where the Reformation (renewal of church life) took place—such as in Germany, England, Switzerland, and others—proper state life was established, preventing the bloodshed of chaotic and constant revolutions. Conversely, in countries where the Reformation of religious life

In the annotation to the journal '*Christian*' (*Khristianin*), Prokhanov wrote the following (ed. Prokhanov 1907a),

With sorrow for Russia's sadness and rejoicing in its joys, the individuals who have gathered around this journal hold the conviction that despite the desirability and necessity of the most radical political and economic reforms, the all-encompassing recreation and true renewal of Russia are only possible through the *spiritual revival and self-improvement of each individual person*. And this, in turn, is only possible through the wide dissemination of the Evangelical teaching, **freely preached and freely accepted as the cornerstone of the life of individuals, families, schools, society, church, and state** (emphasis in the original). This view will be consistently upheld in this publication.

Here, Prokhanov emphasises the importance of freedom in spreading Evangelical teaching as a prerequisite for spiritual revival.

On August 14, 1917, Prokhanov, delivered a speech at a state conference held by the Provisional Government in Moscow. He clarified that the goal of his religious movement was not merely to address existing issues but to ignite a spiritual revival and radically transform the Church based on gospel principles, much like the Early Church (Prokhanov 2009q:66). He emphasised that societal transformation required more than just political reforms; it necessitated significant changes across political, social, and economic spheres. Prokhanov envisioned a Russia free from oppression, with a revitalised army and thriving industry, underpinned by Christian faith (Prokhanov 2009q:67, 69).

During the 1917 revolutions, Prokhanov's sermons centred on the concept of a 'Spiritual Revolution'. He argued that for a political revolution to succeed, each individual must undergo a deep spiritual transformation, renouncing sin and prioritising God above all

did not take place, where to this day the old formal religion, largely incomprehensible to the people, reigns in the souls of the nation, there is still no such equilibrium in public life, and, in any case, no all-around and stable progress.

Thus, despite the benefits of political and economic reforms, the salvation of our people depends primarily on the renewal of their religious life... (Prokhanov 1908a:1-2).

else (Prokhanoff 1933:174). This revolution, he explained, occurs within the heart of every individual and entails a fundamental shift in life priorities toward God.

Contemporaries lauded Prokhanov's vision, recognising his unwavering commitment to internal transformation as the cornerstone of societal reform (ed. Dubrovskiy 1922:12). At his funeral, Kolesnikov spoke of Prokhanov's vision for Russia to be filled with God's knowledge and for all to be enlightened by the gospel message (Kolesnikov 1936:29). Zack, in his eulogy, highlighted Prokhanov's aspiration for a spiritual reformation in Russia, envisioning vibrant communities of believers across the nation (Zack 1936:52-53).

Moreover, as will be demonstrated later in the study, Prokhanov was a missional leader who perceived his mission as a means of transforming Russia – a work carried out by God Himself (Prokhanoff 1933:119).

3.3.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, Prokhanov emerges as a visionary leader deeply committed to the imperative of spiritual transformation within society, which he viewed as the fundamental catalyst for societal change. He firmly believed that genuine social and political reforms could only manifest through the profound metamorphosis of each individual, fostering a renewal of character and spirit. Prokhanov's approach to societal reform was inherently holistic, asserting that individual spiritual enlightenment would lead to broader societal transformation. Essentially, he believed in the intrinsic connection between individual personality transformation and the collective advancement of society. This emphasis on spiritual awakening likely emanated from his scepticism toward reforms that lacked a spiritual foundation.

Prokhanov's distinctive endeavour to integrate the spiritual dimension of individual life into the social and political fabric of society sets him apart from secular social reformers. His vision reflects a deep understanding of the interdependence between personal and societal change. He envisioned a Russia liberated from oppression, where citizens would unite as brethren under a shared spiritual ethos. His aspiration for Russia's spiritual

renaissance resonates with his acknowledgment of the pivotal role of religious freedom in disseminating and embracing Evangelical teachings.

3.4. Passion: Theoretical Assumptions

Transformational leaders possess a genuine passion for their work, a quality that is both infectious and inspiring to their team members (Johnson & Hackman 2018:122). Their enthusiasm and love for what they do naturally motivate others to become equally invested.

Leadership expert Warren Bennis (2009:33-34) identifies passion as one of the key ingredients of effective leadership, placing it second only to a “guiding vision”. Bennis explains that a leader’s passion extends beyond their profession to encompass their entire life, their calling, and the work they engage in.

Bill George (2003:36-37) adds that passion stems from high motivation, which arises when a person believes deeply in the significance of the purpose they are striving to achieve.

Simon Sinek (2009:43), drawing on his experience, asserts that all companies know *what* they do, and some know *how* they do *it*, but very few truly understand *why* they do it. Sinek refers to concepts such as ‘purpose, cause, or belief’ when discussing the question of ‘why’.

Richard Chang (2001:13-17) outlines the tangible benefits of passion within an organisation’s culture. Passion provides direction, catalyses energy, fosters creativity, increases productivity, promotes decisiveness, attracts talent and customers, engenders loyalty, and unifies people, ultimately elevating the organisation. Chang (2001:19) echoes Sinek’s sentiments, asserting that founders of organisations are initially guided by a burning desire and deep emotional commitment to a principle or idea, though they may lose sight of their original inspiration over time.

In conclusion, passion is a defining characteristic of both transformational and authentic leadership. Leaders with passion exhibit a strong *belief* in the *value* of their work, demonstrating *dedication* and *enthusiasm*. For them, financial gain is *secondary* to their commitment to the organisation's values and mission. Their passion *motivates* and inspires others, yet it is susceptible to erosion when individuals lose sight of the organisation's purpose and mission.

3.4.1. Prokhanov as a passionate leader

Prokhanov's leadership was characterised by an unwavering passion and commitment to his mission, driven by a deep conviction of its significance. His encounter with the gospel during a period of existential crisis in his youth profoundly transformed his outlook, instilling in him a sense of purpose and optimism (Prokhanoff 1933:42-47). A vision, symbolised by a dream in which Christ distributed coins, reinforced his belief in a divine mandate to share the gospel's abundance with the marginalised (Prokhanoff 1933:40-41).

His upbringing, marked by a miraculous survival in infancy, further solidified his belief in a providential calling (Prokhanoff 1933:29). This sense of destiny fuelled his dedication to service, which he viewed as a response to a unique divine purpose.

Prokhanov's autobiography reflects his unwavering commitment to his calling, repeatedly emphasising his desire to devote his life to serving persecuted Christians and advocating for freedom of conscience (Prokhanoff 1933:41). His passion for societal reform and the alleviation of suffering among the Russian populace underscored his dedication to this cause (Prokhanoff 1933:40).

From a young age, Prokhanov actively engaged in propagating the gospel, displaying a fervent dedication to his vocation (Prokhanoff 1933:47). Financial gain held little appeal to him, as he followed the Apostle Paul's example of balancing spiritual service with

manual labour (Prokhanoff 1933:50, 51). Zhidkov (1922:17) confirmed that Prokhanov 'loved God's work without expecting any financial gain'.²⁰

His contemporaries lauded his tireless dedication, describing him as an indefatigable laborer (*trudzhениk*), highlighting his relentless pursuit of his mission (Yubileynaya Komissiya pri VSEKh 1922:1 [YkpV 1922]; Shenderovskiy 1986:11). Prokhanov's robust work ethic and boundless productivity were admired, leaving an indelible mark on those around him (Martsinkovskiy 1936:4, 6; Shenderovskiy 1981:11; YkpV 1922:1922:1; Karev 1922:14; Pelevin 1922:18).

Even in his later years, Prokhanov remained steadfast in his passion for the gospel, advocating for its dissemination as a solution to contemporary societal challenges (Prokhanov 1936:60; 1933:260-271). His speeches, publications, and personal exhortations served as a testament to his unwavering commitment to his cause, as is shown in this study.

However, in his passionate commitment to realizing his vision, Prokhanov, as noted by Wardin (2013: loc. 10254), sometimes resorted to "questionable means." According to the historian, he contributed to the division of the Pashkovite community to achieve his goals.

3.4.2. Conclusion

²⁰ At the end of the 19th century, many young people anticipated a significant outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the year 1900 and the imminent return of Christ. This expectation inspired a surge in missionary activity, driven by the desire to bring as many people as possible to faith (Robert 2009:61; Bevans & Schroeder 2004: loc. 5148). Motivated by this vision, numerous young individuals set out for foreign countries, relying entirely on God's provision and forgoing any guarantee of material support. This approach came to be known as the "faith mission."

Ivan Prokhanov, deeply influenced by this spiritual awakening, chose to follow a similar path. Although he stated that he had no objection to missionaries receiving financial support, he personally decided not to accept it during the early years of his spiritual career. Instead, he opted to serve as a volunteer, earning his livelihood independently. His decision reflected a firm belief that serving God should remain free from material interests, grounded in complete trust in God's provision.

In summary, Prokhanov's leadership embodied the passionate dedication described in transformational and authentic leadership theories. His deep conviction in the significance of his mission, his relentless pursuit of spreading the gospel, and his selfless devotion to his work all highlight how he fulfilled the profile of a passionate leader. This passion not only inspired his contemporaries but also solidified his impact on the evangelical missionary movement in Russia.

3.5. Communication: Theoretical Assumptions

Leadership, as articulated by Warren Bennis (2009:XXV), hinges on the ability to engage others in realising a shared vision. This necessitates not only conceptualising a vision but also persuading others to adopt it as their own. Effective communication, therefore, becomes intrinsic to leadership, as emphasised by Bennis.

Dilenschneider (2023:ch. 6) underscores effective communication as pivotal for acquiring and retaining power and influence. He emphasises the importance of thorough message preparation and clarity, asserting that a concentrated message yields a more profound impact. Crafting a focused message, he suggests, involves questioning its purpose and desired outcomes before communication (2023:ch. 6).

Similarly, Maxwell (2017:ch. 4) also stresses the importance of clarity and simplicity in communication, aligning with Dilenschneider's perspective.

Transformational leaders often convey ideas through imagery, metaphors, and storytelling (Johnson & Hackman 2018:114). Effective communicators, according to John Maxwell (1998:65), recognise the necessity of appealing to emotions to motivate action: 'Effective leaders know that you first have to touch people's hearts before you ask them for a hand'.

Many leaders overlook the power of storytelling in motivating people, favouring dry statistics over impactful narratives (Denning 2013:116-117). Denning (2013:118) argues that storytelling translates abstract goals into compelling narratives that resonate with individuals' emotions.

Understanding followers' needs and motivations is crucial for effective communication (Johnson & Hackman 2018:116). Encouraging open communication enables leaders to gain insights into these interests. Dilenschneider (2023:ch. 6) stresses the importance of crafting messages that align with both individual and organisational interests, a process that is greatly enhanced through feedback.

Nick Morgan (2008) posits that authenticity is fundamental for trustworthy communication. Authenticity is cultivated through openness, connection with the audience, passion, and active listening. Natural body language further reinforces authenticity, ensuring alignment with the communicator's intentions (Dilenschneider 2023:ch. 6).

Aristotle's rhetoric emphasises the importance of the speaker's character, the audience's mood, and the logical content of the message in achieving persuasion (2017:18). He advocates for communicators who possess virtuous character, intellectual prowess, and an understanding of human nature. The ancient Greek philosopher suggests that a successful communicator must be trustworthy and intellectually developed with a deep comprehension of human nature.

In essence, effective communication forms the foundation of influential leadership, predicated on *trust* in the speaker. It integrates *emotional* resonance (metaphors, imagery, and stories) with *logical* coherence, while openness to feedback ensures alignment with audience *interests*. *Authenticity*, *clarity*, and *purposefulness* enhance the impact of communication, underscoring its pivotal role in leadership efficacy.

3.5.1. Prokhanov as a communicator

While a comprehensive study of Prokhanov's communication style exceeds the scope of the current research, addressing key aspects of his communicative endeavours provides valuable insights into his impact as a preacher and public figure.

Prokhanov's journey as a communicator began in his youth, marked by his inaugural sermon at the age of 17 in Vladikavkas. Despite initial apprehensions, his reliance on divine assistance yielded a successful delivery, laying the foundation for his future as a preacher (Prokhanoff 1933:51). Subsequent theological education augmented his innate gift, empowering him to articulate the call of the gospel with conviction and clarity.

Prokhanov's sense of divine calling imbued his communication with a profound sense of purpose, driving him to fervently spread the gospel throughout his life (Prokhanov 1898).

Prokhanov dedicated significant time to disseminating his ideas through various channels. He engaged in active preaching and lecturing, delivering sermons at church services, participating in educational courses, and contributing to evangelical Christian congresses. Additionally, Prokhanov expressed his ideas prolifically as a poet, journalist, writer, and editor, contributing to multiple publishing platforms and periodicals. This multifaceted approach ensured a wide reach for his messages.

The pivotal question emerges: Was Prokhanov an effective communicator? Did he succeed in conveying his ideas to his colleagues and followers?

3.5.2. Prokhanov as a preacher and orator: Perspectives from his contemporaries and modern scholars

Prokhanov's prowess as a communicator resonated deeply with his contemporaries (Redaktsiya 1922b:10-11) and continues to be acknowledged by modern scholars. Numerous testimonies extoll his powerful oratory skills, reflecting his profound impact on audiences.

Kareva (2001:178-179) evaluates Prokhanov in her memoirs as an effective orator who enjoyed the love and respect of his audience.

A. Mitskevich (1901–1908), a significant figure in the Union of Evangelical Christian Baptists (VSEKhB 1989:554), provides a compelling account of Prokhanov's impactful speeches (Mitskevich 2007: 513). Mitskevich recounts a momentous incident during the

fifth URCEC in Moscow, where Prokhanov delivered a stirring sermon that prompted a spiritual awakening among hundreds of listeners. Prokhanov's message, centred on the theme of spiritual renewal, elicited a profound response from the audience, inspiring many to recommit their lives to Christ.

In Mitskevich's recollection, Prokhanov's sermon employed metaphorical imagery, equating physical sleep with spiritual passivity and awakening with spiritual renewal. This metaphorical framework facilitated a deeper understanding and emotional resonance with the audience, leading to a transformative experience for many, including Mitskevich himself.

Martsinkovskiy (1884–1971), another acquaintance of Prokhanov, praises him as a 'people's preacher', adept at bridging the spiritual divide between intellectuals and common folk in Russia. According to Martsinkovskiy (1936:5), Prokhanov's sermons, characterised by simplicity and heartfelt sincerity, captivated audiences for hours on end. Martsinkovskiy attributes Prokhanov's persuasive power not only to his straightforward delivery, but also to the genuine warmth of his character, which fostered a strong connection with his listeners.

Similarly, Istomin, a participant of a significant spiritual conference, lauds Prokhanov's emotive preaching, likening it to 'rivers of living water' that nourished the souls of the audience. Istomin's comparison of Prokhanov to renowned preachers from England and America (Spurgeon [1834–1892] and Moody [1837–1899]) underscores the latter's significant impact on the evangelical movement in Russia (Popov 2007:104).

Shenderovskiy (1986:14), a colleague of Prokhanov, attests to his exceptional communication skills, affirming that Prokhanov's sermons left an indelible impression on all who heard them. Koval'kov and Chernopyatov (1979:48-49) describe Prokhanov as a talented preacher. Nichols (2011:loc. 4031) praises Prokhanov as an 'outstanding teacher and powerful evangelical leader', further highlighting his esteemed reputation among peers. Thus, numerous contemporary and modern testimonies confirm

Prokhanov's effectiveness as a communicator, showcasing his ability to inspire, connect with, and profoundly impact his audience.

3.5.3. Exploring Prokhanov's methodological approach: Unveiling the art of his preaching and oratory

Understanding the core principles of Prokhanov's methodology is essential to appreciating his reputation as a powerful orator. Central to Prokhanov's approach is his unwavering emphasis on spiritual empowerment within his ministry (Prokhanov 1898). In his treatise on homiletics,²¹ Prokhanov (1989:72) contends that spiritual potency derives from prayer, which he asserts is the preacher's 'primary means'. According to him (1989:72):

A preacher without prayer is either a dry lecturer lacking emotions, or an actor, that is, a person with feigned sensitivity. A preacher without prayer is 'beating the air (1 Corinthians 9:26); a preacher with prayer shatters rocks with the hammer of God's Word.

Prokhanov emphasises that knowledge of God's Word (ed. Prokhanov 1911d:5), but not merely intellectual, rather 'spiritual knowledge of the Bible and experiential knowledge of God, through direct communion with Him', should take precedence in the preacher's life – it is more important than even the knowledge of theological sciences (Prokhanov 1989:80). Through prayer, the preacher receives the content of the sermon (Prokhanov 1989:112). The preacher is an instrument in the hands of God, transmitting God's message. He is a 'phonograph record' that conveys what the Holy Spirit has inscribed upon it' (Prokhanov 1989:89).

In his lectures on homiletics, Prokhanov likely shared his own experiences, emphasising the importance of prayerful preparation. He believed that through prayer, he received divine messages, which he then conveyed with authority and confidence. His self-perception as a prophet, bolstered by a vision that called him to ministry, further fuelled his boldness in delivering spiritual messages.

²¹ Before the revolution, Prokhanov published a guide to preparing for preaching (Puzynin 2010:319) in which he outlined his approach to understanding evangelical preaching.

Prokhanov's background in engineering likely influenced his penchant for clear, structured thought, evident in the logical coherence of his sermons. His renowned sermon 'For What and for Whom Do You Live?' epitomises this approach, categorising individuals into distinct groups based on their existential outlooks (Prokhanov 2009a:16-32). Prokhanov's ability to delineate these categories succinctly minimises redundancy while enhancing comprehension.

Moreover, Prokhanov's discourses were not merely didactic but vibrant with vivid imagery, drawn from his experiences as a poet. In 'For What and for Whom Do You Live?' he invokes the metaphor of a bubbling river, central to the sermon's thematic fabric, vividly illustrating his points (Prokhanov 2009a:16-32). This narrative richness, punctuated with real-life anecdotes, fostered audience engagement while reinforcing his messages.

Prokhanov's speeches, marked by a blend of logical rigour and evocative language, bespoke a keen understanding of his audience's values and concerns. His address at the 2nd regional congress of the Northern Region Department of Evangelical Christians in 1922 exemplifies this, wherein he employs vivid metaphors to rally support for evangelical outreach amidst societal turmoil (ed. Prokhanov 1922f:6). Prokhanov employs the concept of a dying person's will and the act of helping those who are drowning to encourage evangelism, emphasising that evangelism is the path to a peaceful life free from wars, bloodshed, and enmity. By tapping into prevalent sentiments and aspirations, Prokhanov ensured his message resonated deeply with his listeners. In conclusion, Prokhanov's effectiveness as a communicator stemmed from his ability to merge spiritual fervour, intellectual clarity, and emotional resonance. Through his sermons, he infused personal conviction, structured logic, and relatable imagery, addressing relevant subjects to convey his vision of a Russia transformed through the gospel. In doing so, he left a lasting impact on his audience.

3.5.4. Literary, journalistic, and publishing activities of Prokhanov

3.5.4.1. Journal – ‘Conversation’ (Beseda)

In his autobiography, Prokhanov (1933:67) reflects on the establishment of the journal *Conversation* (Beseda) during the pivotal spring of 1889, a significant period in his academic journey. This periodical emerged as a conduit for maintaining connections with believers scattered nationwide, including those enduring exile from their homes. The editorial team (Redaktsiya 1922a:3) commemorated Prokhanov’s 35-year ministry by acknowledging his founding of this pioneering periodical during his time at the institute. While Prokhanov credits Fast for his initial involvement in the journal’s creation, differing perspectives, such as Val’kevich’s (1900:162-164), suggest that Fast’s dominance at the beginning gradually diminished over time, eventually giving way to Prokhanov as its driving force. It appears that the concept of the journal originated with Prokhanov, while Fast, possessing extensive ministerial experience and networks both domestically and internationally, provided these connections (Stepanov 2016).

According to Val’kevich (1900:162), the journal’s main objective was to cultivate communication and unity among believers, fostering the exchange of spiritual insights and addressing organisational concerns within the faith community. Additionally, it aimed to probe the dynamic between evangelical Christians, the state, and the Orthodox Church, particularly after its publication overseas.

Val’kevich (1900:162) states that the primary purpose of the journal was to foster communion and solidarity among believers, facilitating spiritual dialogue to deepen their connection with the divine. Initially focused on matters of harmony and structure within the faith community, its scope expanded as it gained international readership.

As the journal evolved, it embraced diverse voices by featuring correspondence from various religious factions, offering glimpses into their respective challenges. A novel segment titled ‘From Another Yard’ provided updates on religious and political developments among emigrants in Protestant nations, enhancing readers’ understanding of broader religious landscapes (Val’kevich 1900:163).

Contemporary scholar Nichols (2011:loc. 4036) argues that Prokhanov aimed to forge bonds among believers, with the journal's content addressing the issue of collective identity among St. Petersburg's faithful. This endeavour for communal identity assumed heightened importance amidst governmental efforts to foment discord among them.

Was Prokhanov's journal effective? Prokhanov himself asserts its positive impact, citing feedback that it provided vital spiritual support, fostering a sense of unity among believers (1933:68).

Val'kevich (1900:164) offers a rather harsh critique of the magazine, deeming it deeply damaging to Russian society. It is important to recognise that Val'kevich was a staunch critic of the evangelical movement. He argues that *Conversation* extended its influence beyond Baptists to encompass all Protestant believers, fostering unity among them while also promoting anti-religious sentiments. Val'kevich specifically singles out Prokhanov, particularly his pseudonymous articles, as the primary source of these harmful ideologies. From the perspective of its organisers, however, the journal was successful in achieving its objectives.

Thus, it is evident that Prokhanov aimed to unite believers, inspire missionary zeal, highlight persecution, and delve into socio-political themes. 'Conversation' likely served as a successful platform for these endeavours, playing a pivotal role in supporting evangelical believers during tumultuous times and shaping Prokhanov's future endeavours.

3.5.4.2. *Christian (Khristianin) Journal*

In his memoirs, Prokhanov (1933:137) highlights the strategic significance of launching the *Christian* (Khristianin) journal, envisioning it as a pivotal tool for his mission. Having previously initiated the clandestine *Conversation* journal, Prokhanov gained valuable experience in underground publication, which he viewed as foundational for establishing a more substantial periodical.

Initially intended to serve as the organ of the Russian Evangelical Union, *Christian* eventually became associated with the All Russian Union of Evangelical Christians, established later by Prokhanov. The publication's supplements included *Brotherly Bulletin* (Bratskii listok), *Young Vineyard* (Molodoi vinogradnik), and *Children's Friend* (Detskii Drug) (Savinsky 1995:77). Puzynin (2010:255) suggests that the magazine's name and model were inspired by the British periodical *Christian*, published in London, incorporating translated articles from the latter.

Prokhanov's interest in periodical publication dates back to at least 1898, as evidenced by his correspondence with Pashkov, expressing a desire to disseminate the gospel through printed media (Prokhanov 1898).

Despite encountering challenges, including revolutions and civil war, *Christian*, endured for 22 years, from 1906 to 1928 (Popov 1996:60; Prokhanoff 1933:138). Following the 1905 manifesto granting publishing freedom, Prokhanov (1933:137) applied to the Minister of the Interior, and the journal's programme was approved just a month and a half later (Nicol'skaya 2009:31).²² Prokhanov celebrated receiving permission, gathering his family and friends to thank the Lord (Prokhanoff 1933:137).

The inaugural lithographic test issue circulated widely, eliciting positive feedback, culminating in the official launch of the first printed edition on January 1st (Prokhanoff 1933:137-138).

The magazine, labelled 'for all those seeking truth and loving the Lord' (*Khristianin* #1 1907)), embraced a dual mission: guiding individuals in their pursuit of Christ and nurturing believer's spiritual growth. Prokhanov articulated this mission as 'Revival, Regeneration, Reformation' (1933:138), where 'revival' stands for evangelisation, 'regeneration' for spiritual renewal, and 'reformation' for fostering communal transformation.

²²It should be noted that this was done quite promptly. It's possible that Prokhanov knew that a manifesto was being prepared and had been working on this project in advance. The Baptist Union released its first issue only on July 1, 1907, nearly a year and a half after Prokhanov's first issue was published (VSEKHB 1989:166).

Prokhanov (1933:138) outlined three principles guiding the journal, which are encapsulated on the cover page. These principles aim to reform individuals for a flourishing Russia.

The first principle was to reveal the essence of the Christian faith centred on Christ – “the living Christ, nothing save Christ”. This principle is reflected in the magazine’s cover quote, “Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor. 1:22-23). Prokhanov seeks to restore direct access to Christ by removing barriers such as rituals and religious hierarchy. Additionally, this principle contrasts the crucified Christ with the theological scholasticism of Western Christianity, emphasising the importance of a living faith over deep theological knowledge for personal transformation.

The second principle focused on evangelising Russians and integrating them into a united community dedicated to the evangelical faith (Prokhanoff 1933:138). This aligns with the cover page statement: ‘Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel’ (Phil. 1:17). Prokhanov stressed the importance of conveying the truth that salvation is attained through faith by grace, aiming to unite believers in a community where they can find spiritual nourishment and jointly engage in evangelisation efforts.

The third principle emphasised uniting all branches of Christianity based on freedom and brotherly love, echoing the cover quote: “In essential things, unity. In secondary things, freedom. In all things, charity” (Prokhanoff 1933:139). Prokhanov believed that church unity was crucial for a profound awakening of the people.

Prokhanov claimed the journal embodied gospel teachings, promoting tolerance, impartiality, and a focus on essential Christian principles that transcended denominational differences (ed. Prokhanov 1910b:6).

Alongside the previously mentioned objectives, Prokhanov aimed to convey the “great optimism of faith, faith in the Gospel” (Prokhanoff 1933:139). This faith-based optimism

is evident from the very first page of the inaugural issue of the magazine *The Christian*, as reflected in the opening poem (Prokhanov 1906c:1).

The editorial board envisioned *Christian* as a platform for educating parents, organising Sunday schools, and promoting spiritual enlightenment (Prokhanov 1910b:6). Prokhanov himself, his contemporaries, and even some modern historians positively evaluated Prokhanov's project *Christian*. Prokhanov hailed the launch of his magazine as a triumph. Reflecting on its inaugural year, he observed a flood of letters, indicating its resonance with individuals seeking spiritual solace amid life's monotony (ed. Prokhanov 1907a: Preface). In his memoirs, he confidently asserted receiving numerous letters affirming believers' spiritual growth, conversions, and blessings derived from engaging with the journal (Prokhanoff 1933:139).

Testimonials published within the magazine underscored its profound influence on readers' spiritual journeys. In her memoirs, Liven states, 'I.S. Prokhanov published the journal 'Christian', which gained wide circulation among the members of the Union and contributed to their unification' (Liven 1990:106). Anna, who personally knew Prokhanov, reminiscing about the student Christian movement, praised the *Christian* magazine as a favourite among believing students, expressing gratitude for its publication (Grachev 2017:56).

Zhidkov, a longtime collaborator of Prokhanov, praised the magazine for its purely spiritual content, which was free from controversy and won the affection of believers across different denominations. Prokhanov and his colleagues intentionally steered clear of criticism, instead focusing on proclaiming the crucified Christ and promoting unity among believers for collaborative Gospel outreach. This approach significantly enhanced the magazine's reputation, making it appealing not only to new believers from various theological backgrounds but also to many within the Orthodox community (Zhidkov 1947:17).

Historian Sinichkin (2017) underscores the magazine's enduring legacy, noting that the compilations were carefully preserved by believers. They were neatly bound, with worn-

out pages carefully glued, indicating their frequent use. According to Sinichkin, these compilations nurtured several generations of believers, serving as a vital source of spiritual growth.

In summary, *Christian* demonstrated Prokhanov's dedication to the transformative power of the Gospel, significantly contributing to spiritual renewal and communal unity with the potential to drive societal reform. The magazine's long-lasting influence reflects Prokhanov's vision and its critical role in shaping the spiritual landscape of Russia.

While this study does not provide an exhaustive analysis of the journal's content, it highlights how Prokhanov used *Christian* to promote individual spiritual growth and societal change. The magazine served as a vital platform for disseminating the gospel and nurturing readers' spiritual lives through diverse articles on Scripture, prayer, and faith.

Prokhanov's emphasis on unity among believers was central to his vision for *Christian*. Feedback and testimonials indicate that the magazine effectively supported and organised the missionary movement in Russia, solidifying its place as a cornerstone of Prokhanov's evangelical efforts.

3.5.4.3. Supplement to the *Christian* Magazine: *Brotherly Bulletin* (*Bratskiy Listok*)

The *Brotherly Bulletin* (*Bratskiy Listok*), a supplement to the *Christian* magazine, was established to address social issues that were originally intended for inclusion in the main journal. However, it was later decided to publish *Brotherly Bulletin* as a separate entity (Prokhanov 1906i:1). This supplement was specifically designed for members of Evangelical communities, focusing on matters relevant to Evangelical Christians.

Although this study does not provide a detailed analysis of this supplement, which would require a separate investigation, the frequent references to *Brotherly Bulletin* in this research confirm its important role as an informational tool that addresses various aspects of community life, the ARUEC, and individual believers. Like other printed publications, Prokhanov used it to promote community cohesion, establish unions,

cultivate a positive church culture, and enhance individual spirituality. As a result, 'Bratskiy Listok' played a crucial role in advancing and achieving Prokhanov's vision of societal transformation through spiritual renewal.

3.5.4.4. Supplement to the Christian Magazine: Young Vineyard (Molodoy Vinogradnik)

Beginning in 1909, a supplement to the *Christian* magazine titled *Young Vineyard (Molodoy Vinogradnik)* began to be published. This supplement served as the Organ of the Union of Christian Youth (ed. Prokhanov 1909a:6) and covered the activities of the Union of Christian Youth Clubs. Working with the younger generation was especially important for Prokhanov. Therefore, he created an association.

In his memoirs, Prokhanov (1933:189) mentions that this publication was specifically created for Christian youth and was the first of its kind in Russia in a 'Protestant Christian spirit'. He states, 'This periodical was a means of providing information, spiritual growth, and a way to educate our young people in organized Christian life' (1933:189). Like other publications, *Young Vineyard* served as a tool for mobilising young individuals, essential for Prokhanov's vision (Redaktsiya 1922a:5; Prokhanoff 1933:189-198).

The Union of Christian Youth Clubs was conceived as an interdenominational entity, fostering unity among evangelical believers. The *Young Vineyard* embodied a spirit of tolerance and unity. For example, in describing the upcoming 2nd Congress of the 'Union of Christian Youth Clubs', it stated, 'Representatives of Christian clubs from all existing denominations in Russia will be admitted to the Congress' (ed. Prokhanov 1909b:1). The author (possibly Prokhanov) asserts that youth are not driven by partisan aspirations in God's work. Having come to know God, they embrace the world with zeal. 'The strength of Christianity lies in the unity of spirit in the union of the world', the author continues, requesting prayers for 'the cause of uniting Russian Christian youth', the author states (ed. Prokhanov 1909b:1).

Interestingly, *Young Vineyard* was not solely for mature believers to teach youth. It anticipated the maximum involvement of young individuals. The Union of Christian Youth

appealed to literary committee members in local clubs to regularly send messages and articles. It was desirable for all Union members to submit their articles and letters for publication in *Young Vineyard* (ed. Prokhanov 1909a:6). The Union promised to publish everything possible.

Prokhanov likely recognised the role played by youthful energy and enthusiasm, as well as young people's openness to overcoming interdenominational barriers. This realisation may have motivated him to establish a separate publication to engage directly with youth. In other words, youth could become a significant support in Prokhanov's effort to unite the church and create conditions for the spiritual reform of Russia.

In conclusion, *Young Vineyard* was a strategic supplement to the *Christian* magazine, specifically designed to mobilise Christian youth and foster interdenominational unity. Prokhanov recognised the potential of youth to drive spiritual renewal and societal reform, making the publication a vital tool in his mission to unite the church and transform Russia.

3.5.4.5. The Evangelical Christian Publishing Association and Book Store

In 1908, together with Mennonite brothers, Prokhanov founded the 'Russian Protestant Christian (Evangelical) Publishing Association called *Rainbow*. The publishing house printed tracts and books on religious topics, and their calendar, *The Family Friend*, was particularly popular (Redaktsiya 1922a:5-6; Prokhanoff 1933:148-149).

Later, they also established a bookstore that became a centre for religious publishing activities.

3.5.4.6. The Morning Star (Utrennyaya Zvezda) Newspaper

In his memoirs, Prokhanov (1933:157) recounts his decision to publish a weekly newspaper called *The Morning Star (Utrennyaya Zvezda)*, with the first issue being released on January 1, 1910. He considered the project successful due to its wide distribution and its aim to unite those striving for a free Christian Church in Russia

(Prokhanoff 1933:158). He described it as ‘a weekly Evangelical light projector upon all questions of life in my country’.

Prokhanov explained the name *The Morning Star* (Redaktsiya 1922a:5) by referencing the prophet Isaiah: ‘The morning is near, but there is still darkness’. Despite signs of hope, darkness persisted in various spheres of life, especially religious. The name symbolises Christ and His ideals, calling for a fundamental restructuring of Russian life based on gospel teaching. The publication aimed to satisfy individual spiritual needs and promote the renewal of religious social currents within the framework of Russian reformation.

The newspaper would reflect Evangelical Christian views on political, social, and economic issues, publish proposed laws, and refute unjust accusations. The tagline under the title ‘*The Morning Star*’ read: ‘a progressive publication of religious awakening for the Russian people’, featuring sections on Religion, Politics, Public Life, Science, and Literature.

Prokhanov (ed. 1910c:5) stated the newspaper's goal: ‘to make the voice of the new progressive-religious Russia audible amid the chorus of various voices in Russian public life’. Addressed to ‘every progressive Christian’, it served as both a ‘political and social newspaper’ and a ‘spiritual entity’. Subscribers could read both *The Christian* for inner spiritual life and *The Morning Star* for outward practical Christianity.

Yakov Zhidkov, a long-time collaborator, characterised the newspaper as reflecting religious thought, science, and politics while documenting state persecution of new believers. Prokhanov aimed to meet the needs of Evangelical Christians, Baptists, Molokans, and other believers aspiring to serve God in spirit and truth (Zhidkov 1947:18). In an article commemorating on Prokhanov's 35 years of service, the editorial board emphasised the newspaper's advocacy for ‘the necessity of a fundamental reform of the state church on evangelical principles, and the inevitability of reformation’ (Redaktsiya 1922a: 5).

In conclusion, the newspaper *Morning Star* was used by Prokhanov to promote Christian views on various aspects of religion and public life, including politics and literature, among others. Human rights advocacy also remained a focal point of Prokhanov's attention, as will be demonstrated later. Furthermore, it can be assumed that Prokhanov aimed to influence believers, attempting to overcome tendencies of escapism, the withdrawal from societal life into religion, and fostering a more holistic perception of reality among them. Thus, like other publications, it served Prokhanov's comprehensive vision.

3.5.4.7. Gramophone Enterprise 'Gloria'

Prokhanov initiated the founding of the gramophone enterprise 'Gloria', which was involved in recording and distributing spiritual songs and sermons on gramophone records. These recordings included sermons by Prokhanov himself, as well as other preachers (Redaktsiya 1922a:5).

3.5.5. Conclusion

Prokhanov dedicated significant time and effort to communicating his vision through preaching, lectures, and various publications, establishing himself as a highly effective communicator. His clear, purpose-driven messages resonated emotionally and intellectually with his audience. By skilfully using storytelling, metaphors, and vivid imagery, he made complex theological concepts accessible and engaging.

Prokhanov's editorial skills were evident in his ability to articulate a comprehensive vision through his writings. His publications addressed a wide range of topics, including religion, politics, public life, science, and literature, fostering a holistic perception of reality among his readers. His strategic use of the editorial platform promoted Christian views, advocated for human rights, and countered religious escapism, significantly shaping the missionary movement he led.

To further disseminate his vision and values, Prokhanov established a publishing association, bookstore, and gramophone enterprise, demonstrating his commitment to utilising all available means of communication.

Prokhanov's approach to spiritual formation was holistic, encompassing both personal spiritual maturity and active social engagement. He published *Christian* to nurture individual spiritual growth and *Morning Star* to encourage Christian involvement in various spheres of social life. This dual focus allowed him to avoid both secularisation and tendencies towards withdrawal from societal life.

His competence in communication was crucial in shaping the missionary movement he led, ensuring that his messages were impactful and far-reaching.

3.6. Relationship and Connectedness in Leadership: Theoretical Assumptions.

Theorists and managers alike emphasise the importance of leaders' ability to build and maintain strong relationships with their employees. George (2003:23) asserts that enduring personal relationships are a hallmark of effective leadership, fostering trust and commitment among employees. He cites successful businessmen like Bill Gates, Michael Dell, and Jack Welch, who connect deeply with their employees to gain their loyalty and dedication.

Maxwell (2017:ch. 1) agrees, noting that leaders who cultivate positive relationships and trust can significantly influence their followers, enhancing enthusiasm and motivation. Conversely, leaders who fail to build good relationships struggle to manage effectively.

Johnson and Hackman (2018:116) highlight that effective leaders must possess strong communication skills, requiring regular interaction to understand followers' needs and motivations. Maxwell (1998:64) describes this as 'The Law of Connection', where leaders must first touch followers' hearts before seeking their cooperation.

Maxwell (1998:66) emphasises that strong leader-follower connections motivate followers to pursue the leader's vision. True leaders initiate and build relationships, creating an atmosphere of loyalty and a strong work ethic (Maxwell 1998:69). Good communication involves active listening, aiming to understand others genuinely (Covey 2009:pt. 3), which fosters sincerity and openness.

Maxwell (2010:pt.1, ch. 2) stresses showing care for others to build connections. He believes charisma arises from positivity, self-belief, and focusing on others, while advocating for finding common ground in communication (Maxwell 2010:ch. 3, 6). Carnegie (2006:pt. 3, ch. 6) and Kouzes and Posner (2007:ch. 1) emphasise recognising individuals' merits and inspiring followers through appreciation.

In summary, relationship-building is essential for effective leadership, requiring regular, open communication, active listening, genuine care, and appreciation. Such behaviours cultivate an atmosphere of trust and commitment.

3.6.1. Prokhanov's interpersonal skills

Did Prokhanov possess the skill to foster interpersonal connections?

Confirming whether Prokhanov possessed the skill to foster interpersonal connections is difficult due to the limited number of primary sources available. However, by examining specific documents and testimonies, it can be inferred that Prokhanov likely had the ability to form close associations with individuals, potentially earning their trust and loyalty.

Additionally, it seems that he understood the importance of forging deep interpersonal bonds, as shown by his significant investment of time and effort in building communities, a topic that will be further discussed.

For example, there are letters from Prokhanov to the leader of an Evangelical community in Lithuania, located in Biržai and addressed to Petras Vederis. These letters indicate that during the Soviet era, this community faced legal difficulties and sought assistance in obtaining the necessary documents for official registration.

Here is what Prokhanov wrote:

Dear brother, we received your letter after a long break and are very glad that the Lord has kept you and your community until now. We are sending all the necessary documents for you. Now you will undoubtedly be registered. Write to us more often. We wish that many more Evangelical communities would be established in Lithuania. Warm greetings to all the brothers and sisters. Your brother in Christ, I. Prokhanov.

And there is an additional note stating that 20 marks of money were received. The letter is dated June 2, 1922 (Prokhanov 1922b).

Prokhanov sent four documents²³ that were necessary for the registration of the community. Those documents likely contributed to the community obtaining legal status in Lithuania.

On July 22, 1922, Prokhanov wrote another letter to Vederis, stating:

I received your letter dated July 1. I am deeply saddened by the trials you are going through, but do not lose heart. Trust in the Lord, take care, and He will arrange everything. We do not need anything for our efforts. Spiritually, we are doing well, thank God, but physically, not so great. There are many shortcomings. I received a bill for 100 marks. Write to us more often about the work of God among you, and pray for us. Warm greetings to all the brothers and sisters. Your brother in Christ.

Prokhanov's signature is at the end of the letter (Prokhanov 1922c).

It is likely that the community still faced issues initially, but they were resolved later, as indicated by the following letter from Prokhanov dated December 24, 1923 (Prokhanov 1923). It stated:

We received your letter along with Dr. Rebruk's letter. We are very glad that the Lord helped you to overcome all difficulties and achieve your intended goal. It is also important that you maintain the purity of the Evangelical faith. We will be very happy if you inform us from time to time about the work of God among you. Our work in God's service is progressing. The number of communities is increasing, and the work of God is spreading. Pray for us, and we will pray for you. Warm greetings to all the brothers and sisters. Your brother in Christ, I. Prokhanov.

²³ There is a certificate confirming that the Evangelical Christian community in Lithuania in Birzai belongs to the All-Russian Union. This certificate was issued on June 2, 1922 (Certificate, 1922, June 2).

In addition, on June 3, a certificate was issued stating that the community of Birzai, up to the year 1914, 'belonged and still belongs to the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians', and Mr. Petr P. Vederis, both formerly and presently, serves as a preacher of the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians. It is mentioned that the community is registered under No. (number not specified). Furthermore, it states that the preacher Vederis is the authorised representative of the Union for Lithuania (Certificate, 1922, June 3).

There is also a mandate for the representative of the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians in Lithuania in the name of Vederis, granting the right to represent the church in state authorities (Mandate, 1922, June 3). On the same day, June 3, a certificate was issued confirming that Vederis is a preacher of the union and is authorised to engage in spiritual education of communities and other spiritual work with the consent of the communities (Preacher's Certificate, 1922, June 3).

It can be assumed that the registration difficulties of the community were resolved, and the community was left in peace.

An analysis of the provided documents allows us to conclude that Prokhanov had well-developed skills in establishing interpersonal relationships, particularly through written communication. These letters reveal sincere warmth and care. Prokhanov addresses the recipient as 'dear brother', which conveys a profound sense of authenticity and closeness in the Russian language. It is evident that Prokhanov genuinely took an interest in the challenges faced by the church in Biržai and endeavoured to assist them in overcoming these difficulties. He notes that he is willing to help them free of charge.

In his second letter, Prokhanov expresses empathy and support, demonstrating an understanding of the church's experiences. Upon the resolution of the issues, in the final third letter, he shares his joy on this occasion. In each letter, he encourages believers to maintain connections through written communication. Prokhanov demonstrates a deep interest in sustaining ties with the church in Lithuania.

In his third letter, Prokhanov promises that he and his colleagues will pray for the church in Biržai. He also displays a certain degree of vulnerability by sharing his personal issues with the church and requesting prayers for himself and his colleagues in the second and third letters, while also promising to pray for the church in Lithuania in the third letter.

In general, based on the content of these letters, one can conclude that Prokhanov genuinely aimed to maintain communication with fellow believers. He showed interest in the life stories of others and demonstrated empathy in his interactions, seeking to provide support. These relationships lack a dominating nature due to the presence of vulnerability and interdependence, which adds authenticity to these connections.

Karev (1922:14), a close associate of Prokhanov, described him as approachable and courteous to everyone, regardless of their background. Karev recalled that Prokhanov warmly welcomed even the simplest villagers, attentively listening to their concerns and offering friendly guidance.

Kolesnikov (1936:30) recounted his first encounter with Prokhanov, during which Prokhanov showed genuine interest in the state of God's work in America and inquired about acquaintances from Russia, demonstrating his caring nature towards others.

In the final days of his life, as documented by Kifer (1936:44), Prokhanov's love and warmth towards others remained evident. Two days before his passing, upon seeing visitors, he exclaimed, 'I love you all!' and extended his hands in a friendly manner, despite his declining health.

Anna Gracheva, as recounted by her son Yuri (Grachev 2017:54), shared memories of Prokhanov's affection for her brother Peter, even though Peter had not undergone baptism based on expressed faith. Prokhanov's empathy stemmed from his own experiences as a recent college graduate, allowing him to closely relate to Peter's aspirations.

Anna reports that Prokhanov invited both Peter and her to visit multiple times, and once they responded to the invitation and visited the Prokhanov family. Anna claims that Prokhanov "welcomed them particularly warmly, and his wife Anna Ivanovna immediately started fussing about refreshments" (Grachev 2017:54). The conversation was lively and centred around evangelical work. It seems that everyone was engaged and interested in this conversation.

Zhidkov asserts that Prokhanov had great patience towards those with differing opinions, even those who did not share his views:

He was always willing to *listen to everyone, utilize each suggestion*, and I remember he would always say: know that anyone, even one who opposes you, desires good for the cause. Once you internalize this perspective about others, it will grant you the strength to deal with *opponents patiently and generously*, and in the presence of criticism, develop more sound solutions (Zhidkov 1922:17).

Marcinkovskiy (1936:5) fondly recalls Prokhanov's gentle demeanour and laughter, illustrating his ability to create a welcoming and engaging atmosphere.

This study emphasizes Prokhanov's remarkable achievements, visionary leadership, and his significant contributions to the growth of the evangelical movement in Russia. However, like any influential leader, he was not without flaws, which occasionally became evident in his actions.

As a driven and highly occupied leader, Prokhanov sometimes struggled to prioritize personal interactions, which could strain his relationships with colleagues. For instance, in 1922, he failed to make time for a meeting with P. V. Pavlov, a prominent Baptist Union leader, to address the critical issue of unity with Evangelical Christians. Pavlov waited for two days, but the meeting never materialised. Prokhanov, instead, was deeply engrossed in establishing connections with a faction of the renewal movement within the Orthodox Church, known as the "Living Church." This was perceived as a slight toward the Baptist movement, a group closely aligned with Evangelical Christians in both theology and ethos (VSEKhB, 1989:195–196).

In conclusion, Prokhanov's interpersonal skills encompassed *warmth, empathy, support, patience, and genuine interest in connecting with individuals*, fostering *authenticity and inclusivity* in his relationships. His ability to treat even critics with *grace and tolerance* underscores his commitment to *dialogue* and growth in all aspects of life and ministry. However, his intense focus on his vision sometimes made him less sensitive to the feelings and perspectives of others, occasionally leading to frustration or alienation among his colleagues.

3.6.2. Prokhanov: Builder of community and unity

Prokhanov's endeavours extended beyond nurturing personal relationships; his primary aim was to cultivate connections among individuals, fostering positive relationships and uniting them into communities and alliances. He keenly recognised that achieving his vision of transforming Russian society through spiritual awakening necessitated the unification of people and the establishment of robust alliances. Consequently, he wholeheartedly dedicated himself to forging such unions.

3.6.2.1. Organisation of the Russian Evangelical Union

In August 1906, Prokhanov penned a letter titled 'Russian Evangelical Union', wherein he posited that Russia's primary predicament lay in 'the instability of its moral principles' and 'the absence of true spiritual, religious' foundations (Prokhanov 1908a:1). According to Prokhanov, in order to establish a harmonious life in Russia, it is necessary to heal the spirit of the people, ensure religious freedom, and also have a 'spiritual awakening, or outpouring of the Holy Spirit'. Russia, like the man lying by the roadside in the gospel story, is waiting for the merciful Samaritan. And this merciful Samaritan is the believers who raise their voices 'in the full strength of spiritual unity', he states (Prokhanov 1908a:1).

He proposed uniting all believers not 'on the basis of church organization', as such unions 'lead to the narrowing of fruitful activity'. Instead, he advocated for a unity of believers for practical activities around a unifying centre called the 'Council of the Russian Evangelical Union' (Prokhanov 1908a:2-3). Prokhanov emphasised: 'not a union of churches united by a common church structure. It is a union of individual believers united in the aforementioned key points of faith and in activities to achieve the aforementioned goals' (Prokhanov 1908b:5).

The purpose of this union was to combine efforts for the advancement of God's Kingdom (Lk. 11:2 and Matt. 11:12) (Prokhanov 1908c:3).

The first task of the union is 'to promote any spiritual awakening within the Russian church, establish connections with all its living elements, and spread the idea of religious renewal based on Evangelical principles' (Prokhanov 1908c:3). It seems that this

pertains to the reform of the Orthodox Church. It is evident that Prokhanov realised that a reformed Orthodox Church could play a crucial role in transforming the spiritual life of Russia. Prokhanov would dedicate a portion of his time and energy to this task in the future.

The second task entails disseminating gospel truths among the Russian populace through oral preaching and publishing initiatives.

The third task of the union is 'putting gospel teaching into practice in people's lives'. Prokhanov distinguishes between gospel truth and gospel teaching. It is likely that by *gospel truth*, Prokhanov means activities aimed at *turning* people towards God, while *gospel teaching* refers to the spiritual and moral *shaping* of individuals. For the implementation of this teaching in life, Prokhanov plans the upbringing of youth in a Christian spirit. Additionally, the education of renewed young people in various sciences is *essential*, secular education being a significant component of Prokhanov's vision realisation.

Included in this point are the organisation of both general education schools and spiritual schools, Sunday and Bible classes, schools for preachers, schools for teaching spiritual singing, and more. This also includes plans for organising courses and lectures on theology. These theological lectures and courses will have the character of a 'free Gospel spirit'. It is probable that Prokhanov envisioned the development of theology of tolerance and patience, valuing unity in the primary and freedom in the secondary. Concluding the enumeration of the third task – putting gospel teaching into practice, Prokhanov includes the issue of the material base for these activities – 'arranging necessary premises; houses for prayer and enlightenment, etc'.

It is noteworthy that at this stage, while recognising the necessity of uniting people, Prokhanov seemingly does not grasp the role of the church community in addressing these tasks – both in spreading the gospel and in spiritual growth. Perhaps he did not fully trust the union composed of church organisations, fearing that church bureaucracy might negatively influence the union's effectiveness. The realisation of the significance

of the local community for achieving many of the aforementioned tasks will likely come to him later, perhaps after the failure of organising the Russian Evangelical Union, as he envisioned it for achieving his goals (Puzynin 2010:249).

The fourth task of the Russian Evangelical Union, according to Prokhanov, is 'to contribute to the unity of all Evangelical believers in spirit, word, and deed'. This task will be achieved through joint *prayer* gatherings and assemblies, where believers will share their experiences. The value of unity and collaborative work is important to Prokhanov. He will dedicate a significant amount of time and effort to realising this *unity* task. Joint prayer meetings and assemblies will become a crucial component of Prokhanov's ministry as it will be shown later.

The fifth task of the union is *advocacy* and human rights activities.

Finally, the sixth task is the involvement of 'all living elements of the Russian population' in the work of the Evangelical Union (Prokhanov 1908c:3).

He anchored the Union's foundations on 1 Corinthians 3:11, affirming Christ as its cornerstone, and delineated nine doctrinal statements binding its members together (Prokhanov 1908d:4).

Prokhanov envisaged financing the Union's activities through dedicated funds for Evangelical missions, literature, education, and charity, with a focus on establishing charitable institutions operating in a 'purely Evangelical spirit' (Prokhanov 1908e:4).

In summary, Prokhanov (1908f:7) envisioned the Russian Evangelical Union as a key catalyst for Russia's spiritual reawakening, contingent upon the earnest dedication of Evangelical Christians to its lofty goals. However, even after obtaining official registration, the idea failed to garner widespread support within the Russian evangelical community, facing opposition from Orthodox and Baptist factions alike (Puzynin 2010:249). It is likely that in creating this organization, Prokhanov was emulating a trend that emerged in Western Europe, where missionary organizations were often founded by volunteers as

an expression of the individualistic spirit of the Enlightenment and frequently took on an interdenominational character (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5256; Bosch 2011: loc. 7785). However, Prokhanov may have underestimated the significance of the differing historical contexts between Western Europe and Russia, attempting to transplant Western European methodologies onto Russian soil. This endeavour ultimately proved unsuccessful.

3.6.2.2. Renovating the structure of the St. Petersburg community as preparation for the creation of an actual union of churches

Prokhanov's shift in focus from the Russian Evangelical Union to the reformation of the St. Petersburg community likely began around 1907–1908. Recognising the limitations of the Russian Evangelical Union in realising his vision, he initiated reforms aimed at making the community a cornerstone for organising a church union. The focal moment occurred on August 15, 1908, with a General Assembly of church members chaired by Prokhanov (Prokhanov 1908g:9). Lasting nine hours, the meeting led to significant decisions regarding the reorganisation of church activities, aimed at fostering unity and enhancing effectiveness. Committees were established, and fundraising efforts for acquiring premises were intensified, with the Love Feast utilised for fostering fellowship among believers (Prokhanov 1908g:12; ed. Prokhanov 1909d:12).

A year later, at a General Assembly in August 1909, Prokhanov presented the progress made, which included the addition of new members and securing three meeting spaces (Prokhanov 1909e:1-2). This progress indicated the community's rapid development, with preparations underway for the Congress of Evangelical Christians and efforts to form a Union of Communities (Prokhanov 1909f:3). Additionally, plans for acquiring or constructing a dedicated prayer house, initiated in February 1907, gained momentum following the community's renewal in 1908 (Prokhanov 1908g:10).

The successful reform of the St. Petersburg community likely strengthened Prokhanov's belief in the necessity of a church union to share this experience with other congregations. The community's registration in November 1908 (Prokhanov 1911a: 4) enabled them to petition for and receive permission to hold the ARCEC, marking a

significant milestone (ed. Prokhanov 1909f:3). Prokhanov's willingness to assist others in community registration further demonstrates his commitment to fostering unity among evangelical believers (ed. Prokhanov 1909g:7).

During this period, Prokhanov's focus shifted towards developing a union of spiritually and theologically aligned churches, rather than individual believers. While unity among evangelical believers remained a goal, his main efforts were directed towards uniting churches with shared theological and cultural backgrounds, learning from the somewhat unsuccessful attempt to unite diverse evangelical believers under the Russian Evangelical Union.

By 1909, the St. Petersburg community emerged as the central hub for forming a union of evangelical Christians. This culminated in the organisation of the ARCEC in September 1909, solidifying the community's role in shaping the future of evangelical Christianity in Russia.

3.6.2.3. Role of the All Russian Congresses in creating of All Russian Evangelical Christians Union (ARUEC)

Prokhanov's strategic vision for the All-Russian Congresses significantly contributed to the formation of the ARUEC. His goal was to consolidate churches rather than individuals, beginning with the reorganisation of the St. Petersburg evangelical community in 1908. Prokhanov's efforts aimed at uniting various churches to promote spiritual revitalisation across Russia.

After establishing a publishing centre in St. Petersburg in 1908, Prokhanov worked to unite desperate evangelical churches into a cohesive movement (Redaktsiya 1922a:6; Prokhanoff 1933:149-151). Recognising the lack of unity and organisation among these churches, he initiated correspondence with key centres like Odessa and Sevastopol, receiving positive responses. In some areas, the process of unification was already underway (Prokhanoff 1933:150). This led to the formulation of the All-Russian Conference of Evangelical Christians (ARCEC), where the decision was made to establish 'The All-Russian Evangelical Christian Union' (ARUEC).

Historians and contemporaries attribute a pivotal role to Prokhanov in the inception of this union, recognising it as a cornerstone of the missionary effort in Russia. D. Mazaev, Chairman of the Baptist Union, highlighted Prokhanov's centrality in the union's establishment (Mazaev 1911:268-269). Similarly, Livens emphasised his leadership in formulating the union's charter and fostering unity among scattered evangelical communities (Livens 1990:105-106). V.P. Stepanov also acknowledged Prokhanov's significant role in inaugurating the union (Belousov 1925:39).

The formation of the ARUEC began with regional congresses, such as the one in Odessa in 1908, which discussed doctrinal issues and planned future congresses (Savinsky 1999:289). Despite Prokhanov's intention for these congresses to convene annually, practical constraints limited their frequency. Nevertheless, these congresses played an instrumental role in fostering unity within the burgeoning union of evangelical Christians. From 1909 to 1926, only 10 congresses were organised, reflecting the challenges of the time. The first three congresses (1909, 1910–1911, and 1911–1912) were crucial in laying the groundwork for unity and strengthening churches in the face of challenges.

The analysis of the first three congresses (see Appendix A) highlights the dominant role of Prokhanov's leadership. He served as the chairman of all the congresses and authored both the ARUEC charter and its confession of faith, providing a clear organisational structure and doctrinal foundation for the movement. Under his leadership, Prokhanov integrated preaching, prayer, and hymn singing into the congress agendas, promoting a Christ-centred approach. Simultaneously, he fostered a healthy business culture focused on planning and accountability, ensuring the achievement of planned objectives.

During the congress, Prokhanov was influential in creating a relevant agenda for the growth and development of churches, addressing areas such as preaching, music, schools, legal matters, and more. Prokhanov was sensitive to the culture of independence within the churches in the union, ensuring that decisions were recommendatory, thereby respecting their autonomy. Recognising this independent nature, Prokhanov prepared complex issues in advance for local discussions before the

congress deliberations. He proposed and guided practical projects, including Bible institutes, periodicals, and educational programs. He engaged in dialogues with authorities to safeguard religious freedoms and obtain necessary permissions. He worked on fostering unity with the Baptists.

The style of managing the congresses was democratic (VSEKh 1911). All issues were discussed openly and democratically, and Prokhanov himself showed wisdom by not insisting on his proposals. He did not push his ideas aggressively, and his suggestions were often not accepted (VSEKh 1911). His visionary leadership established a strong foundation for the future growth and engagement of the Evangelical Christian community in Russia. It can be assumed that these three congresses established a positive trajectory of growth and development, which helped the evangelical communities endure the restrictive years of 1914–1917, associated with World War I and the deteriorating attitude of the state towards evangelical believers.

The analysis of the remaining congresses reveals their important role in the development of evangelical communities and the growth of the union. These congresses focused on developing strategies for spreading the gospel both within Russia and internationally, electing and training evangelists, and securing financial support for mission work. They also established Bible institutes and training courses for preachers, strengthened spiritual education to support evangelistic efforts, and created spiritual literature. Social and charitable activities included setting up Union shelters for orphans, addressing famine relief, and developing agricultural and production cooperation initiatives.

The First Congress, which took place from September 14th to 26th, 1909, holds undeniable historical importance, despite its modest attendance of only 24 delegates representing 18 churches (ed. Prokhanov 1909h:5; Mitskevich 2007:143). This congress marked a crucial first step towards the formation of a solid and unified coalition of Evangelical Christians.

In stark contrast, the Tenth Congress, held from November 30 to December 6, 1926, in the 'House of Salvation' in Leningrad, demonstrated remarkable growth and expansion.

It saw the participation of 350 representatives from churches with voting rights from 52 established Brotherhood departments, totalling 503 participants (Savinsky 2001:95-96). This significant increase in attendance and representation over the span of 17 years underscores the substantial growth and consolidation of the Evangelical Christian movement in Russia. The progression from a modest gathering to a large and influential assembly highlights the success of Prokhanov's vision and efforts in uniting and strengthening the evangelical community across the country. This growth reflects not only the numerical increase but also the deepening influence and organisational maturity of the ARUEC.

In conclusion, Prokhanov's strategic vision and leadership were instrumental in the formation and development of the ARUEC. The congresses under his guidance laid a robust foundation for unifying evangelical churches across Russia, addressing both spiritual and practical needs, and promoting a Christ-centred approach to community and societal transformation. The enduring impact of these congresses highlights their significance in the history of the evangelical movement in Russia.

3.6.2.4. Prokhanov's role in the creation of youth groups and the Christian youth union

Prokhanov was keenly aware of the importance of involving young people in realising his vision. Consequently, he actively worked on establishing youth groups for both women and men, as well as the Protestant Christian (Evangelical) Association of Young People (Prokhanoff 1933:131-133; Vysotskiy 1981:1).

By 1906, a group founded by Prokhanov in Saint Petersburg (Savinkiy 1999:286) published an appeal in the *Bratsky Listok*, calling on young people to unite in working for Christ and combatting unbelief (Sankt-Peterburgskiy Yunosheskiy Kruzhok 1906:5). Beyond their evangelistic goals, the group also focused on the spiritual development and education of young people (ed. Prokhanov 1906e:1; ed. Prokhanov 1911a:4).

At the first congress of youth group representatives, held from April 23 to 26, 1908, in Moscow, Prokhanov was elected chairman of the council, whose goal was to unite young

people. At the second congress, from May 17 to 19, 1909, in Saint Petersburg, it was decided to legalise the Union under the name 'Evangelical Union of Christian Youth'. Prokhanov was elected chairman of the union (Savinsky 1999:287).

The youth groups experienced significant success, particularly after the Bolsheviks came to power. Bolshevik ideologist Eliashevich expressed concern over the growing influence of Evangelical and Baptist youth, noting that in the Melitopol district, up to 90% of the youth were members of sects, and in the Samara province, up to 50% (Eliashevich 1928:20-21).

3.6.2.5. Conclusion

It is evident that Prokhanov understood the importance of uniting efforts to achieve significant goals. Moreover, he had the ability to inspire and unite people, which likely played a crucial role in the creation of the missionary movement in Russia.

3.7. Self-Discipline: Theoretical Assumptions

According to Maxwell (2017:ch.9), 'good leaders practice self-control before they try to engage others'. He also asserts that in order to achieve success, a leader must possess the quality of self-discipline. As previously noted, self-discipline is demonstrated by a person's ability to remain focused on their goals for an extended period (Northouse 2016:199), making them highly consistent in achieving those goals (George 2003:25; Maxwell 2017:ch.9). This ability to focus and stay focused is impossible without the capacity to control one's emotions and impulses (George 2003:25).

An expert in the subject of willpower, McGonigal (2012:ch.1), claims that 'to exert self-control, you need to find your motivation when it matters. This is "I want" power'. In other words, a crucial component of self-discipline is a person's significant values, their goals, and a strong desire to achieve those goals. Driven by this strong desire, a person subdues their impulses and does what needs to be done to achieve their goals.

Maxwell (2017:ch.9) also believes that the internal energy for practicing self-discipline is the result of 'inspiration and motivation', with motivation being a byproduct of passion.

Maxwell (2017: ch.9) asserts, 'If you love to do something, you are always motivated to do it'.

Thus, a leader's self-discipline is demonstrated by their ability to *maintain focus* on their set goals and follow through with the necessary actions over an extended period. This ability is rooted in the leader's awareness of the importance of the tasks they undertake, as well as their passion for the work they are performing.

The question arises: Can we consider Prokhanov a person with well-developed self-discipline?

3.7.1 Prokhanov's self-image as a disciplined individual

Prokhanov evidently regarded himself as a paragon of self-discipline, a trait he claimed to have cultivated since his student days, as described in the seventh chapter of his autobiography, 'The Student and Organizer' (Prokhanoff 1933:62). He delineates a meticulously structured life, meticulously planning his time, including yearly and summer vacations, and even daily schedules. He underscored his nightly ritual of charting out the tasks for the forthcoming day, asserting that this method optimised his productivity by providing clarity and direction (Prokhanoff 1933:62). This disciplined approach, he contended, afforded him efficiency and precision in his endeavours, enhancing his productivity by up to 50% according to his own estimation.

Prokhanov also detailed his scrupulous planning of spiritual endeavours in SPb. Implicit in his memoirs is the assertion that he rigorously adhered to his preconceived plans, thereby demonstrating self-discipline. However, a critical inquiry arises: Were his self-appraisals objective? Did he truly embody the discipline he professed?

3.7.2. Assessing Prokhanov's self-discipline: Perspectives from contemporaries and scholars

Based on the provided information, it is evident that while the term 'self-discipline' may not be explicitly mentioned in documents about Prokhanov, there is a consensus among

both contemporaries and historians that he exhibited traits indicative of strong self-discipline.

Several individuals, including Livin, the Jubilee Commission, Karev, Pelevin, Zhidkov, Corrado, historian Savinskiy, and Kuznetsova, highlight Prokhanov's exceptional organisational abilities, enormous energy reserves, diligence, and tirelessness. These attributes are commonly associated with individuals who possess a well-developed sense of self-discipline.

For instance, Livin (1990:101) refers to Prokhanov as exceptionally gifted and notes his organisational abilities, while Karev (1922:14) emphasises Prokhanov's remarkable work capacity and lack of fatigue. Pelevin (1922:18) attests to Prokhanov's unwavering commitment to his work for the Lord, and Zhidkov (1922:17) describes him as an untiring labourer. Additionally, Corrado (2000:171) mentions Prokhanov's competent organisational skills and creativity in seeking new methods of evangelism, which requires discipline and dedication.

Furthermore, historians such as Savinskiy (2001:91) and Kuznetsova (2009:246) recognise Prokhanov's extraordinary organisational abilities, tireless energy, and leadership within the Russian Evangelical movement, indicating a high level of discipline in managing his responsibilities and achieving his goals.

3.7.3. Conclusion

Contemporary accounts and historical analysis imply that although 'self-discipline' is not explicitly mentioned, Prokhanov displayed evident traits of it. His outstanding organisational skills, diligence, energy, and unwavering commitment suggest a well-developed sense of self-discipline. As a recognised leader, he likely structured and managed tasks effectively, showcasing self-discipline. His tireless energy, unwavering dedication to work, strong work ethic, and pursuit of innovative approaches further support this notion

3.8. Creativity: Theoretical Assumptions

As previously mentioned, the creativity of leaders is evident in their *forward-thinking approach* and their *quest for innovative solutions* to advance and expand the organisation (Johnson & Hackman 2018:111). In other words, they are constantly seeking 'new ideas, products, and ways of performing tasks'. Bennis (2009:XXVI), while listing the key competencies of a leader, emphasises one that he considers 'absolutely essential for leaders – the key competence – is adaptive capacity'. The author asserts that 'adaptive capacity is what allows leaders to respond quickly and intelligently to relentless change'. Bennis describes this ability to adapt as a creative process. It includes the capacity 'to identify and seize opportunities' (Bennins 2009:XXVI). However, creativity is also needed to identify a problem and find its solution. As Bennis and Burt (2012:38-39) note, 'creative mental processes occur when neither the problem nor the method, let alone the solution, exists as a known entity. Creativity involves a 'discovered problem', one that needs to be worked out from beginning to end'.

When it comes to the personalities of creative individuals, three characteristics set them apart (Johnson & Hackman 2018:113): '(1) they are hardworking and persevering, (2) they are independent and nonconforming in their thinking, and (3) they are comfortable with complexity and ambiguity'.

Thus, leaders with creative abilities are *forward-looking*; they are *visionaries* who possess the unique capacity to *adapt* to a changing context and continue their activities successfully. They have the gift of seeing *emerging opportunities* and are adept at *solving* existing problems. Indeed, such leaders can be characterised as having *perseverance*, a lack of *conformity*, and the ability to *handle complexity and ambiguity* well.

3.8.1. Prokhanov as a creative and innovative leader

Prokhanov viewed himself as an innovative leader, frequently highlighting his pioneering achievements. He stated that he founded several groundbreaking organisations, such as 'The First Protestant Christian (Evangelical) Association of Young People' (Prokhanoff 1933:131), 'The First Protestant Christian Periodical in Russia' (Prokhanoff

1933:137), "The First Protestant Christian (Evangelical) Bible Course" (Prokhanoff 1933:139), and "The First Russian Protestant Christian (Evangelical) Publishing Associatio" (Prokhanoff 1933:131, 137, 139, 149). Additionally, he initiated the publication of the magazine *Khristianin* (Christian) after October 17, 1905, claiming it as "The First Protestant Christian Periodical in Russia" (Prokhanoff 1933:137).

However, Puzynin (2010) suggests that Prokhanov may have adapted models from Western organisations, such as the YMCA²⁴ and the English publication 'Christian' (Puzynin 2010:249, 255). Despite these influences, Prokhanov's ability to adapt ideas to the Russian context demonstrates his commitment to innovation. His initiatives are characterised by their uniqueness, reflecting his role as a leader in fostering creative endeavours.

During his time at the institute, Prokhanov saw the need to unite believers and support exiles, leading to the unauthorised launch of the journal, *Conversation* (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:67). He discreetly distributed the journal by mail, even to exiles, using pseudonyms like 'Zacchaei' (Prokhanoff 1933:68). Despite escalating persecution, *Conversation* continued to be published abroad, demonstrating Prokhanov's resilience and creativity.

Influenced by the Apostle Paul's dialogues with various religious groups (Prokhanoff 1933:71), Prokhanov actively engaged with diverse factions, such as the "Chlisti", considering these endeavours successful (Prokhanoff 1933:72). His ambition to reform the Orthodox Church is evident from early correspondence outlining plans for clergy publications (Prokhanov 1998).

Prokhanov's connections with prominent figures like Tolstoy were uncommon among evangelical believers. He visited Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana, engaging in discussions about Christ (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:78-80, 86). Karev suggests that Prokhanov had contacts with other notable figures like N.S. Leskov and Vladimir Solovyov (Karev 1957:11). Prokhanov also conversed with Nepluev, a wealthy

²⁴ Young Men's Christian Association.

landowner, and members of his community about Christ (1933:86), describing efforts to teach them Bible reading, interpretation, and prayer guided by the heart and Holy Spirit.

As persecutions intensified, Prokhanov and his associates felt the need to relocate for their spiritual work. They established the 'Vertograd' (Vineyard) agricultural community, reflecting Prokhanov's deliberate efforts to continue his ministry (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:87-88). Corrado (2000:171) notes Prokhanov's creativity in seeking innovative approaches to evangelism, highlighting his dynamic and adaptive nature.

Brandenburg (1977:134) greatly admired Prokhanov's creative abilities in finding new ideas to defend believer's rights amidst escalating persecutions. Prokhanov's unconventional approach to theological education included studying at the Baptist College in Bristol, the New Congregational College in London (Prokhanoff 1933:97), spending a semester at the University of Berlin, and attending lectures in Paris in early 1897 (Prokhanoff 1933:101-102). His goal was to gain a comprehensive understanding of Protestant Christian denominations in Western Europe (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:97), indicating his intent to adapt these traditions for the Russian context.

Prokhanov spearheaded the establishment of the gramophone enterprise 'Gloria', which focused on recording and distributing Christian songs and sermons on gramophone records. These records featured sermons by Prokhanov himself, along with those of other preachers (Redaktsiya 1922a:5).

Prokhanov planned to build a model City of the Sun in Siberia, where evangelical believers would live (Tash-Otlu-Key 1928:44-53).

Furthermore, Prokhanov composed numerous poems that have become popular hymns among Evangelical Christians (Popov 2007:124-136; Martsinkovskiy 1936:6-7). This is further evidence of Prokhanov's creative potential. However, exploring Prokhanov's poetic talent would require another research project, beyond the scope of this study.

3.8.2. Conclusion

Ivan Prokhanov exemplifies the characteristics of a creative leader as defined by Johnson and Hackman (2018), Bennis (2009), and Bennis and Burt (2012). His work ethic, perseverance, independent thinking, and comfort with complexity and ambiguity underscore his leadership capabilities. Prokhanov's ability to adapt to changing contexts, seize emerging opportunities, and address challenges through innovative solutions clearly positions him as a creative and forward-thinking leader.

While Prokhanov's achievements highlight his ingenuity, it is important to recognise that his creative potential lay not in the invention of entirely new concepts, but in his exceptional capacity to adapt and contextualise existing ideas for the Russian evangelical movement. This ability to integrate external influences into the unique socio-cultural and religious landscape of Russia was a defining strength of his leadership. Ultimately, Prokhanov's contributions significantly advanced the evangelical movement in Russia, demonstrating a profound alignment with the theoretical framework of creativity in leadership.

3.9. Empowering: Theoretical Assumptions

Empowering leaders play a crucial role in fostering organisational engagement and ownership by delegating tasks and providing resources (Johnson & Hackman 2018:122). Northouse (2016:235) defines empowerment as granting followers the freedom to be independent, thereby fostering self-sufficiency.

Maxwell (2005:section II) further emphasises that empowerment involves clearly granting authority and responsibility. He expands on this concept, noting that empowering leaders not only delegate authority but also provide the support and resources needed for individual growth and development (Maxwell 1998:78). Similarly, Short (1998:70) underscores that empowerment focuses on developing personal competence and offering opportunities within the organisation.

Kouzes and Posner (2007:250) describe "exemplary leaders" as those who enable others to take ownership and responsibility for success by enhancing competence and

confidence, listening to ideas, involving them in decisions, and acknowledging contributions. Bass and Riggo (2006:193) argue that transformational leadership involves empowering followers through individual consideration and intellectual stimulation, fostering a culture of creativity and learning.

Kouzes and Posner (2007:253) observe that increased employee confidence leads to greater organisational effectiveness and satisfaction. Bennis (2009:179) emphasises the importance of providing leadership opportunities early in individuals' careers to build their motivation and self-confidence.

However, effective empowerment hinges on leaders having faith in their team members' abilities (Maxwell 1998:81). Insecurity may hinder purposeful empowerment, as only confident and secure leaders engage in equipping, training, and empowering their team members (Maxwell 2005:section III).

Posner and Kouzes (2007:281) introduce another crucial aspect of empowerment: nurturing the human spirit through personalised recognition. They advocate for exemplary leaders who acknowledge individuals' contributions personally, igniting intrinsic motivation and uplifting morale.

Thus, empowering leaders foster a culture of organisational *engagement*, promoting *ownership* development. By *delegating* authority to their employees, they provide opportunities for assuming *responsibility* without *micromanagement*. *Confident* in themselves, they inspire confidence in others, nurturing *self-assurance* among team members. Their focus on employee *growth* and *development* facilitates *competence* acquisition, significantly contributing to staff self-assurance. These leaders also cultivate a culture of *recognising* each individual's contributions to organisational development. Overall, this approach enhances production *efficiency* and fosters subjective job *satisfaction* among employees.

However, the question arises: Can we consider Prokhanov an empowering leader? Without sufficient data, we cannot assert this with absolute certainty. Nonetheless, both

direct and indirect indicators suggest that he possessed some qualities of an empowering leader.

3.9.1. Prokhanov as an empowering leader

Creation of a Culture of Interdependence.

Prokhanov actively fostered a culture of independence and autonomy within the ARUEC, encouraging collaboration among its members. Despite his assertive demeanour, Prokhanov structured the union around the concept of autonomous churches, preserving their decision-making authority (ed. Prokhanov 1909h:6). His drafting of the union's charter prioritised the preservation of congregational autonomy (Trosnov 1911b:6), drawing inspiration from the decentralised model of governance in the United States. Therefore, Prokhanov advocated for regional structures that united churches while respecting their internal autonomy (Prokhanoff 1933:153).

As Prokhanov (1933:153) states:

We had the principle that every church should be entirely *autonomous* and free. But at the same time I promoted the spirit of *unity* and advised that wherever there were five groups or churches they should form a local association of churches for missionary, publishing and spiritual educational work.

Thus, it would be more accurate to describe the culture that Prokhanov fostered as a culture of *interdependence*, where autonomous communities recognise their need for each other and voluntarily unite for more *effective* mission accomplishment.

Leadership Development.

Vysotrkiy, a well-known figure in evangelical Russian history and a colleague of Prokhanov, attests to Prokhanov's recognition of the importance of personnel development. Despite his busy schedule, Prokhanov devoted attention to nurturing the growth of young evangelists and circle organisers (Vysotskiy 1981:1). Among those he mentored were Trosnov, Savin, Zhidkov, Andreev, Karev, Kazakov, and Dubrovskiy. Vysotrkiy states (1981:1):

In youth work, they spiritually grew, strengthened, and became well-known workers in the extensive pan-Soviet evangelical field. Prokhanov had the gift of attracting good helpers, entrusting them with work that matched their spiritual and business qualities, and without burdening them with micromanagement, fully utilizing their knowledge, abilities, and energy.

This testimony highlights Prokhanov's talent for attracting skilled individuals and empowering them without imposing excessive control. Through their collaboration with Prokhanov, these individuals became prominent figures in the evangelical community. For example, Alexander Karev, who began working with Prokhanov in 1922, took on leadership responsibilities within the Union of Evangelical Christians during Prokhanov's absences. Remarkably, at just 28 years old, Prokhanov entrusted Karev with the union's leadership (Kulikov 2009:8). After hearing Karev's first sermon, Prokhanov remarked, 'Now I can be at ease because in A.V. Karev, I see my replacement' (Kulikov 2009:8). These words proved prophetic, as Karev went on to become a leading figure in the Soviet evangelical movement, serving as General Secretary of the United Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists from 1944 until his death in 1971. He was also the editor of *Bratskiy Vestnik* (Brothely Herald) and a respected spiritual writer and preacher (VSEKhB 1989:530).

Similarly, Prokhanov identified the potential in a young A.I. Mitskevich, proposing him as an all-union evangelist at just 18 years old. Mitskevich later became a key figure in the evangelical community, serving as Deputy General Secretary and treasurer (VSEKhB 1989:537). Prokhanov also recognised the promise of V.N. Chechev, sending him to Minsk in 1924, where he became the senior presbyter for Belarus (Veliseychik et al., 1958:17).

Prokhanov's keen awareness of the importance of developing leaders is evident in his successful mentorship of the younger generation. After Prokhanov's emigration and withdrawal from the Russian evangelical movement, his associates, whom he had involved in the work at a young age, continued to lead the union for many years. Even after the merger of evangelical Christians and Baptists into a single union in 1944, it was Prokhanov's former associates, such as Zhidkov and Karev, who stood out as the most prominent leaders in the united union (VSEKhB 1989).

Fostering the Culture of Engagement.

The analysis of congress protocols under Prokhanov's leadership highlights his commitment to openness during meetings (see Appendix A). He routinely presented draft documents for discussion, allowing participants to propose amendments to specific provisions. In some instances, these revisions significantly altered the original document and were accepted.

For example, in the initial draft of the union's charter, Prokhanov proposed wording that limited membership to communities adhering to a single creed. However, after lively discussions, substantial changes were made, allowing communities with different names and doctrines to join, provided they aligned with Evangelical Christian principles (Trosnov 1911b:6).

This openness to delegate input demonstrates Prokhanov's flexibility and willingness to adapt, making the union more inclusive. Another instance of this adaptability is seen in revisions to auditing procedures, where Prokhanov accepted a more practical approach suggested by delegates (Trosnov 1911b:6).

Before crucial document votes, Prokhanov consistently invited objections, ensuring a democratic process of discussion and voting. This approach encouraged active engagement from delegates in refining documents.

Another method Prokhanov employed to engage believers in the discussion of significant documents was to first draft and discuss them within his St. Petersburg community and then distribute them for broader discussion among other communities (Trosnov 1912b:3-4). This process ensured that congress delegates arrived well-prepared, with input from local communities enriching the discussion.

Prokhanov's leadership in the ARUEC was characterised by a strong emphasis on openness and engagement. Through lively discussions and the willingness to amend

draft documents, he fostered an environment of inclusivity and flexibility. His democratic approach encouraged active participation from delegates, allowing for the preservation of local church autonomy while promoting collaboration. By involving believers in discussions early on, Prokhanov ensured that debates were well-informed and that the organisation developed into a cohesive and inclusive entity.

Nurturing Leadership Competence through Formal Institutions.

Prokhanov's dedication to ministerial training and evangelical dissemination was evident throughout his career. Initially expressing his fervent commitment to spreading the gospel through oral preaching (Prokhanov 1898), he recognised the need for a trained cohort of preachers to facilitate spiritual renewal in Russia. Therefore, Prokhanov's vision for transformation necessitated the establishment of formal institutions for theological education.

Recognising the importance of advancing theological understanding, Prokhanov established the Brotherly Educational Council, which introduced six-week Evangelical Courses in 1905-1906. These courses aimed to enhance the capabilities of aspiring preachers by offering a blend of spiritual and general education topics (Prokhanov 1906d:1; ed. Prokhanov 1906e:2).

Interestingly, Prokhanov, in his communications to the churches, outlined stringent criteria for course candidates: individuals actively engaged in preaching the Word of God, steeped in piety, and eager to deepen their theological understanding (Prokhanov 1906d:1). Additionally, he stressed the importance of spiritual experience (Prokhanov 1906d:2).

The courses were led by esteemed figures from both the evangelical and secular realms of St. Petersburg, including P.N. Nikolai (1860–1919), Ivan Veniaminovich Kargel (1849–1937), Vladimir Christianovich Offenbergl (1856–1927), and Prokhanov himself (VSEKHBB 1989:167-168). Remarkably, most of these instructors juggled successful secular careers alongside their Christian mission endeavours, with the exception of

Kargel, who focused primarily on spiritual matters. The high educational standards set by these instructors likely contributed to the success of the courses.

Evidence suggests that the courses were well-received. In the latter part of 1907, the courses resumed their operations (ed. Prokhanov 1907b:24).

Prokhanov's ambitions extended beyond mere lectures and courses; he aspired to establish a robust school for ministerial training. In 1912, the Council of VSEKHB secured permission to inaugurate two-year courses in St. Petersburg (VSEKHBB 1989:168). This curriculum encompassed classical disciplines alongside subjects like sacred music, philosophy, and comparative religion, marking the genesis of Russia's first Bible school. The inauguration of the Bible courses in 1913 reflected Prokhanov's inclusive approach, drawing attendees from diverse evangelical communities. Emphasising spiritual fellowship and moral discipline, Prokhanov articulated the school's objectives: grooming capable evangelists and nurturing spiritual mentors for the community (Trosnov 1913:5).

The outbreak of war in 1914 disrupted the courses, highlighting the formidable challenges Prokhanov faced (VSEKhB 1989:168). Despite setbacks, the training courses for preachers reached their peak in the mid-1920s (Prokhanoff 1933:229). According to Savinsky (2001:108), annual Bible courses began operating in Leningrad on January 19, 1925, and continued to prepare ministers until 1929. Approximately 400 preachers of God's Word were trained through these courses. Although the courses were discontinued in 1929, their impact on the evangelical movement in Russia was profound. A detailed analysis of Prokhanov's initiatives is beyond the scope of this work. However, historical materials highlight the life and ministry of Lukash Dzyakut-Maley, a notable graduate of Prokhanov's courses. Dzyakut-Maley became a prominent figure in the evangelical movement in Western Belarus, organising the influential church in Brest and founding other churches. He also translated the New Testament into Belarusian and was an active public figure.

According to Belarusian researcher Vladimir Unuchak (2021:77-78), Prokhanov significantly influenced Dzyakut-Maley's views. The years of studying and interacting with Prokhanov likely shaped Dzyakut-Maley's theological and social values.

Nurturing a Culture of Celebration and Appreciation.

Analysing Prokhanov's activities, it becomes evident that he contributed to two significant cultural aspects within the Union. He fostered a culture that celebrated collective successes and publicly recognised individual contributions.

At congresses, Prokhanov highlighted achievements resulting from collaborative efforts while providing honest explanations for unmet goals (see Appendix A). He actively encouraged public expressions of praise and recognition of others' contributions. For instance, after F.F. Sheneman was elected Deputy Chairman of the Second All-Russian Congress, with Prokhanov himself as Chairman, Prokhanov expressed joy, noting Sheneman as an experienced organiser with productive years of service. Additionally, Prokhanov honoured his deceased colleague Gotskiy, suggesting a minute of silence in his memory, a practice he frequently employed to show respect (ed. Prokhanov 1911b:5).

In his article 'In Memory of Nepluev' in the *Khristianin* magazine (Prokhanov 1908h:45-46), Prokhanov praised Nepluev's spiritual life and dedication to prayer, even though they held differing views on certain issues. He admired Nepluev's impeccable personal conduct and his deep love for others.

Prokhanov often used periodicals to express gratitude, not only posthumously but also during individuals' lifetimes. This deliberate practice cultivated a culture of appreciation and recognition, which he believed was crucial for maintaining unity among believers.

3.9.2. Conclusion

Prokhanov embodied the qualities of an empowering leader, as described by various leadership theorists. He cultivated an atmosphere of autonomy and interdependence

within the churches, encouraging collaboration while respecting their independence. His efforts in leadership development were commendable, as he mentored young evangelists and leaders such as Alexandr Karev, A.I. Mitskevich, and V.N. Chechev, who went on to become influential figures in the evangelical community.

Prokhanov's commitment to engagement and inclusivity is evident in his democratic approach to meetings and his willingness to solicit input from others. This approach fostered a more inclusive and collaborative environment within the Union. Additionally, his establishment of formal educational initiatives, like the Evangelical Courses and the Bible school, reflected his dedication to enhancing competence and fostering spiritual growth.

Furthermore, Prokhanov nurtured a culture of celebration and appreciation, where individual contributions were recognised and publicly praised. This practice fostered a sense of unity and motivation among Union members.

However, Prokhanov's leadership was not without its limitations. Despite promoting autonomy and collaboration, he maintained a central role in nearly all key positions within the Union, including chairman of the council, editor of publications, and director of educational institutions (Redaktsiya 1922a). This centralisation of authority raises questions about his ability to delegate high-level responsibilities and collaborate with peers on equal terms. While this could stem from his commitment to ensuring quality and consistency, it might also reflect a reluctance to share power fully.

Such centralisation may have inadvertently hindered the development of a more distributed leadership structure within the Union, potentially limiting its resilience and adaptability (Drucker 1954). These reservations do not detract from Prokhanov's remarkable contributions but provide a nuanced understanding of his leadership style.

Thus, Prokhanov's empowering leadership style significantly contributed to the development and effectiveness of the ARUEC. Through his ability to inspire, mentor, and

engage others, along with his focus on educational and spiritual growth, he ensured the long-term success and impact of the evangelical movement in Russia.

3.10. Compassion: Theoretical Assumptions

Compassion, a key aspect of authentic leadership, entails showing genuine care and empathy towards others, rather than solely focusing on maximising results. George (2003:23) describes compassionate leaders as those who make a conscious effort to connect with their employees on a personal level and demonstrate a sincere interest in their well-being. Leaders who lead with heart empathise with individuals facing difficult life situations, often informed by their own experiences of overcoming challenges (George 2003:39).

Cassell (2002:435), inspired by Aristotle's teachings, defines compassion as the process of connecting with others by identifying with their experiences. He posits that three conditions must be met for compassion to arise: firstly, the recognition of serious problems faced by others; secondly, the acknowledgment that these problems are not self-inflicted but rather the result of injustice; and thirdly, the ability to empathise with the suffering individual's perspective.

Building on Schopenhauer's work, MacIntyre (1998:142) identifies compassion as a fundamental motive driving human behaviour, alongside self-interest and malice. Compassion involves imaginatively placing oneself in the shoes of a suffering person and taking action to alleviate their pain.

However, compassion is not universal across all cultures, as anthropological research suggests that it may be limited to one's own kin in some non-Western traditional societies, rather than extending to outsiders (Cassell 2002:438). Thus, compassion is the capacity to *empathise* with others who are experiencing suffering, particularly when the challenges they face are *significant* and often arise from *unjust* circumstances or fate. This empathetic ability *prompts* individuals to take action to *alleviate* the suffering of those in need.

3.10.1. Prokhanov as a compassionate leader

Prokhanov's compassionate nature was evident from a young age. He felt a deep empathy towards the less fortunate (Prokhanoff 1933:30). The tragic death of a beggar, denied charity out of fear of misuse, deeply impacted him and solidified his commitment to helping those in need (Prokhanoff 1933:31). Additionally, he extended his compassion to fellow students by offering assistance to those less fortunate among them (Prokhanoff 1933:32).²⁵

His empathy sparked a lifelong dedication to social justice and alleviating human suffering (Prokhanoff 1933:32-33). Influenced by literature that depicted the struggles of the oppressed, Prokhanov developed a profound love for humanity and a sense of duty towards serving the Russian people (Prokhanoff 1933:36). Stories of persecuted Christians further intensified his fervent desire to defend freedom of conscience (Prokhanoff 1933:35), while personal experiences of ridicule strengthened his resolve to fight for the rights of believers (1933:41).

Prokhanov's compassion translated into action as he visited political prisoners with his father, providing them with material assistance (Prokhanoff 1933:41). These encounters left a lasting impression on him, reinforcing his commitment to advocating for freedom of conscience. He concluded that these experiences solidified his life's purpose: to champion the cause of freedom for all (1933:41).

Karetnikova (2001:83) describes Prokhanov as an empathetic and compassionate individual, sensitive to cruelty and injustice. She also recounts an incident where, at Leo Tolstoy's request, Prokhanov accompanied persecuted Doukhobors to Canada

²⁵ Prokhanov's portrayal of himself as a compassionate young man appears credible and deeply rooted in the historical context of the late 19th century. This era was marked by a heightened sensitivity among young people to the pain and suffering of others, with many dedicating their lives to alleviating these hardships. This social and cultural background is vividly reflected in Prokhanov's personal story. Moreover, his vision and active implementation of service to others stand as compelling evidence of the sincerity of his compassion.

(2001:86). He cared for the sick during an epidemic and nearly lost his own life in the process (Redaktsiay 1922a:4; Prokhanoff 1933:107-112).

Prokhanov's profound empathy towards people's suffering motivated him to combat the sources of evil and human suffering. As a transformational leader, he rejected the prevailing status quo and actively worked to change social, political, and economic realities to alleviate pain and suffering. His endeavours were deeply rooted in compassion.

Prokhanov's ministry of compassion encompassed three main directions: human rights advocacy, efforts to improve agricultural efficiency and establish communes, and charitable work aimed at providing practical assistance to people in difficult situations, including alleviating starvation and supporting orphans.

3.10.2 Human rights advocacy

Prokhanov's Confession of Faith highlights the pivotal value of freedom of conscience (Prokhanov 1910a:10). Prior to 1905, evangelical communities in Russia faced severe restrictions, including being denied legal status and rights. They struggled with obtaining legal recognition for marriages and burial practices, and experienced persecution from Orthodox priests, resulting in administrative and criminal penalties (Nikol'skaya 2009:24). The turning point came after 1905, when Prokhanov actively engaged in reform efforts.

Prokhanov collaborated with governmental bodies, gathering evidence of local abuses to advocate for legislative reforms. He wrote reports to the Minister of Internal Affairs, suggesting solutions that were incorporated into legislative acts (Potapova 2014b:6; Redaktsiya 1922a:4). His meetings with influential figures, such as Prime Minister Witte, had a significant impact on the enactment of decrees that allowed many exiled believers to return (Redaktsiya 1922a:4; Prokhanoff 1933:137, 141). When direct appeals to the government failed, Prokhanov engaged with influential State Duma members (ed. Prokhanov 1910d:1).

Prokhanov continued to advocate for persecuted Christians during the communistera as well (VSEKhB 1989:173). Additionally, he took on an educational role, empowering believers to assert their rights. Through the newspaper *Morning Star*, he provided guidance on navigating discriminatory practices, advocated for writing petitions, and collaborated with legal experts like I.P. Kushnerov (Mitskevich 2007:129; ed. Prokhanov 1910e:3; Kushnerov 1910a:3; Prokhanov 1908i:11-12; VSEKhB 1989:120). His publication *Law and Faith (Zakon i Vera)* (Prokhanov 1912d) served as a comprehensive guide for religious gatherings and the management of civil affairs, assisting believers in drafting appeals to authorities (Mitskevich 2007:167).

Prokhanov spread accounts of violence and injustice against believers, drawing public attention to their suffering (ed. Prokhanov 1906f:4-5; Kushnerov 1906a:2-3; 1906b:8; 1906c:9-10; 1910b:10). He extended his advocacy beyond Russia, using printed publications to inform the international community about the persecution of evangelicals in the country.

In conclusion, Prokhanov's unwavering dedication to protecting the rights of believers is evident. His comprehensive strategy included working with governmental bodies, educational programs, and public awareness campaigns. His strong belief in freedom of conscience drove his advocacy efforts, with the aim of creating a fairer and more tolerant society. Furthermore, his recognition of the crucial role of freely preaching the gospel in achieving his life's goal – the transformation of Russia – served as an additional driving force for his endeavours. Popov (2020:82) highlights Prokhanov's significant contribution to the human rights movement in Russia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

However, it should be noted that there was a period in Prokhanov's life when he struggled to demonstrate compassion and empathy toward the Orthodox Church, which was being persecuted by the Bolsheviks. In the post-revolutionary period, evangelical believers generally maintained a negative attitude toward the Orthodox Church. Both Baptists and Evangelical Christians harboured resentment toward the Orthodox Church for its role in persecuting evangelical communities through state agencies over many years (Potapova 2014c:115).

In *Gospel Call* (1922), Prokhanov reflected on his earlier 1911 proposal, in which he urged the Orthodox Church to "spread the Gospel among the people by increasing the printing of Bibles, New Testaments, and similar materials" and called on the Church to "repent of the sins of the age" (Prokhanov 2009m:86–87). His proposal also carried a warning that rejecting this call would result in "God's judgment". In *Gospel Call*, Prokhanov stated, "This judgment has come before our eyes and has proven very severe for the leaders of the church" (Prokhanov 2009m:87), interpreting subsequent events as the fulfilment of that warning.

While Prokhanov claimed that evangelical believers had forgiven the Orthodox Church for its past actions, his writings show little evidence of compassion or empathy for the Church, which was now under unprecedented persecution by the Bolsheviks. Instead,

Prokhanov positioned himself as a prophet-judge, interpreting the Church's suffering as the fulfilment of his prophecy.

In this regard, Prokhorov (2007:93) notes that "almost all Evangelical Christians and Baptists remained silent as Orthodox sacred items were destroyed" However, it should be acknowledged that Prokhanov eventually spoke out in defence of the Orthodox Church. Potapova (2014c:21) observes that during the Bolshevik persecution of Orthodoxy, *Morning Star* began publishing materials defending the Orthodox Church in its section titled "Orthodox"—focusing "primarily on repressions carried out at the local level".

3.10.3. Charity

Prokhanov was involved in various charitable activities. In his *Confession of Faith* (Prokhanov 1910a: 9), he argued that God expects redeemed individuals to engage in 'holy labour, holy good deeds (2 Pet. 1:5)', as they are designed for this purpose (Eph. 2:10). Prokhanov emphasised that 'good deeds' serve as evidence of genuine faith, contrasting with faith devoid of action, which he deemed lifeless (Jas. 2:17). He interpreted Paul's words in Galatians 5:6 to mean that faith is manifested through love, which is synonymous with 'producing good deeds'. Consequently, love, for Prokhanov, finds expression through deeds.

Referring to Micah 6:8, which highlights God's desire for acts of mercy from humanity, Prokhanov explained the essence of actions. Therefore, it can be inferred that, for Prokhanov, good deeds primarily encompass acts of mercy.

Prokhanov's ministry of compassion was rooted in a genuine concern for people. However, it also embodied a well-considered and theologically justified intention. This emphasis gains significance when contrasted with other evangelical confessions of faith of the time, such as those of Onken (1906)²⁶ and Kargel (1913), which notably omit any

²⁶ I do not assert that Baptists were not engaged in active mercy ministries. They were likely involved in acts of kindness, perhaps no less than Prokhanov's followers. However, in the officially accepted creed of faith, the value of mercy deeds is absent.

explicit mention of good deeds. This contrast highlights the unique theological perspective held by Prokhanov within the evangelical landscape of his era.

Prokhanov's involvement in charitable endeavours was multifaceted, spanning both indirect and direct forms of assistance. Through his printed publications, he advocated for societal awareness and active engagement in alleviating suffering. Early initiatives, such as establishing a charity fund for a children's shelter and supporting a similar project in St. Petersburg, underscored his commitment to fostering a culture of philanthropy (ed. Prokhanov 1906g:32; Prokhanov 1906b:3; ed. Prokhanov 1907c:7-8; ed. Prokhanov 1910f:35).

For example, in the *Brotherly Bulletin* of 1910 (Kul'tenko 1910:12), a notice highlighted the plight of seven orphaned children following the persecution-related deaths of their parents in Herusy. I.S. Kul'tenko appealed for assistance in finding refuge for at least two of the young girls.²⁷

Shenderovskiy (1986:137) affirms that Prokhanov's primary objective during his final years abroad was to provide practical aid to suffering believers in Russia. Testimonials from beneficiaries expressed gratitude for Prokhanov's efforts in preventing them from starving.

²⁷ In *Morning Star* (1922), under the title "On the Help from Foreign Brethren," the following note was published (Prokhanov, I. (ed.) 1922h:8).

Our Russian communities cannot provide the kind of assistance that would even remotely meet the needs of those who are suffering. Therefore, we have written to our foreign brethren, asking them to respond and help us by sending food, clothing, and footwear. With the government's permission, some assistance has already been delivered through the American Relief Administration, which received a designated fund and a supply of clothing from a representative of the South American Baptist Union. This aid is intended for both Baptists and Evangelical Christians. The Supreme Council is taking all possible measures to ensure that the help from our foreign brethren becomes substantial and reaches all truly suffering children of God. Please pray that the Lord may help us in this endeavor.

Thus, Prokhanov's periodical publications serve as a platform for advocating the relief of suffering and emphasising the importance of empathy and benevolence within the evangelical community. These actions reflect his conscientious alignment with his theological beliefs, highlighting the integral relationship between faith and compassionate action.²⁸

3.10.4. Creation of agricultural communes

Prokhanov's initiatives expanded to include the establishment of agricultural communes, in response to the economic hardship and recurrent famines plaguing Russia. Raber (2014) characterises these efforts as part of Prokhanov's 'ministry of compassion', reflecting his dedication to assisting the needy.

While compassion served as a driving force, Prokhanov's communal ventures also aimed for systemic change and sustainable living, indicating a holistic approach to societal issues. Influenced by socialist ideologies and communal practices observed among Molokans and Mennonites, as well as his acquaintance with Neplueff's ideas (Raber 2014:74; Prokhanoff 1933:86; Prokhanov 1908h:44-46), Prokhanov envisioned communes as embodiments of biblical principles (Popov 1990:48).

In collaboration with colleagues, Prokhanov established the "Vertograd" commune in Crimea, aiming to create a spiritual sanctuary amidst societal challenges (Prokhanoff 1933:87-89). One of the motivations for creating this agricultural commune was that, amid escalating persecutions, communes provided a space to continue spiritual work. Personal circumstances compelled Prokhanov to leave this commune. It lasted for four years and eventually disbanded due to government pressure (Popov 1990:49).

²⁸ In the *Morning Star* (1922), during a year of severe famine affecting certain regions of Russia, a note titled "On Those Suffering from Hunger" appears with the following content (Prokhanov, I. (ed.) 1922i:3): "Communities where there are those suffering from hunger are informed that some of the afflicted can be accommodated by other communities at the following addresses, which we recommend contacting in advance." The notice provides seven addresses and advises against sending the afflicted to Petrograd, as the city is experiencing "a severe shortage of everything."

Post-revolution, Prokhanov continued advocating for communal living, promoting models inspired by the early Christian community described in Acts. In 1918, he wrote 'Evangelical Christianity and the Social Question', in which he describes the foundations of the so-called 'universal community' called 'Sigor', based on the example of the Jerusalem community described in the Book of Acts (4:32). The 'Sigor' community contributed to the formation of agricultural communes across Russia (ed. Dubrovskiy 1922:13).

His visits to communities like 'Vifaniya' emphasised the importance of spiritual growth alongside practical endeavours, reflecting his holistic approach to communal life (Shop-Mishich 1928:26-34).

That said, it must be acknowledged that while these agricultural communes played a positive role, Prokhanov was overly optimistic about humanity's capacity to work together harmoniously within such communities. The very idea of establishing such kind of agricultural communes is inherently utopian (Kuznetsova 2009:252). Ultimately, all these communes ceased to exist. Although the Bolsheviks played a significant role in their dissolution, internal anthropological challenges also contributed to their downfall. As Prokhorov noted (2007:95):

The main causes of the collapse of the Baptist and Evangelical Christian agricultural communes in 1920s appear to be internal, not external. There have been many such experiments, both Christian and Socialist, throughout history. The majority failed because their participants "were not read" to put the theory into practice. This was part of a wider trend in other times and nations, 23 and I do not see any serious reason to consider the early Communist period in Russia an exception. In general, "Christian communis" ended in the mid-1920s.

3.10.5. Conclusion

As noted earlier, compassionate leaders possess empathy and care about what people are experiencing. Deep compassion drives them to take active steps to alleviate suffering.

From a young age, Prokhanov displayed compassion and empathy towards people's pain. As a leader, he actively worked in three areas: human rights advocacy, improving agricultural efficiency through communes, and charitable work aimed at providing practical assistance to people in difficult situations.

Prokhanov's life and work are closely aligned with the theoretical assumptions of compassionate leadership. His deep empathy, combined with proactive efforts to address social injustices, confirms his role as a truly compassionate leader.

3.11. Values and Character: Theoretical Assumptions

The authentic leadership model underscores the essentiality of unwavering values demonstrated consistently in real-world applications. Bill George emphasises that a leader's identity is shaped by his values and character, which act as a moral compass guiding his conduct (George 2003:20). Integrity stands out as vital in this model, as it fosters trust essential for effective leadership (George 2003:20).

Warren Bennis echoes this sentiment, positing that integrity is foundational for trust, which must be earned from employees through consistent behaviour congruent with stated values (Bennis 2009:34).

Consistency and congruity in actions are highlighted by Bennis as key to building trust (Bennis 2009:152). John Maxwell further underscores the indispensable link between integrity, credibility, and trust, asserting that trust is the bedrock of leadership and is unattainable without integrity (Maxwell 2001:ch. 3; 1998:41). Kouzes and Posner's research emphasises honesty as paramount in leadership, serving as a linchpin in the leader-follower relationship (Kouzes & Posner 2007:32).

Therefore, trust is indispensable for effective leadership, relying heavily on mature character and integrity, which ensures consistency between words and actions. Trustworthy leaders 'walk the talk' by exemplifying honesty and truthfulness alongside other qualities of mature character.

In Christian leadership, the importance of mature character is paramount, as outlined in biblical references to leader qualifications (1 Tim. 3:2-5; Tit. 1:6-9). Leaders lacking significant character traits may struggle to command respect.

While an in-depth analysis of Prokhanov's character and values lies beyond the scope of this research, our focus is on evaluating his leadership based on contemporaneous assessments of his moral fibre, primarily from individuals with personal acquaintance. This method bears certain limitations. Grounded in Fritz Heider's (1964, originally 1958) attribution theory and advanced by Bernard Weiner (1986), we acknowledge that Prokhanov's perception is markedly subjective, often susceptible to biases. Nevertheless, given our study's objectives, evaluating external perceptions holds paramount significance.

3.11.1. A positive assessment of Prokhanov's character

Testimonies from Prokhanov's associates shed light on his character and qualities as a leader within the Christian ministry as he was perceived by his coworkers and partners. *Alexandr Karev* (1922:14) portrays him as extraordinary, with both heroic and gentle qualities. Karev observes traits such as *unwavering calmness*, *unshakeable faith*, *resilience*, *perseverance*, and *peacefulness* in Prokhanov's demeanour. He lauds Prokhanov's ability to defuse conflicts with a gentle smile and respond to insults with humour. Additionally, Karev admires Prokhanov's *diligence*, *simplicity*, and *approachability*, noting his *humility* despite his significant stature within the community (Karev 1922:14). Karev believes that Prokhanov is worthy of respect.

Similarly, *Yakov Zhidkov* refers to Prokhanov as the *most prominent* figure in the evangelical Baptist community, emphasising his *humility* and *dedication* to God (Zhidkov 1945:21). Zhidkov notes that negative opinions about Prokhanov often stem from those *unfamiliar* with him personally.

Echoing this sentiment, *Artur Mitskevich* recounts his profound admiration for Prokhanov's spiritual and moral qualities, which significantly influenced his life

(Mitskevich 2007:513). He praises Prokhanov's *dedication* to God's work, *forgiveness*, and *steadfastness*.

Ivan Kolesnikov (1936:29-30) who knew Prokhanov for 10 years recalls Prokhanov's *humility* and principled approach to handling finances, highlighting his *selflessness* and *gentleness*, his *simplicity* and *honesty* (Kolesnikov 1940, as cited in Shenderovskiy 1986:146-147). Also, he spoke about Prokhanov, saying that he was very approachable, 'able to come to a person with a *spirit of gentleness and love*' (Kolesnikov 1936:30).

Similarly, *Petr Dayneka* described Prokhanov as a person *filled* with the *Holy Spirit*, who *loved* God and his people. Additionally, he referred to him as 'a very *humble* person, *approachable* to anyone who wanted to talk or interact with him' (Shenderovskiy 1986:136).

In line with these observations, Pastor *Brandenburg*²⁹ (1936:56) who knew Prokhanov for several years, asserts that *simplicity and modesty* were inherent in his character. Brandenburg likely aims to emphasise that Prokhanov's *simplicity and modesty* are not mere acts but rather genuine and authentic qualities that define his character.

Moreover, *I. Istomin* praises Prokhanov's *nobility*, citing his *refusal* to speak negatively about other denominations³⁰ and his ability to *refrain* from responding to *insults* (Popov 2007:104-105).

Finally, *Vladimir Martsinkovskiy* speaks highly of Prokhanov's intellectual and *spiritual-moral* qualities, describing him as charming, with a *gentle* heart and *strong* will (Martsinkovskiy 1936:5). He admires Prokhanov's *calmness*, *patience*, and *non-*

²⁹ Pastor Brandenburg served in Berlin and was a member of the Missionary Union Committee 'Light to the East' in Wernigerode, Germany. Prokhanov collaborated with this mission (Evangelical Faith No 1-12 (1936):56).

³⁰ As for his attitude toward the Orthodox Church, Prokhanov had a rather critical attitude both toward the church and toward the priests.

malicious nature, noting his advice to respond to enemies with *silence* and *prayer* (Martsinkovskiy 1936:6).

Thus, based on the testimonies and reflections provided by those who knew Prokhanov, several key characteristics and perceptions of his character emerge.

Firstly, Prokhanov is consistently described as embodying a blend of *heroic* and *gentle* qualities. His unwavering calmness, unshakeable faith, and resilience are highlighted repeatedly, suggesting a leader who provided stability and inspiration to those around him. We can assume, that this combination of strength and gentleness allowed him to navigate conflicts with a gentle smile and respond to insults with humour, displaying a remarkable capacity for maintaining peace and harmony.

His *humility* and *approachability* stand out as central aspects of his character. Despite his *significant* stature within the Christian ministry, Prokhanov remained *accessible* and *relatable* to his peers and followers. His *simplicity* and *modesty* were not mere affectations but genuine traits that defined his interactions and leadership style. This authenticity in his humility earned him deep *respect* and *admiration* from his associates.

Prokhanov's *dedication* to his faith and to the work of God is another prominent theme. He is depicted as being deeply committed to his spiritual mission, demonstrating *forgiveness*, *steadfastness*, and a strong *moral compass*. His ability to refrain from speaking *negatively* about others and his practice of responding to insults with silence and prayer further underscore his noble character and spiritual maturity.

Additionally, Prokhanov's *intellectual* and *moral* qualities are acknowledged, with attributes such as *charm*, *patience*, and a *gentle* heart being frequently mentioned. His principled approach to finances and his selflessness reflect a leader who prioritised integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects of his life.

In conclusion, Prokhanov is perceived by his associates as a leader of extraordinary character, marked by a harmonious blend of strength and gentleness, humility, spiritual

dedication, and intellectual depth. His ability to inspire respect and admiration through his authentic humility, peaceful demeanour, and steadfast faith positions him as a revered figure within the Christian ministry. These qualities not only define his legacy but also serve as a testament to the profound impact he had on those who knew and worked with him.

3.11.2. A negative assessment of Prokhanov's character

While Prokhanov garnered admiration from many, it is important to acknowledge that not all views of his character were favourable. He himself acknowledged the existence of negative rumours about him (Prokhanov 1936:63). Accusations ranged from claims of his conversion to Orthodoxy and fleeing to Finland to marrying a Jewish woman. Some accused him of excessive loyalty to Baptists, while others alleged he expressed contempt for the Baptist faith, even claiming he declared he 'would not die until he stepped over the corpse of Baptism'. Prokhanov vehemently denied making such statements, dismissing the rumours as slanderous (Prokhanov 1936:64).

Despite these rumours, Prokhanov's colleagues largely rejected them, as evidenced by their earlier testimonials. This rejection highlights the dichotomy in perceptions of Prokhanov's character. On one hand, he was respected and admired, yet on the other, he faced significant criticism and suspicion. This split in opinion sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the varied perspectives on his character.

Even among those who held Prokhanov in high esteem, there were acknowledgments of his human fallibility. For instance, Zhidkov (1922:17), while expressing admiration for Prokhanov, acknowledged that he, like any human, had weaknesses and flaws. Similarly, at Prokhanov's funeral, Zack noted his greatness but also hinted at his inevitable shortcomings (Zack 1936:52).

However, some figures, such as Day Mazaev, the long-serving chairman of the Baptist Union, held a notably unfavourable view of Prokhanov (Sinichkin 2021:34). This likely stemmed from Mazaev's (1911:268-269) belief that Prokhanov became a catalyst for a schism between Evangelical Christians and Baptists in a context where the process of merging the two directions was already underway.

Further complicating Prokhanov's legacy is the recollection of Evtukhovich, a member of the Belarusian Brotherhood of Evangelical Christian Baptists recalls Prokhanov's death in 1935 (Evtukhovich 2006:22). While generally positive about Prokhanov's contributions to musical ministry, Evtukhovich's remark hints at a negative attitude due to Prokhanov's departure abroad. He contrasts Prokhanov's peaceful passing with the violent death of Baptist Union Chairman Nikolay Odintsov, suggesting a contrasting perception among evangelical believers. Prokhanov's overseas departure may have been seen by some as a sign of weakness, as he himself acknowledged rumours about it.³¹

Contemporary researchers highlight Prokhanov's character flaws. Wardin believes that Prokhanov had an almost messianic complex (2013:loc. 10255), secretly contributed to church schisms for his own purposes (2013:255), and was autocratic and self-centred (2013:10262). Golovanova, in her research, also concluded with disappointment that Prokhanov was an ordinary person (2013:52).

Kuznetsova (2009:305) compares him unfavourably to Kargel, noting his challenging demeanour (cf. Prokhanoff 1993:39). Puzynin (2010:242) identifies two key flaws: Prokhanov's unwavering belief in his prophetic mission and his lack of humility in assessing his own achievements, as evidenced by his oversight of Pashkov's contributions to evangelical publishing in Russia. These academic perspectives add

³¹ Shenderovskiy reports that the decision to leave the country the first time was made by the elder brothers together with Prokhanov. One of the motives for the secret departure from Russia was the desire to inform the international community about the increasing persecution of evangelical believers (Shenderovskiy 1986:65). As for the non-return to Russia after leaving in May 1928, the reasons for such non-return are not definitively known. However, Shenderovskiy reports that the decision to stay was very difficult – Prokhanov was a patriot, loved Russia, but on the other hand, opportunities for active service were becoming increasingly limited, while abroad, one could work and help those in need (Shenderovskiy 1986:137). That is, it is possible that one of the reasons why Prokhanov did not return to his homeland was the desire to help those in need. And as evidenced by an excerpt from Kolensnikov's letter, which includes words of gratitude to Prokhanov for his assistance, Prokhanov was indeed actively involved in raising funds to help those in need in Russia. Kolensnikov provides the following words: 'You, dear Ivan Stepanovich, are our provider and caretaker, like a father looking after us - the suffering'. 'We sincerely thank our Lord for you, dear Ivan Stepanovich. Thanks to the packages sent to us by you, our children are still alive today. We thank you and the donors. May the Lord be with you'.

Shenderovskiy, asserts: 'This was one of the main tasks of the activities of ISP abroad: to provide meaningful assistance to the suffering and starving fellow believers in Russia!' (1986:137).

depth to the understanding of Prokhanov's complex character, connecting historical criticisms to modern scholarly analysis.

Accusations of Prokhanov instigating division within religious communities are particularly notable. Karetnikova (ed. 2001:82) uses language implying moral reproach when describing Prokhanov's role in this division, suggesting he 'led away' members to establish his own community. This negative portrayal is reinforced by Liven's (1990:106) memoirs, which suggest differences between Kargel's and Prokhanov's approaches, ultimately leading to the formation of independent communities. These accusations highlight the contentious nature of Prokhanov's leadership and provide a direct link to the earlier discussion of his perceived divisiveness.

3.11.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, while Prokhanov's legacy is marked by admiration from many quarters, it is also clouded by accusations and criticisms. This duality underscores the multifaceted nature of his character and the complexities of his leadership within religious circles. The varied perspectives on Prokhanov's character, from colleagues' testimonials to contemporary researchers' critiques, highlight the intricate and often contentious aspects of his influence, painting a comprehensive picture of a deeply polarising figure.

However, those who shared his views and belonged to the ARUEC perceived him as a moral authority. The fact that he served as the unchanging chairman of the All-Russian Union for over twenty years and received almost unanimous support in votes indicates that he enjoyed undeniable moral authority and respect among his followers (see Appendix A).

3.12. Optimism: Theoretical Assumptions

Theoretical perspectives on optimism, as articulated by Northouse (2016:204) and Carver and Scheier (2002:231), emphasise the cognitive process of maintaining a positive outlook and anticipating favourable outcomes in the future. This framework aligns with the expectancy-value motivation model, which suggests that individuals are primarily driven by the pursuit of goals, whether desired or undesired (anti-goals).

Central to this model is the concept of expectancy – the level of certainty or doubt about goal achievement – which serves as a key motivator for action. Optimists, in particular, display a broad sense of confidence that extends beyond specific goals, fostering resilience and perseverance in the face of adversity (Carver & Scheier 2002:231).

Martin Seligman (2006:3) further distinguishes between pessimistic and optimistic attitudes toward life, illustrating how pessimists tend to perceive negative events as enduring, pervasive, and internally generated, while optimists view setbacks as temporary, external, and surmountable challenges. This distinction in explanatory style, attributed to either pessimism or optimism, significantly shapes individuals' resilience and perseverance (Seligman 2006:5).

Essentially, the differentiation between pessimism and optimism lies in how individuals interpret and explain the challenging circumstances they encounter – a concept elucidated by Peterson, Buchanan, and Seligman (1995:2). Explanatory style refers to the way individuals attribute causes to events or outcomes, influencing their overall mindset and response to challenges.

A pessimistic explanatory style typically attributes negative events or failures to stable, internal, and global factors. This often leads to a negative outlook and reduced motivation to overcome obstacles (Peterson et al., 1995:2). On the other hand, an optimistic explanatory style involves attributing setbacks to temporary, external, and specific factors. This fosters a positive outlook and motivates individuals to persist in finding solutions when faced with adversity.

This explanatory framework plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' perceptions and responses to setbacks. Ultimately, it influences whether they lean toward a pessimistic or optimistic perspective when confronting life's challenges. Seligman (2006:5) asserts, based on extensive research, that pessimists tend to exhibit lower resilience and are more inclined to give up quickly when faced with adversity compared to optimists.

Therefore, optimists view life situations from a positive perspective and always anticipate good outcomes in the future. They see failures as temporary obstacles and do not blame themselves for them if they haven't genuinely made significant mistakes. Optimists seek to find goodness and meaning in the circumstances they find themselves in. As a result of such a psychological outlook, optimists prove to be much more resilient and resistant to life's crisis situations.

3.12.1. Prokhanov as an optimist

Prokhanov unequivocally identified himself as an optimist, a sentiment echoed throughout his autobiography, 'In the Cauldron of Russia: The Life of an Optimist in the Land of Pessimism', published in 1933. In its preface, he implored his contemporaries to embrace optimism, contrasting the prevailing pessimism of the era with his steadfast optimism (1933:9-10).

In his memoirs, Prokhanov recounted his conversion to Christianity (1933:42-45), describing a profound transformation from a pessimistic worldview, common among his peers, to one characterised by unwavering optimism. This optimistic outlook persisted throughout his life, even amidst the turmoil of Bolshevik persecution. Despite the apparent failure of his dream to witness a spiritually transformed Russia, Prokhanov maintained his optimistic demeanour, expressing confidence in the future of the gospel in his homeland (1933:258).

Testimonials from colleagues and contemporaries further solidify Prokhanov's reputation as an optimist. Martsinkovskiy (1936:7) recalled Prokhanov's unwavering optimism, recounting how he consistently responded to inquiries about the state of affairs with an optimistic outlook. He was affectionately dubbed 'Mr. Better and Better' by German acquaintances, reflecting his optimistic disposition

Prokhanov's epitaph, Zack (1936:52), lauded him as a 'faith optimist', attributing to him an unwavering belief in the potential for both individual conversions and national reform. Similarly, Karev (1922:14), emphasised Prokhanov's unshakable faith and prophetic foresight, praising his confident anticipation of the Evangelical Union's flourishing.

Karetnikova (2001:83) affirmed Prokhanov's optimism, noting its pervasive presence in his writings, which were imbued with a 'profound Christian optimism of faith'. This sentiment was echoed in Prokhanov's creative output, including sermons, articles, poems, and songs, all of which reflected his optimistic worldview.³²

Prokhanov's retrospective analysis of historical events highlights his optimistic perspective. He regarded setbacks such as persecution and imprisonment as catalysts for the expansion of the Evangelical Christian Movement in Russia. For instance, during the First World War, Prokhanov observed that prisoners of war, in their captivity, were more receptive to the gospel, subsequently spreading its message upon their release (1933:241-242).

Moreover, Prokhanov recognised that times of adversity, characterised by hunger, war, and disease, often fostered a greater receptiveness to spiritual matters. He believed that such hardships prompted individuals to seek solace in faith, contrasting with periods of prosperity when interest in God waned (1933:242).

Even the Bolsheviks' anti-religious campaign, while ostensibly adversarial, was perceived by Prokhanov as having unintended positive consequences. He noted that their actions, such as uncovering relics and combatting superstitions, inadvertently promoted spiritual inquiry and facilitated the spread of the gospel (1933:243-244).

Additionally, Prokhanov observed that the vehement criticism directed at evangelical believers by communist publications served to draw attention to the evangelical faith, ultimately fuelling its growth and development (1933:248-249).

³² Prokhanov often begins his publications on a very optimistic note. For example, see the first issue of *Christian* (1906, p. 1) or *Bratskii Listok* (1906, no. 4 and no. 5, p. 1)

Prokhanov (1933:251) recalls that he often used phrases like a slogan, such as Romans 8:28: 'All things work together for good to those who love the Lord'. And here, Prokhanov concludes (1933:251):

Yes, all things, including my arrests, worked for good in our labor of spreading the Gospel in Russia through the Evangelical movement. Greek Orthodoxy, Revolution, atheism and bolshevism alike plowed the soil of Russia, but they could not sow the seed which brought forth fruits unto righteousness. The messengers of the Gospel were the sowers, and the sowing is even now being followed by a glorious harvest. So I say: Glory be to Him who alone doeth wondrous things, for even the evil men would do was transformed into good.

Thus, we see that Prokhanov interprets events from the perspective of Divine sovereignty and providence, according to which all events are turned to the good of spreading the gospel.

3.12.2. Conclusion

Prokhanov's optimism was not a superficial trait, but rather a profound and integral part of his identity and faith. His unwavering positive outlook, even in the face of numerous adversities, exemplifies his deep-seated belief in the transformative power of faith and the ultimate triumph of the gospel. His life and writings stand as a testament to the strength of optimism rooted in religious conviction. Additionally, his resilience serves as further proof of his optimistic attitude towards life, a topic we will look at again later.

Even though Prokhanov's unwavering optimism was a defining feature of his life and faith, inspiring his vision of the gospel's triumph and the Christianization of Russia, it also reveals certain limitations in his understanding of the socio-political realities of his time. His steadfast belief in the transformative power of the gospel, while deeply rooted in faith, did not fully anticipate the profound impact of Bolshevik policies, which systematically suppressed religion and reshaped Russian society for decades. In this sense, Prokhanov's aspirations, though noble, often bordered on the utopian, underscoring the tension between spiritual idealism and historical realities.

This tension became painfully evident in his final days. Lying in a Berlin hospital in 1935, Prokhanov faced the stark reality of Bolshevik power at its zenith and the intensifying

persecution of the church. The apparent failure of his dream to materialize might seem like a personal tragedy—a poignant reminder of the collision between faith-filled idealism and the harsh currents of history. Yet, even in such moments, his unshaken hope in the ultimate triumph of the gospel stands as a testament to his enduring faith and the resilience of a visionary spirit.

3.13. Resilience: Theoretical Assumptions

As previously mentioned, 'resilience' refers to the ability to effectively bounce back and adapt in the face of challenging circumstances. It encompasses the capacity to respond constructively to difficulties and adversity (Northouse 2016:204; Taylor 1935:708). According to Diane Coutu (2017), resilient individuals possess three key characteristics: a staunch acceptance of reality, a deep belief in the meaningfulness of life, often supported by strongly held values, and an uncanny ability to improvise.

When it comes to the first aspect, it is important for a leader to constantly question whether they are truly aware of the reality they are facing. Coutu (2017) argues that this is a crucial question, as many individuals tend to reject reality rather than accept it.

Regarding the second aspect, the researcher emphasises the link between the ability to find meaning in the face of challenges and the presence of deeply rooted values in an individual's life or organisation.

The third ability, improvisation, as described by French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss in his concept of "bricolage", is closely connected to the idea of bouncing back. As Coutu (2017) states, this ability to adapt and think on one's feet is essential for resilience.

Bricolage in the modern sense can be defined as a kind of inventiveness, an ability to improvise a solution to a problem without proper or obvious tools or materials. Bricoleurs are always tinkering—building radios from household effects or fixing their own cars. They make the most of what they have, putting objects to unfamiliar uses.

3.13.1. Prokhanov's perception of himself as a resilient individual

In his autobiography, Prokhanov emerges as a resilient champion of spreading the gospel in Russia, navigating numerous adversities with unwavering resolve. He vividly recounts clandestine involvement in religious gatherings during his institute years, braving the constant threat of arrest and exile to further his beliefs (Prokhanoff 1933:62-64). Notably, he not only participated in these covert assemblies but also played an active role in establishing new meeting locations, demonstrating his deep commitment (Prokhanoff 1933:62-64). His engagement extended beyond preaching; he provided support to believers in exile and discreetly engaged with sympathetic government figures to alleviate their suffering (Prokhanoff 1933:64).

These accounts are corroborated by instances of persecution, such as the arrest and exile of Mr. S.A. Alexeef, which failed to deter believers from congregating (Prokhanoff 1933:64).

Additionally, Prokhanov secretly organised the publication of the periodical '*Beseda*', despite the heightened risks posed by government persecution of 'Stundists' (Prokhanoff 1933:68; Prokhanoff 1933:90). Even in the face of escalating threats, Prokhanov discreetly left St. Petersburg in 1895, guided by the counsel of his colleagues (Redaktsiya 1922a: 3; Prokhanoff 1933:92).

His decision to return to Russia after studying abroad, despite the risks, reflects his unwavering courage and commitment to spreading Christianity (Prokhanoff 1933:100, 112). From the beginning of World War I in 1914 to 1917, persecution of believers intensified, with figures like M.D. Timoshenko, V.A. Fetler, and V.G. Pavlov facing severe repression (Savinsky 1999:309-310).

In 1915, Prokhanov was accused of organising the revolutionary union "VSEKH", a charge that was reported in newspapers (Savinsky 1999:309-310). However, the murder of Rasputin in December 1916 and growing unrest among the population and in the army distracted judicial authorities from his case, and he was never summoned to court (Prokhanoff 1933:170).

Prokhanov claims that during this period, he remained in St. Petersburg, visiting and encouraging people, as well as holding secret meetings (Prokhanoff 1933:170). He notes that during this very dark time, the Lord strengthened him through faith and optimism (Prokhanoff 1933:169).

Throughout the tumultuous years of 1917–1922, characterised by widespread devastation (Prokhanoff 1933:178-179) and Bolshevik terror, Prokhanov remained steadfast in his ministry, despite the constant threats of arrest and disease (Prokhanoff 1933:178-182). His dedication was evident as he continued to support his community in Petrograd, refusing counsel to relocate (Prokhanoff 1933:181).

The prolonged absence of news from his family, followed by his wife's death, his subsequent arrest, and concern for his sons left without both parents presented significant challenges for Prokhanov. Nevertheless, he persevered, describing this period as 'terrible days and nights', yet continuing his work without interruption (Prokhanoff 1933:184-185).

Even during his imprisonment in 1921, Prokhanov displayed resilience by leading prayers and organising Bible courses in prison (Prokhanoff 1933:192-201). His prolific writing during confinement further demonstrated his unwavering dedication to his faith and mission (Prokhanoff 1933:201).

In conclusion, Prokhanov's autobiography portrays him as a resilient individual who faced persecution with courage and determination, steadfast in his commitment to spreading the gospel despite immense challenges.

3.13.2. Perceptions of Prokhanov's resilience by others

To what extent does Prokhanov's self-portrayal as a resilient and courageous figure correspond to reality? Puzynin (2010:242) observes that Prokhanov did not exhibit excessive modesty, while Kuznetsova (2009:251) characterises him as a church politician. To delve deeper, let us turn to long-time associates and witnesses of specific episodes in Prokhanov's life.

A.I. Mitskevich, a close associate and student of Prokhanov (2007:530), recounts the 6th ARCEC in 1919. Held amidst the advancing forces of Kornilov and looming food shortages, Prokhanov, elected chairman, received news of his wife's passing during the congress. Mitskevich describes Prokhanov's reaction as composed, quoting his prayer: 'The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord'. Mitskevich notes that Prokhanov courageously continued leading the congress despite personal tragedy (2007:193).

Mitskevich also recalls (2007:193) that Prokhanov, advised to leave Petrograd due to his deteriorating health, replied, 'A captain leaves his ship last'. Despite challenges like hunger and the approaching enemy, the congress concluded its sessions under Prokhanov's leadership, buoyed by his powerful sermon.

Following this congress, the All-Union Christian Youth Congress commenced, where Prokhanov was again elected chairman, demonstrating his unwavering leadership amidst personal grief (2007:194).

Karev (1922:14), Prokhanov's closest associate, lauds his resilience. Despite famine and illness, Prokhanov rejected offers of respite, opting to stay in Petrograd to fulfil his duties. His determination during these trying times, caring for his ill wife and young sons, inspires admiration.

The Morning Star editorial board (ed. Dubrovskiy 1922:14) highlight Prokhanov's leadership during the Evangelical Christian Union congresses despite government persecution. Prokhanov's resolve during the famine and epidemics in the early post-revolution years, particularly in Petrograd, underscored his commitment to his mission.

Vysotskiy's (1981:2-3) recollections from his time in detention with Prokhanov reflect an atmosphere of optimism among the believers, largely nurtured by Prokhanov's leadership and spiritual guidance. Despite the challenges of captivity, Prokhanov's poetry

and teachings served to uplift his fellow inmates, demonstrating his unwavering resilience.

A thank-you letter to Prokhanov (Vysotskiy 1981:14) from former inmates acknowledges the profound impact he had on their lives, referencing Romans 8:28. The letter credits their spiritual growth to Prokhanov's teachings and exemplary life, affirming the positive influence he exerted during their time of confinement.

Zaichenko (2020:87-88) aptly summarises the very real challenges faced by Prokhanov, asserting that

not all of Prokhanov's ideas were successfully realized. Moreover, Prokhanov "experienced the bitterness of schisms, loss of comrades, misunderstanding, and even condemnation from former friends. During the Soviet era, he endured over 15 years as a prisoner, outcast, and "enemy of the people". He was familiar with personal mistakes and forgiveness. Many of his initiatives ended in failure even during his lifetime.

3.13.3. Additional evidence of Prokhanov's resilience

Prokhanov's resilience is evident in his publishing activities, especially with the *Morning Star*. From the very first issue, a cautiously critical stance towards the Orthodox Church was noticeable (ed. Prokhanov 1910g:1). However, it was an article in the third issue of the *Morning Star* in 1911 (ed. Prokhanov 1911f:1) that caught the attention of the authorities. This article highlighted legal injustices against Baptists, describing an attack on a prayer house that resulted in the death of a Baptist elder and the prevention of his burial for three days, culminating in a forced burial far from home. Prokhanov strongly criticised Orthodox missionaries, accusing them of inciting violence – the article was titled "Power of Darkness".

This publication led to a case against the *Morning Star* on January 21, 1911 (Glavnoe Upravlenie po Delam Pechati 1911). Prokhanov was fined 200 rubles, with an alternative of six weeks imprisonment if the fine was not paid (ed. Prokhanov 1911g:4).

On April 6, 1912, issue No. 14 of the *Morning Star* published 'Copy. Open Letter to Missionary Hieromonk Varsonofy' (Neizvesnyi 1912:1), a response to Hieromonk

Varsonofy's article "At the Sectarians' Prayer Meeting" in the Diocesan Newspaper. The author strongly criticised the Orthodox Church, unfavourably comparing it to a sectarian group. Consequently, the St. Petersburg Press Committee (Sankt-Peterburgskii komitet po delam pechati 1912) initiated a criminal case against Prokhanov and decided to seize the entire issue.

In 1912 (Baglikov 1912:4), Prokhanov published an article titled "Incident in the Evangelical Christian-Baptist Community in the Village of Tikhonovka, Berdyansk District, Tavricheskaya Province on April 8", describing an outrage committed by an Orthodox priest. M. Baglikov called the priest a fool. In response, the Department of Spiritual Affairs inquired whether a case had been initiated against the *Morning Star*. The Main Directorate for Press Affairs replied that a statement from the offended party was required to initiate a case (Glavnoe Upravlenie po Delam Pechati 3 iyulya 1912).

A. Yaitskiy's (1914:6) strong affirmative response to whether soldiers can sing military songs, condemning those who refuse and claim they suffer for Christ, sparked serious controversy. This issue was discussed in issues 9, 11, and 12 of the *Morning Star* and attracted significant attention from the authorities. The Department of Spiritual Affairs noted that such discussions could undermine military discipline and recommended criminal prosecution against the *Morning Star's* editorial office (Departament Dukhovnykh Del 1914). The St. Petersburg Committee decided to prosecute Prokhanov (S.-Peterburgskogo Komitet po delam Pechati 1914). However, the prosecutor's office did not support the decision, and the case was closed (Prokuror S.-Peterburgskoi sudebnoi palaty 1914).

In 1915, attacks on the *Morning Star* intensified. As a result, the Chief Commander of the Military District suspended publication on July 30, 1916, due to the state of war (Poznansky 1916).

Despite the fines and opposition, Prokhanov fearlessly defended evangelical beliefs against the hostility of the Orthodox Church. In summary, Prokhanov's resilience, as

observed by his contemporaries and supported by historical records, confirms his depiction as a courageous advocate for the gospel in the face of adversity.

3.13.4. Reflection on episodes that appear as Prokhanov's displays of weakness

Several episodes in Prokhanov's life might be interpreted as displaying weakness or a lack of resilience.

The Appeal 'The Voice from the East' and Change in Stance on Military Service.

In early 1922, Prokhanov published 'The Voice from the East', urging Baptists worldwide to abstain from participating in wars (Savinskiy 2001:29-30). This appeal, approved by the 8th ARCEC, led to state intervention in church affairs, causing internal strife and a schism within the evangelical and Baptist communities. Prokhanov's motivations for this appeal may have stemmed from a desire to prevent devout individuals from fighting each other during the Civil War, which could lead to civilian casualties and division among believers.

In the spring of 1923, Prokhanov was arrested and imprisoned for three months. Under pressure from authorities, he and his colleagues signed a revised message on military service, recognising it as legitimate in Soviet Russia (Savinskiy 2001:31).

While this shift might seem like a capitulation, it is more likely a pragmatic decision to ensure the legal status of the evangelical movement. Additionally, Prokhanov's original appeal during the Civil War was context-specific and did not signify a change in his fundamental beliefs. His 1910 creed included a provision for military duty, which stated in the 16th chapter, titled 'Attitude toward the State' (Prokhanov 1910a:16): "We acknowledge military duty as tribute but maintain fellowship with those who think differently on this issue". The subsequent message, co-signed by his colleagues, essentially reiterated this tenet: 'To acknowledge military duty in Soviet Russia as tribute, that is, as an obligation for evangelical Christians' (Savinskiy 2001:31).

Moreover, during World War I, members of the Petersburg community led by Prokhanov actively participated on the front lines, indicating a consistent adherence to his principles. More than ten members of the youth circle from the St. Petersburg community went to the front (D-n 1915:14).

Therefore, while Prokhanov did make a certain compromise, which had negative consequences for the allied churches and led to some splits over the issue of war (Savinskiy 2001:32), it is also clear that he did not fundamentally alter his core beliefs in that specific situation.

Prokhanov's failure to return from abroad.

Another episode that might raise doubts about Prokhanov's courage and resilience is his failure to return from abroad. He left Russia in May 1928 with the intention of returning within a year, but, as he recounts in his memoirs (1933:252), 'various lectures, meetings, and conferences delayed me too long'. However, on April 8, 1929, a decree was issued that significantly curtailed the legal opportunities for communities to operate, marking the onset of severe persecutions from that period onward. Prokhanov himself explains his decision not to return (Prokhanoff 1933:252):

I soon received letters of appeal from suffering brethren, asking for help. These appeals multiplied as the needs grew, and I understood it to be the will of God that I should remain abroad and try to organize continuous assistance for the afflicted during their time of trouble.

It is important to note that there is evidence that Prokhanov *did indeed organise* assistance for those in need (Shenderovskiy 1986:137). However, whether this desire to help was the only real reason for not returning to Soviet Russia remains an open question.³³

³³ Karetnikova (2001:124) asserts that at the border, Prokhanov may have been issued a stamp in his passport prohibiting his return. In other words, the Soviet government prevented him from re-entering the country.

3.13.5. Conclusion

Prokhanov's autobiography depicts him as a resilient leader dedicated to spreading the gospel in Russia, despite facing numerous adversities. With a realistic assessment of his circumstances, he possessed a unique ability to find ways to fulfil his mission under diverse conditions. His active participation in clandestine religious gatherings, support for exiled believers, and efforts to publish under persecution highlight his unwavering commitment. His strategic decisions, steadfast leadership during crises, and continued ministry amid personal and political turmoil further illustrate his resilience. Prokhanov's ability to maintain his mission during imprisonment and personal loss underscores his profound dedication and steadfast resolve, portraying him as a resilient and courageous figure.

Prokhanov's contemporaries and associates consistently affirm his self-portrayal as a resilient and courageous leader. Testimonies from close associates like A.I. Mitskevich and Karev highlight his composure and unwavering leadership during personal and political crises. Accounts of his steadfastness during famine, illness, and imprisonment, as well as his impactful spiritual guidance, reinforce his image as a resilient advocate for the gospel.

While certain episodes may appear as potential weaknesses, they reflect context-specific decisions rather than fundamental changes in his resilient character. Overall, Prokhanov's resilience is evident in his persistent efforts to support his community and his adaptability in the face of continuous challenges.

3.14. Hope: Theoretical Assumptions

Hope, as a psychological concept, is based on several foundational theoretical assumptions. C.R. Snyder's (2000:7-8) seminal work elucidates these assumptions, emphasising goal setting as pivotal in hope theory. Individuals engage in a cognitive process where they contemplate goals, which must hold significant personal value and represent desired achievements or outcomes (Averill, Catlin & Chon 1990:13; Rand & Sigmon, 2002:258; Lopez 2013:ch.1).

A critical distinction between hope and mere desire is the probability of achieving the goal (Averill et al., 1990:13). For hope to arise, goals must be attainable but with some degree of uncertainty (Snyder et al., 2002:258). The motivating power of hope diminishes when the likelihood of achieving the goal either becomes almost impossible or absolutely certain. The optimal motivational level exists within a middle range of probability, where the pursuit of goals remains possible but not guaranteed (Snyder 2000:7-8; Averill et al., 1990:13; Snyder et al., 2002:258).

In addition to setting goals, individuals engage in pathway thinking, where they analyse and identify feasible routes to achieve those goals (Snyder 2000:8). This process involves assessing whether viable paths to the desired outcomes are available. Alongside this, individuals engage in agency thinking, which involves reflecting on their motivation, readiness, and determination to pursue the chosen path toward goal attainment (Snyder 2000:8).

Hope involves two essential cognitive processes: the subjective awareness of one's ability to create and visualise pathways to achieve a goal, and the recognition of having sufficient energy to initiate and progress along these pathways (Snyder et al., 2002:258). Snyder defines hope as 'a positive motivational state based on an interactively derived sense of successful agency (goal-directed energy) and pathways (planning to meet goals)' (Snyder, Irving & Anderson 1991:287, as quoted in Snyder et al., 2002:258). Additionally, Snyder (2000:8) offers an alternative definition, describing hope as 'the sum of perceived capabilities to produce routes to desired goals, along with the perceived motivation to use those routes'.

Moreover, researchers highlight the emotional dimension of goal achievement, noting that success generates positive emotions while failures trigger negative ones (Snyder et al., 2002:258). A crucial aspect of hope theory is the recognition of the inevitable hardships and obstacles encountered on the path to reaching goals. Overcoming these challenges enhances one's ability to maintain hope in the face of adversity, underscoring the importance of persistence and effective problem-solving strategies (Lopez, 2013: ch.1).

To assess Prokhanov's leadership qualities in relation to hope, we need to evaluate his ability to establish *attainable goals*, foster *pathway thinking*, maintain internal energy to *overcome obstacles*, adeptly manage his *emotions* during *setbacks*, and sustain *resilience* in the face of *adversity*.

3.14.1. Prokhanov as purpose driven leader

Prokhanov's Purposeful Life Goals.

After his conversion, Prokhanov set a significant life goal: to integrate Gospel ideals and Christian philosophy with practical assistance (Prokhanoff 1933:47). This newfound purpose became the guiding principle of his life. His decision to enrol in a technological institute to become an engineer-technologist likely reflected his desire to express his Christian faith through tangible means of helping others (Prokhanoff 1933:47). During his time at the institute, he developed his planning skills, demonstrated by his involvement in designing engineering projects and gaining proficiency in construction (SPb Tekhnologicheskiiy Institut 1893). His engineering background likely nurtured his pathway thinking, a critical component for realising projects.

Project Execution: Conversation Magazine.

Prokhanov's adept planning abilities were further showcased during his time at the institute when he collaborated with his brother Alexander and a colleague named Fast on a challenging project: publishing the *Conversation* magazine. Despite government restrictions on printing non-Orthodox religious literature, they clandestinely produced the magazine using a hectograph they had built illegally. By employing discreet delivery methods and pseudonyms, they successfully disseminated the publication, thereby strengthening the Christian community (Prokhanoff 1933:68; Redaktsiya 1922a:3; VSEKhB 1989:117). When it became impossible to continue publishing the journal in St. Petersburg, its production was moved abroad (Prokhanoff 1933:91), with Prokhanov later continuing this endeavour in London (Prokhanoff 1933:98).

Goal Setting and Pathway Thinking.

Prokhanov's skill in goal setting and pathway thinking is evident in his 1898 correspondence with Pashkov (Prokhanov 1898), where he articulated his vision of dedicating his life to spreading the gospel through print media. He outlined plans for publications aimed at different segments of society, emphasising the unifying and edifying aspects of Christian teachings. This strategic thinking highlights his clear objectives and the pathways he envisioned to achieve them.

Visionary Leadership.

Prokhanov's (1906b:2) visionary leadership emerged from his call to pray for the salvation of Russia and his vision of a transformed nation grounded in gospel principles. He identified several key tasks, including spreading gospel teachings through oral and written means, nurturing youth in Christian values, and educating individuals in theological sciences (Prokhanov 1906b:3). To align with his vision of societal transformation, he proposed the establishment of funds for missions, literature, education, charity, and buildings.

Adaptive Leadership.

Prokhanov's adaptive leadership is evident in his organisational strategy. When faced with obstacles in his initial project, the Russian Evangelical Union, he adapted and established the ARUEC, successfully achieving his outlined objectives (Prokhanov 1906b:3). This adaptability highlights his resilience and dedication to advancing his vision despite challenges.

3.14.2. Conclusion

Prokhanov's leadership and life goals reflect the theoretical framework of hope as defined by C.R. Snyder. He demonstrated a clear ability to set significant and attainable goals, which is essential for instilling hope. His purposeful life goals, such as integrating gospel ideals with practical assistance, align with Snyder's emphasis on goal setting. Prokhanov's pathway thinking is evident in his strategic planning and problem-solving

abilities, particularly in his clandestine publication of *Conversation* magazine under oppressive conditions.

Prokhanov's visionary and adaptive leadership further exemplifies hope through his capacity to navigate and overcome obstacles, maintaining resilience and determination in pursuit of his mission. His ability to inspire and organise his community during times of crisis, as well as his adaptability in response to changing circumstances, showcases his agency thinking and motivational strength.

Overall, Prokhanov embodied the concept of hope through his strategic goal setting, innovative pathways, and unwavering commitment to his vision, despite significant adversities. His leadership qualities affirm that he possessed a strong sense of hope, driving his efforts towards societal transformation through gospel principles.

3.15. Confidence or Self-Efficacy: Theoretical Assumptions

Self-efficacy, as delineated by Maddux (2002:277), encapsulates the concept of 'The power of believing you can'. This concept emphasises the crucial role of individuals' belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve desired goals. Maddux (2002) argues that this belief in one's efficacy is not just a perception of skill, but a conviction in one's capacity to effectively utilise those skills under specific circumstances (Maddux 2002:278). Johnson and Hackman (2018:164) expand on this idea, describing self-efficacy as the confidence in navigating and managing a variety of situations, whether in professional domains or broader societal contexts.

The initiation of any task relies on an individual's assessment of their ability to successfully carry it out. Bandura (1977:193) emphasises that the motivation to undertake a task is dependent on one's confidence in their capability to achieve it. Furthermore, efficacy expectations determine the level of dedication individuals allocate to a task, with higher expectations resulting in increased effort and persistence in the face of challenges (Bandura 1977:194).

However, self-efficacy is not solely determined by awareness of one's competence; it is also influenced by the belief in one's capacity to handle tasks effectively (Bandura 1977:194). Bandura (1977) identifies four sources through which self-efficacy can be enhanced:

1. Performance accomplishment, where success in a task reinforces confidence (Bandura 1977:195).
2. Vicarious experience, where observing others' successes fosters confidence in one's own abilities (Bandura 1977:197).
3. Verbal persuasion, although less potent than direct experience, can still strengthen self-efficacy when coupled with tangible support for goal achievement (Bandura 1977:198).
4. Emotional arousal, where stress and negative emotions can diminish confidence, emphasising the importance of stress management (Bandura 1997:106). The state of stress, fear, and depression diminishes confidence in one's competence (Johnson & Hackman 2018:164).

Notably, confident leaders demonstrate increased motivation and resilience, persisting in the face of adversity (Northouse 2016:204).

Therefore, assessing Prokhanov's leadership through the lens of self-efficacy necessitates scrutiny of his *subjective perception* of competence, exposure to inspiring *role models*, receipt of *social recognition*, and *resilience to stressors* that could undermine confidence. These factors collectively contribute to a nuanced understanding of his leadership efficacy.

3.15.1. Prokhanov as confident leader

An examination of the documentation pertaining to Prokhanov's life and service reveals his notable self-belief and confidence in his abilities. His memoirs, in particular, highlight characteristics commonly associated with individuals exhibiting high self-efficacy.

Subjective perception.

Prokhanov's portrayal of his youth underscores a *self-perception* marked by intellectual prowess and literary talent (1933:39). He recounts instances where his erudition and literary skills were acknowledged and lauded by teachers and peers. His ability to produce exemplary compositions and poetry, recognised through publication in local newspapers, further accentuates his self-assurance in his intellectual capabilities.

Regarding his first sermon, he notes that it made, in his opinion, 'a favourable impression' on the listeners (1933:51). This reinforces his confidence in his public speaking abilities.

Moreover, Prokhanov's narrative reveals a penchant for effective planning and organisation, which he attributes to his success and productivity. His meticulous approach to both short-term and long-term planning reflects a self-assessment of his adept utilisation of time and resources, indicative of confidence in his organisational skills (1933:62).

The initiative demonstrated by Prokhanov in founding the underground journal '*Beseda*' underscores his confidence in his ability to initiate and execute significant projects. His description of the journal's impact on its audience resonates with a sense of pride and fulfilment in his accomplishments, reinforcing his self-belief (1933:68).

Additionally, Prokhanov's correspondence with Pashkov elucidates his confidence in his vocational calling (Prokhanov 1898). He expressed a commitment to spreading the gospel, articulating a belief in his capacity to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for the task within a specified timeframe. This pragmatic approach, rooted in the analogy of acquiring competence akin to constructing a building, underscores his confidence in

his ability to prepare for and execute his mission effectively (SPb Tekhnologicheskii Institut 1893).³⁴

Furthermore, Prokhanov's involvement in the creation of the periodical publication *Christian* underscores his recognition of the importance of acquiring skills for the realisation of his endeavours (1933:137). His acknowledgment of the learning experiences gleaned from previous efforts underscores a commitment to continuous growth and development.

In summary, Prokhanov's self-perception and actions reflect a balance between a high estimation of his abilities and a recognition of the need for ongoing competence development. His proactive approach to learning and skill enhancement suggests confidence in his ability to effectively fulfil his vocational aspirations. This blend of self-assurance and commitment to growth likely contributed to his efficacy in conveying evangelical values effectively.

Role models.

When considering a *life example* that could serve as a model for emulation, Prokhanov's father is likely a fitting choice. Prokhanov (1933:33) acknowledges that 'various influences combined to form my character and general view of life, but foremost among them must be placed the influence of my father'. He confesses that he deeply loved and respected his father (1933:160). Stepan Prokhanov, a man of remarkable qualities, served as a member of the City Council. Although initially devoted to the Molokan faith, he later embraced the evangelical faith (1933:160). Furthermore, in Prokhanov's opinion (1933:160), his father was a successful businessman. In addition to this, he was an active minister of the evangelical church.

³⁴ In his diploma from the Technological Institute, there is a list of his competencies. It states that he has the 'right to construct factory and plant buildings with their accessories and residential premises directly connected to them, as well as to carry out construction works under the supervision of the Ministry of Transport'.

Consequently, the life, work, and service of Prokhanov's father could have served as a source of inspiration for him, someone he would aspire to emulate.

It is also possible that Pashkov had a significant influence on him. As demonstrated in the historical part of this study, Prokhanov, in continuing Pashkov's work, largely shared his views on the evangelical movement. Thus, Prokhanov likely had role models in his life who instilled confidence in his ministry.

Social recognition.

Prokhanov was highly esteemed by his colleagues for his competence and contributions. In 1922, the newspaper *Utrennyaya Zvezda (Morning Star)* featured an article celebrating his 35 years of service, highlighting his exceptionally fruitful work (Yubileynaya Komissiya pri VSEKh [YKpV] 1922:1).

The article includes a brief biography, highlighting Prokhanov as a poet-psalmist, the first powerful preacher of the gospel in Russia, a profound theologian, an ardent advocate for truth, an effective organiser, and a significant reformer (YKpV 1922:1). He is credited with a major role in the 'greatest conquest in the realm of spiritual and moral enlightenment of the Russian people'. Those who observed Prokhanov's work and the rapid growth of the evangelical church union due to his efforts expressed deep admiration and gratitude. The initiative for the jubilee celebration was led by these admirers, who sought to offer prayers of thanks and to ask for God's blessings on Prokhanov's health, strength, and longevity.

The same newspaper features enthusiastic articles about Prokhanov by Zhidkov (1922:17-18) and Karev (1922:14).

Thus, Prokhanov received consistent approval and encouragement from both colleagues and followers, as will be demonstrated throughout this study.

Resilience to stress.

When considering Prokhanov's ability to withstand stress, this aspect was examined in relation to another quality he possessed: his overall resilience of character.

Spiritual aspect.

Prokhanov's sense of divine calling played a significant role in shaping his self-confidence. His existential experience of a mission from God provided a profound source of inner strength and purpose. This spiritual conviction not only reinforced his belief in his abilities but also fuelled his persistence and resilience. Prokhanov's unwavering commitment to his spiritual mission, as evidenced by his extensive evangelical activities and writings, highlights the importance of this spiritual aspect in his overall self-efficacy.

3.15.2. Conclusion

Prokhanov's life and actions exhibit the key characteristics of self-efficacy as outlined by theorists like Maddux (2002), Bandura (1977), and Johnson and Hackman (2018). His subjective perception of competence, exposure to inspiring role models, social recognition, resilience to stress, and profound spiritual calling collectively paint a portrait of a highly self-confident leader.

A significant factor in shaping Prokhanov's self-confidence was his profound sense of divine calling. This existential experience of a mission from God provided a deep source of inner strength and purpose, reinforcing his belief in his abilities and fuelling his persistence and resilience.

Prokhanov's proactive approach to learning, his innovative initiatives, and his ability to navigate challenges effectively underscore his strong belief in his capabilities. Therefore, it is evident that Prokhanov possessed a high level of self-efficacy, which significantly contributed to his effectiveness as a leader and his ability to advance the evangelical movement in Russia.

3.16. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that Prokhanov embodied transformational and authentic leadership qualities, along with the psychological attributes characteristic of authentic leadership. His efforts in shaping the missionary movement in Russia are closely linked to these qualities, as this study has demonstrated.

Prokhanov's vision of transforming Russia through spiritual renewal was likely influenced by the harsh realities of the late 19th century. Like many intellectuals of his time, he sought answers to the profound questions posed in Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is to Be Done?*, proposing that a spiritual revolution within each individual could serve as the foundation for broader socio-political and economic transformations.

Compassion for people was a driving force throughout Prokhanov's life. This compassion was evident in his fight for religious freedom, his promotion of a culture of mutual assistance, and his establishment of agricultural communities.

Prokhanov's passion for his vision remained steadfast throughout his life, fuelled by the significant mission he set for himself and his profound conversion experience – a transformation from pessimism to optimism. His passion was further inspired by a childhood story of resurrection from the dead and a prophetic dream.

With exceptional communication skills honed through education, Prokhanov effectively conveyed his vision through live sermons and various periodicals. His well-developed social skills enabled him to attract talented young individuals, form communities, unions, and circles, and recognise the importance of collaboration in achieving a shared vision.

As an empowering leader, Prokhanov emphasised the importance of granting autonomy to both structures and individuals while investing in the development of leaders and preachers. He fostered a culture of recognition and encouragement, taking joy in celebrating collective accomplishments achieved through collaboration.

Prokhanov's high moral standards lent authority to his words among his followers. His tremendous energy and self-discipline were catalysts for the development of the missionary movement. Creatively adept, he constantly sought innovative solutions to achieve his objectives. His unwavering optimism likely inspired followers to actively participate, and his self-confidence helped him withstand harsh criticism.

Moreover, Prokhanov's technical education in construction technology enabled him to plan and implement tasks effectively. His resilience and perseverance were crucial in helping him persist in the face of diverse challenges.

CHAPTER 4:

PROKHANOV AND THE EMERGING MISSIONAL PARADIGM

4.1. Introduction

In the previous section, we highlighted Ivan Prokhanov's transformative and authentic leadership, emphasising his efforts toward the spiritual and societal renewal of Russia. This chapter builds on that foundation to explore Prokhanov's significant contributions to missiology, particularly through the lens of Reimer's hypothesis. Reimer (2013) suggests that Prokhanov anticipated many aspects of David Bosch's emerging missional paradigm detailed in *Transforming Mission* (2011).

Before discussing the emerging paradigm, it is crucial to understand the foundational missional paradigms described by Bosch. In his comprehensive work, Bosch outlines three New Testament missional paradigms and provides a historical analytical review of mission history.

Matthew's missional paradigm (Bosch 2011:loc. 2117-2209) – termed *Missionary Discipleship* – entails the community shaping its identity through the tradition of Jesus of Nazareth within the context of missional engagement. This mission, inspired by Christ, emphasises discipleship even at the cost of sacrifice, underpinning the paradox of mission directed towards both Jews and Gentiles (Bosch 2011:loc. 2179-2180). Matthew's paradigm focuses on orthopraxy over orthodoxy, prioritising actions like 'bearing fruit, doing God's will, keeping His commandments, and practicing justice' (Bosch 2011:loc. 2159).

Bosch interprets the Greek word 'dikaiosyne' in Matthew as 'justice', which he argues shifts the focus from an individualistic religious interpretation to a broader social context. This interpretation underlines the disciples' role in 'living out the teachings of Jesus', which involves a deep commitment to God's reign, justice, love, and obedience (Bosch 2011:loc. 1923-1942).

It should be remarked, however, that Matthew's community lives in the context of eschatological expectations.

In Luke's missional paradigm (Bosch 2011:loc. 2886-3108) – *Practicing Forgiveness and Solidarity with the Poor* – the Holy Spirit is portrayed as the driving force of the mission. This paradigm emphasises the multifaceted nature of salvation, including economic well-being and peace through nonviolent resistance, and positions the Church both as a welcoming body to Gentiles and a proponent of apostolic traditions.

Paul's Missional Paradigm (Bosch 2011:loc. 4219-4428) – *Invitation to Join the Eschatological Community* – emphasises the transformation of the church into a unified body where love transcends differences. Paul advocates for a balanced approach to mission, eschewing both radical apocalypticism and realised eschatology, and promotes conducting the mission in vulnerability but with hope of God's imminent triumph.

These three missional paradigms share common characteristics, yet they also possess distinct theological and missional nuances, each emerging within its unique context (Bosch 2011:9886-9888).

Following this, Bosch conducted a historical analysis of six missional paradigms, using classifications established by Hans Küng. Küng, in his 1995 work, utilised Thomas Kuhn's (1996) theory of 'paradigm shifts' to underpin these classifications. Building on this theoretical foundation, Bosch then developed an emerging missional paradigm that includes 13 distinct aspects.

According to Reimer, Prokhanov foresaw, to varying extents, at least 11 of these aspects (2013:145). These include *Mission as the Church with Others*, *Missio Dei*, *Mediating Salvation*, *Quest for Justice*, *Evangelism*, *Contextualisation*, *Inculturation*, *Common Witness*, *Ministry by the Whole People of God*, and *Action in Hope*. Reimer's reflection on the writings of the Slavic Evangelical fathers highlights the presence of nearly all of Bosch's elements in their work, underscoring their commitment to a mission that is

profoundly ecumenical and inclusive. Reimer (2013:145) notes that these leaders rarely addressed theology and interreligious dialogue due to their specific historical and cultural contexts.

In this study, we will not treat two elements from Reimer's list – Mission as Liberation and Mission as Inculturation – as separate topics. Instead, we will integrate discussions relevant to these elements into other related topics: Mission as Quest for Justice and Mission as Contextualisation, respectively. While there are similarities between Justice and Liberation, as well as between Contextualisation and Inculturation, these concepts are distinct. However, due to space constraints, this study will not explore the specific differences between these related concepts in detail.

4.2. Mission as Church with Others

The transformation of Protestant views on the relationship between the church and mission has been a lengthy process, influenced significantly by global missionary conferences (Bosch 2011:loc. 8661). Following the Tambaram conference, a new awareness emerged that the church and mission are inseparable (Bosch 2011:loc. 8671; Niemandt 2019:39-42).

Newbigin further articulated this after the 1958 International Missionary Council in Ghana, stating, 'Church and mission belong indissolubly together... mission belongs to the essence of the Church... and you cannot have fellowship with Him without being committed to partnership in His mission to the world' (1958:26-27).

In 1961, the World Council of Churches merged with the International Missionary Council, emphasising that missionary responsibility is integral to all aspects of the Church's life and teaching (WCC 1962:249-250).

Brunner (1965:108) remarked, 'The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church'. Peters (1972:ch. 6) added, 'Missions flows from the inner constitution, character, calling, and design of the church'.

Newbigin (1995:ch. 1) highlighted the reaffirmation of the church's missionary character post-Second Vatican Council, noting that 'mission belongs to the very being of the church'. Bosch (2011:loc. 8728) stated, 'In the emerging ecclesiology, the church is seen as essentially missionary'. Newbigin (1958:21) argued that the entire life of the church has a 'missionary dimension, though not all of it has mission as its primary intention'. He emphasised that evangelism is part of the church's mission, but compassionate service also holds intrinsic value. When compassion ceases to be genuine, it becomes a pragmatic action for specific goals.

Newbigin (1958:43-44) explained that not all service is 'mission' in the narrower sense but is part of the church's total mission when it bears witness to Christ beyond its own life. This includes work for justice and peace (Bosch 2011:loc. 8749).

Bosch formulated the 'Church with Others' concept, contrasting Bonhoeffer's 'church for others'. Bonhoeffer (1997:pt. 4) stated:

The church is the church only when it exists *for others*. To make a start, it should give away all its property to those in need. The clergy must live solely on the free-will offerings of their congregations, or possibly engage in some secular calling. The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live in Christ, *to exist for others*.

However, Bosch (2011:loc. 8800), citing West and Sundermeier, warned that enthusiasm for Bonhoeffer's formula might mask a liberal-humanist mindset. Instead of 'the church for others', the phrase 'the church with others' is preferred. Bosch (2011:loc. 8823) asserted that the church, in its mission, should not proclaim itself as a model to be emulated but rather say, 'Let us follow him!'

4.2.1. Conclusion

Thus, the concept of 'Mission as a Church with Others' emphasises the inseparable link between the church and its mission. This mission is comprehensive, combining evangelism with other important responsibilities, such as compassionate service. Humility should be a core characteristic of the church, characterised by an acknowledgment of its imperfections and a recognition of the necessity of collaborating with other individuals and institutions. This collaborative endeavour is vital in fulfilling the larger global mission of advancing the kingdom of God on Earth.

4.2.2 Prokhanov and the 'Church with Others' concept

Church and mission.

Prokhanov understood the church's central role in its mission. In his 'The Confession of Faith' (Prokhanov 1910a:11-12), he states: 'The goal of the local church is the establishment of the kingdom of Christ among its members and its spread in the world'.

To support this, Prokhanov cites Acts 16:5, highlighting church growth in faith and numbers, and Mark 16:15, emphasising the global scope of the mission. Revelation 3:2 and 3:9 underscore the urgency and success of the mission, respectively. These texts relate directly to the church as a community. Prokhanov's use of the New Testament to define church goals reflects his core epistemological paradigm. Puzynin (1910:237) notes, 'Prokhanov's restorative vision aimed at the lost ideal of apostolic simplicity'.

The realisation that the church should be at the centre of the mission likely came to Prokhanov after his somewhat unsuccessful attempt to create the Russian Evangelical Union. This union was envisioned as an instrument for the spiritual renewal of Russian society, serving as the foundation for social transformation, as earlier demonstrated in this study.

From 1908 onwards, there is a noticeable shift in Prokhanov's focus: from attempting to create a union of individual believers to forming a community that would serve as the foundation for a future union of churches.

An analysis of the reforms carried out by Prokhanov in the Evangelical St. Petersburg community shows that his goal was to shape a vibrant, dynamic, outward-oriented community committed to mission. Furthermore, Prokhanov envisioned mission from a holistic perspective.

He established a 'Commission for Evangelism or Oral Preaching', as reported in *The Brotherly Bulletin* (Prokhanov 1908g:9). This commission was tasked with internal church activities, city outreach, and outreach to other cities, engaging other churches to expand beyond the city.

He also established a literary commission for the publication and distribution of brochures, books, and journals 'useful for mission and for the Church' (Prokhanov 1908g:9). Additionally, a charitable commission was created to oversee shelters, workshops, future communities of mercy sisters, and to provide assistance to the poor in every possible way (Prokhanov 1908g:10). The deacons' commission was tasked with visiting and supporting the poor.

On October 30, 1908, a prayer was specifically appointed 'for the blessing of those looked after in shelters and those working for them, for the provision of resources to build a home for the shelter and maintain it, for guidance regarding the broader establishment of charitable work' (ed. Prokhanov 1908g:11).

At the conclusion of his biographical narrative, Prokhanov (1933:265) asserts that the mission and task of the church are to recreate early Christianity on earth in all its creative power, which is intimately connected to the spiritual and moral renewal of individuals, families, society, and all humankind. He further claims that the transformation of the world can only be achieved through the restoration of the Church (1933:267).

Thus, it is evident that after 1908, Prokhanov developed a missional paradigm, wherein mission is inseparable from the church and has a holistic nature.

Church with Others.

Prokhanov's vision encompassed the transformation of social and public life in Russia and later in the Soviet Union. He recognised the necessity of collaborating with public institutions to fulfil his mission.

In 1917, Prokhanov founded the Christian Democratic political party 'Voskresenie'³⁵ and published its programme (Prokhanov 1917a:7-8). The party aimed at democratising the state and the Orthodox Church, aligning them with Christ's teachings. He invited like-minded individuals to join the party (Prokhanov 1917a:8). However, he later abandoned the idea, possibly due to the concept's poor reception among evangelical believers and the Bolsheviks' elimination of political opposition (Prokhanoff 1933:172).

In his address to community leaders and believers, Prokhanov (2009l:128) emphasised the need to construct a new life on personal, family, social, and national levels. He urged participation in building this new social and national life (2009l:129), advocating for higher scientific education alongside spiritual upbringing to contribute to the Evangelical movement and the Kingdom of God (Prokhanov 1925a; 1933:237-239).

It is possible that Prokhanov here, whether consciously or not, hints at the idea that schools and higher educational institutions also, in a certain sense, serve the purposes of the Kingdom of God. And believers, by receiving education in their field of calling, can contribute to the different sphere of social life.

³⁵ This is already Prokhanov's second attempt to create a political party. The first one took place in 1905 when he, along with N.V. Odintsov and P.M. Frizen, signed the 'Political Platform of the Union of Freedom, Truth, and Peace' (Mitrokhin 1997:252; Reimer 2020:211).

Prokhanov (1925a:20) urges the use of the most advanced technologies in production, stating, 'All available improvements in science and technology should be applied to all branches of labour. In agriculture, all agronomy recommendations must be utilized'.

In his work, *The Gospel Standard of Life in Russia*, Prokhanov advocates for a comprehensive transformation across various spheres of life, emphasising the active participation of believers in this holistic societal transformation. This implies that the church, in collaboration with others, will be the driving force behind this change (Prokhanoff 1933:237-239).

4.2.3. Conclusion

In summary, key elements of the 'Mission as Church with Others' concept are evident in Prokhanov's vision. He firmly recognised the inseparability of mission from the church, positioning the church at the heart of mission efforts. Prokhanov approached mission holistically, understanding it to involve not only the spiritual transformation of individuals through conversion but also the improvement of overall living conditions. He believed that mission should address all aspects of life, with the church working in collaboration with other individuals and institutions to achieve this broad and comprehensive transformation.

4.3. Mission as *Missio Dei*

Bosch (2011:loc. 9131) highlights a significant shift in mission theology over the past 50 years, emphasising that mission is now understood as the Mission of God (*missio Dei*). Initially, mission was understood in different ways: soteriologically, as the salvation of individuals from condemnation; culturally, as the expansion of Western culture and its associated benefits; and ecclesiologically, as the growth of the church, often within a specific denomination.

The paradigm shift began in the early 1930s with Barth (Bosch 2011: loc. 9131) and became more pronounced at the 1938 Tambaram meeting of the IMC (1939:183-184), where the German delegation expressed concerns about secularisation. They emphasised that God's Kingdom would be realised through His creative act.

This theological evolution reached its pinnacle at the 1952 Willingen Conference of the IMC, where it was articulated that mission originates from God's intrinsic nature (Bosch 2011:loc. 9147). Mission transitioned from being a matter of ecclesiology or soteriology to a doctrine of the Trinity. Bosch (2011:loc. 9149-9151) explains that the classical doctrine of the *missio Dei* encompasses the Father sending the Son and both sending the Spirit, which then extends to sending the church into the world.

Aagaard (1973:11) posits that the essence of mission lies within God Himself, implying that our participation in mission is not of our own origin but a part of God's overarching initiative (Bosch 2011: loc. 9153). Peters (1972:ch. 2) advocates for a theocentric mission, challenging contemporary anthropocentric, cosmo-centric, and ecclesio-centric approaches.

The Willingen Conference also emphasized understanding mission as 'Missions under the Cross' (IMC 1953), a concept further highlighted by von Thadden (1953:51). Von Thadden noted that the cross is a manifestation of God's love for humanity, representing His solidarity with the world amidst sin and suffering. This leads to the church's role as a serving, obedient, and suffering community (von Thadden 1953:53-59), embodying the 'whole Gospel'.

Warren (1953:26) asserts that the cross symbolises God's solidarity with humanity through Christ, signifying solidarity with sinners. Regarding the church, Warren states that the Church is involved in this solidarity in a special way, being made one with the divine purpose. He emphasises that the significance of the Church in the New Testament is not as a company of those who have escaped from the world, but rather as a fellowship in which God and men are actively involved together in the world for its redemption. Moltmann (1977: 64) emphasises that the church is involved in what he calls the 'History of God'. He explains that the church itself does not initiate a mission of salvation for the world. Rather, it is incorporated into the ongoing mission led by the Son and the Spirit, which originates from the Father. This divine mission continuously shapes and expands the church. Moreover, the church does not control the Holy Spirit to fulfil functions such

as preaching, sacramental acts, ministry, or maintaining traditions. Instead, it is the Holy Spirit that guides and governs the church, channelling its activities through the proclamation of the word, the administration of sacraments, and the execution of ministerial and traditional practices.

Moltmann (1977: 65) further notes that the church actively engages in Christ's messianic mission and the creative endeavours of the Spirit, implying that the church's role is responsive and participatory within the broader divine mission orchestrated by the Holy Spirit.

The paradigm shift involved replacing ecclesiological missiology, where mission was perceived as a function of the church, with a Trinitarian missiological paradigm, where mission came to be understood as participation in *missio Dei* (Aagaard 1973:13).

Davies (1967:106) emphasises that the Eucharist not only commemorates a historical event but also engages participants in the ongoing flow of history, which he closely associates with God's mission. He argues that the church must view history through the lens of God's actions and purposes. Davies asserts that denying the importance of historical events is equivalent to rejecting the role of participating in God's mission, which fundamentally involves partnering with Him as He fulfils His objectives within the world's historical context.

Furthermore, Davies (1967:106-107) challenges Christians to actively assume responsibility for worldly events, reinforcing the idea that history is the arena of God's mission. He cautions that failing to engage with history in this active manner can lead Christians either to retreat into a passive form of spirituality known as 'quietistic Pietism' or to embrace an overly dramatic 'apocalyptic fervour', both of which disconnect believers from their essential role in God's mission in the world.

After the Willingen Consultation in 1952, the concept that mission is fundamentally God's mission was widely accepted among Christians (Bosch 2011:loc. 9163).

This understanding led to a significant paradigm shift in missional thinking, recognising that God's care extends beyond the confines of the church to encompass all creation and the entirety of human history. This broader view invites the church to actively participate in God's ongoing activities (Bosch 2011:loc. 9183-9184). Bosch emphasises that the mission does not originate from the church or any human agency. Instead, he believes that it springs from God's inherent nature of love. According to Bosch (2011:loc. 9207-9214), 'God is a fountain of sending love'. This is the deepest source of mission.

4.3.1. Conclusion

Mission as *missio Dei* is inherently God-centred, *originating* not from the church but directly from the *loving nature and character* of God, with the church actively engaging in this Divine mission. Mission is perceived from a *Trinitarian* perspective, implying that the church actively participates in the mission of God the Father, the Son, and the *Holy Spirit*. The *missio Dei* paradigm addresses and corrects past theological approaches that *dehistoricised* God's narrative, countering tendencies toward *quietism* and *escapism* by reaffirming the church's active role in the unfolding historical saga of divine redemption.

As a *universal* and *holistic* endeavour, the mission extends beyond traditional boundaries, compelling the church to address global *injustices*, environmental concerns, and societal healing, reflecting the *comprehensive* scope of God's redemptive plan. Seeing the mission as cross-centric underscores the profound solidarity of God with a suffering world through Christ's sacrifice, compelling the church to emulate this love and solidarity, not just spiritually but in tangible acts of justice and mercy.

4.3.2. Prokhanov as a missional leader: Embracing the *missio Dei* framework of thinking

It is crucial to recognise that although Ivan Prokhanov did not explicitly use the term '*missio Dei*', his theological and missional approach closely aligns with its paradigm. This is particularly evident in his visionary interpretation of the transformation of the Russian Empire, inspired by the prophetic imagery in Ezekiel 37 (Prokhanoff 1933:119). Prokhanov draws a compelling parallel between the desolate state of Russia and the valley of dry bones, envisioning a national resurgence initiated by divine intervention.

This biblical narrative is pivotal in understanding Prokhanov's vision for a spiritual revolution within Russia. In this passage, the revival of the dry bones follows a prophetic declaration, supported by God's promise to breathe life into them (Ez. 37:1-14). Prokhanov interprets this resurrection as a powerful metaphor for Russia's awakening from spiritual desolation, with the Holy Spirit playing a crucial role in this transformative mission. Consequently, the mission of reviving Russia is an act of God, embodying the concept of *missio Dei*, where God resurrects the country through the Holy Spirit. However, God also invites people to participate in His mission.

The pneumatological focus in Prokhanov's thought warrants further examination. As Reimer (2013:145) remarks, the 'idea of spiritual revolution, which goes beyond the classic Western concepts of mission at the time', reveals a sophisticated understanding of the Holy Spirit's role not only in spiritual awakening but also in societal transformation.

First, the Holy Spirit is indispensable for those who proclaim Christ. Prokhanov emphasises the need to pray for the Holy Spirit's empowerment in preaching the gospel (ed. Prokhanov 1906h:3). However, the Holy Spirit's work extends beyond this role. Prokhanov delineates several roles of the Holy Spirit, which he discusses in his 1906 article in *Christian* (Prokhanov 1906a:19-25). He describes the Spirit as a 'life-creating force during creation' (Prokhanov 1906a:22), a 'liberating force in the life of nations', and a 'renewing force in societal life' (Prokhanov 1906a:23). These descriptions underscore the Spirit's comprehensive influence across individual, communal, and national spheres. For instance, Prokhanov credits the Spirit with empowering Moses and the elders to

liberate and organize the Israelites, highlighting a broader application of spiritual influence beyond individual salvation to national liberation and societal renewal (Prokhanov 1906a:23).

Furthermore, Prokhanov's reflections on the communal impacts of the Holy Spirit, evidenced in the early Christian community's unity and generosity (Acts 2:42-45; 4:32), suggest that the Spirit was instrumental in overcoming societal divisions and fostering a communal ethos among believers (Prokhanov 1906a:23).

However, the Holy Spirit also transforms individuals. Prokhanov points out that the Holy Spirit plays a role in rejuvenating an individual's life. He uses the example of Saul, who went from persecuting the church to becoming a passionate preacher of Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit (Prokhanov 1906a:24). According to Prokhanov (1906a:24), 'By the Holy Spirit, the truth of Christ was revealed to the Apostle Paul, which completely changes a person, regenerates him, and makes him a new creation in Christ'.

Many of Prokhanov's pneumatological ideas found creative expression in his poem "Hymn to the Holy Spirit." This hymn was first published as a piece specifically arranged for choral performance with piano accompaniment, as indicated in its original score (Prokhanov 1906k:1-2; Appendix B). The arrangement underscores the central role Prokhanov assigned to music and poetry in the life of both the church and society, reflecting his belief in their transformative power. Published in the third issue of the journal *Christianin*, the hymn exemplified the active realization of Prokhanov's vision for a spiritually renewed church.

Prokhanov began the hymn with an epigraph from 1 John 5:7: "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." By including this scriptural reference, he likely intended to emphasise the hymn's theological function: instilling core convictions about the Triune God, who actively fulfils His mission in the world. The hymn is structured as a prayer, with its refrain repeatedly invoking the outpouring of the Holy Spirit:

*Hear our prayer and faith,
Pour Yourself out fully,
On Your children,
On Your children.*

Prayer and faith occupy a central place in Prokhanov's ecclesiological spirituality. Through prayer, the church receives the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit—the same Spirit who, as the hymn proclaims, created the cosmos:

*Spirit who created the starry heavens,
The expanse of the earth, and the depths of the seas.*

The hymn portrays the Spirit not only as the sustainer of creation but also as the divine enabler of prophetic ministry. This is powerfully illustrated in the reference to Moses:

*Spirit, who raised up Moses,
And to the prophets gave their speech!*

Here, Prokhanov emphasises the Spirit's active role in empowering leaders to articulate God's truth, connecting biblical history with the church's contemporary mission. A strong sense of missional urgency pervades the hymn, as it pleads for divine assistance in proclaiming truth and drawing the people of Russia to God:

*Help us, sowing truth,
To draw the proud world to You.*

This prayer reflects a cooperative understanding of mission, where divine grace provides the message and power, while human responsibility is essential for its fulfilment. Prokhanov's missional culture emphasises that, although human effort is vital, it remains insufficient without the power of the Holy Spirit.

The hymn also portrays the Spirit as the one who liberates:

Spirit of Freedom!
Break the chains of decay,
In human hearts today!

Furthermore, the Spirit brings comfort to those who are grieving:

Comforting Spirit!
To the grieving,
Send comfort!

Prokhanov viewed this as a shared task: Christians, empowered by the Spirit, are called to bring comfort to those in need:

Help those working to
Comfort the children of the earth.

Prokhanov's ideal is the transformative power of the Spirit as experienced by the apostles at Pentecost—an event he longed to see replicated in his own context:

Spirit, who on Pentecost Day,
Came down upon the Apostles to stay!

The hymn also emphasizes the Spirit's role in building the church:

You pour out grace upon grace
On the faithful;
You build the Church within us,
And in it, You wish to embrace the world.

Thus, Prokhanov's *Hymn to the Holy Spirit* is not only a work of devotional expression but also a profound theological and missional statement that embodies the essence of *Missio Dei*. By portraying the Spirit as Creator, Liberator, Comforter, and Builder of the Church, the hymn articulates a vision of mission that integrates personal renewal with societal transformation.

Theologically, it reflects the dynamic interplay of Trinitarian action and human cooperation in God's redemptive work. Historically, it responds to the challenges of a socially and politically tumultuous Russia, offering a vision of hope and renewal through the Spirit's power. In this way, Prokhanov's hymn transcends its immediate context, serving as a timeless call to Spirit-empowered mission in every generation.

When it comes to why nations are not transformed, Prokhanov emphasises the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of freedom. He compares the Holy Spirit to a lightning-fast current that fills the lives of people, societies, or individuals who willingly receive it. Prokhanov emphasises that the Spirit does not force its way in and does not intrude on people, societies, or individuals against their will (Prokhanov 1906a:24-25).

Prokhanov holds to the traditional evangelical belief in redemption through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross at Golgotha. This is highlighted in his work 'Christ Crucified' (2009j: 63-71) and is also referenced in the epigraph of *Christian* magazine (We preach Christ Crucified). Prokhanov sees the communication of God's love as the essence of evangelism (Trosnov 1912a:4; Prokhanov 2009b:39). Additionally, Prokhanov's mission-oriented transformative vision is motivated by a sense of solidarity with the suffering, as evident in the discussions presented in the first and second chapters of this study.

4.3.3. Conclusion

Thus, Prokhanov's missiology has a Trinitarian character, with Christocentrism and pneumatology being dominant. Prokhanov managed to overcome tendencies towards the dehistoricisation of Divine history, which leads to escapism or quietism. In Prokhanov's view, the mission is thought of both holistically and universally. The task of the church is not only to save individual people but also to transform society.

That is, he does not oppose individual conversion to social transformation. The Holy Spirit accomplishes both (see 'New or Evangelical Life' Prokhanov 1925a:4-23, also Prokhanoff 1933:237-238). The Cross of Christ and the preaching of God's love hold significant places in Prokhanov's missiology. And although he likely did not directly associate the Cross of Christ with the idea of solidarity with the outcasts, Prokhanov

actively promoted the idea of solidarity with suffering people, as shown earlier. Thus, we can assert that Prokhanov, to a large extent, anticipated the ideas of the *missio Dei* concept in his missiological paradigm.

4.4. Mission as Mediating Salvation

4.4.1. Historical perspective

David Bosch (2011:loc. 9229) identifies a significant paradigm shift in the concept of 'salvation', which has evolved in tandem with transformations in church and mission dynamics. This new missiological paradigm extends beyond the mere propagation of religious *beliefs* and individual *conversions* to embrace a more *holistic* approach (Wright 2010). According to Bosch (2011:ch. 12), God's redemptive action now addresses broader existential needs, encompassing both spiritual and earthly aspects of salvation.

Bosch (2011:loc. 9219) traces the historical trajectory of missionary concepts, noting that the term 'Jesus' – which means 'Saviour' – has long been central to the Christian missionary motivation to universally mediate salvation. This *soteriological* drive has deeply influenced the church's missionary efforts, closely linking *missiology* with *soteriology*. The church's mission scope is thus defined by its understanding of the essence of salvation.

Bosch further observes a nuanced trend in the New Testament towards a more comprehensive soteriological framework, remarking that early church reflections revealed salvation as being interpreted in broad terms (Bosch 2011:loc. 9231). For example, Scheffler (1993:60-69) analyses Jesus Christ's ministry in the Gospel of Luke, highlighting Christ's mission to alleviate suffering across various human dimensions, including economic hardships. This holistic approach recognizes the realisation of salvation in the present, addressing social, political, physical, psychological, and spiritual afflictions

Pauline theology suggests that salvation begins with an encounter with the living Christ and culminates in *eschatological* fulfilment. Although reconciliation is central, Paul often describes salvation in future-oriented terms (Rom. 5:10), a view supported by scholars

like Green (1998:153) and Beker (1984), who note the eschatological nature of Paul's salvation concept.

The present aspect of salvation also has significant *social* and *political* implications, as seen in Paul's letter to Philemon and the designation of Christ as Kyrios and Soter, in contrast to Caesar's title of saviour and lord (Bosch 2011:loc. 9243).

Bosch highlights the differing soteriological perspectives between the Western and Eastern churches (2011:loc. 9243). The Eastern Church emphasises *theosis* – human divinization through Christ's origin and incarnation – while the Western tradition focuses on the *transformative* impact of Christ's death, as seen in Anselm's theory of vicarious satisfaction (Beinert 1983:203-205, as quoted in Bosch 2011:loc. 5191). In the West, salvation is often viewed primarily as redemption in the afterlife.

This divergence has resulted in a disconnect between Christology and soteriology, with soteriology often overshadowing God's concern for human welfare. This focus has sometimes caused missionary efforts to prioritise redemption while neglecting engagement with society (Bosch 2011:loc. 9257).

Missionaries like Bartholomeus Ziegenbalg and H. Plutschau initially prioritised spiritual salvation but gradually recognised the need to address educational, social, and medical concerns (Verkuyl 1987:177). Despite this, these efforts were often seen as secondary to the goal of proclaiming eternal salvation in Christ, creating a division between charitable actions and spiritual pursuits, with only the latter seen as truly salvific (Bosch 2011:loc. 9253).

Bosch criticises this approach, arguing that it causes believers to detach from societal needs and limits their ability to bring about meaningful societal transformation (Bosch 2011:loc. 9263).

In response to critiques from modernism, traditional soteriology was reevaluated, broadening the concept of salvation to include liberation from superstition, enhancement of human welfare, and moral improvement. Bosch describes this modern reinterpretation

as a radical redefinition of salvation, emphasizing human agency facilitated by scientific and socio-political advancements (Bosch 2011:loc. 9274).

In response to modernism, the church took two different approaches: some maintained traditional soteriological frameworks, while others adapted to contemporary paradigms, abandoning concepts such as Christ's substitutionary sacrifice. In this shift, Jesus was reinterpreted as a moral example rather than the central figure in salvation (Bosch 2011:loc. 9281-9288).

According to this modernist perspective, guilt and sin are no longer seen as barriers to divine communion, but rather as causes of interpersonal conflict. This redefines salvation as the restoration of human relationships rather than a direct reconciliation with God. Proponents of this view advocate for addressing societal issues through education, treating sin more as a form of ignorance rather than a moral failing (Bosch 2011:loc. 9288).

Although these optimistic projections declined from the 1920s to the 1950s, they experienced a resurgence in the 1960s. The Bangkok Conference (1973:89) exemplified efforts towards a holistic mission, emphasising that salvation should address economic justice, human dignity, and solidarity. However, Bosch criticises this view for excessively secularizing salvation (Bosch 2011:loc. 9307).

After Vatican II, the Catholic Church expanded its understanding of salvation, embracing the influence of liberation theology to address systemic injustices like oppression and war (Bosch 2011:loc. 9318). Starting with the 1975 Nairobi Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Bosch observes a shift in the way salvation is perceived. Previously, salvation was seen as a constant progression, but now it is recognised as more complex and multidimensional. The church now understands its limitations when it comes to achieving salvation independently and differentiates between salvation and well-being as interconnected yet distinct concepts (Bosch 2011:loc. 9334).

Bosch identifies the absence of a comprehensive Christology as the primary challenge in effectively mediating salvation. Historically, various missiological approaches have emphasised different aspects of Christ's attributes: the Eastern Church focuses on His pre-existence and incarnation, the Western Church highlights His redemptive sacrifice as articulated in Anselm's satisfaction theory, and a third perspective emphasises the ethical implications of His teachings and life (Bosch 2011:loc. 9366).

4.4.2. Elements of new mission as mediating salvation paradigm

Bosch (2011:loc. 9371) contends that a more comprehensive Christological framework is essential – one that embraces the *totus Christus*: His incarnation, earthly life, death, resurrection, and parousia. Such a balanced Christological approach leads to a holistic missiological paradigm. In this paradigm, the mission of salvation includes *reconciliation* with God through Christ's death, *transformation* into the image of God (*theosis*), grounding in Christ's *teachings, discipleship, and active engagement* in worldly affairs to alleviate human suffering. Additionally, the *eschatological* aspect should remain a focal point for churches aiming for a comprehensive and balanced understanding of salvation.

4.4.3. Prokhanov and mission as mediating salvation paradigm

This study argues that Ivan Prokhanov embraced a holistic and balanced approach to mission service long before the contemporary missional paradigm came into existence. His vision aimed to comprehensively transform Russian society on multiple levels, through spiritual renewal and societal reform, reflecting a holistic understanding of salvation.

Salvation as Reconciliation with God

Prokhanov's missiological paradigm begins with the preaching of the crucified Christ – 'we preach Christ crucified' – which is the first epigraph on the cover page of the *Christian* magazine.

In his sermon 'Crucified Christ', Prokhanov (2009j:68) asserts that salvation and forgiveness of sins come solely through the crucified Christ. In his sermon "Peace to You", Prokhanov speaks about the inherent state of humanity, which is at odds with God (2009k:48). According to Prokhanov, before God, a person stands as a criminal before a judge. However, by recognising Christ as the Saviour and understanding His act of love, individuals become aware of their own sinfulness and experience repentance. By surrendering to Christ, reconciling with the Lord, receiving forgiveness of sins, and becoming a 'new creation' in Christ, they can attain salvation. Prokhanov also believes in the concept of a 'home in heaven' (2009l:126). Thus, reconciliation leading to heavenly blessings for believers is an important aspect of Prokhanov's missional theology.

Salvation as Transformation

As a result of reconciliation with God, individuals undergo a transformative process that Prokhanov refers to as 'rebirth'. In his sermon 'Old and New Man' (2007c:196), Prokhanov emphasises that the essence of Christianity lies in the rebirth of the individual. However, this rebirth does not mark the end of a person's spiritual and moral life; rather, it is just the beginning. The ultimate goal of Christian life is to restore the image of God within us. In his sermon 'On the Human Feeling', Prokhanov (2009e:257) states that 'Christ came to restore the image of God in man'. This restoration occurs through both rebirth, which is the initial step, and gradual sanctification.

Prokhanov extensively speaks about the process of spiritual growth. For example, in the sermon 'Until we all come...to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph. 4:13), Prokhanov emphasizes the importance of spiritual maturity in a believer's life (2007d:220). He acknowledges that there are individuals who remain spiritual infants for an extended period (2007d:222). However, a reborn believer should not remain an infant but should strive to grow spiritually. The ultimate goal of growth, which is sanctification, is to become holy and to be like Christ (2007e: 232). Growing into the full measure of Christ's age means resembling Him, and this means learning to love: loving God, loving neighbours, loving enemies, and loving the work of God and His Church (2007d:224).

Additionally, Prokhanov outlines a clear path to spiritual growth by emphasising several essential conditions. It is crucial to engage in self-examination to recognise the presence of sin, as sin hinders growth and must be confessed (2007d:224-226). Living in a healthy spiritual environment, especially within the Church of Christ, is vital for fostering spiritual growth (2007d:225).

The Word of God plays a central role in transforming believers. Prokhanov believes that the purpose of the Bible is to guide individuals toward spiritual and moral perfection (2009f:213). He emphasises the necessity of loving the Word of God, likening it to an infant's love for milk (2007d:225). Knowing Jesus Christ (2007d:223) and fixing one's gaze on Him is also important (2007e:227-232). Immersion in an atmosphere of love, achieved through close communion with God, is essential for spiritual growth (2007d:225).

Prokhanov compares being filled with the Holy Spirit to breathing air, stating that life is impossible without it (2007d:226). Communication with Christ through prayer is crucial for both spiritual transformation and sustaining spiritual life, igniting believers' hearts (2007a:206-207).

Prokhanov distinguishes three types of prayer: prayer in the church, prayer in solitude, and prayer in the family. He criticises memorised prayers and advocates for living, Apostolic prayer, which involves a profound movement of the soul and lively conversation with God (Prokhanov 1928a:10). Such prayer, he argues, provides spiritual strength and forms the foundation of believers' spiritual lives, making them unshakable against Satan's influence (Prokhanov 2007b:186).

Active service is another key tool for spiritual transformation, according to Prokhanov (2007c:203).

Therefore, the primary avenues for spiritual growth and personal transformation consist of dealing with sin (confessing sins), communal life, studying the Word of God, knowing Christ or looking at Him, prayers, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and active service, including evangelism.

Alleviating the suffering of others is also emphasised by Prokhanov (2009e:257). He rejects passive Christianity that only focuses on internal spiritual needs and asserts that Christians should not solely seek spiritual peace and contemplation without engaging in labour (2009c:139): “That a Christian should constantly abide in a state of spiritual peace and contemplation everywhere and not be involved in any labor at all, of course, is an entirely false doctrine.” The church led by Prokhanov actively participated in alleviating the suffering of those in need (Karev 1925:51). Prokhanov presents a model of social transformation aimed at reforming and developing different aspects of individuals' lives and society as a whole (New or Gospel Life 1925a:4-23). He addresses evangelical leaders and members, stating that, “We are entrusted with the construction of a new life, personal, family, societal, and national” (2009l:125-130). He argues against the idea of making people more unhappy to make them think more about the afterlife, considering this attitude as cruel (2009l:126). Our responsibility, in Prokhanov's view (2009l:126), is “to benefit them, feed the hungry enemy, clothe the naked, and so on. Hence it is clear that the Christian's duty is not to worsen the general life of the world and the conditions in which people live, but to improve.” Christians should demonstrate God's love by doing good to everyone, even to the wicked (Matt. 5:44-48). The duty of Christians is not to worsen the conditions of life but to improve them (2009l:126).

Prokhanov provides several arguments for believers' involvement in the transformation of public life.

Aligning with God's Desires: Restructuring the world to eliminate hunger and need benefits both believers and non-believers, aligning with God's desires.

Witness to the Gospel's Power: Improving lives, even of non-believers, demonstrates the power and universality of the Gospel, proving that the belief in heavenly perfection is a profound truth.

Convincing the World through Love: Love expressed in God's name will convince the world of the Christian worldview's truthfulness, as hearts are conquered by love, not violence.

Prokhanov anticipated a critical response to his article "New or Evangelical Life" (1925a: 4-23), in which he called on believers to transform earthly life according to the gospel.

He called critics pessimists (2009l:125), acknowledging their arguments that Christians are strangers on earth and should seek heavenly things, not earthly ones (Heb. 11:10-16; Col. 3:1-2). Critics argued that since the world is doomed, Christians should not improve it. Prokhanov counters this view, agreeing that while Christians' true home is in heaven, this does not justify making the world worse. Christians should not destroy good or deprive people of necessary comforts to make them more miserable for the afterlife (2009l:126).

For Prokhanov, improving the world is evidence of the gospel's power and proof that heavenly perfection is not a fiction (2009l:126): "If we could reorganize the world so that there were no hungry or needy people, not only among believers, but also among unbelievers, then it would be good, for this is what God desires to see from us."

Salvation as Eschatological Event.

Prokhanov is cautious about overly optimistic expectations that people can achieve an ideal life on their own. He asserts that the ideal life will be realised on earth only with the arrival of the 'millennial Kingdom of Christ', during which there will be no evil because, as he believes, 'Satan will be bound' (2009l:127).

Additionally, Prokhanov partially agrees with critics of Christians' social activities. He acknowledges that 'our homeland is in heaven, that all our treasures, all our hopes are there, and that everything earthly is transient – all of this is true, all of this is indeed a great Christian truth' (2009l:126). In other words, as will be further demonstrated in the concluding part of this chapter, Prokhanov does not lose sight of the eschatological hope central to the Christian faith.

4.4.4. Conclusion

Thus, it is reasonable to argue that Prokhanov's missional paradigm encompasses various aspects of soteriology: reconciliation with God, achieved through Christ's death; transformation into the divine image and deification, linked with the incarnation and teachings of Christ; active engagement in worldly matters to alleviate human suffering, mirroring Christ's example; and the eschatological expectation of Christ's return. Each of these elements plays a role, to varying degrees, in shaping Prokhanov's approach.

It is important to note, though, that Prokhanov adheres to the evangelical theological paradigm, thus distinguishing soteriology from the concept of sanctification. For him, the process of spiritual transformation and active social engagement are not directly tied to questions of salvation.

However, Prokhanov's theological thinking and its implementation in practice reflect, to some degree, a comprehensive Christology, as advocated by Bosch, namely *totus Christus*. A probable source of such a balanced approach is possibly a combined creative compilation-contextualisation approach to various Christian traditions, on one hand, and Prokhanov's inclination towards New Testament restoration, on the other hand.

4.5. Mission as the Quest for Justice

4.5.1. Historical perspective on the relationship between the issue of social justice and mission of the church

David Bosch, in his seminal work *Transforming Mission*, articulates the complex interplay between *evangelism* and *social justice*, advising caution against both *conflating* and completely *separating* these elements within Christian missions. He identifies the integration of evangelistic and societal dimensions as one of the most challenging facets of mission theology and practice (Bosch 2011:loc. 9404).

Bosch analyses the evolution of perceptions of social justice from the Old Testament era to the New Testament period. He points out that in ancient times, prophets encouraged Israelite kings to prioritise justice, emphasising their covenant with God. In contrast, the New Testament church, under Roman rule, lacked a shared religious foundation with the state, which may explain the more 'spiritual' interpretation of the New Testament compared to the Old Testament (Bosch 2011:loc. 9404-9414).

The accession of Emperor Constantine was a significant moment, as it introduced the challenge of the church potentially compromising with state power on social justice matters. Bosch highlights the era of 'court prophets', who refrained from criticising authorities even when they were involved in injustices (Bosch 2011:loc. 9414).

The discussion then moves on to Augustine, who distinguished between self-love, which fostered the earthly city, and the love of God, which created the heavenly city (Augustine 2023:674). Reinhold Niebuhr later criticised this dichotomy, arguing that it oversimplified the complexities of moral existence by contrasting divine holiness with worldly corruption. According to Niebuhr, this perspective promotes a form of indifference where believers are encouraged to pursue divine perfection by withdrawing from worldly affairs, thereby relieving the church of its responsibilities towards social reform (Niebuhr 2015:pt. 3).

In the modern era, the separation between socio-political life and private religious practice further marginalised the public role of the church (Bosch 2011:loc. 9423).

Niebuhr identifies two prevailing motivations within Christian communities: the rational ethics of justice and the religious ethic of love. The former advocates for fair consideration of others' needs, while the latter emphasises uncalculated assistance to neighbours, rooted in a transcendent ethic exemplified by Jesus (Niebuhr 2015:pt. 3).

This dichotomy contrasts with the *mystical* ideal, which advocates withdrawal from the world, and the *prophetic* ideal, which urges engagement in societal affairs out of *love* for others. This tension reflects a significant challenge within Christian theology, as the mystical inclination toward total detachment from the world is seen as both a spiritual journey and a potential barrier to active social engagement (Haight 1976:623; Bosch 2011:loc. 9443).

In Protestant ecumenical denominations and contemporary Catholicism, a prophetic dimension often guides social engagement, although it can be overshadowed by a rational ethic of *justice*. Post-1900, conservative evangelical circles perceived a threat to foundational Christian doctrines from the Social Gospel movement, which they believed *overly emphasised* social concerns at the expense of *eternal salvation* through Christ's atoning work (Marsden 2006:92).

To balance evangelism with social engagement, many advocate for a dual mandate: the *cultural* mandate, which calls for responsible participation in society, including in social justice, and the *evangelistic* mandate, which prioritises spreading the gospel (Bassham 1979:343). The Lausanne Covenant exemplifies this dual mandate, recognising both evangelism and socio-political involvement as Christian duties, with evangelism maintaining primacy (Lausanne Movement 1974; Bassham 1979:344).

Over time, evangelical interest in social issues has increased, evidenced by declarations like the Wheaton Declaration and the Manila Manifesto, which advocate for an integration of evangelism and social responsibility (Bassham 1979:343; Lausanne Movement 1989). The Cape Town Commitment further emphasises this integration, affirming that both evangelism and socio-political involvement are essential expressions of Christian faith

and duty, encapsulating the belief that 'faith without works is dead' (Lausanne Movement 2010:para 10).

While Frierson (2018:65) suggests a potential shift away from an evangelism-centric approach, the balanced perspective continues to resonate with many evangelical Christians.³⁶

4.5.2. Conclusion

Thus, the development of a balanced, holistic approach to the church's involvement in issues of social justice was a complex process. Initially, drawing from the Old Testament, the church *recognised* its mission in prophetic service, following the example of ancient prophets. However, its early emergence during a period when Christians were a minority and alienated from public life limited its initial impact.

Following the official recognition of the church by Emperor Constantine, a significant challenge emerged: the temptation to prioritise political *expediency* over its prophetic mission. This dilemma was further exacerbated by Augustine's *dichotomous* worldview, which arguably hindered the church's active involvement in social justice. Moreover, the Enlightenment period introduced adverse effects, diminishing the church's role in public life.

Historically, two ideals have influenced the church's engagement in the struggle for social justice: the *mystical* ideal, promoting escapism and quietism, and the *prophetic* ideal, which encouraged social activism. The latter, combined with rational ethics of *justice* and religious ethics of *love*, became a potent motivational force for Christians to engage in social life, despite the distancing effect of the mystical ideal.

³⁶ Frierson (2018:66) believes that the formulation of The Cape Town Commitment did not satisfy everyone. Even if it was a minority, some left Cape Town with disappointed feelings of alienation. Frierson states: 'It appears that the goal of clearly defining the relationship between evangelism and social concern, as stated in 1974, has yet to be accomplished. In fact, the tension remains, and the Lausanne movement appears to have grown tired of debating the matter'.

The concept of two-mandate responsibility represents a contemporary attempt to address the complex dynamics of the church's engagement with social evils and injustice. This approach seeks to balance the historical dichotomies by advocating for both *spiritual* and *social* responsibilities.

4.5.3. Prokhanov and the issue of social justice

Chapter 3 examined the significant impact of social justice issues on Ivan Prokhanov's worldview, which was heavily influenced by his early encounters with injustice. Prokhanov's formative years were deeply shaped by his family's persecution for their faith, as depicted in the stories of their suffering. This history instilled in him a profound empathy for the oppressed – a sentiment that was further reinforced during his visits to prisons where believers were unjustly detained (Prokhanoff 1933:29, 41, 115).

During his academic years (Prokhanoff 1933:37), Prokhanov became even more aware of the widespread limitations on freedom prevalent throughout Russia, leading him to metaphorically describe the nation as a vast prison (Prokhanoff 1933:37, 40). This deep-seated understanding of oppression and lack of freedom formed the basis of his enduring commitment to advocate for social justice and reform.

Prokhanov (1933:40) asserted that 'the first thing needed for this unfortunate country was liberty, freedom', directly linking the absence of justice to the lack of freedom. He envisioned a future Russia where 'all injustice and violence would be eliminated, and true justice and freedom would be established, for we are called to freedom' (Prokhanov 1906b:2).

Expanding on this vision, Prokhanov proposed the construction of societal structures that mirrored those of the early apostolic church. His goal was to eradicate injustice and ensure a community where no one suffered from poverty (Prokhanov 1928a:12). This architectural blueprint for society illustrates Prokhanov's aspiration to ground modern social reforms in historical Christian values, blending his theological principles with his advocacy for civil liberties. By anchoring his vision for social justice in the practices of

the early church, Prokhanov emphasised the timeless relevance of Christian values in addressing contemporary social issues.

Prokhanov and Politics.

Ivan Prokhanov's political engagement was deeply connected with his commitment to social justice and religious freedom. His political journey began in 1905 when he co-signed the 'Political Platform of the Union of Freedom, Truth, and Peace' with N.V. Odintsov and P.M. Frizen, marking his entry into formal political advocacy (Mitrokhin 1997:252).

Prokhanov's political involvement gained momentum after the February Revolution. In 1917, he established the Christian-Democratic Party 'Resurrection', which was aimed at promoting freedom and justice. This was prominently featured in the first issue of his newspaper *Morning Star* on March 24, 1917 (Bychkov 1992:3; Prokhanov 1917a:7). The party's manifesto, advocating for the representation of religious communities in the Constituent Assembly, was presented during the 4th ARCEC in Petrograd (May 1917) (VSEKh 1917:89, 90). Prokhanov emphasised the party's role in safeguarding religious freedom from civil authority interference (VSEKh 1917:90).

Despite initial enthusiasm, the Congress exhibited a cautious approach towards direct political engagement by religious communities, supporting individual political participation as a personal and civic duty (VSEKh 1917:91).³⁷ This reflected the complexities of maintaining a clear distinction between spiritual goals and political activities.

³⁷ Here is the resolution adopted by the congress ((VSEKh 1917:91): having heard the report of I.S.P on the Christian-Democratic Party, the Congress deems it undesirable for communities to be involved in politics. On the other hand, the *Congress welcomes* the formation of the Christian-Democratic Party as a private initiative of some union members, aiming at the worldwide organisation of the state life of nations in accordance with the highest Christian ideals. Participation in the party is a personal matter of conscience for each and fulfillment of a state duty.

However, Prokhanov's attempts to use political parties as vehicles for his goals largely did not meet their objectives. Two notable initiatives, including the establishment of the Christian-Democratic Party 'Resurrection', failed to gain significant traction due to a range of socio-political and religious obstacles. Despite these modest outcomes, Mitrokhin (1997:260) lauded Prokhanov's strategic approach, acknowledging his skill in articulating a vision with enduring potential for influence.

Subsequently, Prokhanov scaled back his direct political involvement, focusing instead on leveraging his writings and public advocacy to champion the freedom of preaching the gospel. He viewed this as essential for igniting a spiritual revolution that could fundamentally transform Russian society (Prokhanoff 1933:40; VSEKh 1917:90). In essence, Prokhanov's primary goal was not to overhaul Russian society through political struggle but rather to advocate for religious freedoms, specifically the liberty to preach the Gospel, which he believed was pivotal for catalysing a comprehensive spiritual and societal transformation (Prokhanoff 1933:40; VSEKh 1917:90).

Dualistic Mystical Escapism.

Ivan Prokhanov critically examined the dualistic tendencies among Evangelical believers, marked by a combination of mysticism and escapism. He noted that such tendencies often deterred believers from actively engaging in societal transformation (Prokhanov 2009:125-130).

Conversely, Prokhanov underscored the significant role of mystical communion with God in shaping his theological perspectives and practices. Through his extensive publications, he actively promoted the practice of prayer, emphasising its importance and providing detailed guidance on effective prayer techniques.³⁸ He organised numerous prayer-centric events, underlining the significance of this spiritual discipline (Prokhanov 1911c: 9). Prokhanov championed the necessity of mystical prayer experiences, stating, 'a contemplative state of the soul is essential; contemplation enlivens our emotions

³⁸ see *Christian* No 1; 4; 6; 7; 8 for 1906.

through prayer and communion with the Lord' (Prokhanov 1925a:10). He argued that such engagement leads to a renewal of spiritual life, analogous to the disciples' transformative experience on the Mount of Transfiguration – an essential experience for all believers.

Prokhanov criticised those who preferred to remain in elevated spiritual states without confronting the harsh realities of the world. He highlighted that Jesus led his disciples from the mountaintop to the valleys of human sorrow and suffering to alleviate these hardships (Prokhanov 1925a:10). He rebuked those who, obsessed with ecstatic visions and revelations experienced at the Mount of Favour, narrowly interpreted Christ's teachings as solely spiritual and contemplative. He described these individuals as 'inflamed with emotions, yet their lives do not progress beyond a spiritually-sensitive existence'.

Prokhanov also referred to an ancient hermit trend where Christians withdrew into solitude for contemplative tranquillity, which he viewed as a misstep leading to monasticism.

He did not view prayer simply as an escape from reality, but rather as a powerful tool for societal and spiritual transformation. In his 1906 call to prayer, he declared, 'If all of Russia, from small to great, remembered Him with all their hearts and souls and fell before Him in prayerful humility, something would occur that would exceed the boldest expectations and hopes of the best sons of Russia' (Prokhanov 1906b:2). He saw collective prayer as a catalyst for far-reaching societal changes, encompassing spiritual, moral, cultural, social, and political dimensions.

Furthermore, Prokhanov emphasised the functional role of prayer in active service, criticising believers for using prayer as a way to avoid confronting societal challenges. He stressed that God desires active collaborators, not passive observers, and will not accept prayers that do not inspire service to others (Prokhanov 1906b:2). He argued that

genuine prayer involves a commitment to selflessness and service, qualities that not only capture God's attention but also have the potential to bring about significant change.³⁹

Lastly, Prokhanov's interpretation of Mary's role in the Gospel of Luke, in contrast to Martha's active service, emphasizes that moments of rest and contemplation, like Mary's at Jesus' feet, should lead to active proclamation and engagement with society. This is evident in Mary's role in announcing Christ's resurrection (Prokhanov 2009c:139).⁴⁰ For Prokhanov, preaching the gospel is something that should initiate societal transformation, extending from individual renewal to the broader reconstruction of societal structures in order to establish a just and free Russia.

The Principle of Justice and Love.

An analysis of Ivan Prokhanov's programmatic document, 'New or Evangelical Life' (1925a:4-23), reveals a conceptual framework fundamentally anchored in the principles of justice and love. Prokhanov articulates that societal life 'will be built on the principle of satisfying all the legitimate needs of each member', thus aligning with the principle of justice (Prokhanov 1925a:15). Concurrently, he envisages a society transformed by the Christian ethic of love, stating, 'with the widespread application of the Christian principle of love for one's neighbour in the new society of the righteous, terms like "beggar", "poor person", and "needy" will completely disappear' (Prokhanov 1925a:15).

Moreover, Prokhanov suggests that the success of society depends on individuals' ability to compromise and sacrifice for the greater good, which he directly links to faith in God (Prokhanov 1925a:15). This emphasis indicates a thoughtful involvement in wider

³⁹ As Prokhanov stated, "He wants to see us as His coworkers. He wants to act through us. He will not accept prayers that lull people into ignoring their direct *responsibilities* towards others and towards God. He loves prayer as such communion with Him, when a person is inspired by the Spirit of God, the spirit of truth, love, and the *desire to serve* others (and therefore the Lord) to the point of selflessness and self-denial. Such prayer catches the attention of the Lord, only such prayer moves mountains!"

⁴⁰ Here the quite from his sermon: 'There was a moment when Mary was in a state of rest at the feet of Christ, but then we see her in the role of proclaiming His glorious resurrection, and so on.'

theological discussions, possibly indicating an awareness of the ongoing debate between fundamentalists and proponents of the social gospel in the Anglo-Saxon context. Consequently, the principle of Christian love not only serves as a fundamental motivator in personal relationships but also as a vital element for societal unity and achievement.

4.5.4. Conclusion

It is likely that the paradigm of thinking described by Bosch as 'Mission as the Quest for Justice' was, to some extent, shared by Prokhanov long before Bosch formulated it. This is evident in Prokhanov's efforts to create political parties based on Christian principles, his struggle against dualistic mystical thinking that led to escapism, and his attempts to establish a community where social justice principles could be more fully realised than in broader society (cf. Chapter 3). He also fought for freedom of conscience and the rights of believers, which were first suppressed by the Tsarist government and later by the Bolsheviks (cf. Chapter 3).

However, while Prokhanov's commitment to justice and freedom is evident, his political program, particularly the proposed reforms in the Resurrection Party platform (Prokhanov 1917a:7-8), reveals certain contradictions in his approach to the relationship between church and state. These inconsistencies merit closer examination, as they reflect both the strengths and limitations of his vision for a just and equitable society.

The political programme proposed by Prokhanov for the Resurrection Party embodies both ambition and inherent contradictions in his views on church-state relations.⁴¹ On the

⁴¹ Reference from the Program (Prokhanov 1917a:8): In the internal life of the church, the following fundamental reforms are necessary:

- VI. Reconstruction of the church on the principles of the Gospel, modeled after the church of Christ's and His apostles' time, as described in the New Testament.
- VII. Abolition of the parish structure and the restoration of the church as a local, independent community of believers.
- VIII. Abolition of the hierarchy and the restoration of equality among all church members. The church may have only ministers freely elected and appointed by the congregation from among worthy individuals. Unworthy individuals should be removed by the church itself.
- IX. All matters concerning the church should be decided directly by the congregation or indirectly through elected representatives; all members of the church have an equal vote.

one hand, in the first section (Prokhanov 1917a:7), "Democratization of the State," he explicitly calls for: **full freedom of faith, speech, press, associations, unions, assemblies, and nationalities.**

Likewise, in the second section (Prokhanov 1917a:8), "Democratization of the Church," Prokhanov emphasises principles such as:

- Separation of church and state
- Equality of all religious communities, churches, and denominations before the law
- Complete freedom of religious preaching

These points demonstrate a clear commitment to religious liberty and the autonomy of churches from governmental control, aligning with broader democratic ideals and advocating for an open and pluralistic society.

However, Prokhanov's vision becomes problematic when juxtaposed with his proposals for legislatively mandated reforms of the Orthodox Church. For example, he advocates for a comprehensive restructuring of the church, modelled after evangelical principles, including:

- The abolition of hierarchy
- The democratisation of worship
- The introduction of vernacular languages in services

While Prokhanov concedes that persuasion and free religious creativity should be the primary tools for achieving such changes, his inclusion of legislative mechanisms reveals a lingering reliance on the state as a driver of religious reform. This approach reflects continuity with the historical paradigm in which the state actively promoted the interests

X. Democratization of worship: the introduction of the vernacular in services instead of incomprehensible languages; active participation of congregation members in worship.
XI. All points of the religious program can only partially be implemented legislatively but primarily through free religious creativity, persuasion, inspired preaching, etc.

of the Orthodox Church. Prokhanov's programme essentially seeks to redirect this paradigm to serve the evangelical church.

This inconsistency highlights a key tension in Prokhanov's thinking: while he seeks to liberate the church from state control, he simultaneously appears to believe that state intervention is necessary to facilitate its transformation. By proposing legislative action to enforce religious reforms, Prokhanov inadvertently perpetuates the very model of church-state interaction he ostensibly seeks to dismantle.

4.6. Mission as Evangelism

4.6.1 Definitions of evangelism

According to Bosch (2011: loc. 9592), there are various definitions of evangelism, making it crucial to define this concept within the context of salvation and the mission of the church. The term 'evangelism' is frequently found in the New Testament, derived from '*euangelizein*' (or '*euangelizesthai*') and '*euangelion*', predating the concept of 'mission' (Bosch 2011:loc. 9591).

Coleman (2000) defines evangelism as the announcement that salvation has come. The verb 'evangelise' literally means to bear good news, and in its noun form, it translates to 'gospel' or 'evangel'. This is exemplified in the angels' proclamation of Christ's birth in Luke 2:10–11, a representative usage among the more than 130 occurrences of the term in the New Testament.

In the Septuagint, the Hebrew equivalent is translated similarly, as seen in Isaiah 52:7, which mentions the 'beautiful feet' of the person who brings good news. The ministry of the coming Messiah, as described in Isaiah 61:1-2, involves proclaiming the good news, a role Jesus identifies with at the beginning of his ministry (Lk. 4:18-19). Coleman emphasises that this message should be proclaimed with demonstrated compassion for the marginalised (Coleman 2000).

In this compassionate context, Coleman might refer to mission, which encompasses but is not limited to evangelism; it includes the demonstration of compassion.

4.6.2. Elements of constructive evangelistic paradigm

David Bosch outlines the evolving paradigm of evangelism through 18 key statements. To analyse Prokhanov's perspectives and practices in evangelism, we will utilise selected statements from Bosch's framework to construct a comprehensive profile of the evolving evangelistic paradigm.

1. Mission vs. Evangelism: Bosch, aligning with Coleman, emphasises that mission is broader than evangelism. Moltmann (1977:10) supports this by asserting that a missionary church operates within the context of *missio Dei*. Moltmann states that proclaiming the gospel of the dawning kingdom is central to the mission but not its entirety. Mission encompasses all activities that liberate individuals from various forms of slavery, economic to spiritual. Bosch (2011:loc. 9668) defines mission as the church being sent into the world to serve, preach, teach, heal, and liberate.

Geffre (1982:478) further clarifies that 'mission' signifies the sending of the Church to the world, while 'evangelisation' describes the proclamation of the Good News to the nations by word and example. This distinction implies that mission is broader than evangelisation. Geffre affirms that besides the fundamental task of evangelisation, the mission of the Church includes all pastoral and sacramental activities as well as various forms of service to humanity in accordance with the gospel.

2. Interconnection of Mission and Evangelism: Evangelism, while distinct, is inseparable from mission. Loffler (1977:340) argues that evangelism encompasses everything the church does. Bosch (2011:loc. 9605) notes that the 'Mission and Evangelism – An Ecumenical Affirmation' document intertwines mission (ME 1–5) and evangelism (ME 6–8), making it impossible to choose between them (WCC 1982).

3. Integral Aspect of Church Engagement: Evangelism is integral to the church's overall engagement (Loffler 1977:340). Bosch (2011:loc. 9677) critiques John Stott's view that

evangelism is one of two mission components, emphasising that evangelism cannot be isolated from other church activities.

4. *Witness to Divine Intervention*: Bosch (2011:loc. 9683) defines evangelism as bearing witness to God's intervention in human history through Jesus Christ. Stott and Wright (2015:ch. 3) describe evangelism as a testimony to events, akin to the Apostle Paul's approach (1 Cor. 15). Gutierrez (1988:Intr.) similarly contends that evangelism communicates the liberation brought by Christ.

5. *Goal of Evangelism*: The goal of evangelism is conversion, prompting a response to Jesus' call for repentance and transformation (WCC 1982: ME 11). The New Testament describes this as a new birth (Jn. 3:3), involving a radical transformation of life (WCC 1982:ME 12).

6. *Positive Invitation*: Evangelism conveys a positive message. As Gutierrez (1988:Intr.) notes, 'To evangelize is to communicate this joy; it is to transmit, individually and as a community, the good news of God's love that has transformed our lives'. Manipulation and evangelism are incompatible. Bosch (2011: loc. 9697) argues that inducing feelings of guilt or fear through the threat of hell, or making promises of psychological relief, is unacceptable. Newbigin (1982:151) reinforces this by stating, 'To make the fear of hell the ultimate motivation for faith in Christ is to create a horrible caricature of evangelism'. He further claims that 'in God's economy, the promise of the gospel and not the threatening of the law comes first' (Gal. 3:6-22). People should come to God because of God's love (Bosch 2011:loc. 9697).

7. *Witness, Not Judge*: The evangelist's role is to witness, not judge. Newbigin (1982:151) believes that determining who is saved and who is not is not within the evangelist's task. Assertions that people of other faiths are saved because of their sincerity, or the practice of some 'evangelicals' to divide Christians into 'real' and 'nominal', are erroneous.

8. *Sacred Duty*: Evangelism is a sacred duty of the church, as Bosch (2011:loc. 9704) asserts, and should be regularly communicated with fresh urgency (Watson 1983:69).

9. *Context of a Mature Church*: Evangelism should occur within a spiritually mature church, presenting an attractive Christian lifestyle (Bosch 2011:loc. 9713). The early apostolic church was appealing, as described in Acts 2:42–47 and 4:32–35. As per the Ecumenical Affirmation (ME 13), many potential followers of Christ are deterred by the conduct of both churches and individual Christians (WCC 1982). This behaviour may contribute to millions around the world rejecting Jesus due to the negative impression created by Christians.

10. *Promise of Salvation*: Bosch (2011:loc. 9720) questions what salvation offers, emphasising that it should not be reduced to consumerism. Salvation, as described by Bosch (2011:loc. 9720), is both a present gift and an assurance of eternal bliss. However, the contemporary emphasis on individualism in Western culture has led to feelings of alienation and inner emptiness. The existential quest for meaning prompts individuals to seek hope amid global uncertainty.

Evangelism offers salvation as eschatological hope, anchored in God's promise of justice for all beyond history (Consultation on Mission 1982:463). Yet, there's a risk of reducing evangelism to consumerism, where salvation becomes akin to a commodity. Bosch warns against such distortion. As he remarks (2011:loc. 9727), 'It is not simply to receive life that people are called to become Christians, but rather to give life'.

11. *Against Proselytism*: Evangelism must not involve proselytism or 'sheep-stealing' (Löffler 1977a:340).

12. *Beyond Church Growth*: Evangelism differs from church extension, as Bosch emphasises, cautioning against prioritising quantitative church growth. Critiquing McGavran's (1990) emphasis on harvest over sowing, Bosch warns against focusing solely on segments of the population receptive to the gospel (2011:loc. 9754). Such an

approach risks attracting members for reasons unrelated to the church's core goals and doctrines.

While pursuing homogeneity in evangelism may yield numerical growth, it risks creating congregations that mirror the dominant culture rather than forming distinct alternative communities (Bosch 2011:loc. 9754). The temptation to prioritise quantitative growth often arises during declines in church membership (Bosch 2011:loc. 9754). Snyder (1983:11) aptly notes that the church strays when it prioritizes itself over the rule of God, emphasising the need to focus on the Kingdom rather than the institution.

13. *Organic Growth*: While the church seeks quantitative growth, this should occur organically, incarnationally through evangelism (Bosch 2012:loc. 9761).

14. *Personal Dimension*: Evangelism includes inviting individuals to personally accept Christ's Lordship (WCC 1982:ME 10). Despite its personal nature, the gospel is not individualistic.

15. *Contextual Evangelism*: Evangelism aims for genuine transformation under Christ's Lordship, beyond creating subcultures (Bosch 2012:loc. 9788-9805).

16. *Justice and Evangelism*: Evangelism cannot be separated from justice; it seeks holistic transformation. Evangelism extends beyond mere recruitment or individual salvation; it encompasses the broader mission of the church. Becoming a disciple involves committing to Jesus and God's reign, a call to service. Evangelism should emphasise service to the kingdom alongside eternal blessings. It invites people to join God's work, addressing societal aspirations and challenges (Bosch 2012:loc. 9807-9828).

17. *Not Expediting Christ's Return*: Evangelism is not a method to hasten Christ's return. Such a motivation regarding evangelism often leads to ignoring the growth of poverty and injustice in the world (Bosch 2012:loc. 9830-9856).

18. Not Merely Verbal Proclamation: As Newbigin (1982:146) states, 'Word made flesh' is the gospel. Deeds without words are mute, and words without deeds are empty. The New Testament does not separate word and deed. In Matthew's 'mission charge' to the Twelve, healing and exorcism are linked with the proclamation that 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. The deeds interpret the words; they are one. The good news and healing are inseparable, both indicating the presence of God's reign.

Bosch (2011:loc. 9869) sums this up by defining evangelism as the church's mission, involving both word and deed. It offers everyone a chance to radically reorient their lives, embracing Christ, joining his community, and committing to reconciliation, peace, and justice, under Christ's rule.

4.6.3. Conclusion

Bosch presents a holistic concept of evangelism, positioning it as an essential and integrated part of the church's overall activities. This approach involves verbally proclaiming the historical events related to Jesus Christ's mission. Evangelism is viewed as an invitation for individuals to respond to God's love and a call to make radical life changes and undergo conversion. The target audience for evangelism is individuals, and the message communicated is one of God's love, which should be joyful and free from fear. Additionally, the evangelist's role is that of a witness, not a judge. The motivation behind evangelism is spiritual, rather than pragmatic, and it is seen as a sacramental duty of the church that should be pursued regardless of success. The ultimate aim is spiritual and moral transformation, rather than simply assimilating individuals into a subculture. The effectiveness of evangelism depends on the spiritual maturity of the church and the extent to which believers embody Christian maturity. Evangelism is portrayed as offering a gift that promises immediate and eternal happiness, with the expectation of committed service from those who accept this divine offering.

4.6.4. Prokhanov and the constructive evangelistic paradigm

While it might seem somewhat forced to directly align Prokhanov's evangelistic practices with the 18 points of David Bosch's 'constructive' evangelistic paradigm, there is a noticeable alignment in their foundational perspectives. Prokhanov's emphasis on

evangelism as integral to the church's mission mirrors Bosch's view of evangelism as transformative for both individuals and society.

Prokhanov stated that the church's primary purpose was to 'establish the kingdom of Christ among its members and to extend it into the world', referencing Mark 16:15 where Christ commands to 'go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation' (Prokhanov 1910a:XIII). He adopted the proactive slogan, 'From city to city, from town to town, from village to village, from person to person' (Prokhanoff 1933:154), emphasising that 'Every Evangelical Christian must be a missionary' (Num. 11:29). His views were endorsed by the seventh ARCEC, which supported initiatives to engage every church member in evangelism to reach every person across Russia systematically (Prokhanov 1920a:7).⁴²

Prokhanov believed that evangelism was *foundational* to societal renewal in Russia, stating, 'The rebirth of an individual is the foundation for the broader national development of our entire country. For only through the renewal of the individual can a new social order be strengthened' (Prokhanov 1928a:15). This transformation through the gospel, which he describes as making individuals new creations (Prokhanov 1910a:6-8), was central to his theology.

In his sermon 'For What and for Whom Do You Live', Prokhanov cited the Apostle Paul's influence on the Corinthian believers through preaching (1 Cor. 4:15), underlining the vital role of preaching in spiritual renewal (Prokhanov 2009a:25). He paralleled this with

⁴² In Prokhanov's view, specially trained preachers and evangelists played a crucial role in spreading the gospel. Presumably, within the Evangelical Christian community, a distinct preaching culture emerged, where exclusive priority was given to evangelism compared to other genres of preaching activities. In response to this emphasis, a resolution was adopted at the third All-Russian Congress of Evangelical Christians with the following content: 'Preachers should deliver sermons that are not only a call to repentance for non-believers but also spiritual, aimed at assisting the spiritual growth of community members' (Trosnov 1912a:4).

In other words, the resolution's goal was to promote a more balanced approach to preaching – presumably, preachers were becoming too absorbed in evangelistic sermons.

the early apostolic church's impact, suggesting that just as the Early Church's witness to Jesus' resurrection led to widespread conversions and cultural transformations in Europe (Acts 4:33; Prokhanov 1928a:11), so too could the modern Russian church inspire societal change through robust evangelistic outreach.

For Ivan Prokhanov, the gospel is fundamentally synonymous with Christ. He asserts that an encounter with Christ catalyses a personal conversion experience (Prokhanov 1910a:4-8). He elucidates the gospel as a multifaceted message about Christ, portraying Him as 'the perfect sacrifice for sin, the Redeemer of the world, and the One who reconciled love and justice in Himself' (Prokhanov 1925a:6-7). Additionally, Prokhanov emphasises the significance of the resurrection, viewing it not merely as a theological assertion but as transformative news that reshaped the Greco-Roman world. This aspect of the gospel, according to Prokhanov, played a pivotal role in the cultural and spiritual shifts observed in early Christian history (Prokhanov 1928a:11). This perspective underscores the transformative power of the gospel, reflecting its capacity to instigate profound societal changes through personal and communal renewal.

Ivan Prokhanov emphasised the foundational role of *God's love* in evangelism, a perspective he prominently articulated during the third congress. He argued for evangelical preaching that centres on God's love, advocating for messages free from polemics and criticism (Trosnov 1912a:4). In his poem 'Song', dedicated to the Leningrad Evangelical Christian community, Prokhanov poetically defines the gospel as a divine revelation: 'God is not a judge, He is love' (Prokhanov 1925c:49).

Analysis of Prokhanov's sermons reveals a consistent theme: he *challenges* his audience to make a pivotal choice to respond to God's message. In 'For What and for Whom Do You Live', he addresses those who are searching for life's purpose, encouraging them to seek solace and direction in Jesus. Prokhanov states, 'Turn your weary gaze to Him who says, 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'" (Matt. 11:28; 2009a:19). This invitation emphasises the essential role of establishing a profound connection with Jesus in discovering one's life's purpose.

In 'Are You a Christian?', Prokhanov outlines a clear path to Christian living, *urging* his listeners to embrace Christ as their Saviour, repent, receive forgiveness, and commit to deeds that reflect true repentance (2009b:41). Additionally, in 'From the Spiritual Accounting', he speaks to those burdened by spiritual debt, urging them to seek redemption through Christ, who provides ultimate relief and salvation (2009r:211). Through these sermons, Prokhanov consistently challenges his audience, emphasising that responding to God's message is not merely an emotional experience but involves a decisive and *transformative* engagement, characterised by belief, repentance, and active living in accordance with Christian values.

Furthermore, Prokhanov underscores the necessity of personal transformation within Gospel advocacy, noting that *mere words* are insufficient without a life that exemplifies the message. At the third congress, he championed evangelical preaching supported by personal conversion and a transformed life (Trosnov 1912a:4). In 'The Bible in the Life of a Believer', he describes the Bible as a 'living text' inscribed on the heart, highlighting the need for one's life to reflect biblical teachings (2009f:222).

Prokhanov maintains a balanced approach between promises and expectations when conveying the gospel. His assurances to believers include inner peace, liberation from the fear of death, and confidence in salvation. He characterises conversion as a profound transformation that results in a life filled with joy and optimism (Prokhanoff 1933:42-47). In 'Rejoice in Perfect Joy', he asserts that the gospel imparts joy and happiness, regardless of external circumstances (2009g:267-268).

He recognises the risk of followers developing a consumer-oriented approach to Christianity, which he seeks to mitigate. In his sermon 'What and For Whom Do You Live?' primarily targeted at non-churchgoers (2009a:18-19), he emphasises that a life of faith should be wholly dedicated to Christ and not self-serving. To illustrate, he argues that a self-centred life with Christ, where the soul only takes without giving, is fundamentally misguided (2009a:23, 24). He advocates for a discipleship model where followers of Christ are compelled to share their resources, transforming the spiritual 'water' He provides into a perpetual source of life for others (Jn. 4:14). In essence, while

following Christ is a divine gift, it also demands a commitment to sacrificial service and benefiting others.

Lastly, Prokhanov also integrated social work with evangelism, as demonstrated in the previous chapter of this study. The 1924 report on the Leningrad Evangelical Christian community highlights both evangelistic efforts and social assistance, reflecting Christ's example of addressing physical needs (Karev 1925:51). During the early 1920s famine, Prokhanov and other believers established charitable canteens, showcasing the practical application of their faith through tangible acts of service (Prokhanoff 1933:216).

In 1912, Ivan Prokhanov published a hymn collection titled *Gospel Songs* (Prokhanov 1912f), designed to facilitate evangelistic worship services. In the preface, Prokhanov outlined the collection's purpose: "to remind people of God and His love, to call sinners to repentance, to inspire faith in the Savior and His Gospel, to strengthen confidence in the forgiveness of sins, and to awaken gratitude to God for the salvation He has granted." Thus, *Gospel Songs* was primarily intended for evangelistic gatherings or revival meetings (Prokhanov 1912:5). The collection includes 66 hymns, with the central theme of God's love being highlighted in the first five songs (Prokhanov 1912f: 5-11).

The first hymn in the collection, with lyrics written by Prokhanov, is introduced with the epigraph: "Repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). The hymn's opening lines reflect key aspects of the evangelistic approach, beginning:

"Just as the angelic songs flow like a resounding river in heaven,
so too the words of the Gospel resound over the sorrowful earth."

The refrain reinforces the portrayal of the Gospel as a message of divine love, a theme central to Prokhanov's theology. Repeated after each quatrain, the refrain declares:

"Listen, listen to the Gospel message,
The message of salvation,
The message of God's love!"

This hymn exemplifies Prokhanov's commitment to presenting the Gospel as a transformative message of universal love, accessible to all. It underscores the vital role of music and poetry in evangelistic efforts, reflecting his belief in their power to inspire and draw people toward God.

The refrain emphasises the universality of God's love:

“To all is given the saving love;
Thus proclaims the good news—
The all-forgiving mercy of God
Wishes to win over sinners.”

Furthermore, Prokhanov highlights the eternal nature of God's love, emphasizing its capacity to embrace any sinner. The hymn continues:

“To all is given the saving love;
Thus proclaims the good news—
The all-forgiving mercy of God
Wishes to win over sinners.”

In Prokhanov's theological framework, humanity is portrayed as perishing in sin, but God's love, expressed through the sacrificial death of His Son, redeems sinful humanity:

“The soul perishing in the world,
God has loved from eternity,
And for it, suffering in sin,
He redeemed it with the death of His Son.”

Prokhanov's Gospel also presents a crucial decision for individuals: the choice to accept God's love. This acceptance, according to the hymn, leads to a state of bliss, prompting rejoicing both in heaven and on earth:

“If you accept the Gospel message,
Your God will rejoice greatly;

Heaven will sing the angelic song
With renewed strength and fervor.”

Thus, this hymn exemplifies several key elements of the Evangelistic paradigm as formulated by missiologist David Bosch. First, the Gospel is understood primarily as a message of God’s love. Second, the hymn portrays humanity as burdened, grieving, and lost without God, yet the Gospel promises rest and joy to the weary soul. Third, it emphasizes the necessity of accepting the Gospel to experience the promised bliss.

Lastly, Prokhanov emphasises the role of the Church in delivering the Gospel message. The church’s task is to conduct evangelistic services where the message of God’s love is proclaimed through poetic and musical means. This was the purpose behind Prokhanov’s creation of *Gospel Songs*. It reflects a missional vision where the church acts as a vessel for spreading God’s love through hymns and worship services to those in need of salvation.

In conclusion, Prokhanov's evangelistic paradigm aligns closely with Bosch's framework, emphasising the holistic nature of evangelism, the transformative power of the gospel, and the integration of social action with evangelistic efforts. His approach reflects a balanced understanding of evangelism's role in personal and societal renewal.

4.7. Mission as Contextualisation

4.7.1. Introduction

While the term 'contextualisation' only emerged in the early 1970s, the church has been addressing the challenges of contextualisation since its inception (Whiteman 1997:2; Sanchez 1998:319; Hesselgrave & Rommen 2000:ch. 1). According to Bosch (2011:loc. 9887-9888), there has been a recent acknowledgment of Christianity's inherently contextual nature, suggesting that the Christian faith is deeply influenced by its societal context. Schleiermacher was a pioneer of this perspective, arguing that theological discourse is always shaped by its context. Building on this idea, Bosch (2011:loc. 9917-9923) points out that there is no 'pure' Christian message that is devoid of cultural or historical interpretations. This implies that theological efforts are necessarily intertwined

with sociological, economic, and political dimensions. This recognition became especially pronounced with the rise of Third World theology, marking a significant shift in theological thought towards a more contextually informed approach (Bosch 2011:loc. 9936).

4.7.2. Contextualisation: Definitions and models

The subject of contextualisation is complex and encompasses many unresolved issues (Haleblian 1983:95). Haleblian notes that although the dictionary meaning of the term may be clear, there is considerable confusion in the literature regarding its application. Contextualisation is generally understood as the process of making ideas relevant to a specific context, such as in the cross-cultural communication of the gospel. It is also connected to the development of local theology, shaped by local theologians, and involves the separation of the gospel from its cultural influences (Haleblian 1983:96). Whiteman (1997:1) contends that contextualisation is one of the most critical issues in contemporary mission work. He identifies three primary tasks of contextualisation:

1. *Communicating the Gospel*: This involves presenting Christianity in a way that makes sense within the local cultural context, addressing people's deepest needs, and penetrating their worldview. This enables them to follow Christ while remaining within their own culture (Whiteman 1997:2).

2. *Challenging the Culture*: The second task is to challenge or 'to offend – but only for the right reasons' (emphasis by the author; Whiteman 1997:3). The right reason occurs when the gospel is preached within the framework of the local culture, thereby challenging the sinful aspects of that culture. When the local culture itself is challenged, genuine transformation of the sinful patterns within that culture often does not occur. Instead, the preaching of the gospel is met with suspicion.

3. *Developing Contextualised Expressions of the Gospel*: This aims to understand the gospel in ways that the universal church has not previously experienced, thereby expanding the understanding of the kingdom of God (Whiteman 1997:3).

Schreiter (1985:6) outlines three models of contextualisation:

1. *Translation Model*: This model involves a two-step process: first, separating the core Christian message (the kernel) from its cultural expressions (the husk). Then, dynamic equivalents that are understandable within the local culture are identified. This is similar to Bible translation, where concepts and images are translated into the local cultural context (Schreiter 1985:7).

2. *Adaptation Model*: This model seeks a deeper interaction between the Christian faith and the local culture. Local leaders use Western categories to identify cultural values and then develop a philosophical model based on local data. This results in a missional theology that is both authentic and understandable to the Western world. While it takes local culture more seriously than the translation model, it often confines cultural characteristics within Western thinking frameworks (Schreiter 1985:9-10). An alternative approach within this model is to 'sow the seed of faith' and let it grow within the native soil, leading to a new, culturally faithful expression of Christianity (Schreiter 1985:11).

3. *Contextual Model*: This model highlights the importance of the local context and can be divided into two approaches: addressing cultural identity and social issues. It starts with the needs of local communities and moves towards the Christian faith, embodying the ideals of local theology (Schreiter 1985:12-13).

Schreiter summarises these approaches as follows: Translation Models and some Adaptation Models focus on the transmission of faith, while other Adaptation Models and the Contextual Model focus on the context into which the apostolic faith is received. Depending on the specific circumstances a community faces, one model may be more appropriate than the other at any given time (Schreiter 1985:15-16).

Drawing on the work of missiologists such as Ukpong, Schreiter, and Waldenfels, Bosch identifies two primary approaches to contextualisation in mission work: indigenisation and socio-economic models. Bosch (2011:loc. 9876) further divides these into subtypes. The indigenisation approach can be seen either as a translation model or an inculturation

model. On the other hand, the socio-economic approach can be either evolutionary, including political theology and the theology of development, or revolutionary, encompassing liberation theology, black theology, feminist theology, and similar movements.

Bosch argues that true contextualisation involves both inculturation and the revolutionary model. He is therefore particularly interested in the development of *local* missional theology that carries *transformative* characteristics (2011:loc. 9876).

4.7.3. Contextualisation criteria

The emergence of third-world theology has highlighted the need for a contextual approach to missional theology. Sergio Torres (1979:3-4), representing Third World theologians, reveals that the theology received from missionaries was not universal but distinctly European, white, and male. He argues that theologians must critically examine the ideological biases inherent in Western theology (Torres & Fabella 1977:270).

Historically, theologians often focused on abstract theological debates that were disconnected from social realities. During the Reformation, discussions primarily concerned topics about God, Jesus Christ, and salvation, largely ignoring the historical Jesus who stood in solidarity with the poor (Torres 1979:4). Gollwitzer (1975:41) illustrates this disconnect, noting that the outcomes of these theological disputes were irrelevant to marginalised groups, as their social conditions remained unchanged.

Thus, there is a pressing need for intentional and purposeful contextualisation in missional theology. Torres proposes specific criteria to guide the development of Third World theology, which can also inform a broader contextual theological framework.

1. *Theological Suspicion*: Torres (1979:4) contends that contemporary European theology often validates an economic model responsible for injustices in both Europe and Third World countries. Similarly, Verkuyl (1987:168-175) notes that missionaries were not always guided by pure motives, suggesting underlying biases in their evangelical efforts. Bosch (2011:loc. 9956) supports this view, stating that claims of

neutral knowledge in Western disciplines, including theology, are designed to serve Western interests and legitimise the existing world order.

2. Epistemological Transformation: Traditional epistemology, which views truth as the conformity of the mind to an object, is rooted in Greek and Western philosophical traditions and legitimises the status quo. Torres advocates for a dialectical approach, where theological truth involves the mind's conformity to Scripture and the discernment of present evils judged by the gospel. This approach sees truth as redemptive and active in world-building (Torres 1979:5). Bosch (2011:loc. 9962) echoes this, citing Marx's assertion (1945:No. 11) that the point is to change the world, not just explain it.

3. Preferential Option for the Poor: Torres (1979:5) asserts that true Christian theology must prioritise defending the poor. Theology should be committed to the marginalised, with faith viewed not just as intellectual acceptance of the gospel but as a living encounter with the Lord, characterised by love and service to others.

4. Engaged Theologian: A theologian involved in contextual missiology must engage directly with those who suffer, as credibility comes from shared experience (Bosch 2011:loc. 9972-9973).

5. Action-Based Knowledge: Bonino (1975:88) argues that knowledge arises from action and participation in history. The Word of God is a creative event, and its truth lies in its efficacy in fulfilling God's promises, not in abstract ideas (Bonino 1975:89). Faith in Israel is seen as a way of life, not merely knowledge; similarly, for Paul, faith means walking in Jesus's path (Bonino 1975:89).

6. Hermeneutical Circulation: Bosch (2011:loc. 9976) describes a process starting with practice rather than theory. Theological analysis follows observed practices, which are then refined and repeated. Orthodoxy and orthopraxy are integrated, supporting each other (Gutiérrez 1988:xxxiv).

These criteria provide a framework for developing a transformative and contextually relevant missional theology.

4.7.4. Bosch's contextualisation ambiguities

Bosch (2011:loc. 9987) explores the 'Ambiguities of Contextualisation', identifying several key issues:

1. Divine Engagement with the World: Bosch argues that contextualisation signifies God's engagement with the world, particularly among the marginalised, such as the sick and hungry. He criticises the separation of glorifying God from pursuing a truly human life on earth, suggesting that such separation is contrary to the gospel. He describes this as a form of docetic Christology, which evades worldly responsibilities (Bosch 2011:loc. 10011).

2. Balance Between Local and Universal Theology: Bosch emphasises the need to balance local missiologies with the universal truths of Christian theology. He advocates for a mutual enrichment between 'theologia localis' and 'theologia oecumenica', suggesting that theologians from developed countries should engage with and learn from theologies emerging from the developing world (2011:loc. 10048-10050).

3. Caution Against Absolutisation: Bosch warns against the danger of contextualised theology claiming universal significance, a mistake previously made by Western theology (Bosch 2011:loc. 10053).

4. Interpreting Signs of the Times: Bosch cautions against the manipulative interpretation of contemporary events as divine interventions. For example, in 1933 Germany, some Christians saw the political situation as a divine intervention, which led to dangerous misinterpretations (Bosch 2011:loc. 10072, 10077).

5. Contextualisation and Theological Discourse: While acknowledging the importance of context in missional theology, Bosch argues against its sole reliance as the primary source of theological discourse. He references Stackhouse (1988:26-27), who criticises

scholars who limit the interpretation of Scripture to its historical and literary context only. Additionally, Stackhouse (1988:11) observes a trend in theological education where abstract concepts like truth and justice are overlooked in favour of intense engagement with immediate contexts. However, Bosch asserts the indispensability of theoretical questions like epistemology and abstract concepts, as they form the basis of contextual analysis and help discern what is of God in different contexts (Bosch 2011:loc. 10120, 10126).

6. *The Role of Poesis*: Stackhouse introduces poesis, adding a dimension to theory and praxis. He explains that theology primarily operates with symbols, which are multileveled and cannot be reduced to mere theory or practice. These symbols have cognitive, evocative, and relational significance (1988:104). Bosch emphasises that people need not only truth (theory) and justice (praxis), but also beauty, symbolism, piety, worship, love, awe, and mystery. This dimension is often overlooked in the focus on truth and justice (Bosch 2011:loc. 10132).

7. Bosch concludes that the best contextual theology is the one that incorporates a *creative tension between theory, praxis, and poesis* (Bosch 2011:10132).

In summary, Bosch advocates for a balanced and integrative approach to contextualisation that respects local influences while engaging with universal theological concerns, incorporates diverse human experiences, and remains vigilant against the risks of absolutism and superficial interpretations of contemporary phenomena.

4.7.5. Elements of emerging contextual missiological paradigm

Summarising Bosch's theoretical stance on contextualisation, several key elements emerge within the developing contextual missiological paradigm. These include a critical view of existing theological systems, marked by theological *suspicion*, and an emphasis on the *transformative* nature of contextual theology, which aligns itself with the cause of the oppressed.

The theorist-contextualiser faces a significant limitation: they cannot effectively contribute to the meaningful process of contextualisation while remaining outside the context. They must *immerse* themselves with those who experience suffering. Contextual missional theology is not an abstract discourse; rather, it is a theology for life, intricately linked to *practice*. However, this integration should be approached with careful consideration of theoretical *epistemological* assumptions.

Striking a delicate balance between contextual theology and the *transcendent* historical essence of theology is crucial, avoiding the tendency to *absolutise* contextual theology. *Poetry*, alongside theory and practice, holds a significant place in a well-rounded missional contextual theology. In essence, the foundational assumption of contextual missional theology lies in the recognition that *God* is actively *turning* towards the world.

4.7.6. Prokhanov and mission as contextualisation

While a comprehensive analysis of contextual missiology issues, methodologies, and their application within Prokhanov's perspectives and activities as a missionary leader exceeds the scope of this study, it nonetheless merits future research. Analysing Prokhanov's missiological approach reveals that, akin to Bosch (2011:loc. 9876), he was committed to developing a local theology of mission with a transformative character.

Theology of Suspicion.

Ivan Prokhanov's critique of the Orthodox Church was deeply influenced by his perception of its alignment with state interests, which he articulately discussed in his writings (Prokhanoff 1933:18). He argued that this alignment compromised the church's moral and spiritual autonomy, as evidenced by bishops and priests being compelled to report to the government about any believers considered untrustworthy by the state authorities. This practice, Prokhanov asserted, violated the sacred confidentiality of confession (1933:18). Furthermore, he criticised the church for its indifference towards the needs and concerns of the general populace (1933:19), emphasising that true religious leadership should advocate for societal welfare.

Prokhanov strongly advocated for the autonomy of the church from the state, arguing that an independent church could better fulfil its spiritual mission without the interference of political agendas (1933:134). He also highlighted how the church's entanglement with state power restricted freedom of thought, thereby exacerbating the suppression of dissent rather than defending the persecuted and oppressed (1933:19).

In his seminal work 'The Gospel Call', Prokhanov extended a message of forgiveness for the centuries of persecution facilitated by the Orthodox Church (Prokhanov 2009m:87). Thus, it turns out that the Orthodox Church supported the state apparatus instead of championing the oppressed; secondly, that the church itself acted as a persecutor of nonconformists, utilising the state's power to enforce conformity.

Thus, the examination of Prokhanov's views reveals his acute awareness of the problematic dynamics between the Orthodox Church and the state during the Tsarist era. He recognised the underlying power dynamics and ideological constructs that supported the state's authority, which in turn used the church to maintain the status quo. Prokhanov's critiques reflect a theology of suspicion, where he questions the integrity and motivations of a church that, in his view, often compromised its spiritual duties in favour of political expediency.⁴³

Solidarity.

Prokhanov spent the majority of his life in Russia, including the Soviet period, deeply engaged with the trials and tribulations of its people (Redaktsiya 1922a; Prokhanoff 1933). His personal experiences with persecution underscore his deep connection to the societal challenges of his time. He was forced to leave Russia during the intense persecutions of the 1890s (Redaktsiya 1922a:3; Prokhanoff 1933:92), and again in 1928

⁴³ As shown earlier, the criticism of Prokhanov, though not without basis, was not entirely objective. He may have been guilty of overgeneralisation, as even within Orthodoxy, many clergy recognised the need for reform. Moreover, the symphony of church and state was a historically entrenched paradigm of thought. Under such an alliance, the prophetic mission of the church was weakened, as Bosch clearly demonstrated in his research (Bosch 2011: loc. 9418).

due to political pressures (Popov 1996:164-166; Prokhanoff 1933:252). He was arrested at least twice (1921 and 1923), evidencing the state's hostility towards his activities (Kahle 1978:11; Prokhanoff 1933:189-198; 217-225), and even faced a criminal case (Redaktsiya 1922a:6). Despite these hardships, Prokhanov chose to remain in St. Petersburg during the famine years that followed the revolution, continuing his ministry and providing support to the affected populace (Karev 1922:14).

This enduring presence and active participation in the community during times of severe hardship informed and shaped Prokhanov's missiological paradigm. Unlike those who might create theoretical models from a safe distance, Prokhanov developed his approach through direct and sustained engagement with the people he aimed to serve, often sharing in their sufferings and adversities.

Epistemological Reference Point and Theological Continuity with Protestant Evangelical Tradition.

Prokhanov remains deeply rooted in the apostolic tradition, which serves as his epistemological reference point. He outlines 'cardinal principles' that unify Protestant denominations, including 'faith in Scripture, the doctrine of God as the Father of men, the mission of Christ, the atonement, salvation, etc.' (Prokhanoff 1933:104).

Additionally, Prokhanov refers to the Apostolic Creed, a widely accepted statement of faith among Protestants (1933:104; cf. Puzynin 2010). In his address at the first ARCEC, Prokhanov presented nine points that unify Evangelical believers in Russia (1909j :19). These points were adapted from a document on unity from the World Evangelical Alliance (Puzynin 2010:252), demonstrating that Prokhanov's theology is integrally linked with the theological traditions of the Protestant evangelical world.

Importantly, Prokhanov does not advocate for a relativistic, localised theology devoid of absolute points of reference. Instead, his theological framework is firmly anchored in enduring principles that transcend local contexts, ensuring a cohesive and universally applicable theological discourse.

Dialectical Epistemology and Transformation of Reality.

Ivan Prokhanov's theological approach was fundamentally practical, aimed at transforming both individuals and societal structures. According to Sinichkin, Prokhanov viewed the gospel as inherently practical rather than merely sacred or theoretical, emphasising its direct application to daily life (Sinichkin 2020:62).

Prokhanov criticised abstract theology for its failure to manifest love. In a letter to Pashkov, he argued that the Christian focus should transcend doctrinal definitions that foster division, instead demonstrating Christ's love, which he believed could unite and empower the church on earth (Prokhanov 1898).

After the adoption of a new creed at the Second ARCEC in 1911, which was authored by Prokhanov himself (Prokhanov 1910a:1), he clarified his stance by stating that the creed was designed to transform the religious life of the populace, thus articulating a clear transformative goal (ed. Prokhanov 1911e:1). This statement further emphasised his commitment to a transformational agenda within Russian evangelical movements.

In his 1925 programmatic article 'New or Evangelical Life', Prokhanov outlined a specific programme addressing social challenges in Russia, such as idleness, disorganised daily life, and prevalent alcohol abuse. His theological ethics focused on labour, everyday life, and sobriety, asserting that from the onset of the Evangelical movement, the practical application of Christianity through faith and good works was central (Prokhanov 1925a:4-23; 1933:237).

Prokhanov recognised the need to adapt Western theological ideas to the Russian context for effective transformation. Puzynin noted that Prokhanov's flexibility in contextual adaptation was evident as he sought to build a Trinitarian theology that resonated with the Russian spiritual and cultural milieu while adhering to Western Protestant traditions (Puzynin 2010:253).

The deliberate adaptation of theological and practical ideas to transform Russian reality in the religious and social spheres becomes evident when analysing his Confession of Faith (Prokhanov 1910a:1-19).

It is clear that Prokhanov recognised the importance of prayer within the spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church. Based on his analysis of the state of affairs, Prokhanov devoted significant attention to this topic. His explanation of what prayer should be is polemical in nature. Prokhanov advocated for genuine, heartfelt prayer as opposed to the formal, memorised prayers of the Orthodox Church, emphasising that true prayer should reflect the actual needs and feelings of the faithful (Prokhanov 1910a:XII).

He also emphasised the importance of good deeds for Orthodox parishioners. In his Confession of Faith, Prokhanov highlighted the significance of charitable deeds within his theological framework, interpreting them as expressions of gratitude for salvation and as a means to manifest God's love. This perspective boldly diverged from traditional Orthodox interpretations (Prokhanov 1910a:X).

Prokhanov also addressed the theme of freedom of belief in his Confession of Faith, which was particularly relevant during that historical period. He attributed theological significance to the concept of freedom of conscience, asserting that the freedom of a Christian encompasses the phenomenon of freedom of conscience. He further stated (1910a:X) that

God is the judge and ruler of human conscience (James 4:12); conscience serves as a link between God and man, and no person can subject another to violence or coercion for following the dictates of their conscience or force them to comply with any human commandments and teachings.

It should be noted that his Confession of Faith, with elements adapted for the purpose of transformation, was distinct from the confessions of Onken/Pavlov (1906) or Kargel (1913) in aspects such as prayer, freedom of conscience, and charitable deeds. This highlights Prokhanov's unique adaptation of Western theological ideas to the Russian context, with an emphasis on change rather than preservation.

In conclusion, Prokhanov's dialectical approach to theology, which integrated apostolic tradition with aspects of Protestant culture, was fundamentally aimed at transforming the existing Russian reality. Unlike the Baptists, who sought to maintain their identity within the global movement, Prokhanov and his followers in SPb pursued a distinctly Russian evangelical awakening, potentially diverging from the Western Reformation of the 16th century (Puzynin 2010:254). This approach illustrates Prokhanov's significant role in shaping a transformational theology that was both contextually relevant and practically focused.

Poesis: The Transformative Power of Ivan Prokhanov's Poetic and Musical Contributions.

Prokhanov's engagement with poetry and music was deeply influenced by his understanding of their emotional and symbolic potency within theological and missiological contexts (Kal'nev 1913:529-556). He articulated this perspective clearly, stating (1933:147) that,

The development of spiritual music has a very great importance for the evangelization of Russia. The Russian people are fond of music. A large number of conversions have taken place through hearing the Evangelical hymns... Many have been converted through reading the hymns and others under the influence of singing the hymns in the churches.

His contributions to the poetic heritage of the Evangelical movement in Russia and the Soviet Union are notable, and they merit further scholarly examination.

Prokhanov was prolific in his musical undertakings, reportedly translating 413 hymns and composing 624 himself (Prokhanoff 1933:146). His works were prominently featured in numerous editions of the journal *Christian*, and he published several collections of hymns and poems that deeply influenced the theological beliefs and values of believers (1933:146-147; Redaktsiya 1922a:5).

This significance was echoed at the Third ARCEC in 1912, where the development of musical worship was a focal point, highlighting an intensifying integration of music into religious practices (Trosnov 1912a:4).

As discussed in *Morning Star* (Redaktsiya 1922a:5):

New spiritual melodies should have a folk character but not be vulgar. Existing church music cannot express the essence of the Gospel, i.e., the joy of repentance and rebirth, as historical churches have lost the corresponding experiences. They should combine, on the one hand, Russian folk sorrow and, on the other, evangelical joy.

Prokhanov believed that there was an urgent need to create new musical expressions that captured the joy inherent in evangelical soteriology (1933:145). He advocated for new spiritual melodies that resonated with folk themes but avoided vulgarity, arguing that traditional church music failed to convey the essence of the gospel due to the lost experiential dimensions of historical churches. He envisioned a blend of traditional Russian melancholy with evangelical jubilation.

He also actively supported Christian composers, providing them with theological and cultural guidelines for their compositions (1933:145). Prokhanov criticised Orthodox music for its inability to reflect the joy of the gospel, attributing this to its soteriological outlook, and noted the sombre tone of secular Russian music, which mirrored the harsh realities of Russian life (Prokhanoff 1933:144-145).

A prominent figure and the person responsible for the musical and choral ministry in the Evangelical Baptist Brotherhood of Russia, Goncharenko (1950-2021), asserts (2019a:38-45) that Prokhanov was similar to Luther, who expressed faith and the truths of the gospel through spiritual texts. These hymns had both educational and inspirational characteristics. Prokhanov's influence on the work of conductors who created music for his texts was so strong that composers like A. Keshe, N. Kazakov, A. Gefelfinger, G. Dranenko, and E. Gorin (A. Egorov) primarily based their compositions on his texts. Goncharenko remarks that the influence of Prokhanov's verse is so profound that these hymns are sung today not only in Evangelical Christian Baptist churches but also in Russian Catholic parishes in Moscow and other major cities. These hymns have been translated into different languages and are sung in various parts of the world.

Goncharenko (2019b:8) also asserts that Prokhanov 'saw the development of evangelical churches in Russia primarily as people's churches. Therefore, many outstanding conductors adapted folk melodies, striving to give them a church sound'.

Ultimately, Prokhanov aimed to transform the musical landscape, endeavouring to replace the prevalent melancholy in Russian society with an atmosphere filled with joy and faith-based optimism (Prokhanoff 1933:10).

Thus, Ivan Prokhanov's legacy in the realm of spiritual music and poetry is monumental. His profound understanding of the emotional and symbolic power of music enabled him to create works that not only educated but also inspired (Kal'nev 1913:529-556). His hymns, deeply embedded in the Evangelical tradition, have transcended their original context to influence a wide array of religious practices and communities. Prokhanov's vision of integrating folk elements with evangelical joy created a unique and enduring musical expression that continues to resonate in churches across the world. His work stands as a testament to the transformative power of poetic and musical contributions in shaping theological and cultural landscapes. The enduring popularity and influence of his hymns underscore the significance of his contributions, inviting further scholarly exploration into his life and work.

However, it is possible that Prokhanov overestimated the significance of his evangelical tradition, attributing it excessive importance in the context of global awakening (Prokhanoff 1933:13-14; Puzynin 2010: 259). This was likely linked to his belief in Russia's messianic role in world history, which he thought should primarily manifest in the spiritual realm. His vision of Russia's future messianic significance was quite typical of Russian intellectuals (ed. Prokhanov 1906j: 69; Prokhanoff 1933: 265-266).

The document adopted at the All-Russian Evangelical Christian Conference in 1926, as well as in subsequent regional conferences, is of particular interest (Prokhanov 1933: 237-238). The first point Prokhanov makes, appealing to 1 Timothy 4:12, is that believers must set an example in all aspects of life: "not only in personal behavior, but in conduct in family, social, business, and educational life."

Secondly, a person's actions must be governed by love—for God and His Word, for neighbours, and even for enemies. "The highest aim of his life should be to reproduce the character of Christ," Prokhanov asserts.

According to Prokhanov, the Gospel must also shape scientific and intellectual pursuits. He urges believers to seek education for themselves and ensure that their children receive it as well, emphasising the Christian responsibility to contribute to the advancement of knowledge: "There should not be among us even one illiterate man or woman. (This rule is already being enforced; those who join our ranks are being taught to read and write if they cannot do so). All members, both parents and children, must try to secure the highest education commensurate with their means."

Prokhanov also highlights the role of the arts in expressing the Gospel: "The Gospel must find expression in the development of the arts, such as literature, music, architecture, printing, and sculpture."

Furthermore, he envisions the Gospel's transformative influence on industry and agriculture: "To improve all branches of industry by inventing and applying newer methods of work. The Gospel must have its effect upon agricultural pursuits. That is to say, Christian farmers and cattle owners should exercise themselves to grow the very best farm products and raise the healthiest cattle. The Gospel apples, the Gospel wheat, the Gospel fowls are to be the best compared with any others."

Prokhanov also underscores the importance of cleanliness and aesthetic order in believers' surroundings: "The houses of the believers in the villages should be surrounded with beautiful landscaping. Terraces in the front and kitchen gardens in the rear to give a pleasing effect to the eye. Flowers in profusion should be grown inside and outside, and nearby should be built houses for the birds. Order and beauty everywhere—that is the Christian way."

The principles of the Gospel Standard of Life extend to exemplary marriages, sobriety, and care for people's material well-being. However, Prokhanov's vision is not limited to

outward social reform—it is, at its core, a spiritual transformation. He insists that such a life is only possible "by the indwelling Holy Spirit, daily reading of the Word of God, and prayerful fellowship with Christ, who said: 'Without me ye can do nothing.'" (John 15:15). He further emphasizes the necessity of "a strong faith, 'by which all things are possible'" (Mark 9:27).

Thus, Prokhanov presents a contextualised, holistic, and transformational vision for Russian social and cultural life. Yet, his focus is not merely on moral improvement or societal progress—he sees true change as a work of the Spirit, empowered by God. His ideas are particularly relevant to issues such as personal ethics, alcoholism, and the work ethic. While operating within a modernist framework that values education, Prokhanov does not view learning and cultural engagement as ends in themselves; rather, he sees them as instruments of divine transformation.

He also advocates for culture as a means of Gospel proclamation. Recognizing the profound role of imagery in Russian society, he promotes the arts as a channel for Christian witness. Yet, for him, the arts are not merely tools of influence—they are to be sanctified expressions of the Gospel, reflecting God's truth, beauty, and glory in every sphere of life.

It should be noted, however, that this program was not entirely unique. Many of its ideas were borrowed from the YMCA, which was actively operating in Russia, including in collaboration with the Orthodox Church (Miller 2013).

4.7.7. Conclusion

Thus, it can be argued that Prokhanov did indeed recognise the need to contextualise theological-missiological ideas. Presumably, he intuitively made an epistemological shift towards a dialectical approach, viewing theology not only as an explanation of reality but also as a means of its transformation, inspired by a sense of solidarity with the suffering. The integration of theory, practice, and poetry played a significant role in Prokhanov's methodological missionary contextual paradigm. From his perspective, God is the one who turned to the world of suffering people in Russia.

4.8. Mission as Common Witness

4.8.1. A brief historical overview

David Bosch (2011:loc. 10789) offers a concise historical overview that demonstrates how the recognition of the need for unity among churches to carry out successful missional activities has evolved over time. A crucial turning point occurred in 1910 at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Bosch points out that previously, unity was mainly seen as achieving theological consensus and paid little attention to global concerns. However, the Edinburgh Conference marked a shift by incorporating a concern for the world into discussions on church unity (James 1998:249).

In 1921, the International Missionary Council (IMC) was established to promote interdenominational and international cooperation. This was followed by the emergence of two other movements, namely 'Faith and Order' and 'Life and Work', which eventually merged in 1948 to form the World Council of Churches (WCC). Bosch (2011:loc. 10796-10802) highlights a dichotomy between ecclesiology (WCC) and mission (IMC), which was resolved in 1961 in New Delhi when the IMC was integrated into the WCC.

Bosch asserts (2011:loc. 10805) that:

There can be no doubt that a crucial theological point was made: unity and mission belong together. The rediscovery of the essentially missionary nature of the church could not but lead to the discovery that the Christian mission could only be truly called Christian if it was borne by the one church of Christ.

The Catholic Church also came to understand the importance of unity for the effective fulfilment of its mission. Pope John XXIII (1962), in his 1962 address at the opening of the Second Vatican Council, emphasised the need to promote the unity of the Christian Church to ensure a successful mission. Referring to St. Augustine, the Pope stated that the unity of the Church is foundational 'in order that the earthly city be brought to the resemblance of that heavenly city where truth reigns'.

4.8.2. Bosch's contours of new emerging mission as common witness paradigm

Bosch outlines six contours that define the new emerging mission paradigm, emphasising the concept of 'common witness' (2011:loc. 10909). These contours collectively argue for a redefined understanding of mission within the global Christian community.

Firstly, there is an *awareness* of the absolute necessity for both mutual *coordination* in mission and the recognition of the *need* for unity. As Bosch (2011:loc. 10909) articulates, 'The mutual coordination of mission and unity is non-negotiable'. This awareness does not stem from changing circumstances but arises from the divine gift of unity within the one Body of Christ: 'God's people are one; Christ's Body is one'. Consequently, there is a need to revise our vocabulary, shifting from speaking of the unity of churches to discussing the unity of the Church (Bosch 2011:loc. 10909).

Secondly, the mission in unity is not about abandoning *truth* in the name of unity for the sake of missionary activity. *Unity and truth go hand in hand*, presupposing certain *tensions* and even the presence of conflicts. As Beker (1980:130) comments concerning the Apostle Paul's ministry, 'The unity of the church and the truth of the gospel constitute the permanent uneasy dialectical components of Paul's apostolate and thought'.

The modernist paradigm of thinking suggested making a choice between unity without diversity or diversity without unity, but postmodernism offers a third way – 'as *unity which preserves diversity* and diversity which strives after unity' (Bosch 2011:loc. 10926). However, Bosch states, referring to Pope John XXIII (Bosch 2011:loc. 10926), that 'in the midst of all diversity, there is a unifying center: Jesus Christ'. He also optimistically concludes that 'Unity in mission is no lost cause as long as the Bible, which witnesses to this *Christ*, is opened, read, and proclaimed in all Christian churches' (Bosch 2011:loc. 10926).

However, when we consider tensions among Christians, repentance is necessary, along with self-critical reflection, *respectful dialogue*, and the *acceptance* of one another despite differences.

Thirdly, the unity of the church for the sake of mission is essential in light of the fact that 'the church's mission *will never come to an end*' (Bosch 2011:loc. 10936; emphasis in the original). Countries that were once sending nations for missions have themselves become mission fields due to 'atheism, secularism, superstitions, or a new form of European paganism'.

Fourthly, regarding mission in unity, there is a need to cease dividing churches into 'sending' and 'receiving', where sending entities hold superiority over the receiving ones. As Bosch (2011:loc. 10936) asserts, 'For the sake of unity and mission, we need new relationships, mutual responsibility, accountability, and interdependence (not independence!)'.

Fifthly, it involves developing a negative attitude towards the emergence of an *unlimited number* of new churches formed on the basis of 'extremely questionable distinctions' (Bosch 2011:loc. 10958). According to Bosch, the Apostle Paul created communities where diverse individuals – rich and poor, Jews and Greeks, slaves and free – belonged to one fellowship, learned to accept each other, and lived together despite significant cultural and social differences. Bosch criticises the Protestant tendency to cultivate vertical relationships with God at the expense of horizontal relationships among people. He argues against separating Christology (vertical relationships) from ecclesiology (horizontal relationships), stating, 'We cannot speak about Christ, the Lord and Saviour, without speaking about his Body – his liberated and saved community'. Additionally, the pneumatological aspect plays a significant role, as the Holy Spirit is given not to individual but to the community of faith. Thus, Bosch (2011:loc. 10970) asserts, 'If our mission is to be Christological and Pneumatological, it also has to be ecclesial, in the sense of being the *one* mission of the *one* (emphases in the original) church'.

Sixth, the unity of the church in mission demonstrates the cosmic authority of Christ over this world.

And finally, it is necessary to acknowledge and confess the absence or loss of ecclesiological unity as a *sin* (Bosch 2011:loc. 10976). Preserving unity is a clear command of Christ. We must be unified as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are unified. Bosch recognises that concepts like 'world church' and 'unity of humankind' are fictions. However, he concludes, 'both fictions are indispensable if we wish to do justice to what it means to be the church and to live creatively and missionally in the face of the eschatological tension which belongs to our very being as Christians'.

Thus, the global paradigm of mission unity involves understanding the necessity of both unity and coordination of efforts. This is because both Christ and His body – the church – are one. Unity and truth do not contradict each other; in fact, they go hand in hand and create a certain tension. In order to overcome modernist tendencies, unity should be seen as the preservation of diversity. Similarly, diversity should be seen as a pursuit of unity. Unity is necessary because the mission will never conclude and is needed both among the sending and the sent communities. It is important to foster a negative attitude towards the constant emergence of new communities, as the church is one. A unified church demonstrates the universal dominion of Christ, and it is crucial to recognise that the absence of unity is a sin.

4.8.3. Prokhanov and 'mission as common witness' paradigm

An examination of Prokhanov's viewpoints on unity reveals discernible elements of Bosch's 'Contours of New Emerging Mission as Common Witness' paradigm in Prokhanov's theological-practical approach to mission.

4.8.3.1. Need for unity

The activities and teachings of Ivan Prokhanov clearly demonstrate his deep understanding of the importance of unity in successful missionary endeavours. During his student years (1888–1893), Prokhanov recognised the critical role of Christian unity in effective missions, as seen in his editorial work with the magazine *Conversation*. This

publication aimed to unite believers and consolidate efforts for the propagation of the Kingdom of God, defined as the kingdom of Truth and Love (Val'kevich 1900:162). His inclusivity extended beyond his Protestant roots, incorporating contributions from diverse religious groups such as the Tolstoyans and Doukhobors-Postniks, showcasing a broad engagement (Val'kevich 1900:163).

Prokhanov's exposure to SPb's intellectual circles, notably influenced by the evangelical leader Vasily Pashkov, likely shaped his perception of the importance of unity, as demonstrated in the historical aspect of the study. His studies and time abroad from 1895 to 1898 (Prokhanov 1898) and his affiliation with the Evangelical Alliance further solidified this conviction, emphasising the goal of fostering global Christian unity beyond denominational boundaries (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:9).

Prokhanov advocated for the establishment of a similar alliance within Russia, calling for an expansion of its objectives. The Russian Evangelical Union, as he envisioned, was not only about fostering spiritual closeness among believing Christians in Russia, but also aimed to promote 'God's work' through unity, irrespective of denominational differences, grounded in the gospel and a shared recognition of unity in Christ (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:9).

From the very first issue of the publication '*Christian*', one of the three mottos on the journal's cover encapsulated a call for unity (Khristianin #1 (1906)). In his 'Confession of Faith', Prokhanov (1910a:XV) dedicated a section titled 'The Relationship Between Churches', advocating for the mutual responsibility of churches to support each other and maintain unity. He states (Prokhanov 1910a:XV), 'Churches must never forget that the highest desire of their Head is that they achieve and embody 'unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'.

Furthermore, Prokhanov's sincere efforts to bridge gaps with Baptists underscored his belief that unity among evangelical believers was crucial for effective mission work. His initiatives, as seen in the foundational publications of the magazine *Brotherly Union* (Bratskii Soiuz), which he likely initiated, reflect a serious commitment to fostering unity.

Prokhanov's advocacy for unity was deeply rooted in his understanding of its essential role in accomplishing his transformative project within Russian society, centred on spiritual renewal. This is exemplified in the document he approved and published, SPb Youth Circle (SPb Yunosheskiy Kruzhok 1906:5), an appeal from the youth circle to all Russian youth. It contains a call to prepare for an imminent outpouring of the Holy Spirit intended to transform the nation, similar to events reported in other countries. The appeal underscores the need for unity, urging the formation of youth societies and engaging in fervent prayer, as well as a deep study of the Word of God while awaiting Christ's command.

Prokhanov's (1908j:8) theological basis for this unity is further clarified in his article 'Russian Evangelical Alliance', where he references John 10:16 and John 17:21. These passages discuss the ideal of one flock under one shepherd, and Christ's prayer for unity, respectively. Prokhanov interprets these scriptures as a call for believers to recognise themselves as a single church under one Christ, arguing that unity is vital for the world to acknowledge Christ as God's messenger. He posits that doctrinal divisions among Christians not only hinder God's work but also grieve the Holy Spirit. This perspective was central to his address at the ARCEC in 1909, where he asserted that only a united church could fulfil its divine mission (Prokhanov 1908a:1-3).

In his 1908 letter 'The Main Need of Russia', Prokhanov (Prokhanov 1908a:2) draws an analogy between Russia and a 'beaten person waiting for a merciful Samaritan' (Luke 10:34), suggesting that those filled with the Spirit of Christ are the modern Samaritans. However, he emphasises that their influence depends on their unity, stating, 'for their voice to be heard, they must act in the full power of spiritual unity'.

It is essential to highlight a crucial aspect regarding Prokhanov's alignment with the views prevalent among the SPb intelligentsia. According to Puzynin (2010:254), the desire for a Spirit-led reformation that would encompass all of Russia – a unification of all regenerated Christians notwithstanding minor differences – has been a fundamental element of the SPb evangelical tradition since the times of Radstock and Pashkov. In the

case of Prokhanov, it is necessary to emphasise that unity is a prerequisite for this reformation. The Holy Spirit would bring about reformation if the believers are united.

Thus, in Prokhanov's activities, there is a tendency towards inclusiveness, prompted by the recognition of the need for unity among believers to successfully carry out the mission of the church. According to Prokhanov, the Holy Spirit, who is the initiator and driving force of the reformation in Russia, accomplishes this reformation through a united church.

4.8.3.2. The path to unity

Ivan Prokhanov addresses the crucial question of Christian unity by asking, 'How can this unity be realised?' He warns against the establishment of new churches or associations, advocating instead for a spiritual unity that aligns with the unity Jesus Christ prayed for (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:8).

Recognizing the complexity of achieving unity amidst diversity, Prokhanov emphasizes that the diversity in people's *thinking* and *tastes* inevitably leads to differences in their *ecclesiastical* views. Furthermore, Prokhanov asserts that individuals have the *freedom* to act according to their *conscience*, in line with their beliefs. However, this freedom should not impede the *recognition* that all believers are part of the 'one body of Christ'. Prokhanov also calls for *respect* for the convictions of others and advocates for collaborative prayer and labour (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:8).

Firstly, Prokhanov emphasised that the fundamental prerequisite for unity among believers is *recognising* that they all form a single body of Christ (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:8.), which is divinely *established* and must be *maintained* (Prokhanov 1909i:10-13). He argued that before exploring new forms of unity, believers must acknowledge their integral part in the universal Church. This recognition fosters a deeper understanding of Christ's supreme authority and naturally leads to unity, reflecting an inner spiritual cohesion (Prokhanov 1909i:11). Prokhanov highlighted that the Church, governed solely by Christ, seamlessly connects all members. He stressed the

importance of every member, asserting that none are superfluous or expendable (Prokhanov 1909i:10-11).

Secondly, respecting diversity in interpreting faith's specific aspects and church practices constitutes another condition for unity. Prokhanov stressed the importance of freedom in handling secondary matters (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:8), underlined by the epigraph of his magazine *Christian*, which stated, 'In essentials – unity, in non-essentials – freedom, and in all things – love'.⁴⁴

In Prokhanov's (1910a:10) Confession of Faith, he dedicated an entire section to the topic of freedom, titled 'On the Freedom of a Christian and Freedom of Conscience'. He asserted that such freedom allows believers to be tolerant and indulgent towards those who differ on secondary faith matters, thus fostering unity (Phil. 1:15-18; 3:15-17; Rom. 14:1).⁴⁵

Thirdly, Prokhanov distinguished unity in essentials from *relativism*, asserting the paramount importance of Scripture and Christ. The charter of the Russian Evangelical Alliance mandated members to recognise the Holy Scriptures as the sole faith basis and maintain a conscious belief in Jesus Christ as their Saviour (Prokhanov 1908k:1-2). His summary of the All Russian Union's doctrinal values included worshiping God in spirit and truth, justification by faith alone, and the universal priesthood of believers (ed.

⁴⁴ Reimer asserts (2013:140) that Prokhanov acknowledged the influence of Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon to the extent of referring to them as his spiritual and theological fathers. However, according to Reimer, the Czech reformer Jan Huss had an even greater impact on him. However, according to Reimer, the Czech reformer Jan Huss had an even greater impact on him. Reimer states (140), 'He was so influenced by the Hussite movement that he asked for his ordination by the Hussite brethren in 1924 in order to establish a link between the Hussites and the 'Russian reformation'.

Indeed, the influence of the Moravian Brethren on Prokhanov can be identified. Notably, the slogan emphasising the importance of unity in essentials, which became a central tenet of Prokhanov's theology of unity, is one of the key distinguishing principles of the Moravian Brethren. According to Hutton (2000: section I), this principle 'goes back to the beginnings of their history. For some years they have been accustomed to use as a motto the famous words of Rupertus Meldenius: 'In necessariis unitas; in non-necessariis libertas; in utrisque caritas'—in essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in both, charity'.

⁴⁵ Historically, Prokhanov's advocacy for freedom was likely influenced by a period when the state enforced alignment with the Orthodox Church and suppressed divergent views. This historical context perhaps fuelled his strong support for freedom within evangelical movements.

Prokhanov 1911e:1). The doctrine of spiritual regeneration is also key for Prokhanov (Prokhanoff 1933:24). It seems that for Prokhanov, the essence of faith lies in what facilitates human transformation, as demonstrated in his analysis of the critique of Orthodoxy through the lens of the Evangelical paradigm. The fundamental attributes of the Evangelical faith are those that can unite people in achieving the goals of God's kingdom.

The fourth unifying factor Prokhanov identified was Christ's love. In correspondence with Pashkov (Prokhanov 1898), he asserted that the imperatives of Christ's love should supersede dogmatic definitions. This sentiment was reiterated in *Christian*, which featured Grabb's sermon defining true Christianity by the love of God, transcending denominational divides (Grabb 1906:13)

Finally, Prokhanov proposed practical steps towards unity, starting with communal prayer. He believed that continuous prayer for unity was crucial and cited Finland, where joint prayer facilitated spiritual unity (ed. Prokhanov 1908j:9). He also sought collaboration with the Baptist Union by aligning certain aspects of their work, as outlined in two issues of the newspaper *Brotherly Union* (Bratskiy Soyuz), which was specially created by Prokhanov and published twice in 1920 (ed. Prokhanov 1920d; 1920e; Potapova 2014a; Potapove 2014b). Additionally, he advocated for a culture of responsibility among churches, emphasising the importance of mutual prayer and support to maintain 'the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace' (Prokhanov 1910a:15).

Thus, Prokhanov's vision for unity underscores the primacy of spiritual connections over organizational structures. He advocates for a profound recognition among believers of their membership in one body of Christ, urging respect for diverse interpretations on secondary matters and emphasising freedom of conscience. Prokhanov posits that true unity, established by Christ, must be maintained through acknowledging Christ's supremacy and embracing core doctrines that foster spiritual renewal and societal transformation. Central to his teachings is Christ's love, transcending denominational barriers. Practical steps he advocates to enhance unity include communal prayer, collaborative efforts, and fostering a culture of mutual responsibility and support among

churches. Prokhanov's enduring commitment to these principles underscores his dedication to a unified Christian community rooted in love, respect, liberty, and shared faith.

4.8.3.3. Conclusion

Thus, it is evident that Prokhanov was well aware of the necessity of unity among evangelical believers for the successful implementation of his vision: to transform Russia by renewing its spiritual life. This awareness was reflected in the development of a theological concept of unity, thoughtful approaches to achieving unity, and practical attempts to realise this unity through concrete actions.⁴⁶

Prokhanov's vision regarding the unity of the church aligns significantly with Bosch's paradigm of 'Mission as Common Witness'. While not all aspects of Bosch's paradigm were relevant to Prokhanov's era, their ways of thinking were largely similar.

Like Bosch, Prokhanov recognised the importance of unity and the coordination of efforts in missionary activities. He also embraced the idea that the Church of Christ is one because Christ is one, and this must be acknowledged. Similarly to Bosch, he was not a relativist and did not view unity as opposed to truth. Prokhanov understood that unity should be pursued while respecting differences in secondary matters. Like Bosch, he emphasised that the Bible and Christ are the main pillars of unity. The concept of respectful dialogue and the acknowledgment of differences also held an important place in his discourse.

However, as was previously demonstrated, Prokhanov's attempts to unite with the Baptists ultimately failed. This highlights the challenge of translating theological ideals into concrete realities. While formulating a theological foundation for unity may be relatively straightforward, its practical implementation often proves far more complex.

⁴⁶ An exploration of the reasons why Prokhanov was unable to achieve unity goes beyond the scope of this study, however, attempts to investigate these reasons have been made (see Potapova 2014; Stepanov 2023).

The tensions between different traditions, doctrinal distinctions, and historical factors made unity difficult to achieve despite Prokhanov's efforts.

An additional factor in this difficulty was Prokhanov's own leadership style. His strong vision for a united evangelical movement, combined with his charismatic and strategic leadership, made him an influential figure. However, his leadership also had a controlling aspect—he sought not just unity, but a form of unity that aligned with his own vision for evangelical renewal in Russia. This sometimes led to tensions with other leaders, particularly among the Baptists, who may have perceived his leadership as overly dominant. While Prokhanov was deeply committed to dialogue and cooperation, his approach to unity was not always flexible enough to accommodate differing leadership structures and theological emphases.

4.9. Mission as Ministry by the Whole People of God

4.9.1. Historical perspective: Development of clericalism

David Bosch (2011:loc. 10982) argues that there has been a significant transformation in the modern era that has shifted the role of non-ordained individuals in ministry, challenging the long-standing dominance of the ordained. Citing Boerwinkel (1974:54-64), Bosch (2011) traces the institutionalisation of the church back to the reign of Constantine, noting that the current trend toward 'laicisation' – the increased involvement of laypeople in church roles – marks the end of this era. For nearly 19 centuries, ministry was predominantly the domain of ordained ministers, a practice that has only recently begun to change (Bosch 2011:loc. 10990).

In the early Christian community, there was no distinct class of priests. Jesus selected ordinary individuals as his disciples. Meeks (1983:29, 81; Bosch 2011:loc. 10999) highlights that households were foundational in establishing Christianity in urban centres, where the term 'ekklesia' – borrowed from secular Greek meaning a gathering or assembly – was used to describe the church, rather than terms derived from synagogue practices.

Burrows notes that the early church avoided adopting priestly language from either Greco-Roman or Israelite traditions. Instead, they chose secular terminology to prevent the sacral connotations that priestly terms would later imply (Burrows 1980:76). This avoidance of religious elitism underscores the church's original inclusivity.

The authority vested in church office-bearers, traditionally seen as exclusive to the ordained, overshadowed the concept of Jesus' unique ministry and the universal priesthood of all believers – a doctrine asserting that all Christians have equal potential to minister (Burrows 1980:76). By the end of the first century, as Christianity distanced itself from Judaism and faced the challenge of heresies, figures like Ignatius of Antioch and Cyprian of Carthage emerged as custodians of the apostolic tradition, often viewed as exclusive upholders of truth (Bosch 2011:loc. 11011).

The division between clergy and laity became more pronounced due to the church's emphasis on sacrificial offerings, which reflected Christ's ultimate sacrifice for humanity. This theological concept became central to the functions of the church, where ordained ministers played a pivotal role in performing sacred rites. They believed that through these rites, Christ's grace became accessible to the congregation (Burrows 1980:60). Ordination was seen as granting priests the authority 'to re-present sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ, and brought about a mystical and ontological change in the soul of priest' (Burrows 1980:61), positioning them as 'alter Christus' – another Christ – actively involved in consecration and blessings. In contrast, lay believers assumed a more passive and receptive role (Bosch 2011:loc. 11018).

The church's structure thus evolved into a clear division between clergy and laity, with the latter often perceived as less mature in faith and overly dependent on the clergy for spiritual guidance (Bosch 2011:loc. 11018). Edward Dullas (2002) identifies five ecclesiological models that have historically portrayed the church, ranging from an institution to a community of service. These models tend to reinforce a priestly-sacerdotal image of the church, where ordained ministry is seen as the primary mediator of salvation (Bosch 2011:loc. 11025).

In contrast, the Reformed Church tradition emphasised preaching the Word of God as central to worship. Over time, as the focus on theological education intensified within Protestant practice, it further entrenched clericalism, deepening the clerical paradigm rather than diminishing it (Bosch 2011:loc. 11046).

4.9.2. Development of anticlericalism

David Bosch identifies a significant transformation in the modern era that has shifted the role of non-ordained individuals in ministry, challenging the long-standing dominance of the ordained. This phenomenon, which Bosch terms 'the apostolate of the Laity', is evident in both Catholic and Protestant contexts (Bosch 2011:loc. 11053). Missionary societies have been particularly progressive, actively engaging both men and women in mission activities. Women have taken on roles comparable to men, including preaching, although they have generally been excluded from sacramental duties (Bosch 2011:loc. 11060, 11067).

Post-World War II developments extended these trends from the missionary field to domestic church practices. Bosch notes that it became apparent to both Catholic and Protestant churches that traditional, monolithic models of church office no longer aligned with contemporary realities (Bosch 2011:loc. 11070). The Second Vatican Council marked a significant evolution in this regard, as it recognized the role of ordinary believers in community life, which was substantiated by documents such as *Ad Gentes* 21 and 28 (Second Vatican Council 1965) and *Lumen Gentium* 12 and 33 (Second Vatican Council 1964). For example, *Ad Gentes* 21 emphasises that the Church is not fully established or alive unless there is a genuine laity actively working alongside the hierarchy.

This growing awareness has challenged the traditional division within the church between clergy and laity. In congregational gatherings for fellowship, baptism, or preaching, it is often a member of the community who steps forward to lead, acting in Christ's name. Theologian Jürgen Moltmann (1977:303) describes this dynamic, stating, 'These individuals emerge from the community but stand before it, acting in Christ's name. It is not as 'office bearers' that they confront the congregation; rather, it is Christ

who acts through them'. Moltmann (1977:303) further clarifies, 'Their commission neither separates them from the people nor elevates them above the congregation'. This perspective underscores that the mission is entrusted to the entire community of faith, not just to isolated, individual representatives.

As the understanding that the church inherently possesses a missionary nature has evolved (Bosch 2011), and with the recognition that every believer is, in a sense, a missionary, a new theological focus has emerged. Bosch advocates for the development of a 'theology of the laity', addressing the need to overcome the dichotomous worldview inherited from the Enlightenment era, which often separates personal from societal life (Bosch 2011:loc. 11109; Newbigin 1986:ch. 6).

Moltmann emphasises the crucial need to develop a theology tailored for the laity, which extends beyond the confines of the church and empowers individuals for service in the broader world. This theology holds practical significance in areas such as 'socialization, democratization, education toward self-reliance, and political life', transcending traditional church activities like preaching, rituals, and pastoral services (Moltmann 1975:11).

Theologically, this implies that education should not be confined to training pastors but should be accessible to everyone, fostering a formation that extends to laypeople. Moltmann warns against transforming lay individuals into 'mini-pastors'; instead, he envisions laypeople as independent thinkers and actors who embody Christian values in their respective vocations in the world (Moltmann 1975:11).

4.9.3. Essential tasks of ordain ministers

It is important to clarify that anticlericalism and the democratisation of the church are not aimed at eliminating ordained ministers (Newbigin 1987:30). Rather, these movements seek to redefine their roles within a broader theological context.

Ordained ministers hold a pivotal theological role that extends beyond mere administrative duties. As Burrows (1980:84) notes, 'The early church did not view these

offices as merely human constructs for organizational purposes; rather, they served a deeper theological function'. This function involves preserving the community's fidelity to the teachings and practices of apostolic Christianity, a responsibility Burrows (1980:112) describes as 'a service of keeping the community faithful to the teaching and practice of apostolic Christianity'.

Additionally, ordained ministers are responsible for empowering and equipping church members for service. Newbigin (1987:30) articulates this responsibility clearly: 'The priesthood of the ordained ministry is to enable, not to replace, the priesthood of the whole church'. This underscores that the role of ordained ministers is to facilitate the active participation of all church members in their spiritual and communal duties, thereby advancing the church's universal mission.

4.9.4. Prokhanov and mission as ministry by the whole people of God

4.9.4.1. Prokhanov and the doctrine of the universal priesthood

Prokhanov addressed the challenges posed by the clericalisation of the church from an evangelical theological perspective. In the foundational document 'Foundations of the Russian Evangelical Union', Prokhanov (1908d:4) advocated for the 'priesthood of all believers in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One High Priest'.

In his article 'On the True Priesthood', Prokhanov (2009d:119) used Revelation 5:10 and Leviticus 8:2 to argue against the Old Testament's distinct class of priests, suggesting that the New Testament extends priesthood to all believers. He proposed that this universal priesthood allows every faithful individual to approach God directly, a privilege once exclusive to Aaron's descendants. According to Prokhanov (2009d:124-125), Christ's sacrifice abolished these barriers, endowing every believer with 'the power of spiritual influence'.

Prokhanov's (2009m:86) ideas are further articulated in 'The Gospel Call', where he urged the Orthodox Church to implement radical evangelical reforms. He emphasised that 'the grace of the Holy Spirit belongs not only to pastors but to every believer'

(Prokhanov 2009m:89) and called for the abolition of a special class of priests, proclaiming all believers as priests to the living God (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 1 Pet. 2:5). He argued for the elimination of divisions between clergy and laity, advocating for all church members to be led and inspired by the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3:5; Rom. 8:9, 14; Eph. 5:18).

Prokhanov's doctrine of universal priesthood asserts that every believer, empowered by the Holy Spirit, has equal access to God through Christ, enabling them to combat the forces of darkness. This position democratizes spiritual authority and calls for a profound transformation in church ministry.

4.9.4.2. Prokhanov's stance on ordination and the laying on of hands

The issue of the laying on of hands is closely tied to the concept of universal priesthood, a distinction that traditionally segregates individuals into clergy and laity. This issue was particularly salient during the period in question and highlighted significant doctrinal divergences between Evangelical Christians and Baptists, as noted by Mitskevich (2007:222). Prokhanov (2009n:162-180) addressed this topic in his publication 'On the Laying on of Hands and Ordination'.

Baptists view ordination as essential for ministers (Pavlov 1906), whereas Evangelical Christians see it as beneficial but not mandatory (Prokhanov 2009n:180). According to Prokhanov's *Confession of Faith* (1910a: XV), the responsibilities of preaching and other church ordinances are not confined to presbyters or deacons (1 Cor. 3:6; 1:14-17). Non-ordained individuals can administer Communion and the laying on of hands, although the involvement of ordained members is preferred (Prokhanov 2009n:174). Prokhanov (2009n:174) articulates this position clearly:

Some argue that only ordained presbyters have the right to perform baptism and communion. In some churches, it is even considered a rule that, in the absence of an ordained presbyter, the congregation is not allowed to baptize or partake in communion. However, the same churches permit ordinary members to freely engage in preaching. This perspective is based on the assumption that baptism and communion are much more important than preaching. Yet, such a view arises from the common tendency of spiritually immature individuals to attach greater

importance to external rituals than to internal aspects, contradicting the example set by Christ and the Apostles.

Furthermore, Prokhanov emphasises that Christ, while actively preaching, did not perform baptisms. Similarly, Paul prioritised preaching the gospel as his principal ministry (1 Cor. 1:17; Prokhanov 2009n:175). Drawing on these examples, Prokhanov argues that if preaching – a central sacrament – does not require ordination and is a right extended to every believer, then logically, other sacraments considered less central, such as baptism and the breaking of bread, should also be accessible to all believers. Consequently, Prokhanov concludes that every believer, with the church's consent, has the right to administer both communion and baptism, reinforcing the doctrine of universal priesthood.

The Baptist restriction that only ordained individuals can conduct communion likely stems from their understanding of the Lord's Supper. For Baptists, this ceremony serves as a remembrance of Christ and involves a spiritual eating of His body and blood: 'We believe that in this holy sign Christ gives believers the spiritual eating of His body and His blood' (Ps. 41:3; Is. 55:2; Jn. 6:57; Pavlov 1906). While this interpretation significantly differs from the Catholic-Orthodox understanding of the Eucharist, the language and style echo elements of the Catholic and Orthodox Eucharistic tradition. Believers eat the body and blood of Christ spiritually.

In contrast, Prokhanov's (1910a:14) explanation of the Lord's Supper deliberately avoids associations with the Orthodox Eucharistic tradition. This intention is evident in the practice of breaking bread among evangelical Christians. As Mitskevich (2007:223) notes, evangelical Christians have the presbyter break the bread into large pieces, with each member then breaking off a small piece individually, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 10:16. In contrast, among Baptists, the presbyter and assistants break the bread into small pieces and distribute them, reflecting a more hierarchical approach. This practice is reminiscent of the Catholic tradition, where the priest distributes the bread. The evangelical emphasis on individual participation contrasts with the Baptist approach,

further illustrating Prokhanov's effort to distinguish evangelical practices from Orthodox traditions.

These differences in ordination, the role of the ordained, and the meaning and practice of the Lord's Supper reflect Prokhanov's attempt to distance the evangelical church from Orthodox influence and fully embody the doctrine of universal priesthood. Prokhanov seeks to maximise church democratisation, preventing division into laity and clergy. He emphasises that preaching the gospel, considered the most crucial sacrament, should involve as many participants as possible – essentially, everyone.

4.9.4.3. Prokhanov on liberation and ministry of women

Operating in a conservative religious context, Prokhanov was mindful of the sensitivities surrounding women's roles in church ministry. In his brochure *On the Service of Women in the Church* (Prokhanov 2009o:231), endorsed at the 5th ARCEC (ed. Prokhanov 1922e:10), he addressed these issues directly.

Prokhanov critiques the view that confines women solely to the roles of wives and mothers, while acknowledging the importance of these roles. He argues that women possess diverse gifts and callings (Prokhanov 2009o:231). He asserts that women can pray, prophesy, and evangelise in assemblies but must do so 'under the guidance of experienced brothers' (2009o:235). This stance reflects his adherence to early apostolic church models, which support women's participation in ministry, albeit without assigning them primary leadership roles.

Prokhanov (2009o:235) also asserts that women can work in missions and serve as evangelists. His *Confession of Faith* (Prokhanov 1910a) even allows for deaconesses, a provision not found in the confessions by Pavlov (1906) or Karegel (1913). Prokhanov believes that the opportunities for women's ministry arise from their spiritual emancipation through the evangelical movement (Prokhanov 1922e:10-11). He expressed this belief in a poem inspired by Galatians 3:28, proclaiming equality in Christ and asserting that women gain freedom and equal rights through Him (ed. Prokhanov 1922f:11).

Prokhanov stated ((Prokhanov 1922g:10-11):

Women have historically been in a position of servitude among various nations and peoples. However, in Christ, the Eternal Son, they have been granted a law of *freedom*.

This liberation is remarkable: within the *Church*, women have been given *equal rights*, along with the responsibility of voluntary service and obedience.

Yet, over the centuries, women once again found themselves subjected to restrictions. *In Russia*, too, the *suffering* of women was heard.

However, the holy *Gospel*, brought to the people, has accomplished a great work—it has *restored their freedom*.

This freedom proclaims that God is the Father of all, and in *His love*, He makes *no distinction* between men and women.

Salvation is the same for all, and the same love has redeemed everyone, with one sacrifice and one blood shed for all.

This freedom affirms a *woman's right to serve in the Church of God*, to serve in such a way that God's glory may be revealed through her actions.

This freedom teaches that one must be a servant to those with whom they are united, walking the same path together.

God has commanded that in our lives, we must combine both the gift of freedom and the call to service, so that we may receive His grace.

Sisters, rejoice in your *freedom*! But *hurry to serve all*, so that the Gospel may teach the people how to live.

In this poem, Prokhanov asserts that for centuries, women were in a subordinate position, but the Gospel brought them freedom. Now, being equal before God, they can serve alongside men, as God's love makes no distinction based on gender. This was a radical statement for traditional Russia at the time, especially within the church. Prokhanov was likely influenced by Western trends, where women's missionary societies were actively emerging, with women playing a significant role in spreading the Gospel and serving society (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5195; Robert 2009:131:141).

However, he interprets this issue not merely as a social reform but as a theological principle rooted in the Gospel.

In 'On the Women's Issue in the Field of the Evangelical Movement in Russia', Prokhanov (1922d:11) argues that Christianity liberated women, allowing them to participate in spiritual-social work alongside men. Point 20 of the Gospel Call affirms equal standing for men and women in church assemblies (2009m:92). Prokhanov (1922d:11) contends that Christianity sanctified women's roles associated with childbirth, child-rearing, and marital relationships. He criticises Bolshevik claims of women's liberation, arguing that economic freedom burdened women with labour unsuited to their nature.

Prokhanov highlights the harsh conditions for women in rural areas, emphasising the transformative potential of the gospel within Christian families. He envisions women's spiritual liberation leading to their engagement in the 'spiritual and moral revival of national life' (Prokhanov 1922d:11). He included women among the founders of the Evangelical Russian Union and in key roles within the Evangelical Youth Union Council (ed. Prokhanov 1908k:5-6; ed. Prokhanov 1909a:5-6). Women spoke at the ARCEC and contributed to his periodicals (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:4; Kurilenok 1928:12-14; Nadezhda N 1928:13-16) Prokhanov emphasised the spiritual and educational development of women, establishing Women's Circles in St. Petersburg and other locations (1933:156). These circles supported missionaries, funded prayer house construction, and operated stores. The 10th ARCEC decided to organise Bible courses for women (Mitskevich 2007:242).

Despite operating in a conservative context, Prokhanov held progressive views on women's ministry. He recognised their ontological equality with men and valued their unique contributions, advocating for their active participation in both spiritual and social activities. Prokhanov believed that empowering women was essential for the spiritual awakening and transformation of Russia.

However, his limitations on women's leadership roles may reflect his sensitivity to Russian socio-cultural norms and his commitment to an epistemological stance that idealised the New Testament church paradigm.

4.9.4.4. Prokhanov and home churches

In his *Confession of Faith*, Prokhanov (1910a:11) introduces the concept of home churches defining them as 'a gathering of regenerated souls belonging to one house or family' (1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:4; Col. 4:15). This idea received support among believers.

At the second regional congress, held on February 24, 1922, in Petrograd, a proposal was made (ed. Prokhanov 1922f :7) to ensure that all community members practice three types of prayer: 1) personal prayer, 2) family prayer, and 3) prayer in a public assembly. Accordingly, it was recommended that every believing family have morning and evening prayers and, if possible, read the Word of God together.

This concept of a home community reflects Prokhanov's commitment to democratising spiritual life and church practices. It allows individuals to commune with God through prayer and scripture reading, not only within the church but also within their family context. This approach contributes to the practical application of the doctrine of universal priesthood, fostering a spiritual culture that embodies its values.

4.9.4.5. Prokhanov and lay theology

While a detailed examination of the creation and development of lay theology initiated by Prokhanov is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to highlight his recognition of its necessity. Prokhanov articulated this in a programmatic document, *The New or Evangelical Life* (1925a:4-23), where he sought to provide theological justification for the active, transformative influence of believers on various aspects of their personal, familial, and societal lives.

At the heart of Prokhanov's vision is the evangelical ethic of labour. Before conversion, work is often perceived as a burdensome duty (1925a:9-10), with individuals seeking to escape this obligation. Prokhanov attributes this aversion to a lack of motivation among

pre-conversion individuals. However, for believers, a new motivation for work emerges. Prokhanov asserts that 'for them, work is a necessary condition for internal spiritual happiness'. Believers see God as one who labours, and Christ as 'the Worker in the highest sense of the word' (1925a:9).

Prokhanov further elaborates (1925a:9):

The Christian considers every labour, whether physical or spiritual, as participation in the great work of his Creator and Saviour in renewing the life of humanity. The opportunity to participate in this work is seen by him as a great honour, glory, and happiness. Therefore, he accepts and performs every labour with great joy, and everything he does, he does in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to the glory of God.

However, as the historical context of this study reveals, Prokhanov, along with many of his contemporaries, shared certain socialist values. Moreover, he grounded these values in the gospel. He states (1925a:10), 'Due to the Gospel's call for a social principle as a necessary form of new life, Christians naturally develop an inclination toward collective work'.

Thus, Prokhanov presents classical Protestant work ethic ideas infused with a socialist framework. This synthesis of individual labour ethics and collective work principles reflects his unique approach to integrating religious beliefs with the socio-economic ideologies of his time, demonstrating a holistic vision of Christian life that encompasses personal spirituality and communal responsibility.

Additionally, Prokhanov's doctrine significantly contributes to overcoming the dualistic tendency to divide the church into clergy and mere visitors. By emphasising the active, transformative role of every believer in both personal and communal spheres, Prokhanov's theology underscores the priesthood of all believers. This doctrine promotes the idea that every Christian, regardless of their official role within the church, participates in God's work of renewing humanity.

4.9.4.6. Conclusion

Prokhanov's theology emphasises the doctrine of the universal priesthood, asserting that every believer has equal access to God through Christ and is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

He advocates for the abolition of special classes of priests and the elimination of divisions between clergy and laity, promoting a vision where all believers are priests. However, while Prokhanov encourages active participation of women in church activities, he stops short of endorsing them in primary leadership roles, reflecting his adherence to early apostolic models. Furthermore, he promotes the concept of home churches as a way to democratise spiritual life, allowing individuals to practice their faith within their families. Additionally, Prokhanov advocates for lay theology, emphasizing the transformative role of believers in various aspects of personal, familial, and societal life, blending Protestant work ethic ideas with a socialist framework. Overall, Prokhanov's theology seeks to overcome the dualistic division between clergy and laity, emphasising the priesthood of all believers and promoting active engagement in the church and society.

4.10. Mission as Action in Hope

4.10.1. Introduction

Mission and eschatology may seem unrelated at first glance. Mission is often viewed as practical and tangible, while eschatology, the study of 'the last things', may appear abstract and obscure (Nelson 1954:147). However, Nelson argues that the Church is increasingly recognizing eschatology as significant. According to Nelson, eschatology is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of faith, intricately connected to evangelism, with each holding particular relevance for the other.

During the 19th century, eschatology garnered little interest overall (Bosch 2011:loc. 11732). However, the 20th century saw a revival of interest in this subject, characterised as a 'recovery of the eschatological dimension', spurred by the missionary community. Bosch (2011:11736) asserts that since the inception of the Christian church, there has

been a notable connection between missionary endeavours and expectations of significant future changes for humanity. Nevertheless, Bosch (2011:11763) observes a decline in the eschatological-historical viewpoint within Christian faith in later years.

4.10.2. Historical perspective on mission and eschatology

The historical connection between mission and eschatology can be traced back to the Old Testament, where God is depicted as actively shaping history. Unlike pagan religions, which focused on cyclical phenomena, biblical faith emphasised God's past and future actions. Israelites anticipated a universal kingdom under God's reign, perceiving history as a progression towards redemption (Wright 1952:24).

Moltmann contrasts pagan hopes for a return to a pristine past with Israel's forward-looking view of history (1975:17). While pagans sought periodic renewal, Israelites anticipated a future fulfilment, rooted in their encounter with God. The exodus exemplifies this, seen not as myth but as a historical event pointing to a greater future (Moltmann 1975:18).

Israel's faith was inherently messianic, anticipating God's intervention in the future (Moltmann 1975:18-19). This dynamic perspective, affirming God's active involvement in history, rejects a static understanding of religion (Wright 1952:22).

Bosch underscores that revelation is not merely unveiling the past but God's self-disclosure in historical acts (2011:loc. 11736; Wright 1952). This highlights the inseparable link between God's action in history and the theological understanding of mission and eschatology.

The New Testament faith represents a continuation of the same future expectation that now includes other peoples beyond Israel (Bosch 2011:loc. 11754). Bosch asserts that, despite the early Christians' conviction that history had entered a rapid and unprecedented phase with Christ, and that the future had already invaded the present, they anticipated even greater events to come (2011:loc. 11760; Rowland 2008:ch. 3).

The patristic fathers maintained an eschatological orientation through their interpretation of texts, though not always consistently. Lampe (1953:17-18) describes them as fundamentalists. He states that the early Church was acutely aware of living in the 'last time' prophesied by the ancients. This belief was marked by the conviction that the divine had directly entered human history and that the new life of the Resurrection was partially realised through the Spirit's indwelling (Lampe 1953:19). The Church anticipated Christ's return and the 'total redemption of creation'.

However, with the delay of the Parousia, eschatology shifted towards a mystical and pneumatological perception of reality. God and Christ were perceived as pneuma, and through the Holy Spirit, humans became spiritual. This led to the development of the concept of 'deification' and the union of the soul with the divine, causing the hope for the Parousia, bodily resurrection, judgement, and renewal of creation to recede in Christian thought (Lampe 1953:20). The focus shifted to the soul's present state and stages of union with God, rather than a catastrophic divine intervention concluding history (Lampe 1953:20). This dehistoricisation of faith resulted from the Hellenisation of Christian belief.

Lampe observes that the early Christian sense of living in the last times and possessing the first instalment of total redemption was gradually threatened by a drift toward Judaistic moralism. This moralism became intertwined with the hope for the Kingdom of God in heaven, reshaping eschatological expectations into a reward for righteous living. This shift altered the New Testament's emphasis on sonship and freedom, instead portraying God primarily as a judge and rewarder (Lampe 1953:20). Bosch describes this development as the 'blurring of the eschatological horizon', leading to a loss of the eschatological-historical perspective, where the Old Testament was increasingly viewed as temporally significant (Bosch 2011:loc. 11763).

Braaten (1977:50) interprets eschatological concepts as having two trajectories: one towards the past and the other towards the future. The past-oriented trajectory is 'radically incarnational, Christocentric, and often ecclesiocentric' viewing eschatology as realised in Christ, with the church extending this eschatological salvation and guarding its heritage without expecting new events. Bosch (2011:loc. 4784) notes that the

Christian proclamation of the Kingdom of God was replaced by 'introducing to people the only true and universal religion'. Conversely, the future-oriented trajectory anticipates future salvation, with the historical process preparing for it. Here, the second coming of Christ is paramount (Braaten 1977:51).

These eschatological models, defined by their directional trajectories, can be categorised as ecclesiocentric and mystical. Both models are prevalent in Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism (Bosch 2011:loc. 11777).

According to Bosch, the Enlightenment era intensified two eschatological orientations: ecclesiological-centric and mystical. Bosch remarks that, banished from the public sphere, religion found refuge in mysticism, the eternal redemption of the soul, or the empirical church (2011:loc. 11784).

Bosch argues that the Puritans preserved a vibrant eschatological hope, expressed through millenarian sentiments, which was not merely individual or ecclesiastical (2011:loc. 11783). Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins played pivotal roles in fostering missionary enthusiasm, leading to the global outreach of American missionaries and shaping postmillennial eschatology. This perspective gained popularity between the American Revolution and the Civil War (Marsden 2006:49).

By the 1860s, postmillennialism was embraced by most American Protestants, characterized by an optimistic belief in civilisational progress (Quandt 1973:391). Postmillennialists viewed history as a struggle between God's and Satan's forces, with the victory of righteousness assured. They believed the defeat of Satanic forces was imminent, contributing to a conviction of an impending golden age (Marsden 2006:49).

Postmillennialism represented a compromise between apocalyptic and evolutionary views of time, balancing dramatic upheavals with natural development (Moorhead 1984:61). Cataclysms were expected after the millennium, allowing for gradual evangelical conquest and secular progress. Postmillennialists focused on missionary

initiatives rather than the dramatic second coming of Christ, believing that every unconverted person would face judgement (Moorhead 1984:62).

Over time, influenced by German universities, faith in the supernatural and biblical predictions waned, diminishing apocalyptic sentiments. Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889) reinterpreted the Kingdom of God as a present ethical reality unfolding through organic development, not dramatic divine intervention (Moorhead 1984:66; Dillenberger & Welch 1954:206).

Millenarian thinking also extended to individual fates, with conversion seen as a radical life event, later replaced by gradual spiritual progress (Moorhead 1984:68-69). By the early 20th century, postmillennialism had lost its influence, transitioning to the Social Gospel, where sin was seen as ignorance to be overcome through knowledge and compassion (Bosch 2011:loc. 6756-6764).

However, some continued to believe in the supernatural elements of Christianity, viewing Christ's return as the only solution to fundamental and permanent change. They focused on evangelisation, avoiding social involvement (Bosch 2011:loc. 6767-6770).

The holistic approach to Christian life, which was prevalent before the Enlightenment and persisted for some time afterward, eventually underwent significant disruption. Although this sense of wholeness had already been compromised in Europe, Bosch argues that it was further dismantled, with the Civil War playing a pivotal role in this disintegration. Prior to this period, it was possible to hold seemingly integrated beliefs – being both an evangelist and a voluntarist, a postmillennialist while upholding the belief in a supernatural kingdom of God, and defining sin as both public (or structural) and private (or individual), as Bosch notes (2011:loc. 6770).

This led to a division within the American Christian community: premillennialists, who became the fundamentalist wing, and postmillennialists, whose views became increasingly secular and grounded in an uncritical perception of American culture (2011:loc. 6777).

Quite naturally, in the theological reflection of the postmillennialists of that time, there was no room for apocalyptic sentiments. The apocalyptic idea persisted only within premillennialist circles, but it was marginalised in the early 20th century (Bosch 2011:loc. 11796). Overall, it can be argued that at the beginning of the 20th century, 'the eschatological office', to use Bosch's words (2011:loc. 11733), 'closed'.

At the turn of the century, New Testament scholars such as Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer contended that eschatology, contrary to liberal theology's claims, was not a dispensable element for Jesus and the early church but was central to their entire life and ministry (Moltmann 1967:37-38; Walls 2008:Intr.). However, as Bosch points out, they were unsure how to integrate this realisation (2011:loc. 11802; cf. Käsemann, as quoted in Beker 1980:361).

However, in the late 1930s, and especially after World War II, eschatological discourse re-emerged in theological discussions (Bosch 2011:11806). After the 1960s, there was an increasing awareness of the need for a balanced approach to the relationship between eschatology and mission. Bosch asserts that focusing solely on the parousia may lead to neglecting worldly issues, thus harming Christian mission.

Conversely, an excessive focus on historicisation risks overshadowing the transcendent aspect, depriving individuals of ultimate purpose and meaning (Bosch 2011:ch. 12). He argues for an eschatology that is both future-directed and oriented to the present, maintaining a creative and redemptive tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' (Bosch 2011:ch. 12).

Kasemann (1980:61) states that Christian communities are credible only when they passionately cry, 'Your Kingdom Come!' He adds that God has established signs showing that His kingdom is near and that the struggle with the powers of this age has begun, calling us to participate in this struggle (1980:67). Kasemann further asserts that we must actively oppose the demonic kingdom, as witnesses of the resurrection and instruments of the Spirit of God, working towards a new heaven and a new earth (1980:67).

The revolutionary idea that we can change the world by promoting truth and justice challenges the status quo (Stackhouse 1988:206). However, it is doubtful that the eschatological vision can be fully realised in history. Stackhouse notes that while some manifestations of evil can be overcome, and some anticipations of the ultimate future can be actualised, those inspired by the Kingdom's vision must remain aware of history's limitations (1988:206). Frost (2011:28) emphasises that our actions, such as feeding the hungry and sharing Christ, are anticipations of the world to come, where starvation and unbelief will no longer exist.

The final triumph will be accomplished by God, as stated in Revelation 21:5 (Bosch 2011:ch. 12). It is this vision of ultimate triumph that prevents us from succumbing to quietism; thus, by participating in God's mission, we are acting in hope (Bosch 2011:ch. 12).

4.10.3. Action in hope: Contours of emerging holistic eschatological-missional paradigm

Thus, the holistic approach to mission and eschatology seeks to counteract the dehistoricisation brought about by the Hellenisation of the Christian faith and to transcend ecclesiological-centric and mystical eschatological trajectories. The goal of this holistic eschatological-missional paradigm is to restore the historical-eschatological perspective of the Christian faith, which was diminished during the historical development of Christianity, particularly under the influence of the Enlightenment.

In the holistic model, there is a postmillenarian *optimism* associated with the possibility of *improving* the world with the help of God's grace through preaching the gospel, social reforms, and the progress of science. Simultaneously, there is an element of premillenarian *pessimism*, better defined as a realistic assessment of human incapacity to make the world perfect without *apocalyptic intervention* from God.

Within this framework, *individual sin* is addressed, to some extent, through *conversion*, resulting in *reconciliation* with God, thereby fostering hope for a *future* eschatological kingdom. However, this does not negate the presence of *societal sin*. Resolving societal sin is facilitated by implementing social reforms. Consequently, *evangelisation* and *social activism* are not mutually exclusive.

Moreover, the hope for God's apocalyptic triumph in the holistic missional-eschatological paradigm does not endorse passive waiting. Instead, it calls for active engagement in combating the forces of evil – acting in hope.

4.10.4. Prokhanov and emerging 'action in hope' eschatological paradigm

Prokhanov embodied a holistic 'Action in Hope' missional-eschatological paradigm at the beginning of the 20th century. His approach countered the de-historicising tendencies of Christian faith caused by Hellenistic influence and the Enlightenment. He avoided both ecclesiocentric and mystical eschatological perspectives.

Postmillennial optimism: Prokhanov shared the optimism of postmillennial American evangelicals from the mid-19th century (Marsden 2006:49). This optimism included faith in the spread of the gospel (Prokhanoff 1933:258; 1910a:XVIII) and in scientific, technical, cultural, and social progress (Prokhanov 1925a:21-23; Puzynin 2010:240). He encouraged believers to pursue education and engage actively in social life.

Prokhanov concludes his autobiography on an optimistic note, expressing his belief in the triumph of the gospel in Russia. He asserts that Jesus conquered the forces of darkness through his crucifixion and resurrection, and although his followers initially scattered, ultimately, he gathered them and sent them to preach the gospel (Prokhanov 1933:270).

As evidence of Christ's triumph over the forces of evil, Prokhanov points to the historical impact of the Christian message on the Greco-Roman world. Despite the dire conditions faced by Christians in the first century, 'the Christianity preached by unlettered men overthrew Greek philosophy and Roman military power, and on ruins of that ancient civilization erected the Church, a wonderful building of Christian refinement, culture, and religion' (Prokhanoff 1933:270).

It is important to note that Prokhanov wrote these words during a time of severe persecution in Russia, with numerous leaders imprisoned (Prokhanoff 1933:269; Prokhanov 1928a:11,12). Despite these circumstances, Prokhanov called for faith and optimism, reminding believers that even the early Christians endured 'terrible' conditions (Prokhanoff 1933:270). He urged them to follow this path:

Striving together now for the faith of the Gospel in the atheistic country, we believe that God will give us spiritual victory over all doctrines denying the existence of God and will create a new and happy life in our country.

Prokhanov's social programme 'New or Evangelical Life' (1925a:4-23) reveals his excessive optimism, envisioning ideal believers, families, and society. While this utopian vision may be unattainable, it underscores his belief in progress without the need for

apocalyptic intervention. Prokhanov anticipated a glorious future for Soviet Russia, achieved through the triumph of the gospel, even before Christ's return (Kravtsev 2017:85). In his *Confession of Faith* (Prokhanoff 1910a:18), Prokhanov asserted that the Gospel would spread globally, leading to the millennial Kingdom of Christ (Rom. 9:27; Matt. 24:14).

Apocalyptic eschatological expectations: Prokhanov holds eschatological beliefs emphasising the Second Coming of Christ as the determinant of the world's final destiny. In his sermon 'Soul – Spiritual Instrument' (2009h:97), he mentions that harps will be used in heaven to glorify the Lord. In 'Glory to God' (2009i:187), referring to Revelation 21, he describes the new heaven and new earth, highlighting the beauty of the new Jerusalem, which will be illuminated by God's glory, negating the need for the sun or moon.

In 'Confession', chapter 18, 'Resurrection of the Dead' (1910a:XVIII), Prokhanov asserts that believers will rise in glorified bodies, similar to Christ's post-resurrection body, and the living will also be transformed. He references Revelation 20:13 and 21:1-5 to support his claim that both bodies and the heavens and earth will be renewed. In the same chapter, under 'Final State of Sinners and Righteous', he cites texts from Revelation 21 and 22.

Prokhanov's references to the heavens and the new heaven and earth in his sermons likely refer to the renewal described in Revelation. He implies that the future involves the transformation of the current earth and sky, akin to the renewal of our bodies, rather than a distant, angelic paradise. Thus, Prokhanov envisions the future as being connected to a renewed state of our present world.

Personal versus societal sin: Prokhanov did not separate personal sin from societal sin, believing their overcoming was interconnected. He stated that the mission of the ARUEC was the 'spiritual and moral rebirth of the individual, the family, society, the people, and all mankind' (1933:265), indicating that individual moral transformation was the starting point for broader social change.

As a devout evangelical, Prokhanov emphasised the transformative power of evangelism, which he believed leads to individual spiritual rebirth and hope for eternal life to be realised with Christ's return (2009a:25; 1910a). He rejected the liberal Western prioritisation of the social gospel over evangelism, adhering instead to conservative evangelical soteriology, which views conversion as the result of evangelism rather than gradual improvement through education. Nevertheless, he maintained a strong commitment to social engagement.

Urgency of expectation of apocalyptic second coming of Christ:

Prokhanov's eschatological thought reveals two main tendencies regarding the Second Coming of Christ.

Firstly, he urges believers to anticipate Christ's return, viewing this expectation as a catalyst for evangelisation, consistent with premillennialist thinking. Prokhanov emphasises the importance of spiritual vigilance and readiness for Christ's return, which should be manifested in moral purity and active service, including evangelism (Prokhanov 1925b:45-46). For Prokhanov, evangelism is not merely a means to secure eternal bliss but also a tool for individual revival and social transformation. In his article *What Should We Do* (Prokhanov 1928a:15), he underscores the necessity of spiritual revival as essential to establishing a new social order.

Secondly, Prokhanov believes that the expectation of Christ's apocalyptic intervention does not diminish the motivation for social transformation; rather, it enhances it. His involvement in the project to build a city called 'The City of the Gospel' or 'The City of the Sun' (Prokhanoff 1933:231) illustrates this. In his poem 'City of the Sun', Prokhanov (1928b:15-16) describes a heavenly city where the Lamb's light and love abound:

For the perfection of eternal life,
For the everlasting days of incorruptible blessings,
For infinite bliss—
There is a wondrous city in the heavens.

There is no sun in it; its light is the radiance of the Lamb, the face of God.
There, the speech of the Creator is the only standard;
All speak the language of love.

But for the wanderers of the world's wilderness,
For those seeking enlightenment in the darkness,
We will build the City of the Sun, the City of Peace,
For people here on earth.

The radiance of the sun from the sky
Will be the daytime light there;
At night, another kind of light will shine—
An electric sun.

That City of the Sun will shine clearly,
Like a bright temple on high;
And its walls will be adorned
With the wondrous message of Christ.

The City of the Sun will be great:
No longer will the law of drunkenness or the power of gold rule;
There, people will live under God's authority.

Its streets will be straight,
Like the bright rays of the sun;
The peaceful order of life
Will be the best healer there.

Virtue will reign there,
And purity will be the mistress of the city;
Every home will bear witness
To the power of faith in Christ.

Gardens full of flowers and fruit
Will surround the homes;
Starlings, with their lively voices,
Will bring joy to the citizens.

In white garments at their work,
Brothers will sing together;
Brotherly labor will be honored,
And no poor man will groan in distress.

The Gospel, the Lord's Word,
Will be the holy source for His people,
The foundation
Of all words, deeds, and ideas.

That City of the Sun, the City of Light,
Will draw all to faith
And call them heavenward—
To the City of the Covenant,
Where light shines without the sun.

Prokhanov's poem *The City of the Sun* envisions an ideal Christian society, both heavenly and earthly, shaped by the Gospel. The opening stanzas depict a celestial city of eternal perfection, where the Lamb is its light and divine love its language. Drawing from Revelation 21–22, this imagery presents heaven as a place where God's presence replaces all earthly sources of illumination and authority.

Yet this vision does not lead to passive anticipation of the heavenly city. Instead, it inspires the creation of a just and holy society on earth, modelled after that divine ideal. For Prokhanov, eschatological hope is not an excuse for inaction but a call to evangelism and social transformation.

His *City of the Sun* embodies moral purity and social justice, where the forces of intoxication and greed no longer hold sway. A striking feature of his vision is the embrace of modern technology, symbolised by the "electro-sun" illuminating the night. This reflects his optimism about progress, where innovation serves divine purposes while remaining subordinate to Christian ethics.

His vision also extends to economic and social renewal. Labor is honoured, and brotherhood becomes a lived reality, echoing early Christian communal ideals (Acts

2:44–47). He portrays a city where nature and technology exist in harmony, and work itself is transformed into a joyful expression of faith. The image of workers singing as they labour subtly recalls Soviet propaganda about the dignity of work, yet in Prokhanov's vision, it is infused with evangelical purpose.

Ultimately, *The City of the Sun* is not merely a vision of transformation—it is an evangelistic endeavour, seeking to draw all people to faith. Yet, despite its prophetic boldness, it remains an *unattainable utopian ideal*.

4.10.5. Conclusion

Prokhanov's eschatological views align with traditional evangelical beliefs, emphasising the importance of evangelism for reconciling with God, experiencing spiritual rebirth, and addressing personal sin. His theology incorporates key doctrines such as the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the renewal of creation, all integral to God's plan for humanity's fulfilment. These views are characteristic of premillennial theological thinking.

However, Prokhanov also integrates elements of postmillennialist thought, which emphasises the success of gospel preaching and the belief in social progress, thereby encouraging active engagement in both missionary work and social issues. This perspective acknowledges the social dimension of sin.

Prokhanov's synthesis of premillennial and postmillennial eschatologies reflects a nuanced understanding of spiritual and societal dynamics. He successfully avoided the polarisation seen in North America between fundamentalists and liberals, and between premillennialists and postmillennialists. His holistic approach to mission and engagement can be aptly described, in Bosch's terms, as 'Action in Hope'.

4.11. Final Conclusion

4.11.1. Ivan Prokhanov and the emerging missional paradigm: A historical and theological analysis

This study affirms Reimer's assertion that Ivan Prokhanov anticipated numerous aspects of the missiological paradigm later articulated by David Bosch as the emerging missional paradigm. These aspects include Mission as the Church with Others, Mission as *Missio Dei*, Mission as Mediating Salvation, Mission as a Quest for Justice, Mission as Evangelism, Mission as Contextualisation, Mission as Common Witness, Mission as Ministry by the Whole People of God, and Mission as Action in Hope (Reimer 2013; Bosch 2011). This observation raises a compelling question: how did Prokhanov, active in Russia between 1906 and 1928, foresee ideas that Bosch would formally articulate only in 1991? While a comprehensive analysis of how this paradigm emerged in Prokhanov's thought remains a subject for future research, several contributing factors can be identified.

4.11.2. Diverse theological influences

4.11.2.1. Diverse theological heritage

Firstly, as argued in this thesis, Ivan Prokhanov was influenced by a variety of theological traditions. These included the Molokans and Pashkovites, who emphasised social activism; the Mennonites, who rejected the church's alignment with the state and cultivated close-knit community relationships; and the Baptists, known for their developed ecclesiology and strong focus on preaching the Gospel. This diversity of perspectives allowed Prokhanov to develop a multifaceted theological outlook and a unique approach to both theology and missional activity.

4.11.2.2. New Testament epistemology

Prokhanov's epistemology was deeply rooted in the New Testament apostolic church, which he idealized as a model for Christian unity, missionary activity, and spiritual life (Prokhanov 1927a:6-15). Similarly, David Bosch, in his exploration of New Testament missionary paradigms, conducts a historical and analytical survey of their evolution and continuity (Bosch 2011:loc. 1020–1150). This leads him to the formulation of the emerging missional paradigm, which, in many respects, mirrors the characteristics of the New Testament apostolic approach. Prokhanov's commitment to this model underscores his emphasis on unity and holistic mission.

4.11.2.3. Western theological engagement

Prokhanov studied, albeit briefly, at four different educational institutions, including both evangelical and mainline Protestant schools. After completing his studies, he maintained close ties with Western partners, frequently traveling abroad and actively exchanging theological insights (Redaktsiya 1922a; Prokhanoff 1933). His awareness of religious developments in the West is reflected in his column in *Christian in God's Field Abroad* (*Na nive Bozhieĭ za granitseĭ*), where he shared his observations and analyses of Western trends. This exposure enabled him to synthesize diverse theological ideas and adapt them to the Russian context.

4.11.3. Two-paradigm thinking

Prokhanov lived at the intersection of two paradigms. He embodied elements of the Enlightenment-era missional paradigm (Bosch 2011:loc. 6230–6262) while engaging with the emerging paradigm Bosch later identified. Bosch noted that paradigms evolve over decades, sometimes centuries (Bosch 2011:8207). He also observed that individuals often operate within the context of two paradigms simultaneously and that contemporary missiological ideas frequently arise from the development of, or reaction to, earlier concepts (Bosch 2011: loc. 9274).

Thus, understanding the emerging missional paradigm requires acknowledging earlier influences, particularly the Enlightenment, which played a foundational role in shaping

modern Protestant thought and missiology (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 4938; Bosch 2011:loc. 8207).

4.11.3.1. *The role of the Enlightenment*

The Enlightenment played a foundational role in shaping modern Protestant thought and missiology. Bosch highlights several shifts during this era, such as the primacy of reason, the separation of subject and object, the abandonment of teleology, and the rise of individualism (Bosch 2011:loc. 6262–6523). These shifts fostered secularism but also stimulated the creation of voluntary missionary societies and new theological approaches.

Prokhanov channelled the Enlightenment's transformative outlook into a theological vision tailored to the Russian context. His work reflected the Enlightenment's optimism while addressing Russian society's unique challenges, promoting both evangelical revival and social reform.

4.11.3.2. *Enlightenment and missionary activity*

The Enlightenment era introduced a spirit of secularism that dampened missionary enthusiasm, particularly on the European continent. In contrast, England and America were less affected by the Enlightenment's secularising tendencies, allowing for significant spiritual awakenings during the mid-18th century and the late 18th to early 19th centuries. These revivals played a pivotal role in rekindling interest in missionary activity (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:4994).

The Enlightenment's emphasis on individual autonomy contributed to the rise of voluntary associations, including missionary societies. By the 19th century, particularly its later decades, these societies began to align their interests with emerging nation-states (loc. 4952). While the Reformation had not severed the church-state union—except among Anabaptists—the Enlightenment weakened this bond by relegating religion to the private sphere and further distancing the church from the state.

Despite this separation, a convergence of missionary and national interests emerged, often blending Christian evangelism with colonial ambitions. The concept of "Manifest

Destiny" epitomised this union, promoting the spread of Christianity alongside the expansion of nation-states. The Enlightenment's belief in progress, combined with a paternalistic compassion, fuelled European missionary efforts, which often intertwined evangelism with cultural and political dominance (Bevans and Schroeder 2004:4952).

4.11.3.3. Influence of Western missiological traditions

Holistic Soteriology

The evangelical awakenings in England and the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries integrated evangelism with social care, reflecting a transformative vision of mission (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:4998–5022). Revival movements exhibited a keen awareness of social injustices, including those stemming from colonialism (Bosch 2011:loc. 6698). Despite the fundamentalist-liberal divide of the late 19th century, figures such as John Mott championed a synthesis of evangelism and social concern, advocating for a holistic approach to mission (Bosch 2011:loc. 7720).

Prokhanov, shaped by his theological training in England, Berlin, and Paris, synthesized these perspectives into a comprehensive soteriological model. His approach, which combined evangelistic zeal with social engagement, anticipated Bosch's later articulation of an integrated missional framework.

Missio Dei

The Reformed theological tradition's emphasis on God's sovereignty and glory endured through the Enlightenment, later influencing the 20th-century articulation of the *missio Dei*. Bosch highlights how the understanding of mission as the manifestation of God's glory regained prominence in the mid-20th century (Bosch 2011:292). Prokhanov's theology similarly centred on divine glory, yet he uniquely integrated this with a profound emphasis on God's love, as reflected in his hymnal *Gusli* (1928c:2).⁴⁷ His vision of

⁴⁷ The hymn collection begins with a section consisting of 33 songs under the heading "God's Love and His Greatness." This is no coincidence. Despite the strong emphasis Prokhanov places on God's love, likely reflecting the trend of 19th-century Western revivalism, he also includes hymns about God's greatness at the beginning of the collection. The first hymn is titled "O, is it not the King of the Universe?" (Prokhanov 1928a: 3).

mission, rooted in both God's glory and love, underscores a holistic and participatory approach to the *missio Dei*.

Balanced Eschatology

The 19th century witnessed significant shifts in eschatological thought. Early postmillennial optimism linked human progress and evangelism to the coming of the millennial kingdom, whereas later premillennialism emphasised divine intervention and prioritised evangelism over social reform (Bosch 2011:288–290). Figures like John Mott navigated these tensions by integrating active social engagement with a hopeful anticipation of Christ's return (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5263).

Prokhanov similarly balanced eschatological expectation with practical engagement. His theology reflected a belief in the transformative power of the gospel to inspire both spiritual renewal and societal change. This integrative approach anticipated contemporary *missio Dei* paradigms, which emphasise mission as participation in God's ongoing redemptive work.

The Priesthood of All Believers

The Enlightenment's emphasis on individual autonomy revitalised the concept of the priesthood of all believers, contributing to the rise of voluntary associations with missionary aims. This period also saw increased participation by women in mission, expanding the scope of lay involvement (Robert 2004:44–49).

Prokhanov actively incorporated these developments into his missiological vision. He championed broad lay participation in mission, recognising the transformative potential

In his sermon "God's Glory (2009i:199)," Prokhanov calls people to glorify God: "Can we belong to the category of those who dishonor Him—those who do not glorify God but only themselves, who draw near to Him with their lips yet fail to truly give Him glory, or those who praise Him today but abandon their entrusted mission tomorrow?" He urges believers to glorify God with their lips, songs, prayers, deeds, and their entire lives because He is worthy of our praise.

In his Confession of Faith, Prokhanov asserts (1910a:2) that all creation was made for "the manifestation of His eternal power and might... so that everything may serve Him and glorify Him."

of every believer's contribution. His emphasis on communal engagement in mission reflected an early anticipation of later missiological trends that stress the role of the whole people of God in missional activity.

Issue of Unity.

The pursuit of unity in mission gained increasing prominence in the 19th century, fuelled by interdenominational initiatives such as the Evangelical Alliance and the YMCA (Bosch 2011:467). John Mott epitomised this movement, championing pragmatic cooperation across denominational boundaries (Miller 2013).

Prokhanov actively engaged with these trends, adapting their principles to the Russian context. Influenced by Moravian Pietism, he emphasised unity in essential doctrines while fostering collaboration among evangelical communities, reflecting his commitment to a unified and transformative mission.

Contextualisation

The intellectual and political upheavals of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and Romanticism stimulated national consciousness, leading to the emergence of the modern nation-state as a central societal framework. This development often engendered a form of messianic nationalism, intertwining religious identity with political aspirations (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 4925–4949). Within Western missionary endeavours, this dynamic frequently manifested in cultural imperialism, as missionary efforts were often accompanied by a sense of Western superiority. Nevertheless, calls for indigenous leadership and contextualised expressions of faith gained traction, exemplified by initiatives such as the Three-Self Principle (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:loc. 5509–5553).

4.11.4. Conclusion

Ivan Prokhanov's theological and missiological contributions must be understood within the broader historical framework of evolving paradigms. His engagement with diverse theological traditions, rootedness in New Testament models, exposure to Western theological developments, and adaptation of Enlightenment-era ideas all contributed to

his forward-thinking approach to mission. By synthesising evangelism with social engagement, emphasising unity in mission, and anticipating concepts such as *Missio Dei* and contextualisation, Prokhanov functioned as a bridge between historical paradigms and the emerging missional paradigm later articulated by Bosch.

This emerging paradigm is not an abrupt shift but rather the result of historical development and theological response to cultural and societal changes. While secularization left its mark on mission theology, the transcendent aspect has re-emerged, tempering Enlightenment-era optimism with a more cautious realism. Transformational activism continues, yet with a deeper recognition of humanity's limitations and a reliance on God's eschatological intervention. Secular anthropocentrism is now balanced by a renewed concern for the human soul, maintaining evangelism as a core missional impulse. Additionally, the early awareness of the need for contextualisation, which began taking shape in the 19th century, has now matured, leading to the rejection of colonialist approaches and the affirmation of national theologies and indigenous church expressions.

In this light, Prokhanov's work not only anticipated but actively shaped key elements of contemporary missiology. His legacy serves as a crucial example of contextualised mission, demonstrating the ongoing need for theological engagement that is historically aware, theologically sound, and culturally relevant.

CHAPTER 5:

REVISITING THE PAST: TENTATIVE APPLICATIONS OF EARLY 20TH CENTURY INSIGHTS

5.1. Summary of the Research

Although Prokhanov was, in general, unable to realise his vision of reforming Russia on the basis of spiritual transformation, his influence and role in the evangelical world cannot be overstated. In his seminal work *The Pashkovites*, Vladimir Stepanov praises Prokhanov's reforms as remarkably successful, highlighting a significant increase in Evangelical Union membership. From 1912 to 1928, the Union's numbers surged more than elevenfold, growing by 11.4 times, compared to the Baptists, who grew by only 1.74 times (Stepanov 2023:486).⁴⁸ Stepanov attributes Prokhanov's success to his reformative initiatives in theology, organisational activities, and the socio-cultural sphere. Prokhanov not only actively adapted theological ideas but also demonstrated exceptional organisational skills, expanding his missionary work beyond traditional approaches and actively engaging in the socio-cultural sphere.

This research conclusively supports Stepanov's assessments and the initial hypotheses, emphasising Prokhanov's impactful leadership, which aligns with the *transformational-authentic* leadership model characterised by *positive* psychological attributes. Prokhanov's missiological efforts, deeply attuned to *socio-cultural* dynamics, anticipated the *transformational* missional paradigm that would be formulated over half a century later by David Bosch.

⁴⁸ Regarding the quantitative growth of evangelical Christians and the reasons for this growth, as well as a comparative analysis with the growth of Baptists, historians do not share a unanimous opinion (Sinichkin 2011:204). However, despite the lack of consensus on the exact figures of growth, there is a general agreement that the evangelical Christian movement as a whole was successful.

Transformational Leadership.

Prokhanov's success stemmed from his *vision* of transforming Russia through the spiritual renewal of its citizens. This vision responded to the public's demand for solutions amidst a multifaceted societal crisis. Prokhanov's approach, rooted in an evangelical theological paradigm, was propelled by his deep empathy, which fuelled his *passionate* and dedicated pursuit. His exceptional *communication* skills, both verbal and written, facilitated the widespread dissemination of his vision. Recognising the importance of *community*, Prokhanov actively united people into communities. Additionally, he was dedicated to developing and *empowering* young individuals. Driven by *compassion*, Prokhanov advocated for freedom of conscience, established communes, and provided various forms of support to those in need.

Prokhanov maintained undisputed authority among his followers, esteemed as a man of *integrity* and action with high moral standards. His *optimism*, underpinned by *confidence* in his expertise and calling, combined with exceptional *self-discipline* and *resilience*, drove his *innovative* pursuits. His creativity, enriched by his poetic talent and engineering background, enabled him to develop *practical* (hope) solutions to challenges.

Transformational Missional Paradigm.

Prokhanov was a missional leader whose activities were deeply rooted in an evangelical theological paradigm. His approach, shaped from a young age by a radical conversion and a divine call to ministry, was aimed at the comprehensive transformation of Russia.

Transformation, in Prokhanov's view, begins with individual conversion, initiated by evangelism (Mission as Evangelism), which introduces the Gospel of God's love. Believers, once reconciled with God and assured of eternal life, become conduits of this transformative message. The Church, revitalised according to the Apostolic New Testament model, serves as a catalyst for the expansion of the Gospel. However, the mission to transform individuals and societal structures extends beyond the Church's

efforts; it is fundamentally God's mission (Mission as *Missio Dei*), with the Church invited to participate.

Through the Holy Spirit, God initiates a spiritual revolution and individual transformation, expanding the mission beyond mere salvation to encompass engagement with various aspects of human life, particularly in social and cultural realms. This approach requires the Church to collaborate with other entities (Mission as Church with Others) and to understand salvation as a holistic process (Mission as Mediation of Salvation) that includes the pursuit of justice (Mission as Quest for Justice).

The effectiveness of Church activities hinges on the contextualisation of missional theology within the environments it aims to transform (Mission as Contextualisation), alongside a unified evangelical church that fosters a spiritual revolution through the Holy Spirit (Mission as Common Witness). Each believer's responsibility is to advance transformative ideas within society (Mission as Whole People of God), with the ultimate source of optimism and certainty being the belief that God is actively shaping the present and future (Mission as Action in Hope).

5.2. Tentative Applications of Early 20th Century Insights

Developing Slavic Missiology: Learning from Early 20th Century Insights.

Contemporary missiologists and mission practitioners in Slavic countries, formerly part of the Soviet Union, face a significant challenge: the absence of a native missiological foundation. This gap forces the church to adopt Western missiological concepts, which are often ill-suited to the local context. As a result, church leaders are increasingly recognising these models as major limitations in their missional strategies (Reimer 2013:138).

Reimer (2013:137) and Kravtsev (2017:246) advocate for a return to cultural and historical roots in developing an authentic Slavic missiology, emphasising the importance of recovering missionary memory. Bachinin (2000) highlights a general unawareness

among Russians, especially those distant from evangelical Christianity, of the identity of I.S. Prokhanov and the valuable social experience accumulated by Russian evangelism at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite this, such experience, formed at a critical historical juncture, holds extraordinary societal importance and should not be overlooked.

This study represents a crucial step towards addressing these issues, suggesting that the missiological transformation paradigm formulated by Prokhanov offers a substantial contribution to the historical narrative of Slavic missiology.

Moreover, when this paradigm is critically and contextually analysed, it provides a robust foundation for crafting a uniquely Slavic approach to missiology. By integrating historical insights with contemporary analytical methods, this framework not only rectifies past oversights but also paves the way for a missiological practice that resonates deeply with Slavic cultural contexts.

Countering Escapist Thinking in Missional Work: Integrating Spiritual and Social Dimensions.

In his doctoral dissertation, Andrey Kravtsev (2017:70) describes the missional approach in Russia from 1905 to 1930 as ‘transformational’, contrasting it with the escapist mindset that prevailed from 1941 to 1991. This shift toward escapism was a logical consequence of the Soviet state’s deliberate policy to marginalise the evangelical church from public life. Ubeivolk (2019:39-50) refers to this phenomenon as a ‘trench mentality’. State policies isolated evangelical churches from global trends in missionary development, significantly hindering the formation of a holistic approach to mission work (Kravtsev 2017:68; Sawatsky 1981:360).

However, overcoming the limitations in the missionary approach can be achieved not only by reintegrating the churches of the former Soviet Union into the active global evangelical community but also through the restoration of ‘missionary memory’ (Reimer 2013).

Prokhanov challenged this escapist mindset by proposing a balanced and comprehensive approach that refused to see the spiritual and social aspects of life as opposing forces. Instead of allowing spiritual concerns to overshadow social engagement, he advocated for integrating traditional spiritual practices with modern social involvement. This approach could be particularly effective in counteracting the escapist tendencies prevalent in contemporary missional efforts.

Innovative Dynamic Leadership in Eastern European Evangelical Movements

The evangelical movements in Eastern Europe, particularly in the post-Soviet space, have faced significant challenges in developing dynamic and innovative leadership. Mikhail Cherenkov (2011), in his analysis of the Ukrainian evangelical movement during the two decades following the early 1990s, describes this period as one of missed opportunities. He attributes this to the absence of bold and creative leadership, alongside a preference for conservatism that often overshadowed efforts to implement visionary strategies for growth and development. Similar trends are evident in Russia and Belarus, where leaders often prioritized preserving the status quo over fostering innovation. Yuchkovski (2014:192–194) observes that while leaders in the post-Soviet space gained newfound freedom, they frequently operated within a framework of control rather than empowering and inspiring their communities.

This broader context of leadership challenges underscores the urgent need for an innovative and contextually relevant approach to leadership. The team of authors from the School of Leadership at Saint Petersburg Christian University highlights the complexity of defining leadership. They agree with Roger Gill (2014) that the etymology of the term "leadership" encapsulates its essence: guiding the way, assisting others, and encouraging them to follow the path (Krasnikova, Negrov & Sarapulov 2014:11). This perspective emphasises several key aspects of leadership, including vision, mission, values, motivation, passion, and a strong moral foundation (Krasnikova et al., 2014:12).

Krasnikova (2014:311) observes that, in the context of globalization and the expanding business culture, society requires not just managers but leader-managers. These leaders must combine positional authority with expertise, innovative ideas, and the ability to influence. Leadership, she contends, is always shaped by its context. In Russia, the "Eurasian" or "Russian management" approach is particularly significant, calling for the development of a leadership model that bridges Western and Eastern paradigms.

A study conducted in collaboration with *Harvard Business Review*— Russia in 2007–2008 revealed that the success of foreign top managers in Russia depends on their ability to balance Western and Eastern management styles. Effective leaders adopt a commanding style while applying it less rigidly than is typical in Russia. Additionally, they integrate a "commanding" approach with a "human-oriented" one, motivating employees through a combination of control and encouragement (Kimpeleyanen et al., 2009).

Negrov and his team investigated the theoretical and practical foundations for developing spiritual and effective leadership among the youth of evangelical churches (Negrov, 2014:10). Their findings revealed that many young people lacked a clear understanding of effective leadership (Belov & Negrov 2016:137). This gap highlights the need for educational and practical initiatives to equip future leaders with the tools to inspire and guide their communities effectively.

However, in Russian history, Prokhanov appears to exemplify proactive leadership that challenges the status quo. His leadership, characterised by a visionary, dynamic, bold, inspirational, and innovative approach, while firmly rooted in conservative evangelical theology and moral values, may serve as a compelling model for contemporary communities. It can be hypothesised that Prokhanov successfully achieved a synthesis of strategic management and ideological spiritual inspiration. Furthermore, he seems to have embodied a fusion of Western democratic principles with the firmness characteristic of the Russian leadership style. Thus, Prokhanov could be regarded as an effective leader and a vital bridge connecting past traditions with present paradigms.

A Balanced Approach to Shaping Christian Culture: Structure and Spirituality.

Prokhanov's distinctiveness lies in his exceptional ability to seamlessly integrate the spiritual and organisational aspects of Christian culture, without prioritising one over the other. This balance is crucial; an overemphasis on organisational structure can make a movement rigid and bureaucratic, stifling creativity and spiritual vitality. Conversely, focusing too heavily on the mystical and spiritual dimensions without a strong organisational framework can lead to disorientation and fragmentation, undermining the movement's effectiveness and cohesion.

As a consummate leader and manager, Prokhanov masterfully infused a mystical spirit into the fabric of well-organised structures. His leadership was characterised by an unwavering conviction in the transformative power of the gospel, a commitment to being guided by the Holy Spirit, vigorous engagement in prayer, and a deep reverence for the Word as divine revelation. These spiritual practices, combined with top-tier organisational strategies, likely catalysed unique and impactful outcomes within the Christian community. This synthesis of spirituality and structure under Prokhanov's guidance exemplifies a sustainable model that fosters spiritual vitality alongside systematic progress.

Prokhanov's example may prove extremely beneficial for anyone aspiring to advance in the field of Christian leadership. He demonstrates how to effectively blend spiritual enthusiasm and high spiritual vitality with a well-organised structure. Such an approach is likely to yield significant positive results in contemporary settings as well.

Building a Culture of Unity.

The issue of unity among Christians is particularly pressing in the post-Soviet space. As Ubeivolk (2019:43-44) notes, evangelical believers often lack readiness for dialogue with other Christian denominations. This challenge is further compounded by frequent difficulties even in intra-denominational conversations (Yuchkovski 2014:207). Moving forward, cultivating a culture of mutual respect and mastering the art of dialogue are essential. It is crucial to recognise the importance of unity in the success of missionary

endeavours. Prokhanov offers valuable insights that can serve as a foundation for advancing the theology of unity among believers. His legacy suggests that the core of evangelical unity should be the transformative power of the gospel and Christ's influence on the human heart. His projects for unification contain practical plans for building unity. Moreover, even his attempts at dialogue with the Orthodox Church and efforts to reform it, though ultimately unsuccessful, are worthy of attention and deep analysis.

Dialogue Between the Orthodox and Evangelical Churches

It is crucial for the contemporary evangelical church to learn from Prokhanov's experience. His commitment to dialogue and willingness to engage with the Russian Orthodox Church, which yielded certain positive outcomes (Popov 1996:92–93), can serve as an example. However, his mistakes should not be repeated—dialogue must be respectful, rooted in a sincere desire for mutual understanding and acknowledgment of differences.

Evangelical Christians need to adopt a proactive stance, taking past mistakes into account, and reinitiate contact with the Orthodox Church. A successful example of such interaction can be found in England, where representatives of evangelical and Orthodox churches formed a working group (Evangelical Alliance [UK] 2001). They identified common theological points of agreement, openly discussed differences, and developed recommendations for future cooperation. This experience shows that constructive dialogue is possible when grounded in respect and openness.

In Russia and Belarus, similar initiatives may face greater challenges due to the comparatively smaller influence of the evangelical church. Nevertheless, such dialogues could begin informally, involving theologians interested in fostering mutual understanding.

Research by Konstantin Prokhorov (2011) reveals that during a period of isolation (1960–1990), evangelical-Baptist churches absorbed many elements of Orthodox tradition, both theological and liturgical. This phenomenon could serve as a valuable resource for building mutual trust and creating a foundation for constructive dialogue.

Contextualisation: An Integrative Approach to Developing a Comprehensive Missiology through Reflective Borrowing.

Some contemporary analysts highlight the strong influence of Western theological concepts on the formation of theological culture in post-Soviet countries (Puzynin 2010:419-424; Kravtsev 2017:246). Undoubtedly, this influence has its positive aspects. However, as noted earlier, among the clergy of evangelical churches, there is a growing awareness that Western theological models are not always effective in our cultural and historical context, and uncritical integration of ready-made theological schemes and missional methods may prove unhelpful for mission development in post-Soviet countries. Prokhanov also borrowed ideas from abroad, but, as the research shows, he did so consciously. He actively explored a variety of theological concepts to formulate, through deep reflection, an adequate theology of mission appropriate to the cultural and historical reality in which he found himself. As a result, he managed to avoid the extremes of liberalism and fundamentalism, mystical escapism, and liberal rationalism. The approach of thoughtful analytical reflection, assessing Western theological models and methods for our Slavic context – this is what we need to learn from Prokhanov.

Contextualising Church Music.

The issue of musical genres within evangelical communities has recently become particularly contentious. A debate has emerged over which music can be considered spiritual and suitable for church use versus which music is non-spiritual and therefore unacceptable. Some argue that this division is artificial (Semlek 2014:30). In discussions on the acceptability of music, concepts such as the spiritual and the carnal in musical ministry also arise (Evtukhovich 2014:45). Prokhanov's experience in creating a distinctive Slavic musical culture could provide valuable insights for resolving this complex debate. Goncharenko (2019a:41-42) notes that Prokhanov's efforts bear the influence of Martin Luther's reformatory work, as he placed significant importance on spiritual music in shaping both theology and the church community. As demonstrated in this study, Prokhanov not only translated hymns but also wrote the lyrics for new ones.

He encouraged composers to create music that reflected the unique characteristics of Slavic culture while remaining true to evangelical theology.

Church and State Power.

As a result of prolonged persecution and oppression of evangelical Christians in post-Soviet countries, believers have collectively developed a justifiably negative and suspicious attitude toward authority (Ubeivolk 2019:88). However, an analysis of Prokhanov's actions reveals his efforts to foster constructive cooperation with government structures. Prokhanov sought common ground, utilised legal mechanisms, and engaged in dialogue with authorities to protect the interests of believers and promote the ideals of a just society. Moreover, he actively worked to change the negative perception of authority among believers, acknowledging positive shifts in the state's attitude towards evangelical Christians and encouraging prayer for the authorities. His experience in interacting with the government offers a valuable example for contemporary believers.

Church and Politics.

Church involvement in political processes is a sensitive issue in post-Soviet countries, where politics is often perceived solely as a struggle for power – a perception that can lead to rejection among evangelical believers. However, political activity also encompasses participation in societal life and its institutions with the aim of transforming them (Reimer 1917:54). Prokhanov's experience offers a balanced approach to this issue. He initially sought to influence the legislative process and secure freedom of worship through direct political involvement. When this approach did not gain sufficient support, he redirected his efforts toward creating social institutions that could significantly impact societal life.

Additionally, at the Fourth ARCEC in May 1917, a decision was made to support the creation of a Christian Democratic party, which would contribute to shaping society based on Christian moral ideals. Believers were encouraged to participate in the formation of

such a party privately, according to their conscience – a noteworthy stance that highlights the importance of individual conviction in political engagement. Prokhanov's experience provides valuable insights for developing a thoughtful theological perspective on the participation of the church and its members in the political life of society.

Developing Missional Leaders.

In this study, contemporary theories of effective leadership served as an analytical tool. We developed a comprehensive leadership profile that integrates elements heuristic of transformational and authentic leadership, further enriched with positive psychological attributes. Our findings indicated that this leadership approach was particularly effective during the tumultuous socio-political upheavals experienced by Russia and later, the Soviet Union, which were crucial to the formation of missional movements.

This holistic leadership model excels in addressing critical management skills, including the ability to engage with people, discern their needs, and inspire motivation. It also focuses on managing the leader's inner self, prioritising authenticity – a vital trait for Christian leadership. Furthermore, the model underscores the importance of emotional and psychological resilience and maturity, qualities essential for navigating complex challenges.

Consequently, this leadership framework can be adopted as a theoretical foundation for cultivating missional leaders suited to contemporary challenges. By drawing on historical insights and modern leadership principles, it provides a robust blueprint for effective leadership in today's dynamic environments.

5.3. Prospects for Further Research

Missionary Influence of Ivan Prokhanov Beyond the Russian-Speaking World.

Ivan Prokhanov was a significant figure in the Evangelical Baptist movement in Russia. However, his missionary activities also had a substantial impact beyond the Russian-

speaking world. Investigating the extent of this influence, assessing its successes or failures, and exploring the underlying reasons presents an intriguing avenue for further research.

In-Depth Analysis of Ivan Prokhanov's Religious-Social Position through the Morning Star (Utrennaya Zvezda).

The newspaper *Morning Star* (Utrennaya Zvezda) played an important role in disseminating Ivan Prokhanov's religious, social, and political ideas. Prokhanov's position in this regard holds unique significance in Russian history. A thorough examination based on existing materials is not only compelling from a historical perspective but also provides valuable insights into contemporary socio-political thought within the evangelical church in post-Soviet countries.

Comparative Analysis of Prokhanov's and Kargel's Eschatology in the Context of the History of the Evangelical Baptist Brotherhood in the Soviet Union.

Ivan Prokhanov was a prominent and influential evangelical religious figure in early 20th-century Russia. However, in the realm of eschatology, the views of theologian Kargel gained traction among evangelical believers. Exploring the reasons behind this eschatological shift towards Kargel's views is not only intriguing from a theological analysis standpoint but also pertinent for contemporary practical theology.

Controversies Surrounding Ivan Prokhanov.

Ivan Prokhanov remains a highly controversial figure. On one hand, his followers greatly admire him for his leadership qualities and his spiritual and moral integrity. On the other hand, serious accusations have been levelled against him, casting doubt on this integrity. Specifically, he has been accused of contributing to divisions among believers, despite his advocacy for theological unity.

This topic invites deeper exploration into the complexities of Prokhanov's legacy and the contrasting perspectives on his character and actions. Investigating these controversies could illuminate the dynamics within religious communities and provide valuable insights into the challenges of religious leadership, particularly when navigating differing theological perspectives.

Key questions to explore include:

- To what extent are the relational challenges surrounding Prokhanov a result of his personality?
- To what extent are these challenges due to objective factors within the religious communities?

Understanding these dynamics could be valuable for comprehending the relationships between closely related yet distinct evangelical communities and the unique aspects of leadership within religious groups.

The Role of I.S. Prokhanov's Poetic Legacy in Shaping Evangelical Culture in the Russian-Speaking World.

The influence of I.S. Prokhanov's poetic legacy on shaping evangelical culture in the Russian-speaking world warrants comprehensive exploration. Prokhanov, renowned for his poetry and authorship of numerous hymns, wielded considerable influence. Investigating the impact of his poetic legacy on evangelical culture is of scholarly

importance, particularly within the broader context of mission-oriented approaches to contextual theology, where poetry plays a pivotal role.

5.4. Conclusion

This study addressed the following research question: “In what ways can I.S. Prokhanov be considered a Missional Leader who embodied transformational and authentic qualities, and how are his missional paradigm and leadership qualities connected to his achievements in founding the missionary movement in early 20th-century Russia?”

The study concludes that Prokhanov was, indeed, a leader who embodied both transformational and authentic leadership qualities. Additionally, he was a missional leader who significantly incorporated elements of the emerging missional paradigm formulated by David Bosch.

The study identified an organic connection between Prokhanov's theology of mission and his leadership qualities. The missionary movement he initiated and established is, to a considerable extent, a result of his leadership and missional theology.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Overview of 10 congresses of All Russian Union of Evangelical Christians (ARUEC).

The First Congress of ARUEC, which took place from September 14th to 26th, 1909, holds undeniable historical importance, despite its modest attendance of only 24 delegates representing 18 churches (ed. Prokhanov 1909h:5; Mitskevich 2007:143). This congress marked a crucial first step towards the formation of a solid and unified coalition of Evangelical Christians.

The first congress had two primary goals: uniting Evangelical Christians across Russia based on joint projects and promoting the spiritual unity of Evangelical movements (ed. Prokhanov 1909f: 3).

The congress, initiated by Prokhanov, Chairperson of the SPb Evangelical Christian community, opened on September 14th at 3:00 PM with a prayer gathering. Prokhanov emphasized the concept of 'preserving unity rather than creating it' and led prayers for *freedom and the tsar*. Representatives from other communities also spoke, and the assembly ended with a prayer and singing. Prokhanov announced the business session for the next day at 10:00 a.m (ed. Prokhanov 1909h:4).

Prokhanov was elected as the congress chairman and led the proceedings. Immediately after procedural matters were settled, Prokhanov urged to 'give the central place to Christ' so to speak during the congress work. Speeches and prayers followed. Prokhanov then introduced *telegrams of welcome* and a draft letter of *thanks to the tsar for the gift of freedom*.

The SPb Community proposed a *yearly day of fasting and prayer for unity* and the establishment of a *Bible institute*, with plans for its development discussed at the next congress. They initiated 6-week *courses for preachers* and supported a planned *periodical publication*. The *Union of Christian Youth* of Evangelical Confession was approved.

After the discussion it was decided that the congress's decisions were *advisory rather than mandatory* for the communities (ed. Prokhanov 1909h:6). To initiate the process of *uniting with the Baptists*, the congress proposed that they come together around *specific*

projects, including annual joint prayer events, Bible courses, participation in the creation of publications, and involvement in the development of the Union of Christian Youth.

Matters related to *recognizing excommunication* from Baptists and Mennonites, *children's ministry*, *musical issue*, and others were also discussed. Prokhanov announced the community's intention to appeal to the government for permission to hold congresses for *development of regents and children's gatherings teachers*. The decision was made to hold the next congress in Moscow, and *Prokhanov* and his colleague Dolgopolov were authorized to request permission for its convening.

Analysis of the materials available to us from the first congress allows us to conclude that Prokhanov's leadership at the First Congress was characterized by his *ability to unite diverse groups*, *provide spiritual guidance*, *initiate practical solutions*, and *facilitate decision-making*. His leadership set a strong foundation for the Evangelical Christian community's future endeavors Russia.

Due to the strategic significance of the *Second Congress*, we will delve into the events taking place at it in greater detail.

The Second Congress convened from December 28, 1910, to January 4, 1911, with an attendance of 47 delegates and 15 guests. It should be noted that the number of delegates has almost doubled since the first congress (VSEKh 1911). The congress began with a separate evening prayer gathering, led by Prokhanov (ed. 1911b:4).

Initially, a hymn was sung, followed by a sermon by Prokhanov, in which he emphasized that without the help of God, we would not achieve success (Psalm 126:1). Prokhanov said the following (1911b: 5):

Here, we have now gathered to initiate the Congress, during which serious and important matters concerning the *spiritual and organizational work of Evangelical churches* should be discussed. We have come together to build, and we intend to build while maintaining the closest communion with the Lord.

Prayers were offered, and God's blessings were sought for the assembly. In his prayer, he *recalled the freedom* granted to the believers. Prokhanov also prayed for *blessings upon the tsar*, the *government*, the *State Duma*, and the *State Council*.

Following this, there were other sermons and songs. Before the prayer, Prokhanov once again delivered a sermon.

During the *first business* session on December 29 (ed. Prokhanov 1911b:5), the assembly opened with singing, followed by a sermon from Prokhanov. Another participant of the congress then delivered a sermon and called for prayer. Prokhanov

was *unanimously elected* as the chairman of the congress. He expressed that it was an honor for him. He noted that for the success of any endeavor, Christ himself should be the chairman, and this wasn't just empty words for him. Prokhanov then *expressed his joy* that someone named Sheneman F. would be his deputy, considering him an *experienced organizer* who had been laboring *productively* in God's field for many years.

Following this, *welcome telegrams* from organizations and individuals were read aloud. Information was shared about the persecution of a family from Alupka. Prokhanov *spoke kind words* about the late Gotskiy, a colleague of his. At Prokhanov's suggestion, everyone *stood up to honor the memory* of the deceased.

Then the question was raised: should the session continue or conclude? The vote was taken, and the decision was made to conclude the session.

At the second business session December 30th (Trosnov 1911b:6), after singing the song, Prokhanov reads Psalm 58, verses 17 and 18, and briefly explains them. Another participant delivers a short sermon and calls everyone to prayer. Prokhanov suggests allowing guests without official church credentials to participate with the right to offer advisory opinions, emphasizing that they are '*very active brethren, known to many for their work*' (Trosnov 1911b:6). The proposal is unanimously accepted after discussion.

Next, Prokhanov reads the minutes of the previous congress, provides comments, and notes that *almost all planned activities* have been completed.

Regarding the 'loyalty address to the Emperor of the Empire', Prokhanov reports that a response has been received with a comment that the Emperor 'read it with pleasure'. Prokhanov suggests that everyone should *stand in honor* of such a response!

The chairman observes that the Biblical Institute has not been organized, and congresses of regents and Sunday school teachers have not been convened for reasons independent of the Union.

They then proceed to discuss the All Russian Union of Evangelical Christians charter. Since Prokhanov himself created it, he *explains* the important principle of community autonomy, emphasizing the need to strike a balance - not giving too much power to the center, yet acknowledging its necessity. He cites the United States as an example, where states enjoy autonomy, resulting in prosperity. A recommendation is adopted that all communities be referred to as 'The Community of Evangelical Christians'. Lively exchange of opinions ensues in the discussion of the first point: 'The Union unites communities of Evangelical Christians who adhere to one confession of faith'. As a result of discussion a note is added, stating, 'Communities with different names not recognized

by the Union and accepting a different creed may also belong to the Union, provided it does not contradict the doctrine of Evangelical Christian' (Trosnov 1911b:6).'

At the third session, Prokhanov proposed to begin with singing and invited one of the participants to deliver a brief sermon.

Then, the discussion of the charter commenced, and an important *amendment* was suggested: 'Upon the desire of not less than one-quarter of all the communities belonging to the Union, a sudden revision can be conducted at any time, instead of the previous wording: 'upon the desire' of three-quarters of all the members of the communities' (Trosnov 1911b:6) When the proposal that SPb would become the center of the union's activities was being discussed, Prokhanov, *anticipating questions*, elaborated extensively on why such a decision was necessary. Prokhanov inquired if there were any objections, and the constitution was *unanimously accepted*.

Prokhanov congratulated everyone and moved on to the discussion of the Statement of Faith, which was authored by himself (Trosnov 1911b:6). Prokhanov emphasized that this Statement of Faith was created based on the Bible and Symphonia, thus having its specific features.⁴⁹ He commented on the third paragraph, in which it is stated that there are two ways of knowing God - through external revelation, the Word of God, and through internal revelation. Prokhanov cautioned against two extremes - giving too much attention to internal revelation and neglecting the external, as well as suppressing the internal revelation in favor of the external. He stressed the need for balance, where internal revelation does not contradict the external.

Another extreme he highlighted was the denial of the value of catechism, considering it a harmful phenomenon. On the other hand, giving too much attention to catechism at the expense of the Word of God was equally dangerous. Prokhanov emphasized that catechism is useful for those interested in faith and can provide a general understanding of evangelical truth. However, he insisted that the Word of God is paramount, specifically referring to Canonical Scriptures. This perspective was particularly relevant for Russia, where the Orthodox Church was using the Scripture with Apocryphal Books.

Prokhanov *systematically explained* each point of the Statement of Faith, and it was unanimously accepted since it had already been discussed in the churches before the congress.

⁴⁹ A more detailed analysis of the doctrine will be made in the next chapter of the research. However, it is worth noting that Prokhanov somewhat exaggerated his unique role in the creation of the doctrine, stating that he only used the Bible and Symphonia in its preparation. It is likely that he relied on existing Statements of Faith and developed them.

The fourth business meeting began with a collective prayer. During the discussion of the *organization of the Bible Institute*, the congress participants expressed a unanimous wish for the program and charter of the Bible Institute to be developed and published. Such a proposal was unanimously accepted (ed. Prokhanov 1911h:4).

Prokhanov explained that on April 10, 1910, he *submitted a request* for permission to conduct a two-year Bible course to prepare preachers, with an age range of 20 to 35 years. The courses were planned to be held at the SPb community of the Evangelical Christians in the central premises of the community at Fontanka 94, apartment 10. Even a two-year *curriculum* was developed.

The congress affirmed the general desire for these courses to commence their work immediately as soon as legal permission was granted, and also for the training of *teachers* for Sunday schools and *choir conductors*.

Further discussions centered around the *legal status* of believers and recommendations were given to write complaints, as well as to write to the Union Council about all abuses and persecutions. These materials could be used for official reports to the government. The meeting concluded with a prayer.

At the fifth business meeting (Trosnov 1911a: 4), once again, the *host* of this meeting was Prokhanov, just as in all previous sessions. A brief sermon was delivered by one of the congress participants, and everyone in attendance knelt, seeking a blessing to commence the meeting.

It was recommended to all communities, whenever possible, to *establish schools*. To facilitate this task, it was entrusted to publish programs and educational plans in 'Morning Star' and 'Christian' publications.

In light of the circular from the Minister of Internal Affairs dated October 4, 1910, which led to the closure of youth and children's gatherings in many communities, the congress instructed Prokhanov to develop and publish all matters related to youth and children's gatherings in the near future (Trosnov 1911a:4).

A decision was adopted:

The congress unanimously decrees that all members of the Union and Evangelical Christian Communities must absolutely *abstain* from the use of *alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and playing cards* in any form whatsoever. Violators of this resolution shall be subject to excommunication (Trosnov 1911a:4).

The question of printing a *smaller format Bible* was also discussed. The presence of apocryphal books made the Bible too voluminous, which was undesirable, as 'the Bible should be a constant companion of every Evangelical Christian' (Trosnov 1911a:4).

The congress instructed the Union Council to submit a petition for the publication of such a Bible, free from apocryphal books, in accordance with the editions of 1882 and 1907, as well as in a more compact format, with clearly marked verses and on high-quality paper.

The commitment to *friendly relations* with related faiths was reaffirmed, and a proposal was put forward to create a 'unifying committee to resolve any misunderstandings between kindred communities and to develop a joint work plan' (Trosnov 1911a:4).

The question of unity was commented on by Prokhanov, who felt that Baptists had not responded favorably to their proposal.

A resolution was adopted:

Regarding our relationship with kindred faiths, the Congress authorizes the Union Council to act in the future in the spirit of the proposals put forth at the first Congress held in 1909. If necessary, these proposals will be reiterated in writing' (Trosnov 1911a:4).

Complex issues such as marriage and observance of the Sabbath were postponed for the discussion in local communities.

Prokhanov and Dolgopolov were again empowered to request the next congress, and there was an expressed desire to hold it in Moscow, in response to a request from the Moscow community.

Afterward, the meeting protocols were once again read and edited. Prokhanov emphasized the benefits of the congress and proposed a prayer.

After the congress, an article appeared in the 'Morning Star' in which it was noted that the congress took place with 'great enthusiasm among the participants' (ed. Prokhanov 1911e:1).

It is of interest that, presumably, an editorial article written by Prokhanov himself was published in the 'Morning Star' under the title 'About the Second ARCEC' (ed. Prokhanov 1911e:1), in which Prokhanov expresses his evaluative judgment regarding the significance of the congress.

It is stated, that this congress 'elicited the liveliest responses in the entire Russian periodical press' and that this congress carries 'national significance'. And the significance of this congress lies in the fact that both a charter and a doctrine were adopted at the congress.

The author of the note asserts that this is an 'unprecedented phenomenon in the history of Russia: Russian people with the Bible and the Gospel in their hands, with fervent faith and open hearts, come forward before their fellow countrymen with a new religious, a new Christian worldview' (ed. Prokhanov 1911e:1). The author goes on to outline the uniqueness of this new worldview. It is based on Holy Scripture, on the Gospel, and this worldview recognizes Scripture as the sole source of knowledge about God. The author then lists other values of this worldview: worship of God in spirit and truth, faith in the one mediator between God and man, salvation and justification through faith alone, and the belief that all believers are priests, that the church is made up of living stones who have consciously believed and joined the church consciously. All of the above is a return to Apostolic Christianity, as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

Furthermore, the author asserts the following:

The creed adopted at the congress is a nationwide call to people filled with the enthusiasm of evangelical faith, to their beloved fellow countrymen, to awaken, renew, and transform their religious life, to the people who, like Ilya Muromets, still slumber deeply in the bonds of old forms. Neither political nor economic reforms could awaken this hero (ed. Prokhanov 1911e: 1).

The creed itself points *the way* that needs to be taken (ed. Prokhanov 1911e:1). Therefore, in his overview, Prokhanov likely highlights the key theological values that need to be conveyed to the people in order for spiritual reformation to take place in Russia.

The Third Congress took place from December 31 to January 4, 1912. There were 91 delegates from the community at the congress, and a total of 167 participants, including the guests with advisory voting rights (Trosnov 1912b:3-4). The substantial increase in the number of participants compared to the first congress, where only 24 people took part, can be attributed to a growing demand for such events driven by the communities' desire to be united.

Prokhanov *presented a report* on the activities of the Union Council, emphasizing that all decisions of the congress had been successfully implemented, with the exception of two aspects: the printing of the canonical Bible in a small format and the launch of biblical courses.

The primary focus was on the discussion of the role of *congregational singing* in churches. An important warning was sounded: to *prevent the displacement* of choral singing by *congregational* singing, as the latter serves the purpose of *uniting* the congregation. It was also proposed to *encourage* people to *create* their own melodies. It was emphasized that the musical style of evangelical singing should be balanced, reflecting the joyful message of the Gospel while respecting the profound feelings of the Russian spirit. Concrete measures were proposed to improve the musical ministry in congregations. For example, one of the brothers expressed a desire to attend church for free and assist in organizing the musical ministry. In the future, the possibility of *designating* a specific *minister* responsible for training new hymns and forming choirs in various churches was considered.

It was also recommended to send *new melodies* to the address of Prokhanov in SPb. Prokhanov also noted that in each issue of the Christian magazine, a new song with Russian melodies would be published (Trosnov 1912b:4).

The second question at the congress was regarding *Evangelical preaching*. It was suggested that the central theme of preaching should proclaiming *Good News*, sharing the message of *God's love*. Additionally, it was proposed that preachers should *avoid* engaging in any controversies. Preachers should be individuals who have experienced *spiritual rebirth* and have *transformed* their lives. The format of the preaching is of secondary importance compared to the previous conditions, but nevertheless, it is necessary to continue its development.

Prokhanov announced that he had *submitted a request* for the organization of a six-week biblical intensive course for preachers in SPb.

Kargel emphasized the importance of preachers deepening their *knowledge* and fully grasping the significance of *biblical texts* in their sermons. He spoke about the necessity for preachers to be *filled with the Holy Spirit*.

A declaration of the following content was adopted:

Having listened to the exchange of opinions on the matter of preaching, the congress recommends congregations to hold fast to Evangelical simplicity and the Spirit of grace in their sermons; at the same time, they should take care of the development of preachers and address any shortcomings in the form and content of sermons through the establishment, where possible, of special biblical and preaching gatherings. Preachers should deliver sermons that encompass not only messages directed towards non-believers, urging them towards repentance and reconciliation with God, but also sermons of an exhortative nature, aimed at assisting the spiritual growth of the congregation's members (Trosnov 1912b:4).

The declaration emphasized that for the training of preachers, it is *desirable* to establish courses in SPb and later in *local* areas, as well as publish *exemplary* sermons and *books* beneficial for preachers, providing a specific direction in the strategy for the development of preaching activities.

Next, the question of Sunday schools for children was discussed (Trosnov 1912b: 4). The responsibility of parents in raising their children was emphasized, but it was also noted that Sunday gatherings and schools were important for children's upbringing. However, it was mentioned that due to a certain circular from the Ministry of Internal Affairs on October 4, 1910, some difficulties arose in organizing children's gatherings. To clarify this matter (ed. Prokhanov 1912a:4),

Prokhanov reads the rules of Sunday children's gatherings approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on January 2, 1911, for the SPb community of Evangelical Christians, pointing out that based on these rules, children's gatherings may be allowed by the ministry in other communities as well.

During the congress, the obstacle to organizing Sunday children's gatherings was discussed in light of the prohibition on including children who had not been formally renounced from their affiliation with the Orthodox Church. Such renunciation posed challenges. Nevertheless, a specific strategy for addressing this issue was developed at the congress. It was proposed to *establish committees* within churches dedicated to this matter, to formulate rules based on those approved by the SPb community, and to send a formal request by registered mail to the local governor, with a submission to the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Furthermore, there was a desire expressed to have a *dedicated worker* who could serve as a traveling teacher for children's gatherings, assisting in their organization and coordination on behalf of the Union.

In concluding the discussion, Prokhanov *reminded* everyone that evangelical churches now *enjoy more freedom* than before. Therefore, he suggested sending a *loyal telegram to the emperor*, a proposal that received support during the congress.

Another topic discussed at the congress was the *development of youth circles*. It was recognized for their positive role in the *spiritual growth* of young people, as well as their *moral and intellectual* development. However, it was noted that youth circles, in their relationships with congregations, exhibited two extremes: excessive control over their activities on one end and complete freedom on the other.

As a result, a specific resolution was adopted, urging congregations to develop youth circle ministries based on the rules for circles approved by the Minister of Internal Affairs on January 2, 1911. It was also recommended that the Union's council attempt to petition for changes in the rules.

Emphasis was placed on the necessity for *older* brothers to *bless* these circles themselves, and the founders of these circles were encouraged to *be obedient* to their older brothers. It was highlighted that within the Union, there were two traveling leaders for the circles, Krasnov and Sanin, both of whom were willing to come and assist in the organization of youth circles and children's gatherings.

The issue of schools also arose sharply in many places where children were not admitted to local schools. In many areas, children were persecuted, leading to the consideration of organizing their own schools. The Union Council was tasked with approaching the government (ed. Prokhanov 1912a:4).

Another issue discussed at the congress was the matter of *famine* in the Ufa province. It was revealed that the SPb community had already submitted a request for permission to collect donations to aid the famine-stricken. It was proposed to transfer the funds to the treasurer Matveev for these purposes.

Next, the issue of the *legal status* of believers was discussed, which consisted of four points: the first was renunciation from Orthodoxy, the second was the legalization of congregations, the third was the establishment of local gatherings, and the fourth was the provision of cemeteries for evangelical Christians. A resolution was adopted, instructing the Union Council to petition competent authorities on all these matters in writing.

Furthermore, *doctrinal* issues were also discussed, including the laying on of hands and ordination, the role of women in church ministry, and matters related to marriage and divorce and about celebration of Sunday (Trosnov 1912b:3).

Brochures expressing the views of the SPb community on all these matters were sent to all Evangelical Christian congregations before the congress. This contributed to the fact that, all of these issues were resolved quite quickly (Trosnov 1912b:4). It should be noted that the author of these brochures was Prokhanov; however, it is likely that these matters had been previously discussed within his community, as the references in the congress reports do not point to Prokhanov's personal opinions but rather to the S. Petersburg *community's* viewpoint.

A resolution was passed recommending that all congregations refer to the brochures that were sent out regarding all of the aforementioned issues. The congress promises to revisit these matters in the future. Regarding the matter of women (Trosnov 1912b:4),

In connection with Sister Kapranova's report, the Congress expresses a wish for special attention to be given to the service of women in the Churches at local levels through the organization of handicraft and other gatherings, as well as the spreading of the Gospel among fallen women and the like.

Regarding the issue of the attitude towards traditional holidays in Russia, Prokhanov expressed the opinion that due to the vast number of holidays, the people were experiencing financial difficulties. Prokhanov envisions a future in Russia where his vision will be realized, and holidays will become days of sobriety and prosperity. As a result, the congress empowers the Union Council to 'develop and present to the Congress the 'Evangelical Christian Calendar Project' (Trosnov 1912b:4).

Next, the issue of printing pocket Bibles without apocryphal books was discussed, as well as the question of creating *cooperatives* due to the unsuccessful attempts by many to establish them. The congress entrusted Prokhanov with the task of preparing a report and developing a *project* of a 'practical statute for cooperative societies' for the next congress (Trosnov 1912b:4).

Prokhanov and Dolgoopolov were tasked with petitioning for permission for the next congress to be held during the Christmas holidays in SPb.

At the end, words of gratitude were expressed to Prokhanov, and in turn, he offered kind, appreciative words to all the congress participants. Then came the concluding prayer and the hymn, 'For the Evangelical Faith with Christ, We Stand'.

Presenting an interesting assessment and commentary, likely from Prokhanov himself, on the results of the third congress (ed. Prokhanov 1912b :1). In the fresh editorial note, it is affirmed that all aspects of church life were discussed there, specifically such areas as 'singing, preaching, Sunday children's gatherings, schools, as well as doctrinal issues: the laying on of hands, the ministry of women in churches, marriage and divorce, and the observance of the Sabbath'.

Prokhanov does not shy away from epistemological opposition between his tradition and Orthodoxy, asserting that all the questions discussed at the congress were resolved based on the Gospel and sacred scripture. As a result, the decisions made there often diverged significantly from the historical church, but they corresponded to the teachings of the early Apostolic Christian Church and the practices of the first centuries of Christianity (ed. Prokhanov 1912b :1).

In the second issue of *Morning Star* for 1912 (ed. Prokhanov 1912c:1), there is an editorial note about the significance of the results of the third ARCEC. The author asserts that the congress itself was successful, and one of its goals, the unification of believers in associations, was achieved.

Of interest are the discussions regarding the pocket Bible. The author links the popularization of Kodak cameras with the creation of pocket-sized cameras. Similarly, the author believes that the same could happen with the Bible if permission for its printing could be obtained. However, the Synod does not grant such permission.

The question of the Sabbath day is also noteworthy. The editor claims that in Russia, an unhealthy practice has developed where people celebrate around 160 days a year instead of working. Attempts by legislators to change this tradition are met with protest from the Synod. Even if the State Council and the Synod were to support reducing the number of holidays, people would continue to celebrate because changing their attitude toward these days requires a *change* in religious *thinking*, which the Evangelical Church is engaged in (ed. Prokhanov 1912c:1).

In the newspaper 'Utrennyaya Zvezda' No 3 1912, an article written by a congress participant is published, describing their arrival in SPb. He arrived there ahead of schedule and discovered that many others had done the same. According to the author, such early arrivals at the congress can be explained by the *popularity* and *spirit* of enthusiasm that prevailed in the hearts of the people traveling to the congress.

The article's author also describes the worship service organized by the SPb community and the atmosphere that prevailed during this service. In his opinion, there was a *spirit of unity and gratitude* to God for the opportunity to serve Him together. He states (ed. Prokhanov 1912d:3) that

In general, this gathering, concluding with the singing of the hymn 'Given to us is the invincible banner', vividly united everyone into one harmonious family, leaving an indelible mark in the hearts of those present and filling their hearts with gratitude to the Lord for His love that united everyone into one, regardless of nationality, class, or status.

Based on the increasing number of delegates from year to year and considering that it required a lot of effort and money to travel to SPb, the assessment of a participant regarding the popularity and enthusiasm prevailing at the congress is of an *objective* nature.

Describing the third ARCEC (from December 31, 1911, to January 4, 1912), Mitzkevich reports that doctrinal issues such as the laying on of hands, the role of women in communities, matters of marriage and divorce, as well as the question of the Resurrection Day, were swiftly deliberated. This became possible due to the distribution

of brochures on these matters to all communities of evangelical Christians based on the decision made at the *previous* year's congress. These brochures encompassed the viewpoint of the SPb community of Evangelical Christians (Mitzkevich 2007:159). In other words, Prokhanov would discuss diverse ideas within his community first, and then these ideas were brought up for discussion at the congress, after the communities were acquainted with the content of these issues prior to the congress's commencement. It was a wise approach, considering the autonomous nature of scattered communities that were coming together.

The analysis of materials from the first three congresses allows us to draw the conclusion of Prokhanov's *undeniable leadership* in guiding these events. In his role as the leader of the congresses, he paid significant attention to the *spiritual* aspect and its integration into the agenda, including *preaching, prayer, and hymn singing*.

One of the important values that Prokhanov emphasized was the creation of *unity* among believers from various evangelical directions, especially among Baptists. He taught about the importance of this unity, called for prayers for it, and proposed *practical steps* to achieve it through joint projects.

Prokhanov also promoted a culture of *accountability and productivity*. At the initial stages of the business part of the congresses, reports on the work done were presented based on decisions made at previous congresses. Furthermore, after discussing the challenges and tasks facing evangelical communities, decisions and declarations were made regarding their *resolution*.

Prokhanov's commitment to *freedom and establishing constructive relationships with the government* was evident in several ways. He not only actively called for prayers for the king and government but also expressed gratitude for the newfound freedoms through written correspondence and presented various requests to the government. Additionally, he played an active role in engaging in *dialogue* with government authorities on matters related to religious freedom, actively involving congress participants in this important process. Furthermore, Prokhanov consistently encouraged church leaders to utilize all available *legal* avenues to safeguard their rights.

These moments in Prokhanov's leadership were pivotal in shaping the cultural framework for interactions with the state. Despite the occasional instances of persecution faced by evangelical believers in local areas, which were openly discussed during the congresses, it was clear that the evangelical church had indeed gained more freedom after 1905 than it had enjoyed in the past.

Prokhanov was attentive to the cultural characteristics of congress participants and understood that they represented traditionally autonomous communities. Therefore, the

Congress decisions had a recommendatory nature for local communities. His wisdom was evident in the careful preparation of complex and sensitive issues, which were sent in advance for discussion in local communities before being brought up for discussion at the congresses as it was remarked earlier.

At the second congress, Prokhanov laid a solid foundation for the creation of a missionary movement by approving the doctrine and charter of the union.

Prokhanov and the congress participants also placed significant emphasis on the development of ministers, preachers, musical ministry, children's ministry, the publication of periodicals, Bible printing, the establishment of Christian schools, and youth work.

The Fourth Congress which had been suspended for five years due to a ban imposed by the Tsarist government, took place in Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg)⁵⁰ from May 17 to May 25, 1917 (VSEKh 1917:1). As usual, Prokhanov served as the chairman of the congress (Savinsky 2001:58). More than 120 delegates, plus about 20 who had the right to an advisory vote, attended the congress, despite the fact that invitation letters did not reach all recipients, shortages of supplies in Petrograd and in local areas, as well as difficulties in acquiring train tickets (VSEKh 1917:6-7). On May 21, representatives of the Baptist Union arrived.

The congress was considered successful, starting with the fact that a large number of people made it to the congress despite challenges. Various issues were discussed, especially regarding the expansion of the Union's activities, such as the development of evangelism (missions), the advancement of print media, the establishment of a Union shelter for orphans, and the training of preachers, among others (VSEKh 1917:7).

On the very first day of the congress (May 18) in the Grand Hall of the City Duma, Prokhanov concluded the solemn assembly with a sermon. He used the text 'Preach the Gospel to all creation' and emphasized that such preaching was the *primary task* for everyone - both Unions, Congresses, and every individual Christian (VSEKh 1917:9).

After resolving procedural matters, welcoming letters from individuals and communities were heard, and it was decided to send a welcoming telegram to the Provisional People's Government. The congress also heard the report of the Union Council on its activities over the past years, starting from the beginning of the 12th year, as well as a financial report. The congress assessed the Council's activities during challenging times as highly

⁵⁰ On August 31, 1914, the city's name was changed from St. Petersburg to Petrograd. This decision was made in the context of anti-war sentiments that arose at the beginning of World War I and was related to the city's original German name. Later, on January 26, 1924, the city was renamed in honor of the leader of the October Revolution, Lenin, and became known as Leningrad.

positive – it particularly emphasized that the Union Council was involved in mission work and providing assistance to those in need and their families (VSEKh 1917:23)

The memory of deceased prominent workers was honored (VSEKh 1917:23). A resolution was adopted, addressing the churches to increase donations for the mission. This appeal contained the following statement:

Recognizing the great importance of the moment we are experiencing and the extensive opportunities that open up for our beloved homeland with the advent of freedom, the Congress resolves that the entire Union must exert all efforts and make *every sacrifice* to spread the teachings of Christ throughout our country. To this end, the Congress empowers the Union Council to send an appeal to all communities and individuals to take measures to *increase donations* for the cause of evangelism (mission work). (VSEKh1917:25).

The Congress recommended strengthening the spiritual education of communities to make an increase in donations possible.

Decisions were made regarding the election of evangelists.

The Congress made a request to Prokhanov that he visit communities for no less than 2 months per year starting from 1917 (VSEKh 1917:33).

There was a desire expressed to organize six-week and two-year courses for the training of preachers.

It was proposed to hold joint meetings with other communities on Passion Week Thursdays for prayers of unity. It was recommended to observe a one-week daily prayer gathering at the beginning of the year.

During the congress, proposals were made regarding the draft law of the Provisional Government, which aimed to separate the church from the state and ensure religious freedom.

Prokhanov also suggested the formation of a Christian-democratic party called 'Resurrection', but the congress rejected this idea (Savinsky 2001:58). The congress rejected this proposal and deemed church involvement in politics undesirable (VSEKhB 1989:187; Mitskevich 2007:182). However, the congress recognized 'it as highly desirable to have representatives of free national religious communities in the future Constituent Assembly, to defend the rights of these communities alongside all citizens of the country' (VSEKh 1917:89-90). Moreover, the congress welcomed the formation of a Christian Democratic party, 'as a private initiative by some members of the union, aiming to organize the state life of the nation in accordance with the highest Christian ideals.

Participation in the party is a personal matter of conscience for each individual and the fulfillment of a civic duty' (VSEKh 1917:90-91).

Much time was devoted to discussing the establishment of a unifying committee with Baptist representatives. The congress elected five representatives to participate in the formation of the unifying committee (Savinsky 2001:59).

The congress also passed a resolution calling for forgiveness to be extended to all those who had been expelled from evangelical communities but had not sought forgiveness. In the case of individuals who had been expelled by Baptist communities and subsequently joined evangelical Christians or left the Baptists due to conflicts, the congress urged them to apologize to Baptist communities. If they refused to do so, the churches were to address the matter at their discretion (Savinsky 2001:59).

The Fifth Congress took place from December 25, 1917, to January 1, 1918, in the hall of the Saveliev Confectionery Factory in Moscow (Savinskiy 2001:59). There were 94 delegates and 14 guests present at the congress (Mitskevich 2007:185). It was planned that from December 25 to 28, the congress would discuss matters concerning Evangelical Christians, and from December 28 to January 1, the Baptists would join for joint sessions. However, the Baptists did not attend (Mitskevich 2007:185)

The motto of the congress was 'The hour has already come for us to wake up from our sleep', based on the text from Romans 13:1 (Savinskiy 2001:59). The congress discussed various issues, including matters related to evangelism, raising the level of spiritual life in communities, education, upbringing, and the training of preachers, charity, the role of women in ministry, and the importance of unity. It was decided that for one day, from December 30th to the 31st, starting at three o'clock in the afternoon, they would observe fasting and engage in prayer for unity. The question of acquiring a prayer house in Petrograd, establishing a Bible institute, holding regional congresses, and matters related to publishing and street missions were also addressed. The congress entrusted the Union Council with the task of appealing to the people to cease internal discord and turn to Christ (Mitskevich 2007:186).

Mitskevich (2007:186) regards the congress as highly fruitful.

And a collective of confessional historians assessed the congress's results as follows (VSEKhB 1989:188):

The Fifth ARCEC had a profound impact not only on its participants but also on believers throughout the country. Both young and elderly believers were ignited with a desire to proclaim Christ. Joyful reports of sinners turning to Christ were coming from everywhere. Due to the scattered nature of the evangelical brotherhood amidst the backdrop of the

civil war, evangelistic work at the grassroots level was carried out by regional, provincial, district, and local associations of evangelical Christians.

The Sixth Congress took place from October 12 to 18, 1919.

Mitskevich (2007:192), who was elected as the secretary of the congress, indicates that the congress took place in 'inexpressibly difficult circumstances'. Firstly, at that time, there was a war both within and outside Russia. On the other hand, there was famine and a disrupted railway system. Nevertheless, despite the threat that they might not be able to gather a sufficient number of people, the congress took place. Approximately 90 individuals managed to attend the congress. During the congress, Prokhanov received news of his wife's death.

At this congress, a lot of time was devoted to the cause of evangelism. Fifty evangelists were elected, and sources of funding for evangelism were also planned (VSEKhB 1989:188).

The issues of media development were discussed (VSEKhB 1989:188). The question of unity was also discussed (Savinsky 2001:60). Additionally, a project for the 'Regulations on the All-Russian General Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists' was adopted (Mitskevich 2007:193). The congress noted the positive significance of the laws on the separation of church and state and on freedom of conscience.

The Seventh Congress took place in Moscow from May 27 to June 7, 1920 (ed. Prokhanov 1920a: 2-8). At the congress, 159 delegates were present. In response to Prokhanov's report, the congress adopted a resolution approving the work of the Union Council and all employees, taking into account the difficulties the country was experiencing. The shift of work from the center to the periphery was approved.

Regarding the issue of evangelism, Prokhanov called for a more vigorous spreading of the Gospel among the Russian people. Prokhanov proposed the establishment of an indigenous mission to reach the peoples inhabiting the territory of Russia. As Prokhanov put it, 'It is the task of people of the evangelical faith to heal the wounds of centuries-old injustice committed by the Russian people against the nationalities inhabiting Russian land' (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:3).

Additionally, Prokhanov noted that the Russian people owed a debt to neighboring countries where the old regime exported vodka, weapons, or dead icons. Prokhanov mentioned countries such as China and Persia. Now it is important to reach out to these countries with a message of peace. Prokhanov proposed sending two missionaries to China and two to India – this would mark the beginning of a foreign mission in the Union (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:3).

In response to Prokhanov's call, as well as speakers from other places, a resolution was adopted emphasizing the importance of intensifying evangelism:

In view of this great task, all participants in the evangelical movement in general and the ARUEC in particular must dedicate themselves selflessly and zealously, not sparing anything, to devote all their strength and resources without reservation to this cause, as they have them at their disposal. In the foundation of the work of evangelism among the Russian people, in addition to all conventional methods, it is necessary to strive for: increasing the number of preachers, expanding financial resources, developing spiritual literature, and so on (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:3).

Furthermore, it was emphasized that it is necessary to reach a level within the communities where every church member becomes an evangelist, based on the text from Numbers 11:29 where Moses declares his wish for all people from the nation to be prophets.

Secondly, it was noted that it is essential to continue implementing the principle of delivering the Good News 'from city to city, from village to village, from town to town, from hamlet to hamlet – reaching every last person' in practice (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:3).

The congress also emphasized the need to hold local gatherings – regional (several provinces), district (one province), and local (parts of a province) congresses. It was recommended to all missionary regional, district, and local associations to acquire maps and 'study them, marking all the places where the gospel has not yet been preached, and immediately work towards ensuring that it is preached there until there are evangelical gatherings in all the places marked on the map' (ed. Prokhanov 1920a: 4).

A decision was made to organize a foreign and indigenous mission under the Union Council. Then, the selection of evangelists took place, with '52 evangelists designated'.

A resolution on unity was adopted – efforts to unite with the Baptists into a single union were approved. Prokhanov explained the difference between merging and uniting with the Baptists. There were 24 representatives who spoke on this topic, and a resolution on the preference for merging, if conditions permit, was adopted. If these conditions are not met, then as a temporary measure, uniting was recommended.

Regarding the question of the name of the united union, Prokhanov made several suggestions. He personally preferred to be called the Union of First Christians based on Acts 11:26. However, after discussion, it was decided to propose three names: 1) All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians; 2) All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptized by Faith; 3) All-Russian Union of First Christians. At the local level, the previous names could be retained, but it was recommended that all stamps and seals indicate that

the congregation belongs to the union whose name will be accepted. Prokhanov also presented reports on 'Evangelical Printing' and 'Bible Courses'. As a result of these reports, resolutions were adopted – a prayer for overcoming difficulties in printing, and approval of the project to organize courses for preachers (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:5). The Union Council was re-elected, and Prokhanov was confirmed as the chairman.

Six people, including Prokhanov, were elected to be sent abroad to address the issues of acquiring Bibles and food supplies (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:5)

The congress adopted a resolution on ordination – on one hand, there was a recommendation not to rush ordinations and to allow time for testing, while on the other hand, ordination should take place if there are already experienced and tested brothers. In this regard, it was proposed to inform the Union Council, which would send an experienced minister for the ordination.

Prokhanov suggested that all Baptist brethren and Baptists from around the world join in a day of prayer for unity once a year. The congress accepted Prokhanov's proposal and adopted such a resolution (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:6).

A resolution on the criteria for selecting a presbyter was adopted (ed. Prokhanov 1920:7). The congress passed a resolution authorizing the Union Council to negotiate with the Baptists for unification based on the Regulations of the All-Russian United Council and Fraternal Councils' -Guidelines. These documents were published in the first issue of the new publication dedicated to unification, titled Fraternal Union (ed. Prokhanov 1920b; 1920c). In conclusion, Prokhanov, in his address, reminded of the necessity to provide written reports about the spiritual and material state of the communities.

The evangelists were instructed to write at least once a week. He reminded of the importance of supporting the evangelism materially. He thanked the Moscow community and everyone who participated in organizing the congress (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:7). In conclusion, Prokhanov once again emphasized the importance of everyone in the people of God being prophets and evangelists, as well as the words of the Apostle, 'Forgetting what is behind, and reaching forward'. Prokhanov remarked, that (ed. Prokhanov 1920a:7): 'All the concerns of the Congress must be forgotten, and we must direct all our efforts towards the perfection of the entire work of the communities and the Union, and in this regard, not know any other word except the word 'forward'

The Eighth ARCEC of Evangelical Christians took place from December 1 to 10, 1921. In an address to all churches published in the Morning Star, it is noted that there were 142 participants at the congress, which is considered a significant success given the conditions in which Russia found itself (Vys'shiy Sovet VSEKh 1922:3). At this congress,

decisions were made to *expand* the number of missionaries to one hundred and increase the number of workers in the Union Council. The address includes a request from each member of a church belonging to the Union to donate 25,000 rubles per year and 10 pounds of flour per year.

At the congress, seven addresses of communities were provided where people suffering from *hunger* could be sent after making contact with these communities. There was a request “not to send people to Petrograd due to the famine there’ (Vys'shiy Sovet VSEKh 122:3). The question of uniting with the Baptists was discussed, and at the same time, a letter addressed to the Baptists from the old leadership of the Baptist Union was read, which was considered offensive by the Evangelical Christians towards the Evangelical Christians. This letter expressed protest against the union with the Evangelical Christians. The reaction to this letter from the Evangelical Christians is described in the newspaper ‘Morning Star’:

Following the example of Christ and with the highest goals in mind, the Congress decided to respond to this in accordance with the Word of God: to forgive and cover with love this regrettable act of the members of the old Baptist Board, and to continue their activities as if this act had never happened (Vys'shiy Sovet VSEKh 1922:4).

At the congress, a decision was made to open a Bible institute. The question of religious freedom, which was being restricted by the Soviet authorities at the local level, was also discussed. In this regard, it was recommended to report all cases to the Union Council, which has a Department of Civil Affairs that can appeal to the Central Soviet Authorities in Moscow.

Regarding ordination, it was recommended that all congregations ordain chosen Church ministers according to apostolic custom. The highest council of the Union will send a minister to perform the ordination.

The Ninth Congress took place from September 1 to 10, 1923, in Petrograd, following a two-year hiatus, with 303 delegates present (Savinsky 2001:95). Prokhanov served as the chairman. The Union Council reported on the work done in the field of evangelism. It was also noted that despite significant financial difficulties, 50 people completed the nine-month Bible courses. There were Bibles for distribution, Songbooks, preparations were underway to resume the publication of the ‘Christian’ magazine, as well as other spiritual literature. A significant amount of time was devoted to the issue of relations with the Soviet authorities and military service in particular. This issue was discussed in another part of the dissertation.

Discussions about the possibility of uniting with the Baptists continued. A decision was made to expand missions among *indigenous* peoples and *foreign missions*. A report was

presented on the Third World Baptist Congress in Stockholm. At that congress, Prokhanov was re-elected as one of the vice-presidents of the World Baptist Union.

The Tenth Congress of ARCEC took place from November 30 to December 6, 1926, in the 'House of Salvation' in Leningrad, with 350 representatives from churches with voting rights from 52 established Brotherhood departments present (a total of 503 participants) (Savinsky 2001:95).

A report was presented on the activities of the Union Council, covering its work. Various topics were discussed, including the relationship with government duties, labor collectives, education (both domestic and general), evangelism, Bible courses, music, printing, and other matters.

Prokhanov and Karegel explained issues related to military service for a long time.

Prokhanov informed about his trip to Germany and the United States, as a result of which the opportunity to publish 25,000 copies of Bibles, as well as 20,000 copies of New Testaments and collections of spiritual songs, arose.

As a representative office of the AREC (All-Russian Evangelical Christians) appeared in Chicago, the question of transforming AREC into the World Union of Evangelical Christians was discussed.

Recommendations were given to Prokhanov to publish a brochure exposing Western modernism.

A decision was made to organize a special department for *agricultural and production* cooperation (Savinsky 2001:96).

Various speakers addressed the issue of spiritual education, and various meetings were planned - prayer meetings, edifying meetings, Bible meetings, and meetings for those who are approaching faith to promote such education. Plans were made for working with believers' youth, especially with sisters.

Prokhanov spoke on the topic of domestic education related to improving household conditions at home. Regarding indigenous missions, attention was drawn to the need to start working among Muslims.

The congress concluded with the singing of the anthem 'For the Evangelical Faith'.

Conclusion. The analysis of the congresses shows that Prokhanov played a key and dominant role both in convening and conducting the congresses and in organizing the union of churches. It is evident that the congresses played a pivotal role in the

organization of the missionary movement. They contributed to the unity of churches and their development through discussions and resolutions on various issues related to the growth and development of local churches. Inter-church structures were created to assist local communities, and all the work of the congresses and the union contributed to the realization of Prokhanov's vision.

Appendix B

To the Holy Spirit

Spirit who moved over the deep,
Before the beginning of all days;
Spirit who created the starry heavens,
The expanse of the earth, and the depths of the seas.

Chorus:

Hear our prayer and faith,
Pour Yourself out fully
On Your children,
On Your children.

Spirit, who raised up Moses,
And to the prophets gave their speech!
Help us, sowing truth,
To draw the proud world to You.

Spirit of Life! From the grave's bonds,
Raise the dead to life again.

Spirit of Power! Transform the weak
Into strong servants of Your reign!
In the old and sinful life,

Create a new life, pure and bright,
Raise in us a spiritual throne,
Quench the flesh's voice in us outright.
Spirit of unfading holiness!

Holy Spirit, come from above!
Make the spirit of pride
And doubts within us disappear!

Spirit of Freedom! Break the chains of decay
In human hearts today!
Grant that the spirit of adoption
May grow in Your children's hearts!

Spirit, who on Pentecost Day
Came down upon the Apostles to stay!
Rich with gifts of heavenly grace,
Create in us Your holy throne!

Comforting Spirit! To the grieving,
Send comfort!
Help those working to
Comfort the children of the earth.


Grant us gifts of healing,

The gift of prophetic speech!
But above all the gifts You give,
Grant us the gift of Your love!

You pour out grace upon grace
On the faithful; You build the Church within us,
And in it, You wish to embrace the world.

Spirit! In the love of the Father and the Son,
Revive the branches of the Church;
Let all unite as one
In the eternal feat of love!

APPENDIX B



PROOF-READING

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DR LEE-ANNE ROUX
EDITOR | PROOFREADER

+27 82 825 7325
leeanne@proof-reading.co.za
www.proof-reading.co.za

20 August 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: LANGUAGE EDITING

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the thesis titled:

**FROM TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO TRANSFORMATIONAL MISSION: THE ROLE OF
I.S. PROKHANOV IN INITIATING A MISSIONAL MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE 20th CENTURY**

By

DZMITRY LAZUTA

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Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lee-Anne Roux