Pentecostalism in Soviet Union:
A Nihilistic Analysis

by

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Abstract

Recently secularization has been reinterpreted, by Vattimo, as that which metamorphoses religion in order to make it possible for the day and age one lives in. In this thesis, I argue that New Religious Movements (NRM) represent a secularization of religion in the sense that they reinterpret the "text" and adjust it to the needs of the adherents of that particular movement. Since the Enlightenment, secularism has been understood as that which is not religious. Separation of church and state took place at times peacefully and at times violently. An example of the latter is the Soviet Union where secularization was imposed upon the people regardless of their religious beliefs. While the early Soviet state was at war with the Orthodox Church, a NRM—Pentecostalism—has thrived and spread like fire across the Soviet nations. My research question is: *How did the Pentecostal movement succeed in establishing itself in the Soviet Union, given the hostile environment where the state tried to secularize the society?* To answer this question I look at: (i) the Pentecostal movement's establishment in the Soviet Union, and (ii) the sociopolitical and cultural elements that provided the fertile ground for the movement. In order to situate this event within the historical times, namely late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' understandings of religion and secularization, I offer a literature review of secularization theory as understood by Weber, Durkheim, Berger, and Vattimo among others. I analyze various social events throughout the history of Christianity in Russia in order to understand that which prepared the ground for this religious movement. I give a comprehensive analysis of Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union by analyzing primary sources from the movement's view of themselves as well as the Soviet view of the Pentecostals in particular and religion in general. Lastly, I show how Pentecostalism was a form of secularization and how, in fact, the Soviets and the Pentecostals were working towards the same goal—secularism, only through different means.

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Dedication

To Миша

How good it would have been to be a genuine Cancer,
to constantly go back in time.
I would have met you through memories
and after I would have found you, I would have never let you go,
I would have dragged you back in time with me
where we would have loved each other in our innocent youth...
Then, always backwards, I would have dragged you further,
to childhood
so we could have played innocently
until we would have tired of play and of innocence
and then we would have disappeared into a myth.
But I am not an authentic Cancer,
it is in vain that I am proud of my sign.
I am condemned to go forward
and all I can drag with me in my claws are my memories which do not yield anything
and their giant burden may kill me someday.
by Octavian Paler, Cancer Zodiac (translated from Romanian by Galina Şcolnic)

INTRODUCTION

This is the story of the *almost* in all its potentiality and its eventual metamorphosing into something other than that which it was imagined to be. This is the story of a society in which things were *almost* incomprehensible to its inhabitants. This is the story of a religious movement which *almost* captivated everyone in its wake by offering an alternative mode of living in such a way as to meet the needs of its community. This is the story of Pentecostalism which *almost* succeeded in meeting its own expectations. This is the story of a girl who *almost* understood her parents' yearning for the Divine. This is the story in which the people who joined this movement showed an *almost* perfect example of nihilism. This is the story of a network of communities through which people *almost* became emancipated. This is the story in which secularization as such was *almost* at its finest hour. This is the story in which a state was *almost* ready to tolerate a New Religious Movement (NRM).

□

Research Questions

My goal is to understand the rise and survival of the Pentecostal movement in the former Soviet Union. I offer sociological and theoretical explanations that account for this phenomenon. To do this, I ask: *How and why did the Pentecostal movement succeed in establishing itself in the Soviet Union, given the hostile environment where the state tried to secularize the society?* To answer this question, I contextualize and critically analyze: (1) the Pentecostal movement's establishment in the Soviet Union, and (2) the sociopolitical and cultural elements that provided the fertile ground for the movement.

In order to do that, I look at selected literature about this period, Soviet policy documents, and personal letters written by the believers. Having access not only to the literature but also to personal diaries and state documents enables me to develop a more in-

depth understanding of both the Soviet state and Pentecostalism, thus bridging a gap—what is meant by secularization—in literature that only assesses one or the other.

Due to my background, I work with several languages including Russian, Romanian, and Ukrainian, which enable me to use primary sources in all of these languages. I recognize my own position in this research, which was born out of need for closure, as I happen to have been raised by Pentecostal parents in a former Soviet country—Moldova. As an adult, I have moved away from both—Pentecostalism and the country of my birth—and with diligent care I engage with this phenomenon in a critical way. I reflect upon my own family's immersion within the movement and offer an insider's perspective on this movement that, one may argue, enhances my ability to do this research and renders validity to my study.

Background

In this thesis, I analyze a New Religious Movement (NRM), namely Pentecostalism, in order to provide an explanation on how this movement succeeded in traveling across the globe from the United States to the Soviet Union in a short period of time, and how it succeeded in enticing people into its midst at a time when religion in that state was strongly discouraged. What makes a religious movement persevere even when there have been noticeable state repressions against it? This topic is of interest in the social sciences because religion's appeal has not diminished over the years as predicted, and there has been an upsurge of NRMs in the last decades, especially from the 1980's onwards (Thiessen 1994). What makes people embrace these new forms of adhering to the same ideology when, seemingly, Christianity is an outdated religion that oppresses its members, especially women? What kinds of people join NRMs and how does society react to them?

It is necessary to explain here the way the concept of NRM is used in this thesis. I am aware that NRMs are commonly defined as the religious movements that have come to the

fore since World War II, and particularly since the 1960s (Ruthven 2005). The problem is that this explanation does not account for all the new religious movements as such. Momen (2009) argues that there are several ways of defining a NRM. The most common definition of NRMs refers only to the "New Age" movements that are "not derived from one of the established world religions" and are "distinctive and different from any of the traditions of the world religions" (Momen 2009:509).

Momen argues that in general NRMs do not pertain to a specific timeframe as long as they are: "derived from established world religions, but having such differences as to take them outside the broad tradition of that religion" (2009:509). For the purposes of this thesis, I use this broader definition. Any religious movement within Christianity (though not only there), at its inception is *new*. Because the purpose of this thesis is to argue that NRMs such as Pentecostalism function as a way of secularizing society; *new* here is used as that which is new, different, not-existing-before and creative way of secularizing. This is important because there have been NRMs within the history of Christianity (and elsewhere) that have had a great impact upon the world and have helped us see how religious trends metamorphose across time and cultures. In that sense, Christianity itself started as a NRM within the already established religious systems of the Roman Empire.

> In the beginning, all religions are tiny, obscure and deviant movements. Caught at the right moment, Jesus would have been found leading a handful of ragtag followers in a remote corner of the mighty Roman Empire. How laughable it would have seemed to Roman intellectuals that this obscure sect would pose a threat to the great pagan temples. In similar fashion, Western intellectuals scorn contemporary sects. Yet, if major new faiths are aborning, they will not be found by consulting the directory of the National Council of Churches. Rather, they will be found

> in the lists of obscure new movements. Thus, to assess the future of religion, one must always pay close attention to the fringes of religious enterprises (Stark and Bainbridge 1985:2).

What I am saying is that Pentecostalism is a NRM because the people who convened to form this movement found a *new* way of practicing Christianity that worked for them. This term—NRM—is significant of *new* ways of secularizing the world. If my reader wonders why I am using this loaded term that has a pre-attached meaning to it, it is because I consider it important to pause in order to question that which is taken for granted, considered understood and universalized for everyone's consumption. This thesis is an invitation to question terms such as NRMs and secularization, to ask "where do these concepts come from" and "how did we come to understand them as we do?" Asking is the first step for creating new spaces in which we make way, include and invite that (and those) which (whom) we did not know or which (whom) we have forgotten.

The *new* in NRMs is not necessarily new. There is no newness as such since every movement is a split from an already established religion. In that sense a movement recycles that which is useful for its existence while incorporating new interpretations of the text. As I will show in chapter one, the adherents of secularization have recycled all the ideas that they deemed worthy from the Christian world and then added a new concept "reason" to it. Now, one cannot discard that from which one has learned. Secularization is only happening, has been happening within Christianity, within a religious world. What I am trying to convey here is that if the new in a Christian NRM is only a reinterpretation, then the secularized world is also a new interpretation of the Christian world. That is why I am using a different definition, as described above, of NRMs.

The literature on Pentecostalism in the USSR is limited in both scope and numbers. There is no comprehensive historical analysis that looks at how the movement survived

within the Soviet environment, what made it attractive, what kind of people joined in, and why the authorities were so hostile against them. There is *absolutely no analytical research* on why Pentecostalism survived and grew in the USSR. There are numerous studies done on NRMs, especially during the twentieth century, in the West (Marciano, Coleman, and Baum 1983; Chryssides and Chryssides 1999). There are studies done regarding the spread of these movements throughout the world, but in the case of the Pentecostal movement the authors focus, time and again, on the events in the West (Nichol 1966; Martin 2011). I focus on a less known area of this movement's influence around the globe. Namely, the area I am interested in is the Soviet Union at the beginning of the last century. For the scope of this thesis, the geographical regions within the Soviet Union I mainly focus on are Russia and Ukraine; and the time period goes up until the Second World War. I have decided to stop my research at WWII because the Soviet's state attitude towards religion changes after the war. If anything, the war served as primarily an ideological watershed as seen in the symbiosis of the state and the Russian Orthodox Church, the dissolution of the Comintern, the abandonment of the Internationale as the Soviet anthem and so on. The state seemed to recognize its "family resemblance" with the dominant church, but this only means more persecution for the NRMs.

While this NRM is a case study in which I am particularly interested in due to personal reasons on which I will elaborate later, Pentecostalism as such does not take the bulk of my thesis. Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union is employed as an example in order to contribute to the overall understanding of *secularization not as that which is separate from religion, but as that which continues religion*. I argue that NRMs are nihilistic spasms that attempt to overthrow the yoke of the old religious institutions they emerge from, and implement a new order by going back to a specific textual origin in order to reinterpret it and continue "secularizing" the world.

As such, this research project is about Christianity and Secularization, New Religious Movements, and Pentecostalism. The texts within Abrahamic religions were and still are oppressive and misogynistic, and that is why a critique is certainly needed, but the critique does not stop there. On the contrary, a critique is issued with the hope of change that will make way for inclusion. Why were new religious movements perceived as negative phenomena by the Soviet state? Was it because they conditioned the believers to be a-political, against the state, less likely to conform, and so on? The Soviet state allowed itself to mistreat a group of people—the Pentecostals—because the Pentecostals were engaged in a secularization project similar to the Soviet one whereas the Soviet leaders believed that secularization can only succeed through communism. Now, *believing* is not an end goal in itself, it is a process in which the believers expect the end goal based on previous experience. In order to arrive at a perfect state of communism, the Soviets wanted a religion-less society whereas the Pentecostals wanted a new way of believing in order to be able to live in that communist society. I argue that both—the Soviets and the Pentecostals—were secularizing their society in their own way, but because there was miscommunication between them it created a gap in that secularism as such became the rule whereas any sort of religious enterprise was frowned upon. Understanding secularism in a rigid way—as that which was not religious, as that which hindered communism, and as that which had to be left behind allowed for solid spaces in which religion as such had no room. Both, the Soviet state and the Pentecostals wanted a community in which they would not have to be under the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church. The way they went about undermining that authority was very different in that that the Pentecostals wanted the ability to practice Christianity in a new way, as they understood it; whereas the Soviets wanted to implement *the* way as they saw fit without religion. My research bridges this gap in the existing literature by analyzing the perspectives of both the Pentecostal movement (Gee 1947; Kolarz 1961; Martin 2010) and

the Soviet state (Ramet 1993; Husband and Husb 2000). By bridging this gap, I am able to contribute to the developing of secularization theory by adhering to the Italian hermeneutic philosopher Gianni Vattimo's understanding of secularization as that which continues Christianity (in the postmodern age characterized by the diminishment of Truth) rather than going against it. In this way a NRM contributes to secularization through a new interpretation of the original text even by keeping the primordial thirst of finding a way of accessing the Divine.

The Break that was a Fracture

It is perhaps peculiar that the twentieth century allowed spaces for NRMs when it was predicted that religion was becoming extinct (Berger 1999). Since the Enlightenment, there may have been a tendency for religion to be cast aside as that which was not part of the civic life, as that which was different, less important, and soon to be replaced by more important phenomena such as scientific inquiry. What was it, then, that allowed religion to continue alongside new societal developments? Before answering this question, the actual concept of a religious movement has to be addressed. Doing so requires an answer to the question of what religion is, what a movement is, and finally what Pentecostalism is.

At the elementary level, religion is a doctrine which permeates a community and attempts to hold it together through a specific ideology. Dawson and Thiessen explain (2013) the skeleton of religious phenomena as formulated during the Enlightenment and which was meant to contrast with civic society. That which was religious was fundamentally distinct from what was not religious. Two concepts explain this break: orthodoxy and orthopraxy. *Orthodoxy* embodies that which is the right belief; and *orthopraxy* is the right practice. Each religious enterprise since the seventeenth century has tried to ascertain its own beliefs and practices in order to distinguish themselves from the others. Recently some social scientists

have been suggesting that there has been no break as such between religion and science (Taylor 2007; Vattimo 2009).

For example, in Wittgenstein's "family resemblance"—things which could be thought to be connected by one essential common feature may in fact be connected by a series of overlapping similarities, where no one feature is common to all—religion is a conglomeration of belief, ritual, experience, and community (Wittgenstein and Anscombe 2001). Belief pertains to theodicies which are the nature, role, and variation of belief found within a specific religion. It is not necessarily a cognitive practice, but more of a customary practice that enables the believer to say a prayer in order to provide assurance for one's daily life. Ritual is a way of enhancing or diminishing communal bonds, societal norms, rites of passage, and common understandings. Experience is that which one feels in the presence of the numinous. Community is the sharing of that which one considers the good news and the understanding of ethics.

The word "movement" in NRMs implies a certain sweep, urgency and need of action. Is there a link between religion and rebellion? Perhaps adhering to a NRM is, knowingly or unknowingly, a political act to reject the system under which one lives. What features of religion lend themselves to become a social movement since religion *is* a social organization in which spiritual collective action is key (McCarthy and Zald 1977). According to Melucci the term *social movement* is misleading, and he proposes that one uses *collective action* instead (1996:34). That is because what is called cultural is in fact a connection between social values and the aforementioned collective action. This is confirmed by Charles (1999), who argues that a social movement has several mobilization resources. It is involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents. It is linked by densely informed networks and shares a distinct collective identity.

While one could compare a religious movement with a social movement, it is problematic to do so within Pentecostalism due to several factors. First of all, there is not a single leader who could be identified as the original founder of the movement; nor is there a specific place which would be single-handedly responsible for the harboring of this event. Rather, there are several initial sources which claim to have had a major influence in the origins of the Pentecostal movement. Perhaps, an even more important event was the rise of individualism within certain denominations which helped distinguish between what was Pentecostal and what was not. A nihilistic stance if you like.

As it is, perhaps looking at certain specifics of Pentecostalism would help to understand the rise of this movement which quickly became a worldwide phenomenon. In a sense, Pentecostalism was more of an emerging rather than an actual organized movement, at least in its initial form in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century which manifested itself in the heterogeneity of its spiritual, organizational, and practical relationships. This suggests that the adaptability of the Pentecostal ideas to local customs is the reason why even today Pentecostalism is still in a dynamic sweep across the globe. Pentecostalism's ability to adapt to local mores and traditions wherever it went made it possible for it to thrive since its inception. From here, one could perhaps try to understand the specifics about the movement of Pentecostalism. The history of Pentecostalism is a mythical history directly linked to the day of the Pentecost. It is able to surpass denominational restrictions by insisting on the gift of the Holy Spirit as the ultimate level of one's closeness to the divine.

Pentecostalism's emphasis on healing was appealing to many cultures due to their "indigenous" [local] beliefs (Martin 2011). Since the pastor had the ability to heal, through prayer, then the religious ritual had not only a spiritual, but also a practical purpose. That is, there was no difference between "physical" and "spiritual" benefits that one got from

adhering to this particular faith. Perhaps, in the former Soviet Union, due to remnants of paganism and residual traces of spirituality left after the state's war on religions, this particular movement was attractive to people; but I will return to this later.

Cox (2001) writes about two factors that contribute to a successful religious growth: (1) it must include and transform at least certain elements of pre-existing religions and (2) equip people to live in a rapidly changing society. Commonly practiced prayer, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, empowered members in that everyone had the possibility to participate in rather than simply observe a liturgy (as it was in the Orthodox Church, for example). Spirit, missionaries have discovered, could be translated in one's culture as accommodating to one's way of doing things making it less rigid than, say, the way in which the Catholic Church was proselytizing, which made the boundaries easier to trespass. Melvin Hodges, a former US Assemblies of God missionary, wrote a book titled, *On the Mission Field: The Indigenous Church* (1953), in which he explains how the Holy Spirit enabled the indigenization of the "universal church" and that a missionary should not impose one's own culture upon the peoples whom one is proselytizing. Thus missionaries would maintain that God in Pentecostalism meets the needs of *all* people, including their spiritual salvation, physical healing, and other material necessities such as finances. The message proclaimed by the Pentecostal preachers regarding the power of the Holy Spirit to meet human needs was welcomed in societies where a lack of power was keenly felt on a daily basis. Unlike the Catholic Church or, in this case, the Russian Orthodox Church which encouraged people to be content with their lot in life, the Pentecostals—in the same vein as Calvinism—encouraged material prosperity as a sign that God has blessed them.

The Naming of a Movement

How does something get its name? To *name* something is to designate, assign, and call forward a specific meaning that from the day of the naming onward carries a significant weight. By calling on a name, the callers bring forth the called, making it palpable within the space in which the name is being uttered, reinforcing it. What does a name mean? The meaning which is ascribed at the event of the naming metamorphoses into heterogeneous definitions of the same name. It is not really about the name as such, but it is about the meaning a particular group ascribes to a specific name. It has been argued that the task of pinpointing meaning, specifically in a religious phenomenon is "superfluous, impossible, and ethnocentric" while at the same time it is "necessary, explorative, and useful" (Droogers 2008:23). When a movement is continuous within time then the meaning changes as well, depending on the historical location; it is situational, depending on the members within the movement at a given time.

According to Weber's (2007) *ideal types* one can assume that the Pentecostal is just a stereotype that could be used to discover the essence of a phenomenon and to reduce inchoate complexity to analyzable proportions. Weber emphasized that the ideal type is in fact a construct and does not occur in pure form in reality. The ideal type of the Pentecostal does not exist, just as there is no essential Episcopalian or a stereotypical social scientist. Ideal types may nevertheless facilitate social analysis. Bergunder questions what Pentecostalism *is* and *who* represents it in academic discourse.

> The belief in "missionary tongues" coupled with a pre-millennial expectation of a worldwide revival to precede the imminent second coming of Christ was undoubtedly the reason for the frantic missionary migrations that took place a century ago, migrations that involved

> Pentecostal missionaries from the West as well as other parts of the world (2007: 45).

Bergunder (2007) insists that a single definition cannot be warranted. Pentecostalism is simply a name that various interested parties give to a particular discourse on religion and culture and not a preconceived or reified concept.

Pentecostalism as such has never been homogenous because from the beginning there were multiple schisms that enabled an array of movements within a movement. An inclusive definition has to allow for diversity in understanding these movements. There is no ideal form of Pentecostalism nor can one rank the multiple versions of the same name as more or less important. The term *Pentecostalism* refers to a wide variety of movements scattered throughout the world that can be described as having *family resemblances*. Using the family resemblance analogy, by combining the ideal with the deviations, could be the best way to proceed. Having a family resemblance does not mean that there is something that all movements have in common, but that all have certain similarities and relations with each other. Describing or defining something must allow for *blurred edges*, so an imprecise definition can still be meaningful. Defining Pentecostalism has its shortcomings, but despite its inadequacy it refers to *churches with a family resemblance that emphasize the working of the Holy Spirit.*

The significant biblical story for Pentecostals is that before Jesus ascended he promised his apostles that he would send them a powerful mediator who would guide them and help them interpret God's will. Thus fifty days after the resurrection of Christ the apostles gathered in a specific location in Jerusalem and while praying they received the Holy Spirit which manifested itself through speaking in unknown tongues. That happened on the day of the Pentecost which comes from the Jewish Festival of Weeks.

Droogers (2008) has outlined three broad common features of Pentecostalism that are helpful for understanding the ideology that makes Pentecostalism a worldwide phenomenon. These are outlined in terms of theological categories: (1) the central emphasis on the experience of the Spirit, accompanied by ecstatic manifestations such as speaking in tongues; (2) the "born again" or conversion experience that accompanies acceptance into a Pentecostal community; and (3) the dualistic worldview that distinguishes between the *world* and the *church*, the *devil* and the *divine, sickness* and *health*, and so on (2008:35-37). These are features of all the different kinds of Pentecostalism, and have been so throughout the movement's history.

Pentecostalism is divided into three types: classical Pentecostals (on which I will focus due to my research on the beginning of the movement in Soviet Union), the charismatic renewal movement, and Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like independent churches (Hollenweger 1976). While this broad division into three frames appears reductionist it is necessary to have it as a starting point in order to understand the different streams of the Pentecostal movement. Classical Pentecostalism originated in the early twentieth-century revival and missionary movements. The first decade of the twentieth-century was the time when these movements began to emerge, and although it took them a few years before they were known as Pentecostals, and their gradual ostracizing by their Holiness and Evangelical relatives resulted in new denominations being formed just before and after the Great War.

Tracing the Origins

There are two main explanations within Pentecostalism regarding the origins of this movement. One, originating from within the movement, traces its origins to the birth of Christ (Franchuk 2008; Nichol 1966) and the other recognizes that it is a recent phenomenon within the Christian tradition (Cox 1995). The first group insists that Pentecostalism is "not

an innovation, but has been around since Christ" (Nichol 1966:19). This assumes certain homogeneity of an original truth that is linked through different people throughout the history of Christianity as follows.

The first link, of a chain that is *almost* visible, comes from the Book of Acts which describes the story of the Pentecost (The New Testament 292:345). The second-century's link to the Pentecost is Montanus who continued the promulgation of the ecstatic feeling of the spirit (Nichol 1966:20). Then the chain is *almost* disrupted, but Franchuk (2008) links it with the epicurean philosopher Celsus who talks about the Holy Ghost and whom the mainstream apostles considered a heretic (Reyes 2014). Third-century links are Origen who contributed to the systematization of the religious texts and Ippolit who was the presbyter of the Roman Church. John Chrysostom is a fourth-century Patriarch of Constantinople in whose time speaking in tongues *almost* disappeared and two major events took place that impacted the world at large.

Constantine declared Christianity as the formal religion of the Roman Empire in A.D. 312 followed by the split of the Empire in A.D. 395. Franchuk (2008) identifies this period as the diversion from the early church which resulted in the institutionalizing and ritualizing of a doctrine that was meant to be communal and accepting of anyone who wished to join. The new Roman Church instituted several rules such as the baptism of the newborns in A.D. 342, the worshipping of the Virgin Mary in A.D. 375, and the praying for the dead in A.D. 400. Furthermore in the fifth century the church introduced worshipping of the saints. In the sixth and seventh centuries celibate spirituality was introduced and by the ninth century the pope acquired a significant amount of power. As a result of diversions in ideology the church splits between the Eastern and Western in A.D. 1054.

From the fifth century until the Reformation there are *almost* no explicit recorded cases of adherents to the Holy Spirit, except for the Spirituals who considered that having the

gifts of the Holy Spirit is important but did not actually practice it (Nichol 1966:21). That being said, it is worth keeping in mind that there is a difference between the Trinitarian Christians (who all accepted the Holy Spirit in Godhead) and the adherents to the primacy of the Holy Spirit. Nichol (1966) also considers the Reformation to be a return to the first-century faith and practice which *almost* allows for a continuation of linking Pentecostalism to a certain origin—the Reformation. There are instances of glossolalia in sixteenth-century within the Radical Anabaptist movement in Germany as well as seventeenth-century Jansenism in France. The most prolific gift of tongues is manifested in the eighteenth-century America by the Shakers who were very outwardly expressive in their behaviors. At the same time there was the Irvingite movement in England praying for divine intervention which resulted in Edward Irving being expelled from the Presbyterian Church thus forming the Catholic Apostolic Church in the nineteenth century. The gift of tongues was also recorded in the United States among Mormons and in Scotland there were records of "outpouring of the spirit" (Nichol 1966:25).

Pentecostalism in its Cradle

According to Nichol (1966) twentieth-century Pentecostalism was precipitated by church institutionalization, segregation, and class division. Such evolution from the "poor man's [person's] churches to the upper-middle class" resulted in the so-called "heart-religion" disappearing and various "prophetic conferences" started to form (Nichol 1966:30). In the United States, Pentecostalism comes from the Holiness group directed by John Wesley, which in turn diverged from the Methodist denomination. In 1901, Charles Parham, who is credited as the initiator of the American Pentecostalism, opened a Bible School in Galena, Kansas from which the Apostle's Faith movement started which by 1906 gathered more than 10,000 followers (Nichol 1966). In 1905, Parham opened another school in Houston, Texas,

and one of his students was a Methodist by the name William Joseph Seymour. Seymour moved to Texas in 1903 and got involved with the Holy movement which was problematic because it was constituted primarily of poor white people whereas Seymour was black. At the Bible school, he was allowed to attend the lectures, but only from a neighboring room. Seymour eventually moved to Los Angeles where the Pentecostal movement would grow exponentially under his leadership.

In North America, the first major schism in Pentecostalism occurred in 1911, when Parham, who was then preaching in Chicago went to Azusa Street in Los Angeles to see the new church that his student Seymour had organized and vehemently disagreed with the way things had developed. At issue was Parham's insistence that the Holiness doctrine of sanctification as a second work of grace was not scriptural; instead he advocated a doctrine of *Finished Work* in which sanctification was a gradual process beginning at conversion.

Ultimately this disagreement created the first Pentecostal schism in the United States that influenced the development of the movement in the rest of the world. The majority of African-American Pentecostals followed Seymour as "Holiness" Pentecostals, whereas the largest group of white Pentecostals, the Assemblies of God, formed in 1914, followed Parham's finished work doctrine. As a result of missionary activity the latter division has become the largest group of classical Pentecostals worldwide. In 1916, another acrimonious division occurred within the Assemblies of God between Trinitarian and "Oneness" Pentecostals who denied the Trinity while reaffirming the deity of Christ.

By focusing on Russia, Franchuk (2008) allows for different vantage points regarding the origins of the movement. He links Pentecostalism to previous sects in the Russian Empire such as the Doukhobors and the Molokans, groups which were marginalized and discriminated against within the Russian Empire. The Doukhobors, for example, were forced to emigrate to Canada in order to escape imprisonment due to their refusal to participate in

armed conflicts. These were signs that the religiosity of the Russian people was far from homogenous and that NRMs were welcomed by people who were dissatisfied with the status quo.

Method

In order to fulfill the aforementioned goals of this research, I employ a mixture of hermeneutics and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Critical discourse analysis is a tool for analyzing the production and transmission of meaning, whereas hermeneutics is used as a mode of interpreting the text. Vattimo's theory of hermeneutical nihilism that states that faith/hope is the response to reason/authoritarianism (Derrida and Vattimo 2010), or in this case, dictatorship (McClosky and Turner 1960), will guide my analysis of NRMs as secularization. I will introduce several classical theorists, in the next chapter, in order to relate it to the historical times, namely late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' understandings of religion and secularization.

I will use CDA in chapter three in order to not only show specific events through given sources, but also to interpret these events. The focus of CDA is not limited to written or spoken texts, but is attuned to the social and historical context in which the texts are produced, as well as the processes by which individuals or groups decipher such texts (Wodak and Meyer 2001). Fairclough provides the following definition for CDA:

> By CDA I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination …and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (1993:132-33).

Fairclough's idea that the language is an irreducible part of social life is the main part of his framework. The dialectic relation between language and social reality is realized through social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse), and social structures (Fairclough 1993:135). Fairclough attempts to uncover ideological and power patterns in texts in his research method of analysis. He is one of a few CDA scholars who define the relationship between power and language (social power and ideology) in his research (Fairclough 1993).

Fairclough provides a three-dimensional framework for the analysis of text and discourse: (1) the linguistic description of the formal properties of the text; (2) the interpretation of the relationship between the discursive processes/interaction and the text, where text is the end product of a process of text production and as a resource in the process of text interpretation and lastly, (3) the explanation of the relationship between discourse and social and cultural reality (1993:137). Fairclough's (1993) analysis has gone beyond the "whatness" of the text description towards the "how" and "whyness" of the text interpretation and explanation.

There are certain underlying assumptions behind certain selections of discourse. These assumptions are never value-free and innocent; rather, they are ideologically driven and motivated. By studying the forms of the language, one can discover the social processes and also the specific ideology embedded in them. This leads to the exploration of power relations that exist in the society or community. Fairclough calls this the *hidden agenda*. Discourse analysis studies language in social contexts. As mentioned above, language is not only regarded as a medium for communicating but also as a vehicle of thought. Language is fundamental to social interaction and thus for knowledge construction, "one cannot arrive at knowledge without having travelled some distance in a discursive space" (Fairclough 1993:140).

CDA is a linguistic and social practice, premised on the assumption that non-linguistic and linguistic practices constitute one another. That is, social reality is neither reducible to language nor is language reducible to social reality. The central question is interrogating how power relations and social action are reinforced through language use. Discourse analysis can be done on either a micro-level or meso-level (Fairclough 1993:145). Within micro-level discourse analysis, the data is found as language, metaphors, and rhetorical devices. Central to micro-level discourse analysis is questioning how visual and auditory elements reinforce discourse. Within meso-level discourse analysis the typical data source is again primarily linguistically based; however, the question asked of this data is: what institutions produce the discourse, for what reason, and for what audience? I employ the meso-level analysis.

To this end, I keep the following questions in mind when analyzing the data. How does a new religion take hold within a specific region? Is it because people need an ontological stability in their lives, an alternative way, other than that which is provided by the status quo, of understanding society? In my research, I try to understand what needs the Pentecostal church served for its people. How did people resist persecution? Did they create meaning out of resistance? What was it like to do time because of one's faith? CDA gives me the tools to analyze discursive practices of the Soviet people, events of the church, texts, wider social and cultural practices, relations, and processes asking not only "what happened?" but also how and why. Language and social reality are both important.

In order to be able to understand the role of religious belief and meaning in knowledge construction it is necessary to deal with *epistemological issues*. That is how we share and create knowledge about a particular phenomenon. Knowledge is highly personal and includes acts of integrating explicit and tacit elements of knowledge. Knowledge always contains a highly individual component (Polanyi 1962). Michael Polanyi who introduced the

concept of tacit knowledge, emphasizes the personal element of knowledge: "... into every act of knowing there enters a passionate contribution of the person knowing what is being known, and ... this coefficient is no mere imperfection but a vital component of his knowledge" (Polanyi 1962:45). The justification for this methodology at the epistemological level is basic. The act of sharing and creating knowledge is always situational. In order for me to understand that which made sense to the Pentecostals of that time, I have to attend to the historical side of the situation by "knowing what is being known," about that time period. At the same time, I have to keep in mind that the Pentecostals were part of a tradition that goes back to an origin. Ontologically this involves acknowledging the need of a community to make sense of their lives through a movement in an unfriendly environment. This is a historical development which gives insight into this movement's arrival into the Soviet Union and its survival and eventual success there.

Meaning is socially constructed via the mediation of language, be it the written text or otherwise orally transmitted traditions. At the same time, meaning is historically and locally bound which does not necessarily lend itself to a different time and place. Generalizability becomes rather unattainable in discourse analysis research. However, a researcher has to be *reflexive* and *provisional*. Thus, I acknowledge that these particular research traditions construct the quest for knowledge dissemination in a way that is culturally situated and mediated by a particular textual research practice. As Fairclough has asserted, analysis cannot be separated from interpretation and analysts need to be "sensitive to their own interpretive tendencies and social reasons for them" (1993:35).

I undertook this research due to my own family's history and due to a clenching thirst and desire of knowing, finding out, and making-sense, of a past that continues to grapple at my heart. Of course, that is not reason enough to do research, but I strongly believe that there is a need for societies to understand New Religious Movements worldwide and make sense of

them. As it is, Pentecostalism is still alive and well in most parts of the world and my research analyzes this movement in order to present a preliminary analysis of that which is often beyond reason, namely the desire to believe in something that is transcendental, beyond human reach, and, thus, beyond mortality.

Thesis Plan

In Chapter One, I offer a literature review of secularization theory as understood by Weber, Durkheim, Berger, and Vattimo among others. In Chapter Two, I analyze various social events from the history of Christianity in Russia in order to understand what prepared the ground for this religious movement. In Chapter Three, I use the method of discourse analysis in order to understand the rise of Pentecostalism in Soviet Union. In Chapter Four, I show how Pentecostalism was a form of secularization and how, in fact, the Soviets and the Pentecostals were working towards the same goal, only through different means. In conclusion, this thesis puts forth the idea that secularization needs not be a rigidly defined concept nor offer how-to-do step by step instructions. As shown through the case of Pentecostalism in Soviet Union, to have a step-by-step way of secularizing is to commit violence.

CHAPTER ONE

Secularization Theory

Home is the world in which one shares space, regardless of how small it is, by eating, hugging, crying, laughing.... It is the world in which reason and affect melt into one another, into a warm humanity.

□

In this chapter I show the way in which modern society came to understand the word "secularization" by employing the works of Max Weber, Peter Berger, David Martin, Craig Calhoun, and Gianni Vattimo (among others). The purpose of this chapter is to provide a roadmap into the way in which the world has come to associate secularization with reason and religion with affect as if by acknowledging one's emotions one lets go of one's reason.

Marx considered religion to be the "opium of the people" given to them by the elite in order to keep them subjugated and give them an outlet for their sufferings. Because of the overarching power of the Christian religious institutions, everything could have been explained as simply "God willed it so" rather than inquiring onto why certain events were happening. When they came to power in 1917, the Bolsheviks sought to build a new world free of religion. Due to the fact that since the tenth century the Russian rulers were closely associated with the Orthodox Church, the Soviets were able to argue that a progressive new state had to do away with the official Church.

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Weber posits that the Reformation's aim was the "saving of the soul," but what it actually achieved was to develop an ethics for the Christian world (2007:55). Weber argued that believers, through their faith, brought a certain musicality into the daily life of a community. Leaving religion behind, for Weber, meant that the world became modern, rationalized, and unmusical. This fulfilled

Weber's predictions of modernity according to which the loss of religion brings the rule of the bureaucrats: "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart, this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never achieved before" (Weber 2007:182).

Through substituting religion by a political ideology—communism—what the Soviet Union achieved was the externalization of economic activity by internalizing life's conduct. Internal spiritual activity becomes externalized through communism. A spiritual vocation becomes an economic vocation. A dilution of content is not a dilution of structure. The Orthodox Church is replaced by the Communist Party—both are governing institutions which oversee the social, cultural, and political realm of the people. One was expected to uphold one's part of the bargain—working to build a communist state—in order to eventually gain a certain reward, just like the Christian dogma asks for obedience in order to go to heaven.

Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is one of the first texts in the sociology of religion (2005). He distinguishes between sacred and profane through the concept of time. Due to the fact that our social institutions are based on time, Durkheim writes, the sacred is that which is outside, put aside from the usual, whereas the profane is that which pertains to the everydayness. He explains that totem is a representation of the collective in a symbolic form. Societies develop a collective identity through festivals that celebrate an identity with their totem which is both natural and social. Society is a part of nature, and a clans' practice fulfills its natural needs. Communal ceremonies such as worship solidify religion. Religious effervescence is a source of the festival of the Supreme Being. Thus, the totem becomes the social reality, outside oneself and has value for the individual who depends on this reality and draws on it. It occurs in a different time and space. Religion becomes an experience of joy and togetherness of the ideal society. God is merely the expression of that society (Durkheim 2005:195).

That which cannot occupy the same space and time becomes taboo or a negative cult; hence there is the dichotomy of the religious and profane life. A positive cult is a unity with the divine through soul restoration. An object becomes sacred only when the community invests this with meaning. Religion is a communal enterprise. A believer is stronger, empowered with the strength to endure the everydayness. Social ritual is a moral remaking and it is achieved through reunion, assemblies, ceremonies which produce symbols. Religion is the power of the community over the individual (e.g., a rational assembly) by worshipping god they are worshipping society itself. Ultimately, for Durkheim, religion is functional in guiding humanity, an imperative to ideology if you like. It has four functions: disciplinary, cohesive, vitalizing, and euphoric (Durkheim 2005:297).

What makes something religious? According to Durkheim, it is a sacred experience of a social group as well as the belief in that which involves the sacred (2005). This means that a religion is a group of people who are ultimately worshiping themselves (Durkheim 2005:298). Durkheim's definition of religion provides us with a primordial structure through which society emerges. There is universality to religion that makes it indispensable to society. Because of the structural universal characteristics of religion, all religions can be understood as a primitive religion. All religions are a reenactment of that "original" religion. Durkheim's searching for the universal element that unites us [humans] in that which makes us human, in what is essential for us. As such, Durkheim maintains that the essence of all religions is secular. The secular here means that that which one feels, the affects that come with the "effervescence" of the communal ritual is that which one feels through other human affairs as well. Joy, pleasure, sadness and so on are emotions that one may encounter within a community be it religious or otherwise. However, the divine is a projection necessary for a religion to thrive (Durkheim 2005:299).

The Soviets' take on religion, resembles Durkheim's functionalist approach. According to Durkheim, it is not religion that helps society to attain Truth, but science. Durkheim's ideas about religion may have been that which the Soviets borrowed in order to create a functionalist society where God was replaced with a main person—Stalin, which was supposed to be revered like a deity. Durkheim concluded that worship is not done for a specific deity, but for society. Humanity made God and people, through rituals, revere that which they consider sacred in order to reinforce that which they believe in. Durkheim wrote that the believer "who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man [person] who is stronger" (Durkheim 2005:416). This statement, if applied to the worshiping of the state, may have made the Soviet people proud and fulfilled with their lot in life. Except that the Christian God is invisible whereas Stalin made himself felt on a daily basis without much warning.

But the secular is not just the absence of religion. I endorse Vattimo's understanding of secularism in which people feel compelled to get along with one another in such a way that public life is livable for those who decide to be religious and for those who decide otherwise. It is not the case that religion in the public space was always reactionary and it is not ultimately bad or good.

There are many reasons why the separation of state and church as such was beneficial for modern society: it is better to have freedom of choice rather than to be oppressed by, for example, religious literalism, but it is often forgotten that many social movements have been founded through religious values, for example, the suffragette movement and the civil rights movement. Religion provides some people with a community, a type of "socialism" that brings people together and unites them in their plight. Interpreting secularization as a move away from religion gives the concept a flattened consistency which diminishes its value. There is an impoverished understanding of secularism and at the same time we have cultural

wars between people who think there should be religious freedom and then militant secularization from such people as Richard Dawkins.

In sixteenth-century Europe, Martin Luther wanted to make Christianity more accessible to the masses in terms of access to the text and interpretation, only for it to be altogether rejected a hundred years later by some Enlightenment scholars. Christianity was and is still used as a political tool in order to consolidate power for those who are at the helm of Christian states. It is not necessarily surprising that different movements—liberals, communists, anarchists, feminists, and so on—tried to do away with it. We were going to be saved by a science that knew the answers to all of our ailments, except it proved that while it knows the answers to many of humanity's woes it is still not able to answer the most fundamental questions people have been asking since time immemorial. This is where religion comes in with its claim to give people comfort and quiet their deepest anxieties.

Due to the post-Enlightenment anti-religious and pro-secularization values, which the Soviets have appropriated, religious people—especially if educated—had to keep their faith to themselves in order to not be overtly or covertly ridiculed. Since the seventeenth century, some learned Europeans have thought that only uneducated people still believed in a deity and the ones who have been "enlightened" cannot possibly still believe in such tales (Oliver 1994). However, NRMs prove time and again—as demonstrated by Weber—that that is not how events develop (Weber 2007). Christianity is more than two thousand years old and it is not going anywhere (Taylor 2007). From a small sect to an organized church adopted by the Roman Empire to many diversified communities, Christianity managed to defy predictions of extinction and purges be it by wild animals for the first Christians, or by science for those in the latter part of its history.

1.1. Secularization in the West

It may have been assumed within the Western tradition that the more educated a population was the less likely it was to believe in a deity. Secularism became a taken-for-granted concept because it was understood as a leeway of moving away from religion through which society was going to eventually become non-religious. Peter L. Berger popularized the "secularization thesis" in the 1960s in the United States and argued that religion is becoming a private enterprise and the institutional importance of it is disappearing. He defined *secularization* as, "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols" (1967:107). These studies were mostly quantitative and relied on data such as church frequency and prayer.

Berger initially argued that in the modern world socialization through "nomos," that is, patterns that a state wants its citizens to internalize were gone (Berger 1967). Because there was no more universal "nomos," a feeling of alienation emerged. This precipitated the downfall of the idea that the world as such is meaningful. There was a need of *legitimating* the "nomos" by using "objective" knowledge (Berger 1967:105).

Berger explained his ideas regarding the topic in his book, *The Sacred Canopy* (1967). For him secularization operates on three levels: (1) *social-structural*: in the West, Christian churches have lost functions that are now performed by secular agencies; (2) *cultural*: the religious content of Western art, music, literature and philosophy has drastically declined, meanwhile, the triumphant natural and social sciences have promoted a secular perspective on the world; and finally, (3) secularization of society and culture is accompanied by a secularization of *individual consciousness* which results in fewer and fewer people thinking in a religious mode (Berger 1967:109-110).

Berger argues that the seeds of secularization come from the ancient religion of Judaism (1967). Due to the fact that the God of Israel was a demanding, authoritarian one,

Judaism had deep repercussions for its adherents who found themselves bound by an unforgivable ethics. This changed with Christianity, Berger argues, when Jesus becomes God reincarnate and thus a more humane divinity (1967). The image of the all-powerful God cracked at crucifixion, from the God whose name cannot even be spoken to a God who has a broken body. For the first time people had a God who was suffering (Berger 1967).

Christianity shaped the Western society, as David Martin argues in his book, *Pacifism* (2010). More than that, Christianity as a religion of peace became entangled with war, which made it hard to separate religion from the everyday life. Martin explains what happened when Christianity was adopted by the Roman Empire, and then by the nation states, namely that it became involved in power games. Christianity conquered the world and the world changed Christianity. That is how secularization becomes a part of Christianity rather than a going away from it. In *Pacifism*, Martin posits that secularization appears along the lines where the state allows religious freedom to flourish (2010:45). If it does not cost one to not believe in a deity in a certain and prescribed way, then one feels free to reinterpret one's beliefs.

1.2. Desecularization

Berger (1999) claims that secularization theory, as he saw it in the 1960's, is mistaken. The secular, according to Berger, should be rethought. Peter Berger publicly recanted his contribution to it in his subsequent book, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (1999): "My point is that the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today, with some exceptions…, is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever" (1999:2). Some Catholics maintain that priesthood mediates access to the Divine, but a weakening of the ethics is possible (Vattimo 2002:33). The lay-persons are not deemed responsible to God as long as they can attain the forgiveness of their sins through the priest. Secularization becomes more accentuated with

Protestantism when one can have direct access to the Divine, and God is not seen as an autocratic figure but as a benevolent friend. This, Berger argues, brought about the modern world (1999:48).

Craig Calhoun is another key figure in reconsidering secularization. In his book *Rethinking Secularism* (2011), he argues that the secularization theory started with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, in which it was decided that states would relate to each other without letting matters of belief interfere (Calhoun 2011:134). The idea that developed in the wake of the nation states' emergence was that because of the wars of religion during the years of 1524-1648, society must become secularized. The treaties constituting the Peace of Westphalia did not promote secularization as such; they confirmed the provision of the earlier Treaty of Augsburg that each prince was free to determine the religion of their land.

In *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, John Milbank argues that human beings cannot be understood without a sense of purpose and meaning (2005). The fight between reason and faith has culminated in science and technology governing our lives. This was a long process which started in the middle of the seventeenth century. The fact that thinkers such as Marx have declared religion to be outdated and harmful contributed to the body of literature that became the secularization theory. The militant atheism of the nineteenth-century which fed the belief that science will cure us of all of our ailments has been challenged by the resurgence of New Religious Movements as well as people's continued interest in the well-established churches such as the Catholic Church.

1.3. Secularization *á la* Vattimo

In his book, *Belief*, Vattimo writes that the reason why people believe is because ultimately "one does not find justice on earth" (1999:24). In that sense, for Vattimo secularization is the realization of *kenosis*—emptying of the self, which allows one to live according to one's age.

Koinê comes from Greek and means "the commonality of an age" (Vattimo 1999:48). In that nuance, Vattimo uses *kenosis* in order to advocate a new interpretation of the text which would make it compatible to the age one lives in. That is done through nihilism, which he understands as "a chance at a new relation with Being as in a never ending love" (Vattimo 1999:63-65). The text should not be taken literally, but interpreted through a leap which would allow one to live according to one's age. For example, if one were to read a Psalm such as Psalm 137 that initially appears nostalgically beautiful: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?" (633). This same Psalm ends with: "Happy is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks" (633). Taking the text, in this case the Bible in a literal way is living in the past. To be able to practice one's religion nowadays, according to Vattimo, one has to hermeneutically interpret the text and adjust one's understanding to the time and culture one lives in (Vattimo 1999).

In his book, *After Christianity*, Vattimo elaborates on four senses of the scripture: literal, moral, allegorical, and analogical (2002:28). He argues that people shall strive to reach the fourth "state of grace" since we already went through the first three ones. The literal sense of interpretation is that which is given through the Old Testament as the interpretation of the law. The second one is when we are treated as children through the New Testament when we enter a "state of grace." The third one is the perfect "state of grace" when instead of the division father-son [person] we are all God's friends (Vattimo 2002:30-32). The fourth state is that in which humanity arrives at secularization. Vattimo understands secularization as that which we reach through an "event" in which people take in Jesus's love and share it with others through charity. This "event" is that which I adopt to my analysis of NRMs. Each new religion is an "event" in that that a community comes together and reinterprets the text (the Bible for Christians) in such a way as to make it workable for them, for their times and

culture. As such, Pentecostalism in Soviet Union was an "event" through which this community of people secularized their society by interpreting the idea of the Holy Spirit in a new way. The act of asking questions about a certain interpretation of the text, sitting-down and pondering upon it with the purpose of reinterpreting it is a nihilistic act.

In *After the Death of God*, Vattimo elaborates on a nihilism which develops precisely because of hermeneutics. Interpretations are done according to the times one lives in and they metamorphose as humanity hurls towards the future (Vattimo 2009:24). Vattimo calls this *active nihilism* which is a positive phenomenon in that people do something about that with which they are not satisfied, thus providing an opening, a possibility towards a better future, a new interpretation of the text in the case of a NRM (Vattimo 2009:25). As I will demonstrate in chapter three, this is exactly what the Pentecostals did. They reinterpreted the text in order to adjust it to their spiritual needs of the time and, unknowingly, created a new "event" through which they contributed to secularization. However, the reinterpretation only concerned specific areas such as the way one received the Holy Spirit, and left out other areas, such as the creation story or the patriarchal tone of the Bible. In that way, one can draw similarities between secularization coming from NRMs and secularization done though the state. Both have a certain prescribed way of going about it.

Literalism is one of the problems that are still prominent within the Christian religions. The creation story taken literally translates as if, for example, women are somehow dependent on men. There is a nostalgic desire, within literalist interpretations, to return to those origins of the "natural" order. Nostalgia for an origin that never was, that was imagined to be, is that which fills the lives of those who are aspiring to relive a moment about which they think they know, but really it is just recreated by their collective minds. It is as in Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in which he writes about the Klee's painting angel who is trying to rescue the past, but the wind hurls him towards the future (1969). NRMs are looking back even

though the wind of time is moving forward. In order to create inclusiveness within NRMs it may be beneficial to understand that what happened at some point in the past may have worked for those who were present there and then, but may not work for those who are here and now. The text has to be reinterpreted and readjusted so as one can "live according to one's age" as Vattimo would say. At the same time, the adherents of a rigid secularization need to realize that science and reason—as promised by the Enlightenment thinkers are not the sole way of going about one's life. Thus, the need for different ways of secularization be it through a NRM or through poetry (why not?).

As long as Christianity remains trapped in its literalism in which God is "the father" (why cannot it be "the mother"?), it will not be capable of freely discussing with its non-male believers, other faiths, and all the world religions (Vattimo 1999). The only way for Christianity to move away from its male-dominated fundamentalist ideology is by renouncing any knowledge of objective truth. Vattimo claims in *Belief* that one believes because one reads the Gospels and not because one knows that which the gospels claim (1999:32). Nor is there objective truth in science. One believes the methods one uses for one's research because one has faith that those methods work. Such an argument can only be made in the age of interpretation when a community comes together and decides what is true to them rather than being handed down a prearranged and premeditated truth.

1.4. New Possibilities for Secularization

Given the fact that a desire for new interpretations starts because of its members genuine want to create a better community venue in order to experience the Divine, they have to keep in mind that when a new member—man or woman—comes along with new ideas they have to remember one's own desires for flexibility of the group from which one has departed. Thus instead of being rigid, a group may allow for that which Vattimo calls "weak ontology" or

"weak foundations" (Vattimo 1999:54). If an organization is flexible with its members then it grows together rather than having rigid boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not.

Perhaps instead of refusing foundations, Christianity could weaken its definitions, unsecure its borders thus allowing everyone to fuse within the body mass of the multitude. Because the text is foundational in itself, it cannot emancipate those who adhere to it. However, that does not mean that people should not aspire for new interpretations. That aspiration is that which keeps them going, striving towards a better life, a better understanding, and being better humans. If people cannot live without "meaning" as Calhoun argues (2011), then perhaps NRMs are one way of creating meaning in an otherwise meaningless world.

I agree with Vattimo that here is no use in claiming that believers are going to arrive at a desirable situation overnight even though Christianity cannot really escape its messianic ideology of striving towards the "Kingdom of God." But neither can any movement which has a revolutionary-apocalyptic ideology. There is no "Kingdom of God" and there is no "socialist utopia," and there are always going to be grievances that people will have to cope with. There are small events which could be looked upon as emancipatory moments, and there are spaces in which people can recognize each other's needs and make it intelligible. Life builds upon small events that make life more or less tolerable. In that sense, new interpretations of the text, through NRMs, contribute to the overall state of secularized Christianity and make it acceptable, possible, and livable for those involved in it. That is how people create communities in which they can satisfy their own spiritual needs.

How does one become both a secular and a believer? According to Vattimo's understanding of faith and reason; through dialogue we can overcome that which the ancient Greeks posed to us, that is the questions of Truth, meaning of life, beauty, and so on (1999). The Ancient Greeks had many gods—polytheistic—whereas the age of faith has had one God, one Truth, but then again we have had—and still have—spiritual faiths such as those of the

First Nations or religions without a god—such as Taoism—where there is still the idea of the Truth.

When this truth was snatched from faith and claimed by reason people thought that they could do away with God, but what they did was to just create a leeway for doubt to creep in through which it was recognized that neither faith nor science can provide us with the Truth. What Vattimo is proposing then, for our day and age is a weakening of the foundations rather than the claiming of a monotheistic Truth. All that which was considered solid ground is allowed to be doubted.

The structure of religion is still intact, according to Vattimo, but there is a weakening of foundations. As a result there is the replacement of Truth with procedurality: yes, this is how things are done, but it is more of a ritual rather than a firm belief. The loss of eternal Truth brings about contested truths that involve proceduralism (i.e. pragmatist theory). The core of religion as unshakable belief is no more. It becomes just a semantic, referential allusion of God. Religion remains less of an authoritarian institution and becomes more of that which a group of people commonly agree upon.

1.5. Practical Use of Secularization

International politics have been shaped by ideologies without religions—or so it was thought. Only in the wake of the 2001 tragedy have political leaders realized that religion should be considered in international politics. Charles Taylor, in *A Secular Age*, sees secular society as a mutation of Christianity (2007). The decision to separate the church and the state in the United States constitution was taken by religious men who decided that not one denomination should govern the other. They did not decide to take religion away completely, but to not have a dominant church (Taylor 2007:56).

In that sense both militant atheists and fundamental believers could benefit from the secularization theory as explained by Vattimo (1999). Vattimo puts forward the idea of a weakened ontology through which he explains that these foundational concepts about reason are weakening (1999). This is a very welcoming term for academics who do not feel the need to deny the Bible on rational grounds anymore. Truth claims cannot be made on either side. Secularization weakened Truth claims which were trying hard to debunk or prove that the Bible was just a believed truth. The Bible believers do not have any claim to renounce science just as science cannot claim the non-existence of God.

1.6. Nihilistic Analysis

By taking Vattimo's concepts of "nihilism" and "emancipation," I put forward the claim that every NRM since the Reformation, as demonstrated by Weber, was a nihilistic act, but in the case of Pentecostalism in Soviet Union it adds another layer to it. It forms a *double-nihilism*, as in not only refuting the "main" religion, but also refuting the state's position regarding religion, which rendered the Pentecostal movement to become a rigid institution which in its way of running things reminds one of the very Soviet state apparatus against which they were shielding. This may have been a coping mechanism in order to survive under the Soviet state.

Vattimo advocates a new code in which a community refuses all the moral codes and starts a nihilism which is based on charity (1999). Charity is understood not as a religious duty, but as a mode of action compatible with the death of God. Borrowed from Nietzsche, "the death of God" is the death of the absolute, autocratic God. Thus people are allowed the space to look for that which works for them. In the age of diversity Being has no substance, thus it has become possible to be purely charitable. By advocating love and charity as a normative course of action, Vattimo tells us that due to their unconditionality these concepts

are going one way (one does not need to receive that which one gives) which does not require reciprocation (1999:56).

In *The Future of Religion*, Vattimo advocates a post-metaphysical approach to things (2005). Since religion comes from no scientific proof of God, it should be moved out of the epistemic arena. Because of *kenosis*, everything is humanized, Christ is not Truth or power like science, but love and charity. Christianity is a religion based on love, but can we move forward without normative principles? Many have debated about religion in the public space (Berger 1968; Taylor 2007). Some suggest that religion is not inherently an *Other* and it should be talked about it in the public (Vattimo 2005:67). Others think that religion cannot be recognized by the government because it is not a rational discussion (Berger 1999:82). Not allowing spaces for discussion of religion speaks of a certain uncomfortability, of something that has to be kept behind closed doors, and be done in secret. Calhoun agrees with Taylor that it should be discussed and not be treated as a mystical phenomenon (Calhoun 2011; Taylor 2007). Even if religion is hard to talk about, it should not be treated as unsuitable for discussion. Not everything gets harmonized in a rational system.

The concept of civilization required renewed attention which led to a new appreciation in which religion has inspired people to create a better society. Religion is usually taken to be about transcendence but it is also about transcending the world as one finds it. People are complicated, but there are possibilities, and religion gives a hope to go beyond that which is given to us. An understanding of secularization as that which is constantly fluid is that which allows religious people to practice their belief as they see fit. Therefore, NRMs may be ways of secularizing the rigidity of the Christian dogma.

CHAPTER TWO

Social, Cultural, and Political Factors that Allowed for Religious Revivals in Twentieth Century Russia

Every seduction—religious or worldly—falls upon a surface readied by waiting and desiring. There is an *a priori* to the desire which is floating about in the human world, a horizon in which we are all swimming and in whose virtue we seduce and let ourselves to be seduced. No one can outdraw oneself from this horizon. We are all waiting for something. We are all oriented, in a confused desire, towards the vast horizons of life.

□

In this chapter, I explore the social, cultural, and political factors that paved the way for religious revivals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Russia. Since Pentecostalism is a Christian NRM, I look at how Christianity arrived in Kievan Rus, how it influenced the daily life of the Russian people, the mergence of the Church with the State, splits within the Church and the eventual emergence of evangelical movements. The purpose of this chapter is to identify certain elements of evangelism in the history of the non-orthodox religious sects which developed alongside the established Orthodox Church.

2.1. Understanding the Evangelical Trends in the Slavic Context

The question of how evangelical ideas began in Russia is highly disputed as representatives of the Orthodox Church advocate that evangelism was imported from the West while advocates of the Pentecostal movement are of a different opinion on this issue (Franchuk 2008:5). While I do not consider it necessary to completely reject the idea of Western influence on the formation of evangelism in Russia, it is just as important to acknowledge that the Slavs had their own centuries-long spiritual quest which lead to the different elements

of evangelical thought and spiritual practice. As such, in the nineteenth century Western evangelical influences merged with the local Slavic grass-roots religious movements and gave rise to the evangelical movement in the Russian Empire.

In the Slavic context of Pentecostalism, the word “evangelical” is used instead of the Western post-reformation word “protestant.” It is worth keeping in mind that the Eastern Orthodox Church did not experience a Reformation as such. According to Bachinin (2000), evangelism is a type of Christian religious movement which is characterized by the following features: (1) the orientation of the Christian consciousness to seek the living God where priority is given to the practice of personal knowledge of God; (2) the rejection of ritual formalism; (3) a keen interest to the text of Scripture as the sole criterion of faith and knowledge of God; and (4) focus on a model of church structure, which would be harmonized as much as possible with the apostolic (15-16).

2.2. Adoption of Christianity in Russia

The baptism, literally, of Kievan Rus at the end of the tenth century proved to be one of the most momentous events in the country’s history. The history of Christianity has its Slavic chapter connected with the activities of Cyril and Methodius who communicated to the Slavs their alphabet while laying the spiritual foundations of their faith. While the attempt of communicating one’s faith may seem innocent, the scheme of Christianization for all of the Slavs was of a religious as well as of a political nature. In order to establish a strong princely power among Eastern Slavs, the Grand Prince of Kiev, Vladimir, accepted Christianity in its Byzantine version and then forced the baptism of all citizens along with the destruction of paganism.

It is fair to say that the adoption of Christianity in Russia was a long and violent process. Bachinin (2010) argues that due to the fact that Christianity arrived in Russia after

centuries of transformation within the Byzantine tradition, it lost its first evangelical identity. Forced conversion to the new religious teachings led to a continuation of paganism with its rites and traditions which meant merging two religious systems into one by aligning the Christian holydays with the pagan ones. Also, because the leader of the state promoted Christianity, it contributed to the institutionalizing of the Church in order to strengthen royal power.

While Christianization of Russia (Kievan Rus) as such was a forced event, the influence of Cyril and Methodius on the Slavic languages, through religion, speaks of a beginning of evangelization: as in bringing a new way of living into one's life, a phenomenon that has continued since. Certain elements of the national evangelism have had an impact on the development of Christianity in Russia. This is an important point regarding Pentecostalism: the West sees Pentecostalism as a return to the origins (Nichol 1966), whereas for the Slavs this is a moving forward within the evangelization process (Franchuk 2008; Bachinin 2010).

The closest to a reformation that the Russian Orthodox Church came to was after 1613, when the new Romanov dynasty came to power, it had to face the consequences of the "great turmoil." As a way of amassing control, church reforms which called for a return to the original Greek tradition were introduced (Filatov 2001). The council approved the conversion in 1654, but a significant part of society did not recognize the changes of the ritual services (Filatov 2001:12). As a result, there was a schism within the Church which gave rise to the organized movement of the Old Believers who were looked upon as anathema or *raskolniki* (it makes one wonder where did Dostoevsky get the name for his *Crime and Punishment* hero).

The schism was a clash of two ritual systems which undermined the credibility of the official Church and contributed to the formation of evangelical thinking (Franchuk 2008). An

example of this was the movement of spiritual Christians (*christovery*) which arose in the middle of the seventeenth century. Its adherents rejected the Church hierarchy, its icons, and most of the religious rites, but did not openly break away from the Orthodox Church. Among the special features of this doctrine, it is worthy to note the following: the teaching of the descent of the Holy Spirit in man [people] was seen as the action of the Holy Spirit on the leaders, a spiritual perception of the Bible, and abstinence in marriage (Franchuk 2002; Savin 2012).

A harbinger of evangelism at a significant scale in the Russian Empire was the Doukhobor movement (Savin 2012). Their appearance occurred in the first half of the eighteenth century and manifested itself through the belief that the Holy Spirit belongs to all believers, and lies in a community lifestyle and pacifism. The apogee of Slavic evangelicalism came from the Molokans who denied lush liturgy and demanded the complete elimination of tobacco and alcohol. Thanks to its flexibility, Molokanism reached significant proportions: it is estimated that at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century their number in the Russian Empire was about 1.2 million (Franchuk 2002:163). They became an important platform for the development of Evangelical, Baptist, and Pentecostal movements, but I will return to evangelical movements later in this chapter.

2.3. Evangelism in the Late Nineteenth Early Twentieth Centuries.

As stated in the introduction, the Slavic historian by the name of Vladimir Franchuk (2002) developed the idea that Pentecostalism has its origins in the first century A.D. and even in Russia he maintains that there were “signs” that signified people’s readiness for the Holy Spirit (174). Franchuk considers the first step for the formation of evangelism in Imperial Russia to have been a specific ethno-social composition of the population of Ukraine in the middle of the nineteenth century that took shape due to the nature of the settlement in the

region (2002:180-185). The population of the southern Russian lands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which also contributed the basis for the development of the evangelical awakening, was the fact that quite a large part of the population was made of German colonists (Franchuk 2002:187). One can define two waves of resettlement of German colonists to the south of Ukraine. The first wave was motivated by economic factors, and the second was purely religious (Freeze 2009).

According to Freeze (2009), the first German settlers arrived in Ukraine on the invitation of Catherine the Great. In 1785, the empress invited foreign settlers, mostly Germans, for the development of the southern lands that were ceded to Russia as a result of wars with the Ottoman Empire (Freeze 2009:13). Among the German colonists, who at that time inhabited the southern lands of Ukraine, were Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Mennonites (ibid). Such a composition of immigrants suggests that the motivation for migration were primarily for economic rather than religious reasons. Although it should be noted that the exemption of Mennonites from military service may have been enough to motivate them to immigrate since they often suffered persecution in their homelands for that same reason (Franchuk 2002).

The second wave of immigrants from the German lands to the south of Ukraine was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was associated with the prophecies of Jung-Stilling who determined the date of the second coming of Christ to be in 1836 and pointed to the south of Russia (Ukraine and the Caucasus) as a place where Christians from all over the world would find salvation from future apocalyptic events (Franchuk 2008). Therefore, this wave of immigrants was because of purely religious reasons. But after 1836, when the prophecy did not materialize, they remained in the Ukraine region. In the middle of the nineteenth century, in the Ukraine region, there was a spiritual awakening that took the form of Stundism. The name of the phenomenon comes from the German word “shtundists” which

translates into the English language as “hour” and refers to the Pietist practice of setting aside an hour a day for the study of the Bible (Savin 2012).

The second premise of the evangelical awakening was the reforms of 1861 (Franchuk 2002:201). As it is well known, as a result of this reform, the peasants received personal freedom, but did not get enough land which led to the fact that they were forced to be hired for work. The South of Ukraine was a primarily agricultural region where peasants were hired by wealthy land-owners who often happened to be German colonists who had a large and well-developed economy.

The third premise of evangelical awakening was the crisis experienced by the Russian Orthodox Church. Many researchers of this period marked the religious and moral decline that prevailed not only among the common people, but had its roots in the original conversion Orthodoxy became the autocratic official church, the “royal faith” (Franchuk 2002:207; Filatov 2001:14). It is perhaps worth looking into the historical background of the late Imperial Russia in order of understand the decline of the Orthodox Church which unwillingly created spaces for NRMs.

2.4. Historical Background

It is important to note that Imperial Russia at the end of nineteenth-century and beginning of the twentieth was still an autocracy. It was also a regime that deeply distrusted and only grudgingly tolerated any kind of independent civic association organized from below, not only by the lower classes, but also by the society’s elites. It was still more distrustful of organizational activity that brought those elites into contact with “the people” in social contexts free from state supervision or that seemed likely to escape the reach of government oversight and control.

The Great Reforms of the 1860s and 1870s were a significant change in the mode of government, marking Russia's entry into a new era (Ely 2002). As mentioned above, during this period the serfs were freed, the zemstvo was introduced as an element of civil society at the local level, trial by jury and a relatively independent judiciary and bar were authorized, and the free professions were permitted to begin an open existence, with their own professional associations. All these developments seemed to contradict the principle of unbridled autocracy, while a more or less capitalist industrialization, first in the 1870s and 1880s, then more intensively in the 1890s, moved against the grain of old status-based hierarchies.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding all these dramatic disturbing changes, indeed in part *because* of them, there was enormous reluctance to allow the winds of change to blow in the direction of a liberalized political system, where society might seek to fulfill its aspirations independently of the state. With slow but continuing development of Russia's public sphere each decade from the 1870s, sometimes even with official approval, brought new initiatives from below. They came mainly from members of the educated elite (less often from peasants or workers), many of them openly dedicated to high-minded public causes, to social progress, and to forging positive links between the "people" and "society." As long as such activity respected certain limits, even if never fully trusted by the government, it was tolerated to some extent, even during the so-called era of "counter-reforms" of the late 1880s and 1890s.

The advent of Nicholas II to the throne in 1894 encouraged zemstvos and other civic bodies to convert their newly acquired prestige into a political force. In keeping with their as yet modest goals, perhaps encouraged by the recent flashes of co-operation with the government, their approach was the traditional supplication: a hopeful request to the new, little-known young monarch to include them in his policy deliberations. His notorious response in January 1895 rejected such aspirations as "senseless dreams" and reaffirmed the

autocratic principles of his father, Alexander III (Emmons and Field 1976:24). This insensitive response was only the first of several dramatic moments that disrupted constructive dialogue between state and society in the first ten years of Nicholas' rule.

People respond in different ways to shifts in their physical, intellectual, and psychological environments. Among the upper middle class and the intelligentsia, many responded by undertaking intense spiritual searches that took them in untraditional directions, namely to religious philosophies, orthodox and unorthodox, speculative mysticism, and occult and esoteric philosophies of every kind. Occultism, in a bewildering variety of forms, was a popular intellectual fashion of the period. In the cities, people attended public and private séances and demonstrations of hypnotism. For creative individuals a lifetime philosophical pursuit emerged that impinged on all aspects of their life (Engelstein 1992).

Writer and philosopher Lev Tolstoy was a dominant figure in Russian culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the years that led up to the social, cultural, and political explosion that was the Russian Revolution of 1917, Tolstoy pushed the rich Russian writing tradition, already resting on the pillars of Gogol and Turgenev, to name a few, in the direction of symbolism. His reading of Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* influenced the composition of his thoughts and writings. His major non-fiction work on the subject being *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, and the short, but poignant novella *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* were contracted as a result of this so-called spiritual awakening. These psychological and philosophical tensions created in Russian cultural life at the turn of the century an intense period of blossoming of religious beliefs.

2.5. Religious Movements Within Russia

The Russian religious soil was well prepared for the arrival of American Pentecostalism. Although contemporary Pentecostalism is definitely a phenomenon of the twentieth-

century—its ecstatic practices and exuberant approach to religion were not unknown to Russia. The Russian people have already generated a vast array of religious movements, an entire wing of which was characterized by traits which were to become identified with Pentecostalism. Of the more prominent expressions of this approach, I mention several in order to show the religious milieu awaiting the arrival of the Pentecostals.

The Khlysty were one the most visible and widely disliked of the pre-revolutionary ecstatic sects. The name, meaning "flagellant," is a pejorative distortion of the sectarians' own name for themselves, Khristy [Christs] (Dudgeon and Johanson 1998). On the eve of the Revolution there may have been as many as 300,000 Khlysty in the Russian Empire. The Molokans were another indigenous sectarian movement in Russia, much more widespread than the Khlysty. Far less exotic in their approach, the Molokans represented a reaction against the dominant ecclesiastical formalism, and in most respects the movement was similar to a great many others concentrating on the informal and individual as opposed to the ritual and the ecclesiastical.

Like other movements of the early twentieth century, Russian Theosophy clearly reflected the apocalypticism of its age (Franchuk 2002). Certain aspects of its doctrine played upon the eschatological fears and expectations of the Russian people. Theosophical notions of world catastrophe, cleansing destruction, suffering, and the building of a new, superior culture in which Russia would play a leading role were variants on the same messianic theme dear to Russian god-seekers (idealists) and god-builders (rationalists) alike. The exoteric, or open aim of the Theosophical Society, as stated in its charter, was to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction by race, color, creed, or caste. Many Theosophists lived their creed: they did not drink alcohol or eat meat; they ran soup kitchens, pioneered Montessori education and child care, supported working women, worked with the

poor, and learned Esperanto so that they could communicate internationally (Engelstein 1992).

Expectations of something equal to an apocalypse were signs of searching new ways of spirituality. The ground was there, but a movement had to be sufficiently diverse and different in order to appeal to people's desire for the new. As demonstrated by the notorious example of Rasputin, the masses of people were ready for a significant change. After the years of healers speaking to ghosts and the plethora of mystical practices, the society appeared to be prepared more for a new spiritual doctrine. The Bolsheviks' desire to educate the masses in Marxist theory was not necessarily the best or the only answer for this spiritual need.

CHAPTER THREE

Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union

Wanting requires will, boldness, courage, dreaming, longing and aspiration. Not wanting is the first cause of decay and the first obstacle that comes in between oneself and one's life. To not want is not just a simple renunciation, some sort of an immediate commodity, but also a personal permission of one's death with which one's life is already clothed. Thus, that permission is the sure way to nothingness.

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In this chapter, I interpret Pentecostalism in Soviet Union by using a meso-level of discourse analysis, as explained in the introduction chapter. This approach involves analyzing various texts, which show how this religious movement was viewed by its adherents and how it was viewed by the Soviet state. I will explain first how I decided to choose some texts over the others and the way I went about analyzing them. Before I proceed, it is worth reminding my reader that I treat all of my sources as "texts," in a Bakhtinian way, meaning that they represent specific historical, cultural, and social events within a given time and space and are analyzed as such contextually within the discourse analysis tradition. In the following paragraphs, I proceed to do so while at the same time keeping in mind that these texts do not exist "in themselves" but always in relation to other phenomena.

My analysis of Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union is twofold. Initially, I look at how the movement succeeded in establishing itself in the region using as my sources a book written by Vladimir Franchuk, journal articles published in the *The Evangelist* by the movement's leader Ivan Voronaev during the 1920's, letters sent to the journal by people who were interested in what the movement had to offer, and videos made by an American Pentecostal, about the history of Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union. Then, I present the

Soviet's view of the Pentecostals as expressed in the country's laws on religion, newspaper articles about religion, public speeches, and a state-sponsored documentary about the Pentecostals. These sources are used in an attempt to understand not only what this movement did in order to succeed, but also why and how these specific: "discursive practices, events and texts within the wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes" were used and "to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power" contributed to the secularization processes in the Soviet Union (Fairclough 1993:132-33). That is, discourse analysis enables me not only to present these sources, but also to interpret the meaning that was generated through these "texts" at that time.

3.1. How I Went About Choosing and Analyzing my Texts

In 2010, I came across a book, in my sister's house, titled *The Pentecostals* by John Thomas Nichol (1960). The book caught my sister's attention in one of those "take one, leave one" bookshelves at a coffee shop in Seattle. I borrowed the book from her and upon reading it, familiarized myself with the origins of the religion I was brought up in. More than that, the author—the son of a Pentecostal pastor—inspired me to look into how my own family, during the Soviet era, came about becoming Pentecostals. I was surprised to find out that Pentecostalism originated in the United States and then spread to the Soviet Union when the relations between the two states were not friendly.

My own parents, born in 1952 and 1945, were brought up by Pentecostals who converted to Pentecostalism from the Baptist and Orthodox churches respectively. In the post-Soviet period, I was raised hearing stories about Pentecostals being imprisoned in the USSR because of their faith only later to learn that people from other religious groups were mistreated as well (Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* comes to mind).

Growing up in a Pentecostal church, in my experience, was a rather conservative, patriarchal, and restrictive thing to undergo. One would have to obey the church's rules without question, from the code of dress to one's personal life, if one were to be a part of it. Those who disobeyed, depending on the gravity of their deed, would be either punished by being told publicly that they had to sit on the back of the church until they realized their mistake and recognized it publicly or by being excluded from the church's membership altogether. Socializing with non-Pentecostals was not encouraged by the church. At the same time, the public opinion regarding the Pentecostals as the "other," as I will show later in this chapter, was inculcated to a significant degree by the Soviet state.

I decided to look into how Pentecostalism arrived in the Soviet Union and why the Soviets were against it, to a larger degree than against the established Christian churches. A quick University of Victoria library catalogue search gives only one relevant result and that is William Fletcher's book, *Soviet Charismatics: the Pentecostals in the USSR* which focuses on the later stages of Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union but also briefly traces the history of its arrival (1985). I sadly realized that there was no analysis of interactions between the Soviet state and the Pentecostal religion, and that left me asking many questions. How did the Pentecostal people resist pressure? How did they make resistance meaningful? At the same time: what was the drive behind religious persecution in the Soviet State? I wanted to look at policies and arrests that proved the legality and factuality of the actual persecutions. I needed a place to start.

When I voiced my need to look at Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union, one of my supervisors—Serhy Yekelchyk—put me in contact with Olena Panych, an Ukrainian scholar studying religion in the Soviet Union, who recommended Franchuk's book *Prosila Rossia Dozhdia u Gospoda* (*Russia Asked the Lord for Rain*) for my analysis (2008). I was faced with a book written by a professor of Christian history who happened to be a Pentecostal.

While at times apologetic, Franchuk's book is an extensive historical summary of the events that happened within the Pentecostal movement under the Soviet regime. It pointed me to other documents and books that I needed in order to continue my inquiries (University of Southern California Libraries 2010). The University of Southern California Libraries has an online archive titled "Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Archive" which I have used extensively in order to find most of my primary sources.

3.2. Pentecostalism at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

The Pentecostal movement in the East Slavic context started at the beginning of the twentieth century. While it could be easily explained as an evangelical movement from the West, Franchuk (2008) mentions the following factors. First of all, the spiritual and moral crisis of Orthodoxy reached its peak due to demoralization and a dire need to restructure the Church's system. Second, charismatic manifestations among Evangelical Christians and Baptists were often covered by the press which contributed to the dissemination of this new way of practicing religion. Third, the mass emigration and re-emigration of the Russian Empire's citizens to places where some of them were introduced to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, only to return later to their homeland enabled some to become the bearers of the Pentecostal awakening. Fourth, the period from 1914 to 1921 was filled with the horror of wars, revolutions, starvation, and disease that may have forced a certain share of the country's population to seek stability and protection in the religious sphere.

According to Nichol (1960), at the beginning of the twentieth century spiritual awakenings caused by a mixture of political unrest and need for security, took place in several European nations such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway. Thomas Barratt is credited with bringing Pentecostalism to Norway after a visit to the United States with the purpose of gathering funds for church construction in Oslo. In Sweden, Levi Petrus started proselytizing

in the name of the Holy Spirit as early as 1907. In 1911 Finland, which was still part of the Russian Empire, Ivan Prokhanov and Alexey Ivanov asked Barratt and Petrus to visit their community in order to learn more about Pentecostalism. Prokhanov, who was the leader of the Evangelical Christians in Russia, did not agree with the new Pentecostal teaching. Later in 1921, when Voronaev arrived in Odessa, Prokhanov warned the Baptist churches regarding the Pentecostal teachings, on the receiving of the Holy Spirit, which he considered erroneous. This is important because that is how a NRM emerges. The already established denomination, in this case the Baptists, refused to accept the new reinterpretations regarding the Holy Spirit, thus Pentecostalism comes out of a new interpretations, but also of a new refusal of admission from the parent denomination.

Unlike his colleague Prokhanov, Ivanov was enthusiastic about the Pentecostal interpretations of the text and with another friend, Petr Smorodin, opened the first Pentecostal church in Vyborg in November 1915, but it only lasted a few months due to the arrest of its leaders. According to Franchuk (2008), the church in the city of Vyborg became a missionary outpost of the new doctrine for the whole of Russia. In 1915, through complex vicissitudes of the war with Germany, the situation was complicated for the religious minorities in Russia as they were pointed at as forces that supported the enemy. On the one hand, this hindered the development of the new doctrine in Petrograd; however, on the other hand the persecution of the Pentecostal leader Ivanov, according to Franchuk (2010), lent an important hand in missionary work. Thus, the new doctrine spread to places where these people were imprisoned.

It is worth mentioning that the movement was never homogenous. One factor contributing to this was the teaching of “the Oneness” brought to Petrograd by Andrew Urshan, an American missionary of Persian origin. The Pentecostal movement was only emerging and Urshan’s message resonated with the Russian leader Petr Smorodin who

adopted the new doctrine, which maintained that people should be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ rather than in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. This way of performing rites was encouraged in different regions where the movement spread and, when Ivanov returned from exile he also accepted Urshan's teachings and resumed his leadership in the Petrograd community. In the mid-twenties, the movement started by Urshan became known as the *Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles* (ECSA).

The ECSA were also joined by a group of people separated from the Russian Orthodox Church called *Trezvenniki* which translates as "teetotalers." In their doctrine *Trezvenniki* were similar to the evangelical believers. With the spread of the news of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, some of the teetotalers initially adopted Pentecostalism as taught by Voronaev, but due to his views regarding pro-army conscription, they later joined ECSA. The fate of ECSA was similar to that of most of the religious evangelical movements in the USSR: persecution and forced collaboration with the Baptists. Thus, right from the beginning, there are two main streams of Pentecostalism: the Trinitarians and the Unitarians or otherwise the Evangelical Christians—Pentecostals and the Christians in the name of the Spirit of the Apostles. It is worth noting that these churches formed before the collapse of the Russian Empire.

3.3. Soviet Laws on Religion

There is considerable scholarship regarding Russia's communism as a deliverance that approximated millennialist seizures that were expected to "save" the Russian people from their doomed autocratic government (Brower and Danilov 1990; Ely 2002). Once the communists took power, they did not fancy religious comparisons, and Lenin criticized spirituality by writing a piece named *Bogoiskatelstvo* (God Searching) (Remnick 1994:11), whereas Trotsky wrote a piece called *Vodka, the Church, and the Cinema* (1923).

No Bolshevik assault on tradition could overlook religion. If religion had been "the opium of the masses" under the old order, religious belief in the new world constituted superstition and, as such, an impediment to creating a progressive, scientific society. It appears that the Soviet state instituted its laws on religion in a way meant to appear emancipatory, but with gradual possibilities of instituting state control and suppression of religious organizations. In 1918, the Soviet state decreed the separation of church and state (Anon 2017). While the Orthodox Church was upset by such changes, the Protestants were quite pleased to have religion as a private matter since they were always fighting for existence against the dominant church (Franchuk 2002:565).

It is worth mentioning that the 1918 decree *On Separation of Church from State and School from Church* appeared liberal in its declaration of respecting all religions and giving individuals freedom of conscience. However, outside the law, anti-religious militants desecrated churches and monasteries in an atmosphere of atrocity during the Russian civil war. During War Communism (1918-21), Church lands and properties were nationalized without compensation and a significant number of bishops and priests as well as the representatives of propertied classes were occasionally forced to clean the streets and public squares. In this regard, the Russian Orthodox Church was vulnerable, for it entered the revolutionary era divided and demoralized. Its leadership was ill-prepared to resist the surrender of sacrosanct valuables to the state, ostensibly for famine relief in 1921-22. The Patriarch of the Church Tikhon declared the 1918 separation of church and state anathema, but the new acting *locum tenens* Metropolitan (later Patriarch) Sergiy agreed with the Soviets which allowed the Orthodox Church a formal status as long as they abided by the state's rules (Fletcher 1985:24). This created confusion for the believers within the Orthodox Church. One can see the Church Patriarch's loyalty for the Soviet state several years later, when Germany attacked Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 and Patriarch Sergiy was asked to send a message to

the Orthodox people to defend the holy frontiers of their native country. The fact that liberal offshoots of the main church were more often than not accommodating to the state power undercut Orthodoxy further. Another factor that contributed to it was the rising number of conversions to other denominations, especially the Baptist Church (Fletcher 1985:26). Moreover, official disapproval of illegal assaults on churches and clergy by no means halted; local soviets utilized existing laws to confiscate places of worship for use as workers' clubs, cinemas, and libraries (Fletcher 1985:26).

Not wanting to alienate people further, the government softened its attack between 1921 and the onset of the forced collectivization of agriculture in 1929. Given the Bolshevik Party's implacable hostility toward religion, it might appear incongruous to describe the New Economic Policy (NEP) as a period when the persecution of religion was relaxed, but compared to 1918-21 this was in fact the case (Valentinov, Magee, and Guroff 1971:9). Thus the state allowed both religious and antireligious propaganda, and its Commission on Religious Questions advocated the eradication of religion only through agitation and education (Shpitsberg 1925). The Commission restrained rather than incited anti-religious violence and regularly ruled in favour of groups of believers against local officials. The Union of Militant Atheists did not hold its founding congress until 1925; it began serious work only following its second gathering three years later. Anti-religious propaganda was, moreover, the responsibility of all party organs, which in practice meant that it was conducted ad hoc and at most incorporated within its general advocacy of secularism. Even in national publications such as *Bezbozhnik* (The Atheist), anti-religious tracts and caricatures of priests shared space with articles on popular science, public health, the eradication of illiteracy, the evils of anti-Semitism, and even the improvement of personal hygiene.

In this period, there were numerous state bodies responsible for dealing with major decisions concerning state and church relations such as the Politburo of the Central

Committee and the Anti-Religious Commission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks. Apart from the All-Union Communist Party and the OGPU (and later the NKVD), there were two more organizations in the Soviet Union that were involved in the anti-religious struggle of the 1920s and 1930s: the Komsomol and the League of Militant Atheists which, in fact, appeared to become the major striking force of the regime in the anti-religious campaign (University of Southern California Libraries 2010). In the years of 1927 to 1929 as the Soviet regime was transitioning to Stalinism, it affected religious policies as well. The Russian Orthodox Church declared its loyalty to the regime in 1927. The Soviet support for various other groups which served to undermine the Russian Orthodox Church started collapsing after the late 1920s.

3.4. The Genesis of Pentecostalism in the Soviet Ukraine: Ivan Voronaev

The history of the Christian Church of Evangelical Faith in Soviet Ukraine started in August 1921 when Ivan Voronaev arrived in Odessa. Voronaev (birth name Nikita Cherkasov) was born and raised in the Orenburg province (Francuk 2008; Evangel Theological Seminary 2015). Until the age of 22 he frequented the Orthodox Church, but during his military service in Tashkent in 1907 he met people from the Baptist church and soon after joined their community. In 1912, due to the threat of arrest, he emigrated to the United States with his wife Catherine and their two young children. In San Francisco, he became the leader of a small Russian Baptist church. A few years later, he was invited to be the pastor of a Russian Baptist Church in Seattle and eventually the Voronaev family moved to New York where they met with the Syryts family who introduced them to Pentecostalism. At first Voronaev resisted this teaching, but when his daughter Vera got baptized with the Holy Spirit while visiting the Pentecostal group, Voronaev decided to inquire into this new teaching and soon became convinced of the importance of speaking in tongues.

Voronaev rented a room in the Presbyterian Church on Sixth Street in New York where he was joined by 19 people from the Baptist church, where he had been pastor, and began their journey for the search of the Holy Spirit. Once, during a prayer service in the house of Anna Koltovich, Ivan Voronaev unexpectedly received a revelation from God to return to Russia, to bring the Russian and Ukrainian peoples the message of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Evangel Theological Seminary 2015). In August 1921, Ivan Voronaev arrived in Odessa. Voronaev wanted to revive the Baptist faith (as in receiving the Holy Spirit) not to form a new sect, but he did officially form Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union. He began to preach among the Baptists, but as soon as he started talking about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, he immediately met strong negative reactions. It is worth mentioning that Voronaev was insisting that the Baptists accept the Pentecostal meaning of the Holy Spirit which must have made for sour-relationships (Franchuk 2002:518). The Baptists began to call him a heretic and a fanatic, and Baptist churches were warned that Ivan Voronaev preached heresy.

As in any NRM, a charismatic person is key and Voronaev's charisma really carried him through the refusal of the Baptist churches. Thus, on November 12, 1921, Voronaev held the first Pentecostal meeting as distinctly separate from the Baptists. In 1924, in Odessa Voronaev convened the first Regional Union of Christian Evangelskoi Very [Christians of Evangelical Faith] (HEV) with the purpose of centralizing and legalizing it. The following things were discussed: regarding political views Pentecostals were encouraged to follow the laws of the Soviet state, join the army, and respect any differences regarding other sects. The initial pro-army policy of HEV was used against them later as some churches were against army conscription and left the union. Voronaev's report regarding these proposals was published in a New York based Russian language journal *Puteshestvenik* (The Traveler).

The movement's first All-Ukrainian Congress was held in Odessa on September 21-23, 1926, but at the Congress there were representatives not only from Ukraine but also from the many communities of Siberia, the Caucasus, the Urals, and the central regions of Russia consisting of 62 delegates (University of Southern California Libraries 2010). HEV was registered in the Soviet Union, in Moscow, and its registration document signed by Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich, who had been Lenin's secretary (Franchuk 2002:456).

Voronaev was also the editor of the only Pentecostal journal of this time *The Evangelist* which started being published in 1928. The main aim of the journal was proselytizing, but at the same time it discussed topics such as music, choirs, values, Christian rules, Bible study, Sunday-church, food restrictions, and so on. It became a blueprint of how to live one's life as a Pentecostal and stipulated who could be a member of the Church. At that time, the Union consisted of 250 communities that had more than 15 thousand members all over Ukraine, and the Odessa community itself had risen to 400 people. By 1929, the Odessa community was at 500 members and in Ukraine there were more than 350 churches (500 churches in the USSR), numbering about 17 thousand members (in the USSR 25 thousand) (Franchuk 2002:511). The journal *The Evangelist* sold as many as 300 copies monthly. It received letters from all over the USSR, but it was closed down by the authorities after nine months (Savinsky 2011). It appears that, initially, the authorities welcomed the Pentecostal movement because they were working as an antidote for the already established churches, such as the Baptist church. This was the same policy they pursued by supporting splits within the Orthodox Church.

3.5. Soviet Law on Religion (continued)

Finally, as the New Economic Plan (NEP) came to an end, the state enacted a new law on religious instruction and proselytizing, that presaged the still more brutal assault on the

Church soon to come. The next legislation regarding religion was issued in 1929. The Decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic was mainly directed towards religious associations (http://www.r-komitet.ru/vera/22.htm), and it contained a significant number of restrictions. For example, it was prohibited to donate to charity, provide financial support to the members of an association, and conduct prayer-meetings with children present. The decree also prohibited missionary work, any proselytizing whatsoever, publications, charity work, and houses for the homeless or children. In other words, henceforth religious communities and religious decision-making structures were legally limited in their rights.

The authorities often justified their actions by saying that religious activities and behaviour of believers did not comply with the Soviet legislation on cults. The law required religious associations to register and defined the criteria that could be used to determine the status of a religious organization. Thus, religious organizations were given little or no legal status, which means the following: some of them were allowed to exist (though their activity was limited), while the majority were declared illegal. The latter were thought to require special attention and more decisive and concrete measures to deal with. In this way, religious persecution was legitimized.

3.6. Pentecostalism in the Years of Repression and War (1929-1945)

In 1929, as we have seen, the attitude of the Soviet authorities towards the Christians of Evangelical Faith has changed dramatically. During the period of 1929-1932, all houses of Pentecostal worship in the USSR were closed. In 1930, an article in *Bezbozhnik* (*The Atheist*) titled "*Triasuny* i *ih Organizator—Voronaev*" ("The Shakers and Their Organizer—Voronaev") by N. Gurich describes Voronaev and his employees as "paid agents of US imperialism" involved in the anti-Soviet counter-revolutionary activities, the creation of an

anti-Soviet organization in the Soviet Union, relations with the US and global counter-revolutionary centers of imperialism leading the fight against the Soviet power; and that they created a fanatical religious sect which caused mental disorders in humans (Gurich 1930). Another accusation was "fabricating miracles of divine healing" (Gurich 1930). As stated in the introduction, discourse analysis tells us that language is the basis of social interactions.

No church can exist apart from tradition, the vehicle that carries the values, beliefs, and principles upon which churches stand from generation to generation. According to Gennady Sergienko: "Tradition is nothing else but actualisation of the Scriptures in new historical conditions" (Sergienko 2010:1). Konstantin Goncharov points out that in the Russian Synodal Translation of the Bible the word tradition comes from the Greek term *paradosis* meaning "something that is passed from one person to another" and in the Scriptures it is used both positively and negatively (Goncharov 2008). The theologian, Jaroslav Pelikan, wrote: "Tradition is "the living faith of the dead" while traditionalism, in contrast, is "the dead faith of the living"' (Pelikan 1984:9). Traditions change as time goes by. Some become irrelevant and new ones appear.

In 1929, many of the forerunners of the Pentecostals in Odessa got arrested (Franchuk 2008:540). The new HEV director after Voronaev's arrest became Ponurko; he wrote an autobiography which is excerpted in Franchuk's book (Franchuk 2008:589). Between 1929-1932, all Pentecostal churches got closed in USSR (Franchuk 2008:591). In an attempt at demoralizing the Pentecostal followers, the *Bezbozhnik* magazine published an article about Voronaev's disavowal of Pentecostalism in the name of socialism (Putintsev 1930). In 1932, all the people at the forefront of the Pentecostal movement were arrested and that forced the association to dissolve (Franchuk 2008:593). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union the document regarding Voronaev's disavowal was found in a museum (Franchuk 2002:561).

Ekaterina Voronaeva (Voronaev's wife) was arrested in 1933, and thirty years later in the United States in an interview, she said that all kinds of Christians, and not just Pentecostals, were arrested at that time (Voronaeva 1960). Franchuk also provides proof that Voronaeva was in and out of different prisons (Franchuk 2008:545). Because of her popularity, people confided in her. In the interview, she said that pastors were asked to give the names of their members thus becoming informants for the NKVD and later the KGB (Voronaeva 1960; Franchuk 2008:567). This suggests the existence of disagreements within the movement, which again reminds one that Pentecostalism as such was not homogenous, but was a rather diverse enterprise. For example, Voronaeva said that in 1930-35, there were new teachings such as considering Saturday as the day of the Lord instead of Sunday; however, there were still people preaching the original teachings (Voronaeva 1960; Franchuk 2008:594).

The lack of academic preparation of the Evangelical ministers led to the absence of a healthy and consistent theological tradition that would ensure continuity of doctrine as well as adaptability to changes prompted by political, economic, and social factors (Sergienko 2010). The aim of Pentecostal theology is to summarize the teachings of Scripture and to make them relevant in the contemporary life of believers. The Soviet regime crushed early attempts by Ivan Prokhanov and others to develop Evangelical theological education. This action extremely weakened Soviet Pentecostals and contributed to the rise of enormous complications in their adaptability to the Soviet regime (Humphreys 1994:12).

Paul Voronaeff (the son) wrote a book, *My life is Soviet Russia* (1969), describing the arrest of his parents and his attempts at finding them afterwards. He confirms that Voronaev was arrested on accusations of being a spy and sentenced to a hard-labor concentration camp. Soon after, Ekaterina Voronaeva (mother) was arrested as well. Because Paul was born in the United States he was able to leave after his parents' arrest. Later when the Soviet leader,

Nikita Khrushchev, visited the United States, Paul tried to petition for his mother's release, but to no avail. When the press got interested in the case, however, Ekaterina Voronaeva was released and was able to spend her last years with her son in the Unites States. Voronaeva spoke regarding party-pastor relations and the aftermath of collaboration and the impact on churches after the war (Franchuk 2008:581). Voronaeff (1969) argues that the American evangelicals were not aware of the situation in the Soviet Union, but once his mother arrived in the United States there was discomfort with the way the Soviets were treating the Pentecostals.

3.7. Organized Religion

The first Pentecostal Bible School was founded in 1932 in the city of Danzig by Gustav Schmidt (Franchuk 2008:235). By 1935, it was developed into a Bible Institute whose first set of students came from Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Bulgaria. In the ten years of its existence the school produced many preachers and evangelists who eventually became the leaders of churches of Eastern Europe. Schmidt worked in western Ukraine (at the time part of Poland) as a missionary from the Eastern European Mission called The Assembly of God. This information assembled from Franchuk (2008) and Nichol (1968) tells us that the Western part of Ukraine experienced its Pentecostal revival under the influence of Western missionaries.

It is also worth mentioning that Voronaev was not the sole leader of the Pentecostal movement. The organization of Pentecostalism began simultaneously in Poland and in the Ukrainian lands of Eastern Poland with the return, from the United States of America, of several Ukrainian migrant workers in the Ternopil region before Vorovaev's return in 1920. The same happened in other parts of Eastern Poland with a majority of the population being Ukrainian, such as the Rivne and Volyn regions, thanks to the work of re-emigrants,

returning from the United States (Franchuk 2008:254). This led to the convocation in Kremianets on May 4-6, 1924 of the first Congress of the Christian Pentecostals, organized by Ivan Gerasevich. In 1928, there was a second Congress which was attended by representatives of Ukrainian and Belarusian communities, and by 1929 there was an association of Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish and German Pentecostal churches in the Poland of the time (University of Southern California Libraries 2010). They set up a nationwide alliance called the Polish Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith (PUCEF) led by Arthur Bergholz. Over the years, this organization published the following magazines *Primiritel* (*The Mediator*), *Evangelskii Golos (The Evangelical Voice*), *Stroitel Bojiei Tzerkvi* (*The Builder of the Church of God*) and *Dostup* (*Access*) in the Ukrainian, Russian and Polish languages (Voronaev 1928).

By the fall of 1939, in the Soviet Union there existed more than 500 communities, counting up to 25,000 members the majority of whom were Ukrainians (Franchuk 2008:321). This alliance of churches existed until September 1939, but when World War II broke out and Poland's territory was divided, and Eastern Poland or the Western part of Ukraine was annexed to the Soviet Union, the PUCEF ceased to exist.

In Western Ukraine with the beginning of World War II, the chairman of the Poland Union of Pentecostal Churches, Arthur Bergholz found himself in the territory occupied by the Germans. Communication between the governing centers and communities was disrupted. The publication of the aforementioned journals ceased. The Eastern European Mission stopped its operation (Evangel Theological Seminary 2015). As a result, the events of church life were limited to the level of individual communities.

The territorial divide, between the Soviets and the Germans, during the war played a role in the administration of Pentecostalism as well. For example, the city of Baranovich passed from the Soviets to the Germans and in 1943, the Pentecostal Center of the Church of

Christians of Evangelical Faith located in Baranovichi was registered within the German state. After Ponurko's return from prison, the Pentecostal movement was led by him. The German authorities allowed the Pentecostals legal conduct of religious rites and church services as well as the restoration of their Union.

With the return of the Soviet troops in 1944 the city of Baranovich was taken back and again became part of the Soviet Union. Ponurko was arrested and Ponomarchuk and Kuzmenko were invited to Moscow. At that time the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists was being established (VREHiB). In Moscow, the leaders of the Pentecostal community were invited to come together and join in the Union. This suggests that, by forcing the Baptists and Pentecostals together, the Soviets hoped that they would quarrel internally which would bring their downfall.

At the same time, *Bezbozhnik* and *Antireligioznik* ceased to be published by September 1941. The Orthodox Church was allowed to publish a book titled *The Truth of Religion in Russia* in 1942. After the war (WWII) two publications were allowed: *Vestnik Moskovskovo Patriarkhato* published by the Russian Orthodox Church, and *Bratskii vestnik*, a Baptist journal (Franchuk 2008:568). The first official Theological Institute was reopened on June 14, 1944.

3.8. Further Research

In 1943-1944, the Council for Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults were set up under the Council of People's Commissars (later, under the Council of Ministers of the USSR). Another anti-religious campaign took place during 1957-1962. Being mandated to organize anti-religious activities, these bodies acted as the executors of the State will and the Party interests in the religious sphere. Last but not least, large-scale, permanent, all-inclusive and various anti-religious propaganda work and

agitation held a particular place among other discriminatory practices. Both of them were aimed at insulting and degrading religion, church and religious believers. The anti-religious campaign was conducted via all state and public institutions: schools and universities, the mass media, publishing houses, culture and leisure centres, artists' unions, the Komsomol, and trade unions. Violating the principle of freedom of conscience, state bodies and party activists revealed, ridiculed and demonized everything related to religion, faith, churches, religious history and tradition, church services, and believers' outlooks, not to mention that was done on a daily basis through various forms of media. The clergy and believers were often portrayed as enemies of the Soviet state and were thus treated as counterrevolutionaries, saboteurs, bigots, spies, at best, misguided and deceived people who needed to be exposed, revealed, punished, or reeducated.

After the war, there seemed to be a period of relief for the religious peoples in Soviet Union, and in 1956 the Bible was, for the first time since 1918, published in Russian. However, soon Khrushchev launched a new anti-religious propaganda and publications such as *Why I Ceased to Be a Believe*r in 1957 by E. K. Duluman (a former priest) and the journal *Nauka i Religia* (Science and Religion) in 1959, started to appear. The same year a state-sponsored documentary "The truth about the Pentecostal sect" was aired (USSR film 1959). These developments suggest that the Pentecostals were never quite accepted within the Soviet Society.

CHAPTER FOUR

NRMs and Secularization Theory

In *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu remarks that when one feels unhappy and in need of forgetting one's troubles, when wounded by life and tired of banality and inequality, when aspiring to society especially when one is in need of being touched or of laughing at little things in the company of a benevolent and understanding spirit, one need not look far away, but reach out to a library and call out this talisman: *the book* (Montesquieu 1748:25).

□

In this chapter, I argue that Pentecostalism in the Soviet Union not only survived, but also thrived because, ultimately, the Soviets and the Pentecostals were working, even if it was through different means, towards the same goal: the secularization of society as Vattimo understand that term. Perhaps this is a rather bold argument, but I want to remind my reader that the concept of secularization has been understood differently by different authors, as described in the first chapter of this thesis, and that I make use of Vattimo's understanding of secularization as that which is part of the religious and continues to exist in a given society by adapting to the day and age in which one lives. Thus, a NRM such as Pentecostalism is an "event" through which secularization actualizes itself. Also, whenever I say religion in this chapter, I refer to the NRMs within the Christian tradition.

4.1. It is Personal

The inevitable question that I am asked every time I speak with my mother on the phone is, "Have you been to church lately," to which I have been giving the same answer in the past ten years: "No, I have not." "I will pray for you," she exclaims. "Yes, thank you," I reply. To arrive at this "thank you" took me a long journey—one filled with anger, disappointment,

misunderstandings, and despair. Church attendance was obligatory in our household. Men would preach about women's duties and I did not understand what they would know about being a woman, but expressing one's questions in public (as a woman) was not an option. There was a rupture at some point, after years of questioning the faith in which I was brought up, which culminated in my moving away from my parents and doing away with their God. I was going to have nothing to do with people and gods who preferred silence over discussion of a deep array of problems.

However, there are enough chances in one's life to be able to retell one's story or one's religion's story, in this case. The text is not set in stone, it emerges within time, and it is remembered, reinterpreted as a story that could be, potentially, inclusive. When one does speak up, one hopes that the things that one says will appease the anger and make way for reconciliation. One's story becomes a way of control, but it also leaves an opening, an invitation for the next person that comes along to take on from where one left off. Except that one, always, has *a* version of a story to tell. To be against a set-in-stone version of secularization—which in the Soviet Union perpetuated hegemonic power and violence—does not necessarily mean that one is against "progress" or against knowledge. To refuse this promise of secularization—that we will all be somehow better-off, liberated by science—is to refuse the demand that our society should show signs of secularization. This means a shift of orientation, allowing for different definitions, and accepting that that which one understands as being secularized may not be shared by another. To refuse a definition is not a refusal of "progress" and it is not "being-stuck-in-time," or any of those so-called "secularized" parts of one's society. If anything, a rigid definition sustains the very psychic and political condition of desecularization.

I argue that we do not have to accept one way of looking at secularization theory. The social scientist who does not accept a concept when it seems unacceptable wants a more

inclusive life. Indeed, secularism should be inclusive. No-one wants to get rid of it; life would be a drab and routine affair if we were all required to be religious a certain way or secular in a certain way. That is just the point. Why has all possibility been concentrated, driven into one narrow difficult-to-achieve alley of human experience, and all the rest laid waste? I challenge the very "pressure" of rigid secularism, the way it restricts the possibilities for finding one's way into the world.

This is not to say that questioning a rigid definition is somehow easy. It is simply that by refusing to go along with public displays of secularism one can participate in the widening of horizons in which it is possible to find things. Questioning does not guarantee what one will find through this expansion of horizons. The fact that any such opening (NRMs) is read as a sign of hostility—as it was in the case of Pentecostalism in Soviet Union—tells as something important. *The public investment in secularization is an investment in a very particular and narrow model of the good*. Being secular nowadays requires a commitment to destroying all that came before the moment when we, as a society (apparently), decided that we are now secularized.

I have explored how questioning definitions is represented as being against the establishment—as in the Pentecostals experience in the Soviet Union—but it could also be argued that questioning is caused by the establishment. One could describe consciousness raising as raising consciousness through questioning. The act of experiencing limitations can actually make life seem more rather than less limited. If the world does not allow one to embrace the possibilities that are opened up by a rigid definition of secularization—as in the Soviet Union—then one becomes even more aware of the injustice of such limitations. Opening up the world, or expanding one's horizons, can thus mean becoming more conscious of just how much there is left behind within a rigid definition.

Questioning may also provide an effective way of sustaining one's attention on the cause of one's questioning. One would question the causes of one's questioning. Being a social theorist involves political consciousness of what one is asked to give up in the name of a concept such as "secularization." Indeed, in even becoming conscious of secularism as loss, one has already refused to give up imagination, language, and curiosity for new ways of navigating religion. There can be sadness simply in the realization of what one has given up. Literary archives are full of writers who are barrowing from the Christian text, the Bible, in order to produce their work (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Baldwin, and so on). The text—any text—has a margin that is filled with silences. One hopes that the silences will be heard by someone else, and the story can continue, can be retold.

4.2. Bringing It Together

The Enlightenment was advanced by religious thinkers as well as by non-religious thinkers, but this is forgotten when they are interpreted only as those who shone the light of Reason, and as a result the *secular* is fostered as a unitary stand-alone concept. The *light* in En*light*enment is understood as Reason, in whose "light" religion stood as the epitome of unreason. Those who advance secularism think of religion as a local enterprise—as that which was sowed locally and can be uprooted locally, but this is mistaken. During the Enlightenment, science may have been seen, at times, as perpetuating peace, and religion may have been portrayed as the cause of wars. The complete misunderstanding of secularization reaches its apogee in Nietzsche's declaration of the "death of god" which was reinterpreted in a literal sense. Charles Taylor argues that Nietzsche meant this as a reformulation of Christianity, but it was used against Christianity (2007). The authoritarian God may be dead, but we still have a God in our daily conversations. While images of change

have become sources of secularization, it does not necessarily mean that belief as such has disappeared. As religion does not go away, this view has to change as well.

The way that the Soviet Union treated the Pentecostals reminds me of the way in which the Grand Inquisitor, in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, treats Jesus who disrupted the way of life of a little town in Spain. All was good while the followers were doing that which they were told by the Grand Inquisitor, but as soon as there was a disruption it had to be crushed in order to not disrupt an already fragile system. The Grand Inquisitor accuses Jesus of having had too much faith in humanity, in giving them too much freedom when what they needed, according to him, was guidance—a step by step method of how to live one's life in order for it to appear bearable. That is exactly what the Soviets did, they tried to crush a movement that was getting out of control, was too hopeful, too nice, and too dangerous for the Soviet power. Vattimo argues that, "…all the categories of metaphysics are violent categories: being and its attributes, the 'first' cause, man as 'responsible,' and even the will to power. These categories must be 'weakened' or relieved of their excess of power" (2004:34).

The knowledge of religion is the knowledge of *a* religion. Religion is a human community in which the differences between class and gender are subsumed under the universal faith which holds society together. To what extent is religion a community when some religions are performative? The principle of religion allows the elimination of social differences for the duration of the ritual (Durkheim 2005). Religion has no substance from outside of its ritual performances. No religion can take place outside of the secular realm as in the sacred and the profane (Durkheim 2005). Because we (humans) exist, we are concerned with our existence. A theist religion is an absolute in and for itself.

One cannot do away with one's past just as the Western society cannot do away with Christianity. That which worked for my parents may not work for me, but then I do not know

what they went through and perhaps religion was a path to sanity. In the face of much disillusionment, religion offers people creative resources to pursue things that they want to pursue and categories in which things make sense to them. Religion has thousands of years in which it has tried to generate ways in which to think about the big questions and it offers a rich vocabulary that fosters discussion. The universality of the vocabulary of the major religions provides a membership in the international community. Global populations of people, belief practices, and religions are providing a way of understanding. It is time after years of epistemic oppression to return and remember, learn and listen, pause and dialogue with our fellow beings. This resonates with Vattimo's understanding of agreement and truth: "…in society, for reasons of charity, we have to allow different points of view, and in general I stake out this position: let's not say that we will reach agreement once we have found the truth. Let's say we have found the truth when we have reached agreement" (2004:25).

One's desire to leave behind that which was oppressive is as strong as a baobab tree. One withstands resistance and oppression and goes ahead in a whirlwind of craving something better, something worth leaving one's past for, only to realize that that which one has discovered is not necessarily better or less oppressive. How does one reconcile with two opposed ideologies that do not seem to quench one's thirst for a better solution?
I do not believe in meaning or purpose, but then I use words such as "belief." I do not have the vocabulary to express myself in a non-religious language and that which is called *secular* uses religious language as well. In *Belief*, Vattimo states,

> If secularization is the essence of the history of salvation—that is, a transformation that "reduces" the metaphysical-natural sacred by virtue of God's decision to institute a relation of friendship with humanity (this is the meaning of Jesus' incarnation)—then one must oppose the unwarranted linkage of Christian doctrine with this or that

> given historical reality with the most complete readiness to read the "signs of the times," in order that we may always identify ourselves anew with history by honestly recognizing our own historicity (1999:53-54).

I did not choose the place of my birth, my parents, their religion and all the baggage that came with it, but then—it can be argued—neither did I *choose* to go to university, to take sociology, to study religion, and to write this thesis. There is no meaning in my past other than me trying hard to make it intelligible. There comes a time in one's life when one has to accept one's origins as they are presented to one. One has to "make-peace" with one's past, but one does not have to follow in one's parents footsteps unless that which one's parents did works for one as well. There is no purpose in that which I do now other than doing that which I find intellectually stimulating. These two—my past and the now—do not have to collide, they can coexist. Everything that is useless gets lost in the vortex of wind and water in order to be resting, after it struggled enough in the dunes, at the edge of the seas and deserts.

Religion is a concept attached to a lifestyle which in turn is deemed religious, that which constitutes religious practice to that which does not. Why are people religious? One reason could be because they are born into a worldview of religious practice that in turn reinforces that which is deemed as good. Another reason may be that people choose to be religious because it satisfies a need when people are lonely or perhaps in some cases religion gives some greater access to economic means. The third one is support, be it in political, social, or institutional orientations.

The pattern of overlap and fusion reappeared with every moment of Protestant reform, just as it has in movements of political reform (Martin 2011). It delivers enough to be the most immediate vehicle of hope for the hopeless. Belief is primordial. "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). In

1940, a poster displaying Stalin writing at a desk (University of Southern California Libraries 2010) reads "*O kazhdom iz nas zabotitsia Stalin v Kremle*" (Stalin in the Kremlin is taking care of each one of us) which suggests an omnipresent, god-like personality that replaces the all-seeing deity of the Orthodox Church.

The Soviets understood secularization in a literal way as that which is opposite to religion and they tried their best to do away with religion by implementing laws, desecrating churches, arresting people, using the media for anti-religious propaganda and so on. Because of this many people have suffered, and what is more, religion is still a part of the post-Soviet countries, and this shows that the Soviet's eradication tactics did not necessarily work. Religion understood as that which hinders progress is an idea that has to be done away with. Because religious institutions sometimes suppressed scientific inquiry, people of the book fought long and hard to limit the church's power. Vattimo writes in *Belief*.

> The idea that there is a radical separation between the history of salvation and secular history by virtue of which the meaning of revelation would be exclusively apocalyptic: the unveiling of the senselessness of world history in light of an event so other that the times and rhythms of history can only have a negative sense, to be annulled in the paradox of the leap of faith, or treated as a time of trial (1999:81).

It took a couple of centuries, for the intellectuals to reverse roles and become rather vocal on some of the heresies of the Christian religion. If one is to suppress religion however, then it transforms into the same fight with reversed roles. That is, the scientists may come to impose their view upon society just like Christianity used to. One has to keep in mind that it is not as if one day the world decided to be secular and then that is how it proceeded from then on. We cannot speak of secularization as that which is separate from religion because we have never

left religion behind. We do not have a secular language to express ourselves in. We cannot negate our own history or somehow burn all the books that we do not deem worthy of our so-called secular world. If we are to speak of secularization we can only do so through a nihilistic act. That is, refute that which was said before and arrive at a new definition that resembles that which is happening in the world today.

It is not as if the Soviet Union wanted to eradicate religion and leave people without a moral compass. On the contrary, the Soviet Union supplied its citizens with a new type of doctrine that was going to deliver the Soviet people to a better life. If in Christianity salvation is historical, in the sense that by accepting Christ one embarks on a search for perfection, betterment, and progress, then secularization, as understood by the Soviets, dissolves the very notion of progress by putting a stop to that which happened before, by closing that specific chapter, by disavowing the past, disregarding it as that which is unnecessary, old, and petrified. The new, however, is not made out of nothing unless one believes in Creation.

The world that the Soviets inherited was a pluralistic one and could not have been contained under one single ideology. If Christianity was the sole truth for Imperial Russia and Communism was the sole truth for the Soviets, the result was just swapping one ideology for another. Vattimo looks at the twentieth century as "the epoch in which reality can no longer be conceived of as a structure solidly tied to a sole foundation that philosophy would have the task of knowing, or that religion would have the task of adoring" (Vattimo 2002:5). If the world we live in is understood as moving forward, then secularization has to be that concept which describes not only what happens in a certain era, but also as that which carries forward certain values that we inherit as we come into the world. To have faith or to believe is not necessarily a religious act, but its origins have to be acknowledged in order for us to understand our place in the world. Thus faith moves with us, in the form of a secularized faith and evolving through secularization in faith, as Vattimo would say.

Thinking of secularization in this way allows us to rediscover meaning in a nihilistic ontology, which of course has links with the Judeo-Christian tradition as that which formed most of that which we know in the West. The modern world thrives on the interpretation of the text; we must, then, acknowledge the religion of the book that still reaches us through its interpretations, even if weakened. There are many ways of experiencing truth, but if we are to interpret it we must acknowledge that hermeneutics is heir to Christianity.

Instead of giving people a blueprint of how to live their lives, perhaps allowing one to be-in-the-world is that weakening of ontology that Vattimo professes. Being-in-the-world does not necessarily mean to be in touch with all that is out there, but rather to be familiar with that which was before one's own time. Being aware or in-tune as much as possible with that which happened before, allows one to understand where one comes from, where one's language comes from as well as other people's values. Knowing one's history helps one create meaning and makes it possible to give context to the world one lives in.

CONCLUSION

I hope that we learn from this history how secularization can be used as a technology or instrument, which allows the reorientation of individual desire toward a common good. We learn from revisiting cases like the Pentecostals in the Soviet Union how secularization is not simply used to secure social relations instrumentally, but works as an idea or aspiration within everyday life, shaping the very terms through which individuals share the world with others, creating "scripts" for how to live well.

I think of secularized scripts as a set of instructions for what people must do in order to be deemed as "normal." Going along with the secularization script is how we get along: to get along is to be willing and able to express secularized behavior in the right situations. As if one has a secularized duty. A duty can function as a debt, a way of returning what is owed. In the introduction, I wrote of secularization as an heirloom of the Enlightenment which works through the logic of deferral: one generation of secular intellectuals defer their hope of a religious-less world to the next generation in order to avoid giving up on the idea of secularization as a response to disappointment. One can keep one's belief in rigid secularism while being disappointed as long as one can place one's hopes for secularization in another.

The obligation of the intellectual to be secular is a repaying of what one owes, of what is due to the posterity given what they have given up. One's duty becomes one of keeping knowledge secular and to perform this duty by showing signs of being secular in the right way. Going along with this duty can mean approximating the signs of being secular—passing as secular—in order to keep things in the right place.

The Pentecostals' story within the Soviet Union can be described as stories of people who not only did not place their hopes for secularization in the right place but who spoke out about their questioning of this rigid definition with the very outcome of being made secular by such processes. The history of the Pentecostals in Soviet Union is thus a history of making

trouble, a history of people who refuse to become secularized in a prescribed way, by refusing to follow other people's rules, or by refusing to make others secular.

The Pentecostals in Soviet Union got in unfavorable waters because they got in the way of the rigid secularization prescribed by the state. Judith Butler shows how the figure of the trouble maker exposes the intimacy of rebellion and punishment within the law.

> To make trouble was, within the reigning discourse of my childhood, something one should never do precisely because that would get one in trouble. The rebellion and its reprimand seemed to be caught up in the same terms, a phenomenon that gave rise to my first critical insight into the subtle ruse of power: The prevailing law threatened one with trouble, even put one in trouble, all to keep one out of trouble (1990:vii).

Observing rigid secularization might have kept people who joined NRMs, such as Pentecostalism, out of trouble only by renouncing one's ability to question that secularization precisely because one would have been afraid of getting in trouble with the authorities. I consider that NRMs, such as the Pentecostals in the Soviet Union, offer us an example of rebellion against rigid definitions by showing us the limitations of such narrowly imposed rules.

The Pentecostals thus shared the same horizons with the Soviet State as it pertains to the concept of secularization. Both entities are intelligible if they are read through the lens of the history of secularization. The Pentecostals might have caused concern simply by not finding the promise of rigid secularization—as offered by the Soviet State—to have been so promising. The word "Pentecostal" was thus threatening. The Pentecostal by declaring themselves as Pentecostal was already read as destroying something that was thought of by others not only as being good but as the cause of "progress." A NRM "spoiled" the

"progress" made by others, because people within it refused to convene, to assemble, or to meet up over the rigid secularization.

In the thick sociality of everyday spaces, NRMs are thus attributed as the origin of the lack of "progress," as the ones who stall knowledge. In order to get along, one has to participate in certain forms of solidarity: one has to agree at the right moments. NRMs are typically represented as politically backwards and antiquated, often as a way of protecting the right to certain forms of social bonding or of holding onto whatever is perceived to be under threat (for example, knowledge). A religious person does not even have to say anything to be read as anti-knowledge (for example, visible religious minorities). A religious friend of mine told me that she just has to open her mouth in meetings to witness eyes rolling as if to say "oh here she goes."

My experience of growing up in a religious household has taught me much about rolling eyes. That is why when people say that we need rigidly secularized public spaces, I am never convinced. My skepticism comes from childhood experiences of being part of a family which was part of a NRM in a relatively rigidly secularized society always at odds with the performance of proper behavior in public spaces, for example, by questioning certain behaviors.

Say I am seated at the dinner table at a friend's house. Around this table, the family gathers, having polite conversations, where only certain things can be brought up. Someone says something to me, about my family being part of Pentecostalism, which I consider problematic. I respond carefully, quietly perhaps even though I feel frustrated. People notice my frustration and ascribe it to my teenage hormones. Telling the story at home gives much of the same reaction. The violence of what was said or the violence of provocation goes unnoticed. Questioning is viewed as "causing arguments," disturbing the fragility of peace and is met by the rolling of the eyes.

Let us take this figure of the questioner seriously. Does the questioner disturb other people's peace by pointing out the limitations of a definition? Or does she expose the under layers that get hidden, displaced, or negated under public signs of rigid secularism? Does uncomfortability enter the room when somebody questions rigid definitions, or could questioning be the moment when the uncomfortability that circulates underneath gets brought to the surface in a certain manner?

The one who questions might make others uncomfortable by exposing how rigid definitions are sustained by erasing the very signs of NRMs. By questioning, one disturbs the very fantasy that rigid secularization is the bright future that waits. To kill a fantasy by questioning is to meddle with the establishments, to be against knowledge, against the promise of the Enlightenment and pro-religion, that is backwards. It is not that the questioner might not be for the goals that people who harbor rigid secularization ideas are for, but that the questioning, as an act, is looked upon as sabotaging the "progress" of others.

Answering the Question

Why did Pentecostalism succeed in the Soviet Union? As shown in chapter two and three, there were many factors that contributed to the way Pentecostalism established itself within the Soviet Union. One factor was that there were many other movements within the Christian tradition of the Russian Empire that were slowly disrupting the hegemonic way in which the Orthodox Church was presiding over society. Because the initial ideas about Pentecostalism—the baptism with the Holy Spirit—resonated with the already established movements, people were initially invited within communities where they shared this new ways of interpreting the text.

Another factor that contributed to the establishment of Pentecostalism in Soviet Union is that at the beginning, the Soviets allowed NRMs such as Pentecostalism to exist in

hopes that it will contribute to the weakening of the Russian Orthodox Church. However, when the movement started to organize some of their leaders were disrupted by arrests, public shaming and imprisonment.

After the war, the Pentecostals were forced to join the same union as the Baptists with whom they had numerous disagreements. While this may have seemed like a disadvantageous idea then, I think that this is what saved them and gave them a legal status within the Soviet Union.

Why did people join this specific movement? At the risk of borrowing psychological terms, I posit that one does that which one can do—given the tools available to one— in order to fulfil one's needs. Pentecostalism must have presented different tools to the people to whom this new faith appealed. New tools, be it praying for or with the Holy Spirit or getting together and interpreting the text, that were not given by any other community, religious or otherwise.

Why does one do anything? As any sociologist knows, one has a specific cultural capital that one uses in one's daily interactions. Perhaps Pentecostalism presented a certain opportunity for its members to interact with one another and create a community in which they had a certain mobility, influence and respect. If similar tools were available in other communities such as the Communist Party or the Baptist church, they only worked for those people who joined the Communist Party or the Baptist Church. The Pentecostals were Pentecostal because the *particularity* of Pentecostalism—baptism with the Holy Spirit—was that which they wanted in order to fulfill their spiritual needs.

That is why a rigid definition of secularization, as it was in the Soviet Union, hurts people like the Pentecostals. Vattimo proposes a "weakening" of the interpretation of the text and that is what NRMs are doing when they form because they have a new way of interpreting the text. However, a "weakening" is needed not only of the text, not only from

the religious groups, but also from the hegemonic understanding of secularization. There can be no secularization outside of religion. We have secularization because we have religion. If the goal of secularization is to make sure that religion does not dominate, then NRMs are excellent tactics for doing that. This proves that secularization takes place within religion.

The Soviets knew that when they allowed Pentecostalism to flourish. It was a tactic of "weakening" and secularizing the main Church. However, the Soviets did not want the Pentecostals to become a major presence in the Soviet Union out of fear of the Other. Little did they know that the Pentecostals were never homogenous and towards the second half of the Soviet Union a NRM split from the Pentecostals called the Charismatics (Franchuk 2008). This suggests that secularization occurs through NRMs because some people are constantly seeking new ways of interpreting the text.

NRMs are one way of secularization. Allowing people to secularize through NRMs is more likely to shape society into a "progressive," inclusive and inviting realm than dictating to people how exactly to secularize and what that looks like. When I went to a Pentecostal church in Seattle, it looked rather secularized to my post-Soviet, reverent-attitude and serious demeanor experience. If Martin Luther were to see an American Pentecostal Church, he may not necessarily condone it.

Christianity, through NRMs, has changed significantly. Someday, perhaps because of NRMs, communities may gather together, resembling a religious structure, because of a common idea, but the content of the language they may be using might be completely diluted from the actual religious text. Secularization is not done in a specific way. There are many possibilities and NRMs are a part of it. In this way, we can create spaces in which people of different belief systems feel included.

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