

**“GOD PREPARES THE WAY FOR HIS LIGHT  
TO ENTER INTO THE TERRIBLE DARKNESS OF MUSCOVY”.  
EXCHANGE AND MOBILITY BETWEEN HALLE PIETISM  
AND RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CLERGY  
IN THE 18TH CENTURY**

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**ABSTRACT.** This contribution analyses the relationship between Halle Pietism and Russian Orthodoxy with a focus on the mobility of actors on both sides. This included Halle Pietists travelling to Russia, but also young Russians being invited to Halle to study theology. The paper uses unpublished sources from the Archives of the Francke Foundations in Halle to paint a comprehensive picture of this mobility of people, but also of ideas and literature, which might not have achieved the intended aims on either side, but was still an important episode in German-Russian relations that has received very little attention in existing research. The relationship is looked at over four distinct chronological stages from the final decade of the 17th century to the Catherinian era in the 1760s, with an additional section focusing on Russian academic migration to Halle. Each of these stages must be seen both within the context of what happened in Russia at this time, as well as the developments in Halle. This paper takes all these aspects into account.

**Keywords:** Halle Pietism, Francke Foundations, Russian Orthodoxy, academic migration, education, Feofan Prokopovich, Tsar Peter I the Great, Simeon Todorsky, Anton Friedrich Büsching, Justus Samuel Scharschmidt

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The “terrible darkness of Muscovy” in the quotation from 1705 in the title illustrates a common Western perception of the religious development in Russia in the early 18th century, especially among Protestants.<sup>1</sup> The idea that Protestant Christianity was destined to prepare the way for a divine light beam to spread to all nations across the globe developed in a situation of increased awareness of global humankind in early modernity. Among the most articulate of these conceptions was the one that is associated with Halle in Germany. Halle Pietism became a vastly influential current within Protestant Christianity in the first half of the 18th century. Its influence was not confined to Halle, but aspired to a global scope, *inter alia* through missionary endeavours and the worldwide presence of Hallensian students inspired by Pietism.<sup>2</sup>

This paper seeks to analyse how Halle Pietism imagined this divine light to reach Russia, based on the archival records in the Archives of the Francke Foundations (*Franckesche Stiftungen*) in Halle.<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to comprehensively grasp the attitude from these sources, but together with other tangential scholarship, they point to important aspects that allow for an analysis. One of the chief Pietist strategies was to invite Orthodox clergy to study theology in Halle. This led to a Russian Orthodox academic mobility that had recognisable outcomes over a large part of the 18th century. This contribution aims to paint a picture of this mobility in the context of the wider Hallensian interests regarding the Orthodox Church in Russia.

The Golden Age of Halle Pietism was roughly the first half of the 18th century, when August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) and his son Gotthilf August Francke (1696-1769) were leading figures in the Pietist movement. Next to being professors at the university, these two theologians led the “Waisenhaus” (Orphanage) or “Glauchasche Anstalten” (Glauchau Institutions, named after the Halle suburb Glauchau), from which the present Francke Foundations emerged.

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<sup>1</sup> See Alfons Brüning, “Symphonia, kosmische Harmonie, Moral. Moskauer Diskurse über gerechte Herrschaft im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,” in *Gerechtigkeit und gerechte Herrschaft vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Stefan Plaggenborg (Berlin: De Gruyter 2020), 23-52.

<sup>2</sup> We use the term Pietism to refer to the current associated with August Hermann Francke in Halle only. Other currents conventionally grouped under the heading Pietism are marginal for this paper. On the Moravian Brethren and Russia, see Otto Teigeler, *Die Herrnhuter in Russland. Ziel, Umfang und Ertrag ihrer Aktivitäten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2006).

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of some relevant sources in Halle, see Michail Fundaminski, *Die Russica-Sammlung der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle. Aus der Geschichte der deutsch-russischen kulturellen Beziehungen im 18. Jahrhundert. Katalog*, (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1997). Sebastian Rimestad carried out archival research for this article thanks to a Dr. Liselotte Kirchner Scholarship of the Francke Foundations during three months in the summer of 2021. The contribution of Daniel Haas was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) – GRK 2008 – 242138915.

This large complex not only included the orphanage, but also several schools, a publishing house, a pharmacy, a library, and a *Wunderkammer*. The influence emanating from Halle Pietism to a large extent stemmed from the outreach of alumni from these foundations, who became missionaries in India and North America, for example, or acted as private tutors (*Hauslehrer*) and pastors all across the world.

The influence of Halle Pietism in a variety of geographical, confessional, and linguistic contexts has been thoroughly analysed from a plethora of theoretical angles. Also the relationship of Halle Pietism to Russia has been repeatedly treated, focusing on individual Pietists<sup>4</sup> or on the importance of Halle for knowledge of Russian developments in the West.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the theological affinities between Halle Pietism and Russian Orthodox Christianity have also received some attention,<sup>6</sup> but the influence of Hallensian concepts of education on the role of the clergy as educators has been surprisingly little researched.

Arguably, the 18th century was the time in Russian history that was most open to Western influences. This openness inspired many European intellectuals, who saw Russia as a space in which to realise their ambitious ideas. This Russian openness was, however, to a large degree utilitarian: Russia happily accepted the ideas of Western Enlightenment, but only to the extent that this strengthened its own political clout on the one hand and did not impact the dominating position of the Orthodox Church in the Russian Empire on the other. Nevertheless, the 17th and 18th centuries – understood not as chronological

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<sup>4</sup> Günter Rosenfeld, “Justus Samuel Scharnschmid und seine Bedeutung für die deutsche Rußlandkunde am Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts,” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 2 (1954): 866-902; Christiane Schiller and Mära Grudule, ed., “*Mache dich auf und werde Licht – Celies nu, topi gaišs*” *Zu Leben und Wirken Ernst Glücks (1654-1705) Akten der Tagung anl. seines 300. Todestages vom 10. bis 13. Mai 2005 in Halle (S)*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); Holger Zaunstöck, “Georg Friedrich Weise – an invisible agent of Pietism in Russia”, *Kunstkamera* 3 (5), (2019): 19-38.

<sup>5</sup> Eduard Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt der deutschen Rußlandkunde im 18. Jahrhundert*, (Berlin: Akademie, 1953); Johannes Wallmann and Udo Sträter, ed., *Halle und Osteuropa. Zur europäischen Ausstrahlung des hallischen Pietismus* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1998); Rainer Lächele, ed., *Das Echo Halles. Kulturelle Wirkungen des Pietismus* (Tübingen: Bibliotheca Academica, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Stefan G. Reichelt, *Johann Arndts „Vier Bücher zum wahren Christentum“ in Russland: Vorboten eines neuzeitlichen interkulturellen Dialogs* (Leipzig: EVA, 2011); Andrey V. Ivanov, *A Spiritual Revolution. The Impact of Reformation and Enlightenment in Orthodox Russia* (Madison, WI: UWP, 2020), 138-152; Elena Belyakova and Taisiya Leber, “Die Verbreitung des Pietismus in Russland und die Kirchenreformen in der Zeit Peters des Großen,” in *Ausstrahlung der Reformation. Ost-westliche Spurensuche*, ed. Natalia Bakshi, Georg Pfeleiderer and Yvonne Pörzgen (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 45-65; Tatiana V. Chumakova, “Пьетизм в русской религиозно-философской мысли XVIII–XIX веков” [Pietism in Russian Religious and Philosophical Thought of the 18th-19th Centuries], *Философические письма. Русско-европейский диалог* 5 (2022), 84-103.

timeframes, but as cultural patterns, divided by the Petrine reforms – co-existed in Russian society for a long time. That explains why Russian society constantly oscillated between periods of anti-western tendencies and times with openness and all kinds of innovation over the 18th century.

It is important to emphasise that in this process of cultural transfer, the Russian side was not as much interested in abstract “ideas of Enlightenment” as in concrete institutional models that could be adapted to the Russian context. Among those models, maybe the most fashionable one was that of the religious leader actively and competently participating in the process of education and instruction of the empire’s subjects. As Tsar Peter the Great mentioned in his conversation with the terminally ill Patriarch Adrian (1637-1700): “The clergy are almost illiterate. They should learn to administer the sacraments before being raised to this rank. To do this, a man is needed – not only one – and a definite place to do it in.”<sup>7</sup> However, it was not only about creating the corresponding schools. Archbishop Feofan Prokopovich, who plays an important role in this paper, himself introduced the idea of seminaries for the clergy in every diocese in Russia. In spite of the archbishop’s anti-Latin leanings, this idea was largely taken from the Catholic context. It was clear that the priests needed education, but it was all the more difficult to understand on which basis they should acquire this education. Which pedagogical agenda should they aspire to and how should it be elaborated? From where should this agenda and its elements be taken?

The paper is divided into five sections, with the four first ones each covering a chronologically distinct phase of the relationship. The first section is devoted to the initial phase from the end of the 17th century until 1711, when the first contact between Halle Pietists and the Russian Orthodox bishop and later reformer Feofan Prokopovich was established. This passed on to a second phase, in which the Pietists considered Prokopovich the key to a Russian awakening. The death of Russian Emperor Peter the Great in 1725 and the waning of Prokopovich’s influence put an end to this phase. The third phase began 1730, when the Russian throne was occupied by Germanophile Anna Ioannovna, and ends 1754, when the only Russian Orthodox bishop that is known to have received a theological education from Halle, Simeon Todorsky, passed away. Even though there were few direct links between Halle and Russia after this date, there is a fourth phase, highlighting how conceptualisations derived from Halle Pietism did have an impact also in Russia during the reign of Empress Catherine II the Great in the 1760s. Catherine’s reign represented a

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<sup>7</sup> Georges Bissonnette, “Peter the Great and the Church as an Educational Institution,” in *Essays in Russian and Soviet history in honor of Geroid Tanquary Robinson*, ed. John Shelton Curtiss (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 3-19, here 6.

pinnacle of Russian openness to Western ideas and not only Pietist influence waned after that. The fifth section then delves into a specific aspect of the intellectual exchange between Halle Pietism and Russian Orthodoxy, namely the presence of Russian Orthodox in the Faculty of Theology of Halle University. Such academic migration occurred throughout the 18th century and had a lasting impact on both sides.

### **Phase I – 1694-1711: First Contacts**

The worldview of the great pietist spiritual entrepreneur and reformer August Herrmann Francke in Halle can be glanced from his “Great Project” (*Großer Aufsatz*), an unpublished manifesto that he continuously refined at least since 1704. Here, he laments that the world is in a dire state, claiming that the only solution “must begin with the teaching class fulfilling the command of Christ and his Apostle, truly becoming the salt of the earth”.<sup>8</sup> The *teaching class* (*Lehrstand*) was a grouping that for Francke included mainly clergy and teachers, two professions that were interlinked in the early 18th century. In the second chapter of his great project, Francke boasts of how the orphanage he had founded outside the Halle city wall and its schools were to be the nucleus of a new order restoring the teaching class to its due task. From there, his idea was to spread the reform throughout the world via missionary enterprises, foreign theologians having studied in Halle, and connections with dignitaries and authorities.

This includes Russia, which is mentioned in passing in the project (once as “Russia” and twice as “Moscow”). These mentions go back to the first connections between Halle and Russia, which were connected with the names Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf (1655-1712) and Justus Samuel Scharschmidt (1664-1724). Ludolf was a travelling diplomat who visited Russia on a secret diplomatic mission for King Christian V. of Denmark in 1692-94, where he learnt Russian and started writing a grammar for the language.<sup>9</sup> Ever since, he was interested, *inter alia*, in bringing religious enlightenment to Russia, and found an ally in Francke with whom he entertained good relations until his death. In the following, his diplomatic missions brought him to “the Orient” including Constantinople, and he was instrumental in recruiting Greek Orthodox students to study at the

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<sup>8</sup> “Wenn eine *Beßerung* gesucht werden soll, muß sie nach der jetzt angezogenen Anweisung Christi und seines Apostels vom Lehr=Stande angefangen werden, als welcher das Saltz der Erden seyn muß.” Otto Podczeck, ed., *August Herrmann Franckes Schrift über eine Reform des Erziehungs- und Bildungswesens als Ausgangspunkt einer geistlichen und sozialen Neuordnung der Evangelischen Kirche des 18. Jahrhunderts. Der Grosse Aufsatz* (Berlin: Akademie, 1962), 75.

<sup>9</sup> See Joachim Tetzner, *H. W. Ludolf und Russland*, (Berlin: Akademie, 1955).

*Collegium Orientale Theologicum* that was opened at the Francke Orphanage in Halle in 1702.<sup>10</sup> Scharschmidt, on the other hand, was a young Pietist preacher whom Francke and Ludolf selected to go to Russia to prepare for the coming “Ecclesia Universa”.<sup>11</sup>

Scharschmidt went as a preacher to the German congregation in Moscow in 1696, where his Pietist preaching was not appreciated, however. He never settled in, instead travelling around in Russia, reporting his experiences to Francke in Halle.<sup>12</sup> The grand project to infuse the Russian Orthodox Church with Pietist ideas did not show significant progress, but Ludolf and Scharschmidt were instrumental in laying the foundations for knowledge of Russia in Francke’s foundations in Halle,<sup>13</sup> including a specific view of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The access to Russian Orthodox clergy at that time was very limited. After returning from Russia, Ludolf only encountered the Russian embassy priests in The Hague, such as Christopher Rastoviecki, of which he reports the following in a letter to Francke on 25th October 1700:

I am satisfied that Mr. Scharschmidt made his acquaintance in The Hague and I hope that their friendship will remain blessed in the Lord. It would be a good fruit of this acquaintance, if a correspondence could be established with somebody from the Kiev University to promote the interest *totius corporis Christi*. When you write to such a priest, you could ask for a suitable partner in Kiev.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ulrich Moennig, “Die griechischen Studenten am Hallenser Collegium orientale theologicum,” in Wallmann and Sträter, *Halle und Osteuropa*, 299-329; Stefano Saracino, *Tischgespräche, Wohngemeinschaften, fromme Praktiken: Die Alltags- und Wissensgeschichte der griechisch-orthodoxen Studenten am pietistischen Collegium Orientale Theologicum in Halle (1703–1707)* (Erfurt: Universität Erfurt, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Tetzner, *H. W. Ludolf*, 64. On Ludolf’s idea of an “Ecclesia Universa”, which influenced Protestant missionary efforts among Orthodox and Oriental Christians beyond Halle, see Adelisa Malena, “Promoting the Common Interest of Christ. H.W. Ludolf’s ‘Impartial’ Projects and the Beginnings of the SPCK,” in *British Protestant Missions and the Conversion of Europe, 1600–1900*, ed. Simone Maghenzani and Stefano Villani (New York: Routledge, 2020), 140-163.

<sup>12</sup> Rosenfeld, “Justus Samuel Scharschmidt”.

<sup>13</sup> See Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*.

<sup>14</sup> “Es ist mir lieb, daß sich H Scharschmidt in Haage mit ihm bekandt gemacht, hoffe ihre Freundschaft werde noch meistens im Herrn gesegnet seyn, eine gute Frucht davon würde seyn, wann mann mit einem oder andern seiner Menschen von der Universität Kiov könte in Correspondenz trethen und das Interesse totius corporis Christi dadurch befördern. Wann der Bruder an sothane Priester schreiben solte, könte er hiervon Vermehrung thun und sich ein oder ander zu diesem Topo dienliches Subiectum in Kiov nennen laßen.” Letter from H. W. Ludolf to A. H. Francke, London, 25.10.1700, AFSt/H D 71 : 62-63.

However, Scharschmidt does not mention such a correspondence, and also Ludolf’s continued attempts to reach out to Rastoviecki did not yield any results. The suggestion to contact the Kiev theological academy seemingly did not succeed. The initial unbridled optimism had settled down by 1706, when Ludolf wrote to Francke:

The Kingdom of God is opposed here, just as in other countries, most of all by the clergy, as the most pious priests, such as the one at the Russian Embassy in the Hague, are the most ardent supporters of flashy ecclesiastical ceremonies. At the same time, such priests seem to aspire to something good, which could be fostered by moving in the right circles – if only the poor chap would know another language.<sup>15</sup>

Scharschmidt also had limited encounters with Orthodox clergy, even if he stayed for several decades in Russia. He repeatedly complained that he did not speak Russian. In fact, the German preachers were only supposed to cater to the German Lutherans who often lived in distinct suburbs and did not need to have much contact with Russians at all. The “German Suburb” (literal translation of *Nemetskaia Sloboda*) of Moscow, for example, was a largely closed community of foreigners.<sup>16</sup> The contact that existed, happened on the level of the upper nobility, including the occasional high episcopacy.

At the same time, reports of the enlightened and progressive nature of the new Tsar Peter I, who had, incidentally, spent much of his childhood in the Moscow German Suburb, encouraged Western actors to raise their hopes of asserting influence in Russia. Ludolf in 1705 reported that a Russian traveller had given him hope that “God also prepares the way for his light to enter into the terrible darkness of Muscovy”.<sup>17</sup> In fact, enlightenment influence from Germany, primarily from Leipzig, had seeped into the Russian elite for several decades already, and many German artists and intellectuals had entered Russian

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<sup>15</sup> “Unterdeßen wird im selbigen Lande wie in andern das Reich Gottes wohl den größten Widerstand vor der Clerisey haben, in dem ich [auch?] die frömbsten Priester, wie derjenige einer mit ist, welchen die Rußische Ambassaden in Haage hinterlaßen, die allergrößte Veneration an ihrem Kirchengenrange haben. Gleichwohl scheinen sothanen Priester ein Verlangen nach was gutes zu haben, welches durch guten Umgang einigen Wachsthumb erlangen könnte, wenn der arme Man einige andere Sprache könnte.” Letter from H. W. Ludolf to A. H. Francke, Amsterdam, 18.05.1706, AFSt/H A 112 : 59-62.

<sup>16</sup> Vera A. Kovrigina, *Немецкая слобода Москвы и ее жители – в конце XVII – первой четверти XVIII века* [The German Suburb of Moscow and its inhabitants] (Moscow: Arkheograficheskii Tsentr, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> “Dieu prepare aussi le chemin de sa lumière entre les terribles ténèbres de Moscovie”. Letter from H. W. Ludolf to C. H. von Canstein, 04.02.1705, AFSt/H A 112 : 227-230.

service at least since 1667.<sup>18</sup> Their most lasting contribution was in teaching, initially as private tutors for the sons of Russian nobility.

Some few of these German enlighteners endeavoured to establish educational institutions of various scope and permanence. For this early period, the most topical ones were the makeshift schools Scharschmidt set up wherever he went<sup>19</sup> and the “first Russian gymnasium”, founded by the Livonian Lutheran Pastor Johann Ernst Glück in Moscow in 1704.<sup>20</sup> This latter enterprise, for which Tsar Peter released Glück from his war captivity, only strenuously relates to the Halle Pietists, though. Glück was no Pietist, even if he entertained good relations with them, including Francke.<sup>21</sup> Even when the assistant teacher, Johann Werner Paus, later became a staunch Pietist, the fact that the curriculum included dancing classes indicates that it was not a Pietist project. Moreover, it was rather short-lived, as Glück died before the end of the first schoolyear and the continuation proved contentious. The school continued to exist until 1715, but it was no longer the lighthouse institution it had had the potential to become.<sup>22</sup>

A last important aspect of this first period was the foundation of the new Russian capital Saint Petersburg. The city was planned from scratch on the basis of patterns Peter had come to know in Western Europe. Consequently, the city had a non-Russian appearance, with a foreign population of about 10-13 % in 1725.<sup>23</sup> Each of the confessional groups (Catholics, Lutherans, and Anglicans) were entitled to their own church building on the city’s main street, the Nevskii Prospekt.<sup>24</sup> The first pastor at the Lutheran church, Wilhelm Tolle, wrote to

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<sup>18</sup> Günter Mühlpfordt, “Halle-Leipziger Aufklärung in Rußland – ein Faktor der Modernisierung. Von den petrinischen zu den katharinäischen Reformen. (Mit Vorstufen seit Zar Aleksej und Spätstufen bis zur Regierungszeit Alexanders II.)”, in *Russische Aufklärungsrezeption im Kontext offizieller Bildungskonzepte (1700-1825)*, ed. Gabriela Lehmann-Carli et al. (Berlin: Arno Spitz, 2001), 405-425.

<sup>19</sup> Rosenfeld, “Justus Samuel Scharschmid”, 898.

<sup>20</sup> Vera A. Kovrigina, “Glück als Schulgründer in Russland”, in Schiller and Grudule, “*Mache dich auf*”, 193-213.

<sup>21</sup> Veronika Albrecht-Birkner, “Glücks Verhältnis zu P. J. Spener und A. H. Francke, oder: war Glück ein Pietist?”, in Schiller and Grudule, “*Mache dich auf*”, 57-78.

<sup>22</sup> There are indications that the Russian Orthocox clergy was opposed to Glück’s school project, see Ingeborg Fleischhauer, *Die Deutschen im Zarenreich* (Stuttgart: dtv, 1991), 79; Jan Kusber, *Eliten- und Volksbildung im Zarenreich während des 18. und der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2004), 39.

<sup>23</sup> Aleksandr N. Andreev and Iuliia S. Andreeva, “Иноземное население Санкт-Петербурга первой половины XVIII столетия: опыт статистической реконструкции” [Foreign Inhabitants in Saint Petersburg in the First Half of the 18th Century: a statistical reconstruction attempt], *Вестник Томского государственного университета* 478 (2022): 72-79, here 74.

<sup>24</sup> Arkhimandrit Avgustin, *Храмы Невского Проспекта* [The Churches of the Nevsky Prospekt] (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2015).

Francke in Halle shortly before his death, requesting two assistant preachers for the parish. The two, Heinrich Gottlieb Nazzius and Johann Georg Sorger arrived end of 1710 after a strenuous journey via Arkhangelsk. Especially Nazzius became an important Pietist focal point in Saint Petersburg in the years to come.

## Phase II – 1711-1730: Optimism

The idea to come in and reorganise Russian religious life on the basis of Pietist principles had waned, but the network of Pietist preachers and collaborators in Russia grew, which gave rise to a new optimism regarding Pietist influence in Russia. Moreover, this second phase is closely connected with the rising star of Russian Orthodox Bishop Feofan Prokopovich. Prokopovich was repeatedly mentioned in the reports to Halle by various Pietists, who saw in him an erudite and potentially useful prelate in opposition to Latin-minded camp that dominated the Russian Orthodox Church at the time. Scharschmidt mentioned "my particular friend, the monk Feofan Prokopovich"<sup>25</sup> in a letter from 1713 and fractions of a correspondence between the two has survived.

The usefulness of relations with Prokopovich came to the fore in 1716 when the latter was elevated to Bishop of Pskov with residence in Peter's capital Saint Petersburg. This change of direction in Russian church politics was recognised with elation by Francke and his entourage. The young Pietist preacher and Halle alumni Eberhard Gutsleff the Younger (1691-1749) from Estonia put it most unambiguously in words in 1718:

My naïve thoughts on this issue of religion is that such a vast empire cannot easily be swayed towards this or that particular sect. It would therefore be judicious for the Tsar retain the name of the Greek religion<sup>26</sup>, calling the planned changes a reformation of the ancient Greek Church according to its original purity and integrity. And when a foregoing thorough investigation confirms that this religion was based on the pure word of God all along, its rule and guideline must remain this divine word also after the purification. To achieve this aim, we should involve Greek *patres* for Scriptural exegesis, organise courses in the Greek language for the Russian youth and encourage the study of the Church Fathers.

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<sup>25</sup> "[...] ist Theophanes Procopovitz [...] mein sonderlicher Freund". Letter from J. S. Scharschmidt to A. H. Francke, 01.08.1713, AFSt/H C 296 : 50. See also Rosenfeld, "Justus Samuel Scharschmid", 901.

<sup>26</sup> "Greek religion" was the Pietist term for the Orthodox Church, both in the Ottoman Empire and in Russia. The sources from Halle refer to Orthodox Russians as either "Greek", "Russian" or even "Oriental Christians".

That would, no doubt, open many eyes to help discern whether this or that sect is closer to the true Church. It would certainly be useful if some *studiosi* in Halle would be inclined to learn the Russian language.<sup>27</sup>

No other letter in the Francke Foundation archives speaks so openly about a strategy to reform the Russian Church in favour of Pietism, even though this ambition also shines through in other documents. Gutsleff had spent many years in Halle since 1707, where he studied theology under Francke, and it is possible that he had encountered Greek students there. The Lutheran parish in Reval (Tallinn), where he resided, could hardly provide any such experience. A year later, Gutsleff enthusiastically wrote to Halle about Tsar Peter's curiosity, which could be used to further the Reign of the Lord Christ.<sup>28</sup> Gutsleff's zeal with regard to the Russian Church wanes away after that, but he was intimately involved in a local school project in Alp, Estonia, modelled on the Halle orphanage.<sup>29</sup> Actually, the institution was mentioned by Feofan Prokopovich in a letter he sent to Francke in 1720, praising the initiative and wishing it good luck.<sup>30</sup> Later that year, the bishop even passed through the orphanage in person.

Francke quickly realised that Prokopovich was a key figure in order to increase the Pietist influence on the future Russian Church and sought to foster good relations with this prelate wherever he could.<sup>31</sup> This was facilitated by the

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<sup>27</sup> „Meine einfältige Gedancken bey dieser Religionssache wären diese, daß, da ein so großes Reich [sich] nicht leicht zu dieser oder jenen particulairn Secte wurde adstringiren laßen, ob es nicht rahtsam, daß der Zaar den Nahmen der griegischen Religion behielte und die vorhabende Veränderung angebe als eine Reformation der uhralten griegischen Kirche nach ihrer ersten Reinigkeit und Lauterkeit, und wann man dann nach vorhergegangener Untersuchung finden würde, wie dieselbe allein das reine Wort Gottes im Grunde ihrer Religion gehabt, eben dieses auch in der vorhabenden Repurgation ein Regel und Richtschnuhr seyn müste. Hienechst könnten die griegischen Patres als Exegeten der heil. Schrift zur Beyhülfe gezogen, die rußische Jugend in der griegischen Sprache vor andern unterrichtet und also das Studium Patrum vor andern in Flor gebracht werden. Zweifelsohn würden da vielen die Augen aufgehen, daß sie desto leichter würden prüfen können, wer von dieser oder jener Secte der wahren Kirche am nechsten kommen würde. Sollten in Halle einige Studiosi Gelegenheit und Lust haben, sich auf die rußische Sprache zu legen, möchte es nicht undienlich seyn.“ Letter from E. Gutsleff to A. H. Francke, 16.01.1718, AFSt/H C 35 : 12. The transcription is provided as found in Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 432-435. However, some words on the line ends were not accessible to Winter, who incorrectly conjectured them. Those have been corrected.

<sup>28</sup> Letter from E. Gutsleff to A. H. Francke, Reval, 05.05.1719, AFSt/H A 188a : 123.

<sup>29</sup> Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 267-275.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from F. Prokopovich to A. H. Francke, Petersburg, 04.03.1720, reproduced in Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 437-438.

<sup>31</sup> Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 123-160; Ivanov, *A Spiritual Revolution*, 41-55. On the relationship of Prokopovich to Pietism at large, see also Robert Collis, *The Petrine Instauraton* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 339-354.

Pietist preacher Caspar Matthias Rodde (1689-1743) in Narva, who described his first encounter with Prokopovich as follows:

Other than that I cannot report anything, except that there is a certain bishop of Narva and Pskov, a man of great erudition who is eager for the truth, he especially propagates the teaching of justification publicly, while he is an enemy of superstitious people and keenly preaches against them. This man is highly esteemed by his Majesty the Tsar, while the old popes regard him with suspicion.<sup>32</sup>

Rodde, who was a gifted translator, helped prepare several German pietist texts in Russian for distribution and also translated some of Prokopovich’s Russian writings for Francke to survey.<sup>33</sup> The first German translation of the 1721 Spiritual Regulation, reforming the Russian Church on the model of Lutheran consistories, is probably from Rodde’s pen.

In this document, which would remain the foundational text for the Russian Orthodox Church for the next two centuries, there was a strong emphasis on the proper education of the clergy.<sup>34</sup> It is likely that this section was based, amongst other sources, on the foundational documents of Francke’s Halle orphanage and the orphanage in Alp.<sup>35</sup> However, there are few mentions of the Spiritual Regulation in the Francke Foundation archives until 1727, when Tsar Peter the Great was no longer alive and a fierce battle for his succession had thrown a shadow on the future of all Russian reform plans. Prokopovich had lost his most enthusiastic patron and decided to lay low. The domestic Pietist preacher Johann Loder in Saint Petersburg reported in a letter to Halle about Prokopovich’s current position:

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<sup>32</sup> “Sonst weiß ich von hier nichts zu berichten, als daß ein gewisser Bischoff von Narva und Pleskow ist, ein Mann von großer Gelehrsamkeit, und einen Eyfer vor die Wahrheit hat, insonderheit die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung sowohl öffentlich als insbesondere fleißig treibet und dagegen feind ist dem superstitieusen Weesen, auch dawider scharff prediget; derselbe ist von Ihro Zaarischen Majest. sehr aestimiert; hingegen sehen die alten Pfaffen scheel auf ihn.” Letter from C. M. Rodde to P. Anton, Narva, 27.09.1720, AFSt/H D 111 : 382. Transcribed following Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 361. An alternative transcription of most of this quote can be found in Michail Fundaminskii, “Caspar Matthias Rodde als Übersetzer und Verbindungsmann zwischen Halle und Rußland” in Lächele, *Das Echo*, 359-374, here 363.

<sup>33</sup> Fundaminskii, “Caspar Matthias Rodde”. Another important link between Halle and Prokopovich was Albert Anton Vierorth (1697-1761), the domestic preacher of General von Hallart in the Tsarist Army. See Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 154-156.

<sup>34</sup> For the regulation, see also Sebastian Rimestad, “Russian Orthodox Approaches to Secularity in the Petrine Reforms of the Early 18th Century,” *Working Paper Series of the HCAS “Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities”*, forthcoming, 2023.

<sup>35</sup> See Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 269.

I have heard that Archbishop Feofan Prokopovich is currently a lone wolf [*solitarius*], whom the majority voice would rather have displaced to Kazan [...] I do not feel any spiritual consequences of the former Regulation at the moment. Some act this way, others that way.<sup>36</sup>

### Phase III – from 1730: Attempts at Direct Influence

The unbridled optimism about the prospect of winning Russia to Pietism through Prokopovich and Tsar Peter had taken a hit, but the “Russian” project was still alive. Moreover, August Hermann Francke had died in 1727, and his son, Gotthilf August Francke (1696-1769), was destined to succeed him. This necessarily involved some restructuring and reorientation. The rise to power of Empress Anna Ioannovna in 1730, Peter’s niece, therefore opened up a new phase in the relationship between Halle and Russia. Anna had married the Duke of Courland in 1710, but he died a year later, making her the ruling Duchess of Courland for two decades before becoming Empress of Russia. Since she had spent several decades in a German court and had a German lover, Duke Ernst Johann von Biron, her rule is considered a dark period in Russian historiography, but for the Halle Pietists, it was great news. With German culture at the helm of the Russian Empire, eager to continue and cement the reform projects of Peter the Great, a more direct approach to enlightenment could be pursued.

Even Anna Ioannovna did not dare to touch the prominent position of the Russian Orthodox Church, though, leaving it in the able hands of Archbishop Feofan Prokopovich. The latter immediately began removing the opponents of his idea of reform from influential positions.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, his new prominent position no longer allowed him to entertain direct relations with Halle, but the circle around Francke decided to step up the efforts to educate Russian theologians in Halle and send them back to Russia to further their cause. As mentioned already, there had been a short-lived stunt of Greeks in Halle at the beginning of the century and Eduard Winter mentions several Russian students of theology from the 1710s,<sup>38</sup> but the endeavour only had tangible results from the 1730s.

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<sup>36</sup> “[...] vernommen habe, dasz der Ertzbischoff Theophan Procopowitsch p.t. ein Solitarius sey, welchen die plurima Vota lieber nach Casan hätten. [...] Von seeligen würckungen des ehemaligen Reglement spühre ich pro tempore nichts. Einer schafft disz, der andere das.” Letter from J. Loder to A. H. Francke, Petersburg, 08.03.1727, AFSt/H C 191a : 1. Transcription from *Briefe an August Hermann Francke*, ed. Theodor Geissendoerfer (Urbana, IL 1939), 198.

<sup>37</sup> Ivanov, *A Spiritual Revolution*, 114-120.

<sup>38</sup> Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 105.

This was most notably the merit of Simeon Todorsky, who entered the University of Halle in 1729 and returned to Russia six years later to teach at the Kiev theological academy.<sup>39</sup> Todorsky was an avid student and a gifted translator. His most successful translation was of the fundamental text "Four Books on True Christianity" [*Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum*] by the Proto-Pietist Johann Arndt (1555-1621). Once the Russian version was ready to be printed, the Halle Pietists sought to dedicate it to the Russian Empress Anna Ioannovna, who had contributed 500 roubles to the publication costs. However, this would not have been well received in the Russian Church, and Archbishop Prokopovich convinced the Hallensians to drop the dedication and even omit the translator's name. 3,000 copies of the translation were produced in 1736,<sup>40</sup> but since Prokopovich died in that year, the books could not be openly distributed in Russia. Pastor Nazzius reported from Saint Petersburg in 1737 that "the Russian Arndt is not displayed for public sale in the local bookshop, but those that ask receive a copy."<sup>41</sup> The books were shipped to various Pietist agents in the Russian Empire, who sold them clandestinely, for the book was never cleared for public sale by the Russian ecclesiastical authorities.

Gotthilf August Francke authored annual reports to the missionaries that were sent from Halle to North America and India. These reports include developments at the institutions in Halle as well as Pietist developments worldwide, so they allow for an undisguised view of how Francke and his entourage viewed developments at home and around the world. In the report for 1734, for example, the future plans of Simeon Todorsky are listed:

He thinks that once the publication of the Russian Arndt is complete, he will return to the Russian University in Kiev and, knowing Greek and Hebrew quite well, teach these subjects as well as catechetical practice. We do therefore hope that he can achieve, with divine assistance, that the good and just inhabitants of the Russian lands might get to know the Lord's word better.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 226-229, 239-240; Ivanov, *A Spiritual Revolution*, 138-141.

<sup>40</sup> Reichelt, *Johann Arndts*, 27-53; Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, 232-233; Svetlana Mengel, "Russische Drucke aus Halle – , ein vergessenes Kapitel der Geschichte der slavischen Philologie'," in *Dmitrij I. Tschizewski. Impulse eines Philologen und Philosophen für eine komparative Geistesgeschichte*, ed. Angela Richter and Brigitte Klosterberg (Berlin: LIT, 2009), 21-30.

<sup>41</sup> "Mit dem Russischen Arndt ist so weit kommen, daß er zwar nicht publice im hiesigen Buchladen feil vor Augen lieget, doch heimlich an die so danach fragen verkaufft wird". Letter from H. G. Nazzius to A. H. Francke, Petersburg, 04.06.1737, Berlin Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass A. H. Francke 28/24 : 11.

<sup>42</sup> "Er gedencket denn wenn mit den Druck des Rußischen Arnds fertig seyn wird auf der Rußischen Universitaet Kiow zu gehen und daselbst weil er die hebraeische und Griechische Sprache gründlich verstehet zu dociren und catechetische Übungen anzustellen; dahero man wohl

The death of Anna Ioannovna in 1740 again plunged the Russian royalty into chaos, until Elisabeth, a daughter of Peter the Great, usurped power through a coup d'état end of 1741. These developments are pessimistically commented upon in Francke's report for that year:

God has ordered us to perform prayer and intercession, and especially for His servants in Russia during this time of *revolution*. For it is to be feared that the Russians might unleash their ancient hatred against all foreigners living among them, the Germans in particular.<sup>43</sup>

Luckily, it did not come to the worst, as the following report for 1742 is again optimistic. This report also mentions Todorsky, who

has worked diligently in Kiev, but is now summoned to Moscow. He is said to be charged with educating the Prince of Hollstein [the 14-year-old successor to the throne, who had spent his childhood in Germany] in the teachings of the Greek Church, for which he deserves much compassion. May God safeguard him from betraying the once recognised valuable truth and protect him in this dangerous position.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, Francke hoped that the "once recognised valuable truth" that Todorsky had acquired during his studies in Halle would still influence his activities. He seemed to disregard that Todorsky – as a Russian Orthodox Bishop that was positively inclined to the spiritual values of Pietist Protestantism – remained firmly within the "Greek religion". Pietism was, for Todorsky, a reservoir for the renewal of spiritual education in Russia, rather than the basis for a religious reform.

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hoffet, daß durch denselben künftig mit Goetl. Beistand in Rusland etwas gutes und gerechtes u. denen Einwohnern desselben Gottes Wort mehr beandt werden möchte." G. A. Francke's report to the missionaries in India for 1734, AFSt/M 3 M 1 : 2.

<sup>43</sup> "Gebet und Fürbitte aber hat Er uns befohlen, die wir auch bey gedachten Revolution allen in Rußland befindlichen Knechten Gottes schuldig sind, wie man fürchte, daß bey dieser Gelegenheit die Rußen ihren alten Haß gegen die unter ihnen wohnenden Ausländer sonders Deutsche, einmal auslaßen dürffen." G. A. Francke's report to the missionaries in India for 1741, AFSt/M 3 M 2 : 5.

<sup>44</sup> "[...] der zu Kiow in Segen gearbeitet, ist von dort ab, und nach Moscau berufen worden. Auch sagt man, daß er den Printz von Hollstein in der Lehre der Griechischen Kirche habe unterrichten müssen, da man gewiß groß Mitleyden mit ihm zu tragen hätte. Gott wolle Ihn vor Verleugnung der von Ihm einmal erkandten theuren Wahrheiten bewahren, und auf diesen gefährlichen Posten beschützen." G. A. Francke's report to the missionaries in India for 1742, AFSt/M 3 M 2 : 4a.

A year later, Francke explained to the missionaries that "one must pity his soul, which seems to be mostly torn due to royal benevolence."<sup>45</sup> Todorsky's difficult position was well known to the Hallensians, who realised that direct communication between Saint Petersburg and Halle could be detrimental to his position, especially if they fuelled the suspicions of his still secret involvement in the translation of Arndt's text. The Professor of Oriental Languages in Halle, Johann Heinrich Callenberg, wrote to an unidentified "Evangelical Christian" in Saint Petersburg in 1746:

the good Sir E. (a prelate of the Greek Church) has good reason to be careful: may the Lord reign over him and strengthen him, that he does not overstep his bounds, letting so much good come to waste.<sup>46</sup>

The "good Sir E" is Todorsky. Callenberg had founded the *Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum* in 1728 to promote the mission among Jews and Muslims, but he expanded it in 1746 to include mission among Orthodox and Oriental Christians.<sup>47</sup> In his printed reports, which he sent to friends and patrons of the institute, Callenberg also mentioned the relations to Russia in detail. In order to protect the Orthodox actors that appear in these reports, he only rarely mentions their actual names, instead using an intricate system of letter codes, some of which are difficult to decrypt.

In another letter, probably to the Pietist intermediary Johann Gottfried Pflug in Saint Petersburg, Callenberg suggests that Pflug pay regular visits to Todorsky: "Do not refrain from visiting prelate E. as often as possible".<sup>48</sup> The Hallensians could rely on a network of active Pietist agents and Pietist-friendly partners to keep the contact with compromised actors, like Todorsky. One of these active Pietists in Russia was Georg Friedrich Weise (1696-1781), who has received surprisingly little attention in the literature.<sup>49</sup> Weise, who came to Saint Petersburg as a domestic preacher in 1730, stayed there until 1741, occupying,

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<sup>45</sup> "man hat billig Mitleiden mit seinem Gemüth, welches durch die Gunst des Hofes meistens hingerissen zu seyn scheint." G. A. Francke's report to the missionaries in India for 1743, AFSt/M 3 M 2 : 3.

<sup>46</sup> "Der gute Herr - (E. ein Prälat der griechischen Kirche,) hat ja wol Ursach, behutsam zu seyn: der HErr regiere und stärke ihn aber: daß er darin nicht zuweit gehe, und unzehlig viel Gutes darüber versäume [...]." Johann Heinrich Callenberg, ed., *Einige Fürsorge für die alte orientalische Christenheit überhaupt*, Vol. 1. (Halle: Orientalische Buchdruckerey, 1750), 17.

<sup>47</sup> This institute is at the core of Daniel Haas's current research project at the University of Hamburg: "Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum and 'Oriental Christianity': Interconnections between Halle Pietism and Eastern Christianity in the Eighteenth Century."

<sup>48</sup> "So unterlassen sie doch ja nicht, den - (Prälaten E.) so oft es sich will thun lassen zu besuchen [...]." Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 1, 24.

<sup>49</sup> Zaunstöck, "Georg Friedrich Weise".

*inter alia*, the position of pastor in Ekaterinburg and Astrakhan. He kept a detailed diary and also sent extensive reports of his activities to several of his former teachers in Halle. Even though he worked in the middle of the Russian Empire, he had surprisingly little contact with Russian customs and religious representatives. He mentioned Russian everyday religiosity, such as the sign of the cross or the celebration of Epiphany, in the beginning of his sojourn in the country. After some time in the Empire, however, he became increasingly concerned with the other peoples of Russia, such as the Samoyed and Cheremis. At the same time, he complained that he could not bring these people to Christianity, as that was the prerogative of the local “Archi-Ree”, meaning the Orthodox Bishop.<sup>50</sup> It would therefore be necessary to start with inspiring the bishop, who “would be inclined to enjoy receiving good theological books in the Latin language”.<sup>51</sup>

The distribution of religious literature was another important attempt of Halle Pietism to influence Orthodoxy, next to the education of Orthodox clergy in Halle. Todorsky’s translation efforts in Halle should also be seen in this light. But Todorsky was not only a producer of suitable text, but at the same time an important recipient of Hallensian missionary literature. Callenberg alone provided him with more than 200 copies of missionary treatises in German, Latin and Modern Greek, printed at his own print shop in Halle.<sup>52</sup> The Hallensians were eager to supply him with any other literature he demanded via their Saint Petersburg intermediaries.<sup>53</sup>

Pastor Weise initially thought that wide distribution of Pietist literature might suffice to bring about a religious revival. On the other hand, the recipients must be able to read the language of the books before they could make any difference. In the end, Weise remains pessimistic about the prospect of awakening the peoples of the Russian Empire to Pietist Christianity. His experience with the Todorsky-translation of Johann Arndt, for example, is sobering: The translation

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<sup>50</sup> Letter from G. F. Weise to J. A. Freylinghausen, Cathrinenburg, 28.05.1733, Berlin Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass A. H. Francke 28/40 : 18. The Russian word “arkhi-erei” means “Arch-shepherd” and is used to designate the Orthodox Bishop.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> See Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 1, 1750; Vol. 2, 1754; Vol. 3, 1759; „Oerter, wohin für die Muhammedaner Bücher gesendet worden“, AFSt/H, K 34; „Oerter, wohin für Juden Bücher gesendet worden.“, AFSt/H, K 35. For the missionary print shop at the *Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum*, see Christoph Bochinger, *Abenteuer Islam. Zur Wahrnehmung fremder Religion im Hallenser Pietismus des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, unpublished manuscript, 1996); Christoph Rymatzki, *Hallischer Pietismus und Judenmission. Johann Heinrich Callenbergs Institutum Judaicum und dessen Freundeskreis (1728–1736)* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2004); Grit Schorch and Brigitte Klosterberg, ed., *Mission ohne Konversion? Studien zu Arbeit und Umfeld des Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum in Halle* (Halle: Harrassowitz, 2019).

<sup>53</sup> Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 2, 56; Vol. 3, 46.

would be most useful to please those Germans who have lived in Russia for so long that they begin to forget the German language.<sup>54</sup> Weise, who complained about his inability to speak Russian throughout his decade there, seemed not to consider the Russians as objects of mission, but imagined his own role only in relation to his compatriots, the Germans in Russia, as well as towards the other non-Russian peoples, primarily in an ethnographic fashion.

Gotthilf August Francke also asked Pflug in Saint Petersburg 1752 to pass his greetings on to Simeon Todorsky, “together with the wish that his past suffering may help him discern the Truth and that the Lord may always accord him a glorious position.”<sup>55</sup> Francke did not give up on Todorsky being a saviour of Russia, and the contact between the latter and Halle did have several fruitful results. Todorsky repeatedly encouraged and suggested that Orthodox theologians go to study at the university in Halle, as the last section of this contribution will elaborate. However, his demise in 1754 signalled the end of the correspondence between Halle and Russia. There are occasional archival records also after that point of time, but they are few and do not pertain to our topic.

#### **Phase IV – the 1760s: Indirect Influence**

There is, nevertheless, a fourth phase to this influence, even if the direct relationship between Halle and Russia had somewhat dried out by 1754. For, even without a direct link, the influence of Halle on developments in Russia continued, and for our purposes most notably in the work of the Pietist preacher, Anton Friedrich Büsching (1724-1793). Büsching was born in Stadthagen near Hannover and came to Halle as a student in the 1740s after falling out with his father. In his writings, he recounted how he first encountered the Eastern Church via “Monks from Kiev” who frequented the university at that time.<sup>56</sup> Büsching is remembered primarily as the geographer of Enlightenment; his “New Description of the World” [*Neue Erdbeschreibung*] was published in numerous languages and editions well into the 19th century. At the same time, however, he was a theologian and pastor with Pietist leanings. His insistence on Pietist Protestantism had disqualified him from continuing an academic career at the University of Göttingen, so in 1761, he took up the offer to become the

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<sup>54</sup> Letter from G. F. Weise to G. A. Francke, Astrakhan, 15.07.1739, Berlin Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass A. H. Francke 28/40 : 39.

<sup>55</sup> “mit dem Wunsch seine bisherigen Leiden zum Urtheil der Wahrheit gereiche und ihm der Herr ein herrlich Sitz nach dem anderen bedancken wolle”. Letter from G. A. Francke to J. G. Pflug, Halle, 01.11.1752, AFSt/H C 492 : 4.

<sup>56</sup> *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von neuen Landcharten, geographischen, statistischen und historischen Büchern und Sachen* 11/39, 29.09.1783, 305.

second pastor in the German Lutheran parish in Saint Petersburg. He was already familiar with Russia and the city of Saint Petersburg as he had spent several years there after finishing his studies tutoring a German nobleman.<sup>57</sup>

Büsching's responsibilities as second pastor of the German parish revolved among other things around the parish school, which had been in disarray for some years. To remedy the situation, Büsching set up an ambitious reform programme for the school, certainly inspired by his memories of Halle and the Francke orphanage. As a result, the "Petrischule" in Saint Petersburg became a beacon of education in the Russian Empire, while Büsching's arrogance and intransigence increasingly hindered constructive cooperation with the parish board. After only four years in Russia, Büsching suddenly left his position to return to Germany, eventually becoming school director of a famous educational institution in Berlin, the "Gymnasium zum Grauen Kloster".

Unlike the actors surveyed thus far, Büsching was an avid observer who did not shy away from criticism. The preface to the second volume of his "History of the Lutheran Parishes in the Russian Empire", written in 1767, is devoted entirely to the "erudition [*Gelehrsamkeit*] of the Russian clergy":

This is a subject worthy of my readers' attention, in so far as it relates to the content of this book. There is no doubt that Protestant [*evangelische*] parishes in Russia and their teachers have been instrumental in furthering and enhancing the education of the Russian clergy. I assert this opinion about the Protestants, for between the Russian and the Roman-Catholic clergy there lies the centuries-long hatred between Greeks and Latins. This hatred still persists for well-known reasons and thus, the Russian clergy can display much more love and trust towards the Protestant clergy than the Roman-Catholic one.<sup>58</sup>

At the same time, it is clear to Büsching that only a very minor portion of the Russian clergy could be considered educated at all, most importantly those who

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<sup>57</sup> On A. F. Büsching, see Peter Hoffmann, *Anton Friedrich Büsching (1724-1793) Ein Leben im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Berlin: Arno Spitz, 2000).

<sup>58</sup> "Diese Materie ist überhaupt der Aufmerksamkeit meiner Leser werth, sie stehet auch mit dem Inhalt dieses meines Buchs in so fern in Verbindung, weil es gewiß ist, daß die in Rußland befindlichen evangelischen Gemeinen und derselben Lehrer, zur Verbesserung und Vergrößerung der Gelehrsamkeit der rußischen Geistlichen etwas beygetragen haben. Ich versichere dieses von den Evangelischen, weil zwischen den rußischen und römisch-katholischen Geistlichen der viele hundert Jahre alte Haß der Griechen gegen die Lateiner, und dieser gegen jene, aus bekannten Ursachen fort dauert, daher die rußischen Geistlichen zu den evangelischen Geistlichen weit mehr Liebe und Vertrauen haben, als zu den römisch-katholischen." Anton Friedrich Büsching, *Geschichte der evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinen im Rußischen Reich – Zweiter Theil*, (Berlin, 1767), [preface].

teach in the theological seminaries as well as some individual bishops and abbots. Even this education was limited to language and theology, however, as the following anecdote illustrates:

The director of a certain Seminary came to me in Saint Petersburg, asking me to provide him with a Latin language book [on physics]. He had been tasked with teaching this science, but knew nothing of it, except what is written about it in Ernesti *Initiis*, and had no books. Of Latin handbooks, I only had Horrebow's *Initiamenta philosophiae naturalis* and Bratzenstein's *Systema physicae experimentalis* at hand, which I gave to him. He was exceptionally pleased with this gift and thought that they would be enough to make him a perfect teacher of physics.<sup>59</sup>

At the end of the preface, Büsching expresses his surprise that only the children of the clergy have religious instruction in school. When reforming his own school in Saint Petersburg, he organised religious instruction even for the Russian pupils by hiring a monk from the nearby Alexander-Nevsky monastery. The "Archijerej" (Bishop) of Saint Petersburg had told him that this would be "something new and unusual among them", but welcomed it.<sup>60</sup> Thus, the "Petrischule" was a pioneer not only in the field of general school education in Russia, but also in religious instruction.

The pedagogue Ivan Beckoj, whom Empress Catherine II (the Great) tasked with reforming the system of primary and secondary education in the Russian Empire in 1764, asked Büsching if he would be willing to help him out, but he declined. In fact, Empress Catherine II herself tried to persuade Büsching to stay in Russia to help oversee the reforms, but he declined, purportedly because he did not know the Russian language.<sup>61</sup> Thus ended the direct influence of Halle Pietism in Russia.

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<sup>59</sup> "Es kam der Vorsteher eines gewissen Seminarii nach St. Petersburg und zu mir, und bat mich, ihm ein lateinisches Buch zu verschaffen, weil er diese Wissenschaft lehren solle, und ausser demjenigen, was in Ernesti *Initiis* davon stehe, nichts davon wisse, und kein Buch davon habe. Ich hatte nur Horrebows *initiamenta philosophiae naturalis*, und Bratzensteins *Systema physicae experimentalis*, an lateinischen Handbüchern, welche ich ihm schenkte. Er freuete sich über dieses Geschenk ungemein, und glaubte, blos durch Hülfe dieser Bücher einen vollkommenen Lehrer der Physik abgeben zu können." Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "daß ich etwas neues und ungewöhnliches unter ihnen einführe". Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Hoffmann, *Anton Friedrich Büsching*, 87-88. In fact, Büsching very hurriedly returned to Germany in May 1765, purportedly because of differences of opinion between him and the parish council. See Letter from C. G. Minau to G. A. Francke, Moscow, 03.07.1765, Berlin Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass A. H. Francke 28/22 : 1. "Zu Ende May Mohnat ist der H. D. Büsching aus Petersb. abgereiset, weil er (wie es heißt) mit seinem Kirchen Convent sich dergestalt überworfen, daß er das Consilium abeundi als das zuträglichste Mittel angesehen und auch ergriffen. Er will sich in Hamburg oder Altona niederlassen."

**(Russian) Orthodox *peregrinatio academica* to Halle – an overview**

It is important to maintain that not only was Halle Pietism interested in Russian Orthodoxy throughout the 18th century, but the good reputation of the educational institutions in Halle kept attracting Orthodox clergy from many parts of the Russian Empire to Germany to study. The culmination of this *peregrinatio academica* happened in the mid-18th century, the time when the Halle Pietist influence in Russia was at its most intense. An important figure in this constellation was the already mentioned Simeon Todorsky, on whom the Halle Pietists had pinned so much hope.

This new wave of Orthodox faithful coming to Halle in want of education was set off in 1745, when a group of Serbs under the leadership of hieromonk Arsenius Theophanović arrived from the Grábóc monastery in the Hungarian Kingdom.<sup>62</sup> Gotthilf August Francke was full of hope at this fateful arrival. He later informed the Pietist missionaries in India that “One should regard this as a new form of God’s mercy, providing an opportunity to work for the salvation of the Greek Church.”<sup>63</sup> An additional promising development was the idea to install a Protestant *alumnus* of Halle University as teacher on Mount Athos.<sup>64</sup> This project failed in the end, but the developments were enthusiastically perceived as an opportunity to directly increase the Pietist influence in the Orthodox world. The expansion of Callenberg’s mission institute to include Orthodox and Oriental Christians in 1746 must be seen in this light.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> On Theophanović and other Serbs in Halle see Eduard Winter, *Die Pflege der west- und südslavischen Sprachen in Halle im 18. Jahrhundert. Beiträge zur Geschichte des bürgerlichen Nationwerdens der west- und südslavischen Völker*, (Berlin: Akademie, 1954), 169-173; Dragana Grbić, “The channels of transmissions of Pietistic ideas among Christian-Orthodox Serbs in the Balkans in the 18th century,” in *Schrift soll leserlich sein. Der Pietismus und die Medien. Beiträge zum IV. Internationalen Kongress für Pietismusforschung 2013*, ed. Christian Soboth and Pia Schmid, (Halle: Harrassowitz, 2016), 753–765.

<sup>63</sup> „Es ist als eine neue barmhertzigkeit Gottes anzusehen, daß er eine gelegenheit zeigt, zum heil der griechischen kirche etwas zu wircken [...]“. G. A. Francke’s report to the missionaries in India for 1745, 19.11.1745, AFSt/M, 3 M 2 : 1. Transcription from Zoltán Csepregi, *Pietas Danubiana/Pietismus im Donaultal, 1693–1755. 437 Schreiben zum Pietismus in Wien, Preßburg und Oberungarn* (Budapest: Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház MEDiT Kiadója, 2013).

<sup>64</sup> Ulrich Moennig, “Die neugriechischen Missionsdrucke im Verlagsprogramm Callenbergs,” in *Übersetzungen und Übersetzer im Verlag J. H. Callenbergs. Internationales Kolloquium in Halle (Saale) vom 22.–24. Mai 1995*, ed. Walter Beltz, (Halle: Halle University, 1995), 53–65, here 61–62; Ulrich Moennig, *Οι νεοελληνικές εκδόσεις της Typographia Orientalis του Johann Heinrich Callenberg (1746 έως 1749 ή 1751 περί.)* [The Prints in Modern Greek from J. H. Callenberg’s Typographia Orientalis (1746 to about 1749 or 1751)] (Athens: Hermes, 1999), 46–56.

<sup>65</sup> Moennig, “Die neugriechischen Missionsdrucke”; Moennig, *Οι νεοελληνικές εκδόσεις*.

More than 20 young Orthodox scholars came to Halle over the following 6 years. Depending on their age and knowledge of the German language, they were either placed in one of the orphanage schools to receive primary schooling or were immediately enrolled in the university. Most of them chose to study theology. Most of these pupils and students were Orthodox Serbs, whose stays were coordinated by Theophanović, even after he left Halle in 1747 to become abbot of the Grábóc monastery. Theophanović subsequently rose in the church ranks and became bishop of Kostajnica, while staying in contact with Halle until his premature death in 1753.<sup>66</sup>

As mentioned above, also Todorsky was instrumental in directing the stream of Orthodox students to Halle, albeit seemingly not as directly. Some of the pupils and students had previously studied under Todorsky at the Kiev Theological Academy. One of these students was Caspar Dorumin (or Dorumin Leontowiz, 1722-after 1786), as he is called in the sources in Halle.<sup>67</sup> According to Francke and Callenberg, he was Todorsky’s cousin, sent to Halle by his famous relative.<sup>68</sup> There is no mention of this family relationship in the corresponding entry in the Russian Biographical Dictionary from 1913, which also does not mention any stay in Germany, only that he had taught German at the Kiev Academy. Once in Halle, he explained that Todorsky used material from Protestant Halle in his lectures in Kiev, and not only for teaching the German language.<sup>69</sup> Caspar Dorumin was so well-versed in German by the time of his arrival in Halle in 1746 that he had no problems making an entry in an anonymous *album amicorum*.<sup>70</sup> He was admitted directly to the university, but he soon ran into

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<sup>66</sup> Some of the letters exchanged between Francke and Theophanovic are published in the source appendix to Winter, *Pflege*, 263-273.

<sup>67</sup> There are very strong indications that Dorumin is the person indexed as “Theofan (Theodor Leontovich)” in the *Русский биографический словарь* [Russian Biographic Dictionary] Vol 25 (St. Petersburg: Glavnyi upr. Udelov, 1913), 394-398. Dorumin also turns up in a list of Russian diplomats to the Austrian Archduke as a student in service until 1753. See *Списки дипломатических лиц русских за границей и иностранных при русском дворе* [List of diplomatic persons – Russians abroad and foreigners at the Russian court] Vol. 1, Moscow 1892, p. 62.

<sup>68</sup> G. A. Francke’s report to the missionaries in India for 1746, 20.01.1747, AFSt/M, 3 M 3 : 5; Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 1, 21-22. Already in his report to the missionaries in India for 1745, 19.11.1745, AFSt/M, 3 M 2 : 1, Francke announces that “Insp. Grischow [i.e. Johann Heinrich Grischow, inspector at the Canstein Bible Institute] has received word from Kiev that a certain pupil of Mr. Todorsky is also ready to come here”. “aus Kiow ist schon vor einiger zeit an h. insp. Grischow geschrieben worden, daß ein gewiſer schüler des h. Todorsky gleichfals anhero zu kommen willens sey”.

<sup>69</sup> Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 1, 9.

<sup>70</sup> Berlin, Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Alb. Amic. 238, Bl. 40r, 14.03.1746. Caspar Dorumin enrolled in Halle on 22.03.1746, see Halle, Universitätsarchiv Halle-Wittenberg, Rep. 46, Nr. 4.

financial difficulties. He switched to the neighbouring Wittenberg University already in 1748, where he claimed to be working on a Hebrew dictionary, a Latin grammar in “Slavonian” (*slavonischer Sprache*), as well as a project aiming at a “publication of the New Testament in Greek, Russian, and German[, as] those in Kiev demand such”.<sup>71</sup> Dorumin later became a controversial abbot at a monastery in Vilnius, bringing him into trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities for his anti-Catholic rhetoric. His German sojourn seems to have been completely glossed over by his later notoriety, but it is likely that it helped shape his negative assessment of Catholicism.

There are certainly a host of complex reasons for the decline of the Halle euphoria regarding the Orthodox Church over the 1750s, when fewer Orthodox theologians chose to come to Halle, but they have not been disentangled yet. The demise of Halle’s famous “Orthodox friends”, Todorsky (1754) and Theophanović (1753), certainly played a role, as they had been the driving forces for the exchange with Halle on the Orthodox side.

It is important to emphasise that the developments in the middle of the 18th century represent only the culmination of Orthodox academic migration to Halle. There were Orthodox people in the city throughout the century, including a number of Russians. Andrey Andreev lists 33 ethnic Russians that were enrolled in the Halle university between 1711 and 1796, at least ten of which studied theology.<sup>72</sup> These include Afanasy Ianovsky (1722) and the brothers Anton and Mikhail Slotvinsky (1739), all three related to Orthodox bishops in Russia. Some of them returned to a clergy career in Russia, although only Todorsky is known to become bishop.<sup>73</sup> Petr I. Simonovsky (1748), for example, enrolled in Halle University in 1748, but then moved on to Wittenberg and Königsberg. From there, he recommended the two Gudovich brothers to go to Halle to study, where they enrolled in the Faculty of Law in 1754 and 1755, respectively.<sup>74</sup> Simonovsky later became one of the first Ukrainian historians. He wrote a short history of the Cossacks in 1765, where he mentions A.F. Büsching as an inspiration in the subheading.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> “Herausgabe des Neuen Testaments, in griechischer, rußischer und teutscher Sprache[, wie es] von denen in Kiew verlangt werde”, Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 3, 54. On his projects, see Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge* Vol. 2, 8:

<sup>72</sup> Andrei Iu. Andreev, *Русские студенты в немецких университетах XVIII – первой половине XIX века* [Russian students in German Universities, 18th – first half of 19th century] (Moscow: Znak 2005), 362-364. The majority of the names in Andreev’s list are Germans living in Russia, but coming to Halle to study.

<sup>73</sup> Some of the Orthodox Serbs in Halle did become bishops, though.

<sup>74</sup> Andreev, *Русские студенты*, 165.

<sup>75</sup> Petr I. Simonovsky, *Краткое описание о козацкомъ малороссийскомъ народе и о военных его делахъ* [A short history of the Cossacks and the people of Little Russia and of their activities in war] (Moscow: Moscow University, 1847 [1765]).

There is most certainly a large dark figure, for the lists of Russian students include only those that enrolled in the university. Those that were only educated at the orphanage, because their previous education was lacking, remain outside of the radar. An example is Theodor Simonovich, who arrived to Halle in 1748 after graduating from the Kiev Academy.<sup>76</sup> He moved on to Wittenberg within a few months, because he refused to attend German classes together with young schoolboys at 23 years of age.<sup>77</sup> The support of the Orthodox visitors in Halle encumbered enormous costs, so they were expected to perform exceptionally and integrate well into the new surroundings.<sup>78</sup> The lectures in Halle were all in German, unlike in Wittenberg, where the language of instruction was still Latin. The Orthodox students therefore often played with the idea of transferring to the neighbouring university, which displeased the Hallensians. Their main grievance was that Wittenberg had remained a centre of Lutheran Orthodoxy,<sup>79</sup> unlike the Pietist stronghold of Halle.

## Conclusion

Previous analysts have generally drawn an optimistic conclusion regarding the impact of Halle Pietism on the Russian Enlightenment. The charisma of Halle Pietism undoubtedly did play a significant role in the way numerous individual Russian enlighteners envisioned the future of their society, but it is important not to exaggerate this influence. There were numerous other facets and currents at play and the direct impact of Halle Pietists was by no means as extensive as these actors sometimes liked to believe. The “Great Project” of August Herrmann Francke, for example, which predicted a worldwide enlightenment due to Pietist-inspired education, never showed much promise in Russia. There were definitely single instances where Halle Pietism made a punctual impact in Russia, but the plethora of actors, often with very divergent approaches, ensured that no coherent picture emerged.

Moreover, the social and political context always needs to be taken into account. It was not always easy for the Hallensians to make an impact in the distant Russian society because of dynastic and diplomatic constellations beyond their

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<sup>76</sup> He was admitted to the orphanage on 16.05.1748. Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 2, 13. He enrolled in Wittenberg on 14.10.1748 as “Theodorus Nisenez”.

<sup>77</sup> Callenberg, *Einige Fürsorge*, Vol. 2., 60.

<sup>78</sup> Rich Orthodox students had to cater for their own financial needs in Halle. Orthodox clergy, on the other hand, were provided with free accommodation and food, and the study materials were partly provided for them.

<sup>79</sup> Not to be confused with Orthodox Christianity, this was a current that emphasised the importance of the writings of Martin Luther and the early Lutherans over the mystical and spiritual emphasis of the Pietists.

control. Many of them were too busy observing and understanding developments in Russia and report them back to Halle to become actively involved in changing anything. Pietism was an actor with little diplomatic or military force available to push through changes. Moreover, it was difficult to retain credibility as consistent religious reformers when not even the German inhabitants of Russia actually followed the Pietist commandments. It was therefore much easier to remain focused on the religious ministry to these Germans. Especially once Tsar Peter the Great had openly circumscribed the religious tolerance in the Empire to be linked to ethnicity, meaning that Protestant activity was legally limited to the German and English population.

The exchange between Halle Pietism and Russian Orthodoxy that is tangible today happened primarily via texts – translated Pietist literature and letters.<sup>80</sup> At the same time, as this contribution shows, there was a quite substantial mobility and exchange on both sides. The presence of Hallensians in Russia has been abundantly researched since the early 20th century, even if new facets and insights still occasionally come to light. The Russian academic presence in Halle in the mid-18th century, however, is still a largely unexplored field. Todorsky's influence in Russia, primarily through his translation of Johann Arndt's book on "True Christianity" has been repeatedly pointed out, but the activities and influence of other Russians at the Halle University are still largely left in the dark.

The few attempts to reach out to the Orthodox Russians, which occurred primarily in educational contexts, were moderated by the unbridgeable chasm that existed – and to some extent still exists – between the theological worlds of Protestantism and Orthodox Christianity. Indeed, the very concept that the clergy belong to the "teaching class" was not part of the Orthodox mindset and only took hold in Russia towards the end of the 19th century.<sup>81</sup> Also the decidedly Protestant emphasis on distributing edifying texts that would then lead to a spiritual awakening did not gain traction in Russia: the Orthodox clergy craved for those books, but used their content creatively to re-assert their own Orthodox identity – often in their battle with Roman Catholic missionary endeavours.

The question of clergy education, which had been theoretically broached in Feofan Prokopovich's "spiritual regulation" from 1721, was not practically institutionalised everywhere until after the so-called Alexandrian educational reforms of the early 19th century. These reforms certainly also owe some inspiration to the Pietist pastors of the previous century, but that is another topic that cannot be broached here.

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<sup>80</sup> Already Büsching notes the importance and popularity of Pietist translations and Latin language texts in the preface to Büsching, *Geschichte*.

<sup>81</sup> Daniel Scarborough, *Russia's Social Gospel. The Orthodox Pastoral Movement in Famine, War, and Revolution* (Madison, WI: UWP, 2022), 83-105.

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