**Soviet-Canadian Doukhobor Correspondence:
Building Global Civil Society in a Cold-War
Political Climate**

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a case study of international correspondence between members of a social and religious society known as the Doukhobors. The case study is used to shed light on the historical development of global civil society. It is asserted in the thesis that various forms of correspondence between Doukhobors in the Soviet Union and Canada in the late Soviet period together presented an example both of citizen diplomacy and a nucleus of global civil society. By extension, it is concluded that sustained citizen diplomacy between members of a societal group at a global level can serve as an important precondition in the development of a strong global civil society.

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Chapter One Introduction

Throughout the following chapters, the common thread connecting the variety of different concepts and historical events discussed therein is a relatively small group of people with an extraordinary history commonly known as the ‘Doukhobors’ (*Doukhobory* or *Doukhobortsy* in Russian). The Doukhobors are a Russian religious society with Christian roots, which is as much a social movement as it is a religious organization.

Since a large portion of their adherents emigrated to Canada at the end of the nineteenth century, the Doukhobors have constituted a sizeable demographic both in Canada and Russia and its environs, and at no time since their emigration have the two factions not kept in contact with each other. The fascinating history of correspondence between Canadian and Russian or Soviet Doukhobors thus spans across many periods and affords much material for a variety of studies.

This study, however, is particularly concerned with Doukhobor correspondence and its implications for citizen diplomacy¹ and global civil society² in the period of 1967-1985 – a period which marked a particular era of détente and sporadic return to Cold War hostility in East-West relations. The main thrust of the thesis is that sustained citizen

¹ Citizen diplomacy refers to diplomatic activity between unofficial representatives of different nations, often whom are ordinary citizens. Diplomacy is not used here in the figurative sense, but in the literal sense of national representation and negotiation with foreign counterparts, often with the aim of minimizing conflict and building peace. There are several sub-categories of citizen diplomacy, which is also referred to as second-track diplomacy. For an extrapolation on sub-categories and how it relates to the Doukhobor case study see Chapter II: Citizen Diplomacy and Global Civil Society.

² The term ‘global civil society’ is here considered to represent a Hegelian concept of civil society that is not simply a ‘society based on social contract between individuals’ (Kaldor, Mary *The Idea of Global Civil Society*, p. 585) but a non-commercial sphere separate from the state which aims to influence policy. This idea of civil society is coupled with a conception of globality that is not simply characterized by increased interaction or increased cultural homogeneity of individual states, but by the blurring of national boundaries for social action worldwide. See Chapter II: Citizen diplomacy and Global Civil Society for further analysis.

diplomacy between members of a defined group accompanied by an expressed desire to effect global affairs – as in the case of international Doukhobor correspondence of 1967-1985 – constitutes an example of global civil society in the making.

While few scholars proclaim the existence of civil society in the USSR, it is my position that these relations represented an independent forum for discussing issues related to peace, world unity and disarmament – and that this constituted an instance of a nucleus of global civil society in the later years of the USSR.

The purpose of demonstrating this, however, is not in order to assert that the existence of global civil society was widespread or common in the late Soviet sphere. On the contrary, it is the very uniqueness of the case study that makes it so worthy of examination and affords the opportunity to pinpoint the reasons for its success versus the failure of so many others like it.

When comparing the case of the Doukhobors' successful partnership to other failed attempts at East-West partnerships during the Soviet period, a few elements become clear which aid both to explain the success of the Doukhobors in creating inroads for present-day global civil society and to offer a few lessons for the future of global civil society.

The first of these lessons is that those actors who would seek to broaden global civil society initiatives across the globe and particularly in the former Soviet Union must focus their prospective partnerships in order to create proper matches between Eastern and Western groups. The second is that such successful partnerships in global civil society must also be facilitated by arriving at a common culture of communication that could include various approaches to interpersonal relationships.

The third lesson, in a slightly different vein from the first two, is that there is potential already in Canada for ethnic groups to form such successful partnerships with people in their country of origin by way of citizen diplomacy since these groups already understand the culture of communication in their home country. Such potential, it will be argued, is not being fully realized at present.

In order to put the correspondence between Canadian and Soviet Doukhobors in the later Soviet period into context, an understanding of how the groups ended up where they did in the 1970s and 1980s and the history of their relations with one another and with the state is a necessary precondition. A brief summary of this history represents the nature of the Doukhobors' agency in the societies they have lived in and the various manifestations of Doukhobor activism. Tied in with this, of course, is the history of Doukhobor correspondence and its significance before the period studied – for it will be made apparent that the correspondence did not begin in 1967, but that it entered into a new phase at approximately that time.

History of Doukhoborism

Little is known of the precise origins of the Doukhobor faith. Some say that Doukhoborism sprang from the followers of John Huss and others believe that it originated with the teachings of three brothers, Cossacks from the Don region who seceded from the Orthodox Church.³ However, the link between the emergence of Doukhoborism to the Great Schism of the seventeenth century in Russia is tenuous; the nineteenth-century revolutionary Sergey Stepaniak once stated that it was only the

³ Elkinton, Joseph *The Doukhobors* Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1903, p. 242

Doukhobors and the Molokans (a pacifist Russian religious group similar to the Doukhobors) who “grew up on their own ground, independent of the raskol (schism)”⁴

What is properly documented is that the Doukhobors began to form groups in Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and at the end of the seventeenth century Doukhobor communities existed in the Tambov, Voronezh, Ekaterinoslav and Kharkov regions. The group took its name from an epithet used by Russian Orthodox Archbishop Ambrosias in 1785 to describe the dissident Russian peasants as heretics. Calling the group *Doukhobortsi*, which means ‘Spirit Wrestlers’ in Russian, he meant for this to be a negative label as it implied they were wrestling against the holy spirit. The Doukhobors (*Doukhobortsi* in Russian) as they are still called, took this label and gave it their own, positive interpretation – that the name denoted their struggle with and for the Holy Spirit instead of against it.⁵

The structure of their communities grew out of and had been based on the model for the Slavic village commune – or *Mir* – ⁶which was first instituted in order to provide a reliable tax payment system to the Imperial Government, but developed its own democratic traditions. Several features of these traditions could be consistently observed from commune to commune. For example, one consistent feature was that heads of the household would meet, usually on a weekly basis, to convene and decide upon civil and domestic concerns of the community, and this discussion would be moderated by an Elder, chosen by the community to act as chairman.⁷

⁴ Tarasoff, Koozma *Plakun Trava* Grand Forks, B.C.: Mir Publication Society/Friesen Printers, 1982, p. 2

⁵ *Ibid*, and Elkinton *The Doukhobors*

⁶ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, 1982 p. 3

⁷ Elkinton, Joseph *The Doukhobors* p. 299-301

In the Doukhobor communes of the eighteenth century, community organizers began to make themselves known; among these early organizers, the relationship between the Doukhobors and the state figured largely in discourse. For example, Sylvan Kolesnikov, an organizer from Ekaterinoslav province, was preoccupied in his public statements with the question of “how to escape persecution and yet promote radical ideas”⁸ and taught the Doukhobors how to evade authoritarian interference while practicing their religion.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, instances of severe persecution of the Doukhobors were documented; for example, an *ukase* from 1800 stated that all those found guilty of being a Doukhobor would be condemned to serve in hard labour camps for life, and the intensity of state repression against them caused Senator Lapokhin to observe in 1806 that “no sect has, up to this time, been so cruelly persecuted as the Doukhobortsi.”⁹

Doukhobors also constituted a portion of settlers from the Russian empire to Crimean Khanate, which Catherine II annexed in 1783. Cossacks settled this land first, and subsequent military forts made it possible for peasants to settle there. Settlement by Russian peasants – even “heretic” peasants such as the Doukhobors – was encouraged at this time as it bolstered the Russian empire’s presence in the region.¹⁰

Thus, in 1804, Alexander I assigned the Doukhobors a section of land in the Melitopol region, and there they lived and harvested communally, and reportedly flourished. This became a problem for the Doukhobors, however, as their prosperity there

⁸ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 2-3

⁹ Elkinton, p. 243-245

¹⁰ Staples *Cross-Cultural Encounters on the Ukrainian Steppe. Settling the Molochna Basin, 1783-1861* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003, p. 19

resulted in a flush of new converts joining their ranks, which alarmed Russian state and religious authorities and caused them to be a target of increased persecution.¹¹

Under Tsar Nicholas I, Doukhobor relations with the state worsened. The first decree against the Doukhobors, made in 1826, was extremely repressive and included “a vigorous programme of forced dispersal and conversion.”¹² This was accompanied by a four-year investigation of the Doukhobor Milky Waters settlement by Russian authorities, who eventually found them guilty of several offenses and banished them to Transcaucasia as a result.¹³

John Staples, who consulted local Ukrainian and Russian archives for evidence surrounding such charges, drew the following conclusions about the alleged murders that the Doukhobors of the Molochna area were accused of having committed:

Even the nineteen alleged murders described in the extract were based on the most tenuous of evidence. In only two cases did the accused murderers confess their crimes. In nine the bodies of the alleged victims were never found. Thirteen of the fourteen cases that had previously been investigated had not led to a conviction. One had originally been ruled death by illness, one a suicide, and one a drowning [. . .] These reports are no more credible than the accusations of ritual murder levelled so often against Jews. They provide no basis for concluding that the Doukhobor community was deeply troubled in the 1830s.¹⁴

Instead, Staples asserts that religious prejudice in accordance with Nicholas I’s nationality policy was the primary reason for exiling the Doukhobors¹⁵, a claim that is consistent with official records. According to the decree made in October of 1830, the decision for resettlement of the Doukhobors and Molokans was made on the following

¹¹ Robert G. Wesson, *Soviet Communes* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963, p. 69

¹² Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 10

¹³ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 10

¹⁴ John Staples, *Cross-Cultural Encounters on the Ukrainian Steppe. Settling the Molochna Basin, 1783-1861* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003, p. 100

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 101.

basis: the peasants were considered guilty of heresy and attempting to influence others with heretic beliefs. This decree also coincided, however, with an overall effort to populate the Caucasian region with Russian Christians in order to increase border security, and this factored in to the Tsar's decision regarding where to resettle the Doukhobors.¹⁶

After their forced resettlement to the Caucasus, the Doukhobors adapted to a way of life that later accounts suggest strengthened the cohesive fabric of their communities, as some witnessed that they were

Scattered among Georgians, Armenians, Circassians, Tatars, etc., without however, destroying their internal organization – an individual theocratic community, living its own life and paying tribute only to the Czar. Thus surrounded, they formed themselves into a kingdom of peasants, while the weaknesses, corruption and negligence of the Caucasian administration only strengthened the Doukhobors in their own opinions.¹⁷

Factionalization and Emigration

At the end of the 1880s, the Doukhobors split into two ideological camps, one less stridently pacifist, and the other more so. Early accounts of this split attest that a majority of Doukhobors comprised the more pacifist camp, and as part of the split this group formulated some new doctrinal principles, which were meant to be based on old principles that had not previously been formally expressed. Thus, three new principles were adopted by the latter group as part of the split: Internationalism, Communism and Vegetarianism.¹⁸

¹⁶ D. Ismael-Zade, "Russkiye Poseleniya v Zakavkaze v 30kh-80kh Godakh XIX Veka" *Voprosii Istorii* Nov. 30, 1976 p. 18-31.

¹⁷ Joseph Elkinton, *The Doukhobors* Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1903 p. 6-7

¹⁸ Elkinton, p. 7

The escalating intensity with which some Doukhobors were now embracing pacifism culminated in the Burning of Arms demonstrations of 1895. The Doukhobors, refusing to give an oath of allegiance to Nicholas II and showing support for the Doukhobor men who had defected from the Russian army after being conscripted, set their arms ablaze in the villages of Spasovka, Slavanka and Bogdanovka.¹⁹

The Burning of Arms demonstrations were a watershed in Doukhobor history, for they marked a transformation in Doukhobor identity from a religious organization to a social movement. This action would later be referenced in Doukhobor correspondence as a symbol of their unified history of social activism, and it was through this defining moment, Doukhobor ethnographer Koozma Tarasoff writes, that a “shift in direction had taken place. From the inside, the aim of the Doukhobors became deep, broad, and universal. From the outside, the church and state recognized them as a threat to the existing social order because their ideas were revolutionary.”²⁰ The resulting persecution of them by the Russian state led to 7,500 Doukhobors emigrating to Canada largely with the help of Leo Tolstoy and the Quakers in 1899.

It is of singular note that the subsequent wave of Doukhobor emigration to Canada was not facilitated at the state level through the governments of Russia and Canada, but by private initiatives – most noteworthy of which was by Leo Tolstoy and his aides. The tsar’s only involvement in the affair was to make a decree in 1897 allowing

¹⁹ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*. p. 21-24

²⁰ Koozma Tarasoff, 'Spirit Wrestlers: Doukhobor Pioneers' Strategies for Living', 2002: pp. 379-384.

the Doukhobors to leave Russia unless they were of age and had yet to complete military service.²¹

Doukhobors in the Soviet Union

As the Tsarist system came under attack and the politics of power in Russia shifted, so did the relationship of the Doukhobors with Russia. At the time of Provisional Government, Peter V. Verigin wrote to Prince L'vov, telling him that 10,000 Doukhobors wanted to return to Russia. He made a list of proposals for New Russia two days after the Bolsheviks seized power. The proposals in this list were the abolishment of military service, Russian neutrality, the nationalization of factories, which were to be set up in the countryside as part of an effort to phase out the cities, and the cessation of exports on raw materials.²² These suggestions were more reflective of utopian socialism than peasant Doukhobor values; Soviet scholars denounced this type of theory as 'pastoral capitalism'.²³

Of course, few of the proposals were realized, and though the Doukhobors were first given exemption from military service, they were soon made to do alternative service until 1935 when the exemption was nullified by Stalin.²⁴ A. M. Kinyakin, a Doukhobor who lived in the Caucasus during the Soviet period, described life in the early days of revolution as normal, saying the Doukhobors "continued to live, working in their villages and on their land. There were some changes in management forms in every

²¹ David Davies (ed.) *Canada and the Soviet Experiment: Essays on Canadian Encounters with Russia and the Soviet Union, 1900-1991* Toronto and Waterloo: Centre for Russian and East European Studies and Centre on Foreign Policy and Federalism, p. 3.

²² George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic *The Doukhobors* Toronto: Oxford UP, 1968

²³ *Ibid*

²⁴ Eli Popoff, (ed.) *Joint Doukhobor Research Committee: Symposium Meetings 1974-1982* Selkirk College, symposium 19, p. 251

town. Officials came, who played a leadership role in the villages, self-appointing (stealing) special clerkships”²⁵

Under the Soviets, the Caucasian Doukhobors employed passive resistance to state power. Soviet courts were often eschewed in favour of village elders for settling disputes, only a small percentage voted in rural Soviet elections, and there were few Doukhobor members of the communist party and Komsomol (and those who were tended to conceal their involvement for fear of backlash at home).²⁶

There is some evidence of there having been social capital among the Doukhobors even at this early stage, however. One Doukhobor’s recollection of his predecessor, Ivan Koloskova (founder of a Slavic temperance movement) shows a capacity for social organization independent of state involvement. He writes of Koloskova:

The society he founded was called ‘trezvenniki’ (temperance) for Koloskov started with this, to escape from drinking alcohol seeing what kind of social ills it leads to – a vice in one’s self and one’s families and so on. Intensifying his activity, he saw the links of this evil to other evils – prostitution, theft and overall moral degradation. [. . .] He organized a cooperative workshop (in shoemaking and so on) the table being without alcohol, without meat! For his kindness also extended to the animal world.²⁷

It was during these early days of the Soviet Union that the dynamic of the international community of Doukhobors seen in the contemporary period studied here was developed. In 1925 Gabriel Vereshchagin and Nikolai Plotnikov went to Rostov-on-the-Don to fetch Peter V. Verigin’s son to bring to Canada. An educated man, Peter V. Verigin sent the Canadian Doukhobors the message that attending school was positive, and consequently

²⁵ A. M. Kinyakin *Zhizn i Straganiya Dukhoborets (Life and Suffering of the Doukhobors)* Kaliningrad: Ocherk, 2007, p. 147

²⁶ Woodcock, p. 277

²⁷ *Iskra*, No. 1320, p. 9, 15 Sept., 1972. *It is not explicitly stated in the letter to the Canadian Doukhobors that Koloskov was a Doukhobor but this is strongly suggested, as the man described was agitating for causes associated with the Doukhobors, set up an agricultural commune (though not a kolkhoz), and is described as wearing clothes that fit in with Doukhobor costume.

the education dispute between the B.C. Government and the local Doukhobors was temporarily settled. A meeting was then held at Milky Waters in 1927 for the promotion of solidarity between Doukhobors of all regions and philosophies, and a United Community of Doukhobors was to be set up.²⁸

Soon afterward, Doukhobor communities in the Soviet Union faced the upheaval of collectivization. While most religious communes were abolished in the Soviet Union, the Doukhobors were among the last to be phased out and did not close until 1933.²⁹ However, many Doukhobors staunchly resisted government-led collectivization, which led to frequent clashes with the government over this issue. A report of one of the seizures of a Doukhobor commune in the 1930s illustrates the violent nature of this development:

In February 1931, the state sent one hundred infantrymen, fifty of whom had machine guns, into a Doukhobor settlement and arrested and deported many of the Doukhobors. After billing [sic]themselves with the local inhabitants, the soldiers forced the men of the village to kneel with their faces to the wind for 3 hours until they were covered with snow.³⁰

Facing increased repression from the state, the Russian Doukhobors's tactics against such repression adapted accordingly. After the Doukhobors had handed over a portion of their allotted land to the neighbouring kholhoz, they appealed first to the local government, then to higher-up authorities such as M. I. Kalinin. After this did not succeed, they dispatched envoys to Moscow who were promptly arrested upon arrival and charged with being counter-revolutionaries, and after this action the Doukhobors changed their tack to

²⁸ Woodcock, p. 281

²⁹ Wesson, p. 76 *The reason why the Doukhobors were among the last peasants to be forced to leave their farms to work in the kolkhozes was likely because of the relative similarity of the Doukhobor communes to Communist ideals. While earlier they had resisted closing their communes on the grounds that they were already sufficiently communist, Stalin's centralized planning system eventually required their participation and they were eventually forced off their communal lands.

³⁰ Andrew Donskov, John Woodsworth and Chad Gaffield (eds.) *The Doukhobor Centenary in Canada* Ottawa: Slavic Research Group at the University of Ottawa, 2000, p.94

appeal both for the release of the prisoners and permission for the whole community to relocate.

When this was ignored, the Doukhobors announced they would be marching to Rostov on the 14th of October to demand the release of the prisoners and followed up on this announcement a few days later than planned, on Oct. 20. They met with members of the NKVD en route and said they were leaving the region and wanted to settle “anywhere in the Soviet Union, and, together with their brothers and sisters, be allowed to conduct their own communal economy on the basis of their Doukhobor code.”³¹

Soviet Doukhobors in the Post- WWII Era

After the post-WWII slump in the Soviet economy, quality of life of people in the USSR began to improve. By the 1970s, Kinyakin wrote that living conditions in villages had improved considerably, and that there were also other factors that would have increased the need for more deliberate initiatives for increasing the cohesiveness of the Doukhobor community beyond local levels:

Many newly-constructed houses appeared, especially in the villages of Gorelovka, Orlovka, Bogdanovka, and Spasovka. Everyone strove to build more, better stone houses. The outer view of the villages, like in all life, changed for the better. Equally, the development of inter-ethnonational relations in the USSR intensified. Relations became strained between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, Armenians and Georgians; the matter reached physical clashes, sometimes even with the use of weapons. This couldn't influence the moral/psychological state of the Doukhobors. At the same time, within Doukhobor families the children were finishing higher educational establishments and rightly, did not return to their villages as there was no specialized work there. They left for other places, leaving their parents behind.³²

³¹ Donskov, p. 94-95

³² Kinyakin, p. 163.

Along with these ‘push’ factors that drew Doukhobor youth away from the villages and toward the cities, there were ‘pull’ factors as well, not least of which was the relatively high level of post-war development in the cities as compared to the villages. The rapid pace of urban development made a distinct impression on rural Soviet Doukhobors, which is evident in a letter from Tania Lukyanchuk of Stansia Tselina in Rostovskaya Oblast on 5 July 1971 to the Popov family in Canada.

Lukyanchuk had written that locally, life was hard and her health was bad but that “we have been in such towns and cities that now we do not recognize; everything is newly built, especially our Rostov has become beautiful. Already, there they have built 8 and 13-storey buildings, hotels, stores, houses, and residences which are almost free for students (at a cost of 1 ruble a month)”³³ As a result, the Doukhobors from Canada who visited Doukhobor villages in the Soviet Union in the 1970s remarked on the recent migration of youth to places which better served their educational and employment ambitions.³⁴

There appears also to have been an increase in the amount of free time available to most families as post-war reconstruction became less frantic. A letter written in 1973 from the family of V. A. Verigin in Tbilisi to Doukhobors in Canada writes that things were getting better for them in their house and in their free time they go to the dacha. “The next year, if God is good to us” the letter reads, “we are thinking of acquiring a car and home furniture.”³⁵ These updates might be considered as simply adherence to Soviet propaganda of constant improvement, if not for the fact that this kind of statement cannot

³³ “Pis'mo iz Sovetskovo Soyuzu” *Iskra* No. 1292, p. 12-13, 13 August 1971

³⁴ *Iskra* No. 1445, Nov. 18, 1977 p. 29

³⁵ “Letter From the Soviet Union” *Iskra* No. 1330, p. 22-23, 2 Feb. 1973

be consistently found in the letters from Soviet Doukhobors outside of this time period, and it is reinforced by retrospective accounts such as Kinyakin's.³⁶

Thus, the economic and infrastructural development of the post-Stalin years resulted in increased interaction and communication between the Soviet and Canadian Doukhobors in the 1960s and 1970s, as higher incomes meant that they could afford to visit one another more often and gradual improvements in quality of life also meant they could write to one another more often.

Among other factors which included the opening up of the political situation and Soviet foreign policy (which will be discussed in the second chapter) another social factor was responsible in this period for altering the status quo of Doukhobor communities and creating a greater need for international contacts: this was the aforementioned gradual exodus of youth from Doukhobor villages to larger cities where opportunities lay in greater supply.³⁷

Given the prevalence of youth leaving Doukhobor communities in this period and the threat this posed to the cohesiveness of the Doukhobor culture, identity and way of life, it is ostensible that this may have been a driving force for Doukhobors to look beyond their villages to reinforce a sense of a tight-knit Doukhobor community that would not be eroded by emigration. This is, of course what the Doukhobors continued to establish in this period through their correspondence with one another.

Impact of Correspondence

³⁶ For more information of the extent to which correspondence was controlled, see section 8: Extent of state control of Doukhobor correspondence.

³⁷ *Iskra* No. 1445, Nov. 18, 1977 p. 29

Alongside the changing political climate, these international correspondences between Doukhobors in Canada and the USSR continued to build and gain relevance as a form of citizen diplomacy while the sporadic lurching toward détente eventually brought the two countries closer together in the late Soviet period. Indeed, much of the discourse that defined the end of the Cold War mirrored the leitmotifs seen in international Doukhobor correspondence, namely that of disarmament, love for all peoples of earth and a return to positive diplomacy and the establishment of more friendly relations between the USSR and capitalist countries.

Certainly, though the state-determined discourse could have simply existed as an independent parallel to Doukhobor correspondence, the Doukhobor relations across borders in many instances had the ear of some member of government on one side or another, and on more than one occasion have been explicitly mentioned as good examples to follow in respect to these leitmotifs by Soviet and Canadian politicians. Considering this, it is no wonder that ethnographer Ala Bezhentseva has recently observed that “modern Doukhobors perceive themselves as having built bridges between state and the private sphere, between individual and collective rights, between nations and peoples.”³⁸

It is this idea articulated by Ms. Bezhentseva that will be explored in detail in this study. For if there is some validity to this perception then the implications for the study of state-society relations in the Soviet Union are significant, as this would point to the existence of an emerging global civil society in a Cold-War political setting. The agency of the Doukhobors residing in the USSR at the time is therefore an object of interest –

³⁸ Ala Bezhentseva, *Strana Doukhoboriia* Tbilisi: Mezhdunarodnyi kulturno prosvetitskii Soyuz Russki Klub, 2007, p. 96

perhaps one might say *the* object of interest – for this study. Naturally, logistics are a crucial part of this task, as one could approach an assessment of said group's political and social agency in a variety of ways.

Organization of Thesis

The main question of interest that will be examined in this thesis is whether the relations between Doukhobors living in Canada and those living in the Soviet Union in 1967-1985 constituted an example of global civil society. There are three main angles from which this question will be scrutinized. The first of these is the establishment of key terms within which the variables of the question will be evaluated, such as citizen diplomacy and global civil society.

The second of these is an analysis of Soviet Doukhobor relations and correspondence with Canadian Doukhobors, compared with and contrasted to official USSR-Canada relations and correspondence at the state level in a corresponding timeline. In so doing it will be made apparent whether one set of relations mirrors the other or whether there are notable differences between the two. The aim of this part of the study is to give a basic answer to the question of whether the relations constituted a nucleus of emerging global civil society.

The third method by which this question is examined in the thesis involves looking at the particular nature of the Doukhobor relations and correspondence as compared with similar phenomena such as East-West correspondence between Quakers, the Russian Orthodox Church in exile and other instances of public diplomacy, sometimes involving more state-allied bodies such as the Canada-USSR Friendship society. Having

established by the previous method that the Doukhobor correspondence constituted a successful partnership of global civil society, this part of the thesis will pinpoint the reasons behind this.

Something that further differentiates the third method from the second is that instead of examining trends and initiatives of the relations and correspondence, this method is concerned with measuring the level of intimacy, norms of custom and content and the culture of communication in the Doukhobor international relations and correspondence as contrasted with other USSR-Canada diplomatic traditions.

Methodology

The assertions presented in the thesis are highly dependent on the key concepts discussed in Chapter II, as the dynamic proven by the case study must be expressed in such terms. These two terms of global civil society and citizen diplomacy are apt to have fluid definitive connotations unless otherwise stated, and thus the approach used for the thesis is highly dependent on the analysis of these two terms.

In terms of parameters, I will focus on the periods of 1967-1985 for the following reasons: At the start of this period there was an increase in exchanges and interaction between Doukhobors in Canada and the Soviet Union. In 1967, John J. Verigin seized upon an appeal from the Soviet government for World Peace, taking it as an opportunity to make the case to the Soviets for an opening up of restrictions on international Doukhobor contacts. At the same time, he entreated Canadian Doukhobors to tour the Soviet Union and the Soviet government issued them visas to visit all areas inhabited by Doukhobors in the USSR. In this visit, the Canadian Doukhobors took a memorial plaque

to the site of the 1895 burning of firearms to commemorate this event and place it there permanently.³⁹

This was done with the help of the Society for Cultural Relations With Compatriots Abroad, which changed its name to the Rodina (Motherland) society in 1975; this was the society that sponsored many of the Doukhobor exchanges and distribution of cultural materials in Russian.⁴⁰

This period also witnessed a relative détente in Canada-USSR relations (though, as will be later demonstrated, this was not consistent) that was ushered in when Pierre Elliot Trudeau became Prime Minister of Canada. By 1985, the dynamic of state-society relations in the USSR had changed, which led to Perestroika.

It is also important to state that not all the subgroups that have been associated in the past with Doukhobors will be included in the study. I will be including source material on the Canadian side concerning those who fall under the umbrella of the Union for Spiritual Communities for Christ (USCC)⁴¹ which is widely accepted to be the mainstream Doukhobor organization in Canada, as well as some independents.

The main reason for focusing on the USCC and independents are that some subgroups, such as the Sons of Freedom, have had an extremely tumultuous relationship with the more mainstream factions of Doukhobors to the extent that the two sides have been irreconcilable and have disowned one another.

³⁹ John Philip Stoochnoff, *Men of Goodwill* Calgary, Alberta: MacLeod Printing, 1976, p. 44-45

⁴⁰ This society – as well as several other Soviet Friendship societies – also served as an intermediary for almost all of the cultural exchanges that took place between Doukhobors in this time period. There is, however, no evidence of the Rodina society or other government organizations having been involved in any way in letter correspondence between Canadian and Soviet Doukhobors, and the occasions where they wrote directly to Canadian Doukhobors will be addressed separately in the thesis, under a separate heading. As such, for the purposes of the thesis, the Rodina society and others will not be considered a necessary party to all modicums of correspondence studied.

⁴¹ Both *Iskra* and *Mir* are USCC-affiliated publications.

The lesser reason for this focus is due to the amount of material available for study; the USCC has much information available, as do independent Doukhobors; however, obtaining primary literature from subgroups such as the Sons of Freedom would present a considerably greater challenge and thus it would not be feasible to represent such subgroups in equal measure.

Chapter Two

Citizen diplomacy and Global civil society

The two key concepts to this thesis, citizen diplomacy and global civil society, are both terms that have myriad connotations and carry many possibilities for different understanding and interpretation. Arriving at one clear version of their meaning involves the use of philosophical judgment that must be explained in order to make clear the rationale for the arguments presented in this study. Moreover, an analysis of these terms also answers the important question of whether sustained citizen diplomacy initiatives between international members of a self-identifying society (in this case the Doukhobors) can constitute a sample of global civil society.

Citizen diplomacy

Citizen diplomacy, as the term would suggest, refers to unofficial diplomacy and contacts between individuals and groups who are often ordinary citizens – and which can often lead to consequential developments in official diplomacy between countries and/or factions within countries.⁴² Depending on the literature consulted, ‘citizen diplomacy’ may fall under ‘second-track’ diplomacy or fall under a more specific subcategory of diplomacy-studies nomenclature. A more broad understanding of citizen diplomacy, such as the following definition from a recent scholarly study of the discipline, conceptualizes the two terms of second track and citizen diplomacy as one concept, namely

The bringing together of professionals, opinion leaders or other currently or potentially influential individuals from communities in conflict, without official representative status, to work together to understand better the dynamics underlying the conflict and how its transformation from violence

⁴² Conflict Research Consortium “Unofficial Communication, Citizen diplomacy, and Multi-Track Diplomacy” Colorado, USA: University of Colorado, 1998

(or potential violence) to a collaborative process of peace building and sustainable development might be promoted.⁴³

An example of a more specific definition of citizen diplomacy instead defines citizen diplomacy as ‘track four diplomacy’ since it is more characterized by personal involvement than second-track diplomacy, which is based more on a culture of professionalism.⁴⁴ According to this school of thought, track four diplomacy may also involve many professionals, but it is characterized by a style that is “casual and informal.”⁴⁵

The history of citizen diplomacy is rich and far-reaching; however, Louise Diamond and John McDonald attribute the rise of citizen diplomacy in its modern manifestation to “the burgeoning of visits to and exchanges with the Soviet Union”⁴⁶ which they profess took place circa 1985-1986. This does not account for the Doukhobor visits before 1985, which were certainly a precursor to the type of citizen diplomacy described by Diamond and McDonald – however, it seems evident that the omission of the pre-1985 Doukhobor contacts is merely an oversight by the two scholars, perhaps due to a preference for pinpointing a trend at the time of its fruition and not at the time of its emergence.

According to Diamond’s and McDonald’s system of multi-track diplomacy, however, the case of the Doukhobor contacts and correspondence seems to fit into several categories. Besides citizen diplomacy, this case study also matches some criteria for so-called track six diplomacy, or activist diplomacy. Activist diplomacy is characterized by

⁴³ John Davies and Edy Kaufman (eds.) *Second-Track/Citizens’ Diplomacy: Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002, p. 2

⁴⁴ Louise Diamond and John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace* West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996, p. 38

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 61

⁴⁶ *Ibid*

specific goals within the movement, and has a strong moral component to it – moreover, “unlike citizen diplomacy, which focuses on increasing understanding, activism concentrates on bringing to light and working to oppose those actions and policies that it sees as immoral, oppressive or detrimental to peace with justice.”⁴⁷

The grassroots structure of track six diplomacy does not necessitate a wholly independent strategy for action; on the contrary, all the key players in activist diplomacy “have, like the think tanks, their key contacts in the government, the media, and other high places and know how to work the system to maximize their influence.”⁴⁸ Thus, it seems clear from this statement that the Doukhobors’ cooperation with state-run organizations like the Rodina society to facilitate their contacts is not antithetical to their status as activist diplomats.

In addition, the Doukhobor case also fits some criteria for Diamond and McDonald’s concept of ‘track seven diplomacy’ or religious diplomacy. However, there is a strong correlation between track six and track seven diplomacy and few differences between them. Still, the following observation about track seven diplomacy is evocative of the Doukhobor case, that “probably nowhere else in the system are so many actively engaged with the work of finding peace in their own hearts and homes as a foundation for peace around the globe.”⁴⁹

An examination of current literature on religious global society reveals that the Doukhobor movement indeed bears little in common with other global religious movements, which often hold among their key aims the pursuit of “a transnational

⁴⁷ Diamond and McDonald, p. 87-88

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 89

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 100

religious entity, a kind of globalization to supplant the secular one.”⁵⁰ The goal of the Doukhobors it seems was not to create a religious global movement or even to achieve humanitarian aims under the auspices of their own religion, but to have their aims (many of which were rooted in their religion) embraced by the secular world and put into effect by secular governments.

This idea is not dissimilar to the allying of religious figures with social movements and environmental causes, and can be considered an example of what some scholars have deemed not global religion but ‘global religiosity’ whereby shared religious values across denominations contribute to a pan-spiritual global partnership for social and environmental change.⁵¹

Another useful framework which one could compare to the element of religiosity in Doukhobor activism is the idea of civil religion, which Jean Jacques Rousseau defined as “shared beliefs about the goodness and just nature of the state and the necessity to love one's duty even unto death.”⁵² According to Rousseau, civil religion was absolutely necessary in order for a state to maintain its vitality and survive. This principle was pre-modern in its conception, and did not account for secular states, but Lowe writes that the rise of ideology as a new unifying principle upon which to base a social order in these states was used as its substitute.⁵³

The chief aim of any kind of ‘civil religion’ by Rousseau’s definition is to gain the support and dedication of the populace in the defense of the state. The Doukhobors, as a group that had a genuine kinship with overseas brethren and a loosely unified values

⁵⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Religion in Global Civil Society*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 8.

⁵² Brian M. Lowe, “Soviet and American Civil Religion: A Comparison” *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* vol. 13, no. 1/2 2001, pp. 73-96

⁵³ *Ibid*

system that undermined the ideological dogma of the USSR, were actors in a wider Soviet grassroots movement that eventually eroded the stronghold of ideology in that society. Having aided in the destruction of the old civil religion (Bolshevism), the Doukhobors were also contributors to a new civil religion based on peace and cooperation that permeated through the fault lines of society all the way to the Kremlin for a time in the 1980s.

One interesting aspect of activist diplomacy put forward by Diamond and McDonald is the idea that the ranks of track six diplomacy players tend not to be popular with their own national populace outside of the activist community as their actions and beliefs may alienate those around them and invoke scorn.⁵⁴ If this is as much the case with most activist groups as it was with the Doukhobors in Canada and Russia, then this may serve as an instructional device for forming a greater basis for successful citizen diplomacy. According to this concept, like-minded activists from different nations would be more likely to establish successful dialogue with each other as nationalistic precepts of ‘us’ and ‘them’ would be more fluid and based on their shared system of beliefs rather than on nationalism or regionalism.

Citizen diplomacy has been linked in the past to the anti-nuclear mindset that was one of the main motivators for Doukhobor citizen diplomacy in the 1960s-1980s, as scholars have purported that “the initiatives of citizen diplomacy are directly linked to the psychology of the nuclear era that compels us to explore creative solutions in the midst of traditional antagonisms.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Diamond and McDonald, p. 91

⁵⁵ James L. Hickmand and James A. Garrison, Jr. “Psychological Principles of Citizen diplomacy” in Newsom, p. 135

Though the term may appear similar to such phenomena as public diplomacy and mass diplomacy, there are important differences between to be noted between the terms. For example, public diplomacy often refers to state-sponsored overseas initiatives that involve the wider public, and mass diplomacy instead of referring to diplomacy of the masses, refers to “the entirety of cultural educational and audiovisual programs sponsored by a government within the framework of its foreign policy to obtain international support by targeting the populations of other nations.”⁵⁶

Impact of Citizen Diplomacy

Citizen diplomacy, besides potentially laying important groundwork for progressive developments in official diplomacy, often strengthens civil society by giving it international agency and capacity.⁵⁷ It can also aid tremendously in conflict resolution, as bridging cultural divides is important for mediating the separate perspectives on a particular conflict and its surrounding issues, as well as the different processes for managing or solving a particular dispute.⁵⁸

Some have credited the rise of citizen diplomacy in the modern era to changes in the face of modern diplomacy as a whole, one definitive feature of this being that it has brought change and transformation to the fore of diplomatic activity.⁵⁹ However, since citizen diplomacy encompasses such a large and uncontrolled demographic, the results of citizen diplomacy often vary widely and often do not benefit from the strength of

⁵⁶ Pierre Cyril Cyrus Teymour Pahlavi, “Mass Diplomacy: Foreign Policy in the Global Information Age” (Ph.D diss. McGill University, Oct. 2004) pp. 73-74

⁵⁷ Davies and Kaufman (eds.) *Second-Track/Citizens’ Diplomacy: Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002, p. 6

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 7

⁵⁹ Paul Sharp, “Making Sense of *Citizen Diplomats*: The People of Duluth, Minnesota, as International Actors” *International Studies Perspectives*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 131-150, May 2001, p. 144-145

organization that is possible for more official diplomatic organs. It is for this reason that Sharp makes the prediction for the future of citizen diplomacy that “While citizen diplomats will thrive in numbers, some of them will not thrive in their capacity to secure a following for the sorts of positions they adopt.”⁶⁰

This last concept provides the precise motive for undertaking the Doukhobor case study, for it allows us to examine how some initiatives of citizen diplomacy might be able to thrive like in the case of the Doukhobor relations, and why other groups were less successful in this regard.

To the theory that one key function of citizen diplomacy is to strengthen civil society, the author would add that given the existence of certain conditions (such as sustained activity of citizen diplomacy initiatives between international members of a defined society) a case example of citizen diplomacy can also constitute a sample of emerging global civil society. An analysis of the term ‘global civil society’ serves to further illustrate this point.

Global civil society

As with any popular buzzword, the meaning of global civil society (also referred to as global civil society and transnational civil society) has become convoluted through overuse and flippant interpretation.⁶¹ Thus, in order to precisely indicate the connotation of the term for use here, the two ideas which together comprise the term – the concept of civil society and the concept of globality – shall be analyzed separately.

⁶⁰ Sharp, p. 149

⁶¹ John Keane. *Global civil society?* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 15

Precluding this, however, it is perhaps important to place some limitations on the term. Specifically, the individuals and groups which make up global civil society are non-governmental and non-commercial in structure, but this does not mean the term can also refer to terrorist groups and organized crime which may also be non-governmental and/or non-commercial. As its name implies, global civil society must be characterized by civility, or nonviolence and “respect for others expressed as politeness towards and acceptance of strangers.”⁶²

The groups which comprise global civil society must also have or seek to have a purpose in shaping global affairs; this is a logical extension of Jan Aart Scholte’s caveat for civil society, that it “exists when people make concerted efforts through voluntary associations to mould rules: both official, formal, legal arrangements and informal social constructs.”⁶³

Global civil society provides a check on governmental systems because it guarantees a division of power, and in this way it prevents authoritarian rule. Partly because of this, those who comprise international civil society tend to both directly and indirectly discourage violence between states.⁶⁴

Historically, global civil society is seen as a fairly recent phenomenon that has developed rapidly. For today, there are approximately 50,000 international non-governmental, not-for profit organizations – otherwise known as INGOs – in operation.

⁶² Keane, p. 12

⁶³ Jan Aart Scholte “Global civil society: Changing the World?” *CSGR Working Paper* No. 31/99 May 1999, p. 3

⁶⁴ Keane, p. 8, 15

Of these, 90 percent were created after 1969, and John Keane states that global civil society only reached fruition after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.⁶⁵

Civil Society

In any given state, even in the most totalitarian regimes, there exists some kind of relationship between state and society, and the goal of the political scientist is to understand this relationship. The definition of the term ‘civil society’ has changed dramatically since its inception in the eighteenth century, to reflect not only societal change and modernization, but also trends in political thinking. Harmful to its use as an analytical tool is an understanding of the term based on criteria that do not transcend the boundaries of one political system or context. However, arriving at a single understanding of the term requires much discussion of previous scholarship on the subject as there has been much written about it.

Review of Literature on Civil Society

While discussions related to the core ideas of civil society can be traced back all the way to Aristotle⁶⁶, emergence of a formal discourse on civil society began in what is termed the ‘Scottish Enlightenment’, with the likes of Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith articulating the concept. This school of thought stemmed from concerns that individualism and community were increasingly at odds with one another, state power needed to be reigned in and the bonds of community and public service strengthened.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Keane, p. 1, 5

⁶⁶ Mary Kaldor, *The Idea of Global civil society* p. 586

⁶⁷ Baker, *Civil Society and Democratic Theory: Alternative Voices* London, UK: Routledge, 2002 p. 4-5

The antonym of civil society, according this first wave of understanding, was ‘rude society’ and not the totalitarian society that represents the antonym to the modern understanding.⁶⁸

The more recent focus on totalitarianism as the antonym of civil society has caused many political scientists to conclude that there was no civil society in the Soviet Union. Janine Wedel, for example, supported her claim that there was no civil society under Communism in Eastern Europe with the assertion that civil society exists “when individuals and groups are free to form organizations that function independently of the state, and that can mediate between citizens and the state”⁶⁹ What is of interest here are the words ‘function independently of the state.’ Since no individual in any modern society (let alone an organized group) can function completely independent of the state, there must therefore be some subjectivity to the term.

This thesis nonetheless asserts that the Doukhobor relations show evidence of civil society within Russia. For some, the state’s involvement in their overseas initiatives would undermine this argument. Indeed, the very economic system of the USSR would disqualify the society from any such consideration according to some definitions. Thus it is important to note that the theoretic model most closely followed here is Hegel’s theory of civil society. Hegel wrote of the concept,

The state, in order to increase its universality, requires the creation through civil society of individual freedoms and the ability to satisfy needs. Yet by this very process of development, civil society is increasingly characterized by chaos and inequality that undermines ethical unity. Such ethical unity is only found in the universal state, which, although it should not abolish civil society, should rule and guide it.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Baker, p. 8

⁶⁹ Hann, p. 1

⁷⁰ Baker, p. 5

In the thesis case study, it is clear that a dynamic existed between the Doukhobors and the Soviet government similar to that described by Hegel above. The important distinction, therefore, is the degree to which they were 'guided' by the state – as too much guidance would undermine their agency, for if anything is certain it is that the communities and organizations that make up civil society must have agency. However, it should also be noted that this need not depend on the political environment within which they operate, for as Allen Feldman has argued, “political agency is not given but achieved on the basis of practices that alter the subject”⁷¹

Certainly, Hegel's definition of civil society may not satisfy some of the modern Western thinkers' conceptions of the term. However, Hegel's theories of civil society were some of the most definitive and important contributions to this analytical concept. For example, Hegel was the first political scientist to define civil society as separate from the state, and after Hegel, civil society also ceased to be largely identified and associated with the economy.⁷²

This last attribute is useful for drawing comparisons within other economic systems, and this makes it possible to analyze the concept within a Soviet context. Hegel's theory is also useful when considering the delineations between kinship ties, civil society and the state. Indeed, the Hegelian concept of particularity and universalism is not only useful for drawing such lines in the sand, but is also instrumental in examining the difference between Russian and Western civil society.

⁷¹ Craig Warkentin, *Reshaping World Politics: NGOs, the Internet and Global civil society* Oxford: Roman & Littlefield, 2001, p. 17

⁷² Neera Chandhoke, *State and Civil Society: Explorations in Political Theory* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, 1995, p. 116-117

Since civil society can be understood as the space between the universal state and kinship groups,⁷³ Hegel associates the ‘particular’ with kinship bonds such as family, with natural love and regard for the well-being of the other members of the group as the underlining principle of positive action. The universal, linked with the state, is defined and motivated by ethical ideas that apply to all.⁷⁴ Hegel defined civil society as the space where the two meet, and did not think that a proper civil society could be without a large measure of either. He wrote, “Particularity by itself is measureless and excessive – the whole order must at the same time retain strength enough to put particularity in harmony with the unity of ethical life.”⁷⁵

Some of the reasons why Western thinkers have been reluctant to accept the existence of civil society in the USSR are due to the proclamations of those thinkers who determined the specifics of Communist ideology in the first place. Part of the reason why it has been so easy for political scientists to dismiss the possibility of the existence of civil society in the Soviet Union is because Marx did not envision a place for it in a Socialist state, believing that a civil society after a workers’ revolution was achieved would be particularistic and thus “any separation of spheres between state and civil society had to be overcome entirely.”⁷⁶

However, the Soviet Union diverged in many areas from Marxist ideals, and the political system is no exception to this. Indeed, the nature of the political system in Marx’s communist utopia was not one of his more highly-developed concepts, and if one aspires to imagine such a system based only on his writings the result is evocative of so

⁷³ Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models* London, UK: Routledge, 1996, p. 5-6

⁷⁴ Chandhoke, p. 118-121

⁷⁵ Chandhoke, p. 121

⁷⁶ Baker, p. 5

many individuals shouting for what they want at the same time. Antonio Gramsci, who gave a more comprehensive Marxist interpretation of civil society than did Marx himself, also unfortunately focused on it mainly as a means of breaking free of capitalism and paving the way for a communist reality.⁷⁷

Although the contemporary interpretations of ‘civil society’ reflect Gramsci’s understanding of the term as representing an “arena in which subordinate classes may contest the dominance of the ruling class crystallized in the state,”⁷⁸ there have been different variations of interpretation based on the experiences in Europe and the USA, for example, which show that the idea of civil society is subjective to the country in which it was formed.

European notions of civil society today retain much of the Gramscian nuances of contrarian quality, but in the USA in part because of neoliberalism and World Bank definitions, understanding of civil society runs more along the lines of professional organizations like NGOs which often work to solve societal ills in the government’s stead.

It seems evident, then, that the definition of civil society is subject to the political and social conditions of the state in which it is being defined. Therefore there is a strong case to be made for the existence of civil society in the USSR, if one can allow for the same consideration of unique political conditions within the state as have been adopted by those who define the term in accordance with American or European political and social conditions.

⁷⁷ Hann and Dunn, p. 5

⁷⁸ Edwards, Foley, Diani p. 2

This argument is certainly one which goes against the common knowledge that interest groups in the USSR were not free to act contrary to Party ideology. However, similarly, it is not only the Soviet social action groups which were bound by state favour, as Western civil society groups also benefited and benefit today from the encouragement or support of the government.⁷⁹ Thus the question of whether a group can be considered part of a civil society if they do not run counter to government ideology and political agendas will be central to establishing a firm ground upon which to build my further analysis.

According to Salvador Giner's definition, civil society is not defined by a certain privileged realm where individuals and the state meet, but an idea of a whole society that has many associations, all of them competitive, which are 'politically undisturbed.'⁸⁰ This is very different from the Hegelian concept that the state should guide civil society, and instead seems to simply describe the modern stage of a Western-style liberal democracy at its best and most idealistic, in the style of John Locke.

The problem with this definition is that it erases the potential of 'civil society' as an analytical tool for social change in non-liberal democracies, for if civil society is defined closely along the lines of a liberal democracy, how then can it be used to build a liberal democracy in a transition state? As Gideon Baker's analysis of civil society in Eastern Europe and Latin America has shown, the building of civil society first can act as a precursor for a more liberal democratic system, a phenomenon he calls 'civil society first'.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Edwards, Foley, Diani p. 5

⁸⁰ Warkentin, p. 11

⁸¹ Baker, p. 3

To add to the problem, modern understanding of the term ‘civil society’ has strayed somewhat from the more traditional definitions stipulated by the likes of Hegel and De Toqueville, to represent an oppositionist wing of society engaged in a zero-sum game with the state. This tendency has led to Ernest Gellner’s expression of contempt for the term, calling it a ‘slogan’ and Adam Seligman’s praise of it as a ‘shining emblem’.⁸²

Perhaps the greatest casualty of this political philosophy is the effect it has had in Russia and Eastern Europe. According to the modern Western view on civil society, only two types of civil society are acceptable – 1. oppositionist revolutionary societies and 2. Western-styled NGOs. Of these, only the latter can be viable for a stable political system; and comparatively speaking, Russia has resisted the latter while Eastern European countries have not. However, even the Eastern European adoption of such Western-styled NGOs has proved somewhat artificial and lacking in resonance with the values and aims of the populace; as Hann remarked of Poland in the mid-1990s “The re-emergence of Rotary Clubs is little consolation when you no longer have secure employment.”⁸³

This illustrates the essential problem with Western-imported conceptions of civil society to Russia and Eastern Europe – it is not that the system is bad (as it works, for the most part, in the West) but that it is not compatible with the political culture of post-Communist societies because it was not allowed to develop within local cultural communities and thus reflect local priorities and strategic approaches.

If civil society is to represent a meaningful bridge between kinship communities and the state, then it must grow out of local traditions or at least resound with their values, being recognizable to them. In many instances the post-Communist focus on civil

⁸² Baker, p. 2

⁸³ Hann, p. 9

society has been shaped by Western visions, first and foremost because of better funding from international NGOs but also because of an identity crisis in the former USSR and Soviet Bloc regarding state-society relations that to some degree exists today.⁸⁴

Civil Society and the State

The importance of mutual influence between state and society becomes yet more apparent when analyzing the nature of international relations and global civil society. For inasmuch as global civil society has been systematically analyzed at all, it has almost unanimously been declared to necessarily interact constantly with state action.⁸⁵

The main reason for this is structure; international society, according to Chris Brown, lies between system and community in the three-part apparatus of international relations. He defines society as “a norm-governed form of association, but the norms in question emerge out of the requirements for social cooperation”⁸⁶ Thus, society is shaped by norms – which are determined by community as well as the state – and therefore for

⁸⁴ To illustrate this point, one need not look further than the contemporary environmental movement in the Russian Federation. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the movement underwent a splintering, whereby previously united factions competed for resources and funding, separated into richer and poorer camps and were divided by new ideological expressions of environmentalism, such as ultra-nationalism. Henry suggests that the most conspicuous divide in the Post-Soviet environmental movement in Russia is between the professional groups associated with or styled after Western NGOs, and localized, grassroots groups – many of which are mobilized around a specific issue (i.e. protecting local old-growth forests). The professional groups, which are more exclusive, have been criticized for being largely funded and driven by grants from Western Parties, to whom they often become beholden to instead of to their constituencies. As a result, these groups tend to alienate the wider Russian populace. According to Karjalainen and Hobeck, the local grassroots organizations are more personal in organizational style and less political in approach and tend to mobilize after a big environmental issue comes to the fore. [See: Henry, Laura Ann “Two Paths to a Greener Future: Environmentalism and Civil Society Development in Russia” *Demokratisatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* vol. 10, no. 2 (Spring 2002): pp. 147-165 and Karjalainen, T. and Jo Hobeck “When the Environment Comes to Visit: Local Environmental Knowledge in the Far North of Russia” *Environmental Values* vol. 13, no. 2, (May 2004) p. 177]

⁸⁵ Warkentin, p. 18-19

⁸⁶ Warkentin, p. 16

evidence of a ‘civil society’, one must show that the three elements of that make up international relations are mutually influential.

Globality

Having defined some basic parameters of civil society’s implications, what remains is to specify what is meant by the word ‘global’ in global civil society. According to Scholte, there are five major conceptions of the term ‘globality’ and the associated process of increasing globality, known as ‘globalisation’. The first of these conceptions is more aptly described as internationalism, the state of relatively high interaction and cooperation between individual nations.⁸⁷ This is not the concept used here because it necessitates a non-fluid interpretation of nations and emphasizes the separation of individual nations.

The second main associative concept can be described as liberalism, which is mainly an economic understanding, the third is universalism and the fourth is westernism, both of which emphasize cultural sameness. These three are not considered as the conception used here. The fifth associative concept is deterritorialism, which envisions ‘global’ relations as occupying “a social space that transcends territorial geography.”⁸⁸ Only the last of these concepts is particular to the developments of the late twentieth century and particular to a modern understanding of globality – thus it is this last concept of globality which best fits the case study at hand.

There is a dearth of historical study on international civil society, partially due to the nature of the evidence, as its development was largely based on informal contacts and

⁸⁷ Scholte, p. 8

⁸⁸ *Ibid*

and realization of converging public opinion across borders.⁸⁹ In addition to this, an information bias also exists, whereby much of the empirical data used by global agencies is compiled from individual countries by way of national organizations and governmental institutions.⁹⁰

Thus, there is much light still to be shed on the development of global civil society as we understand it today (with particular reference to the privileged concepts determined in this chapter). The purpose of this case study is therefore to provide a sliver of this much needed insight, as it is appropriately placed both chronologically and conceptually.

The rationale for the last statement is simple: whereas Keane's estimation that the maturation of modern global civil society was specifically stimulated by the dissolution of the Soviet Union and subsequent visions of a new world order of global unification; and whereas it is also considered to be a product of the peace and ecological movements that necessarily envisioned a unified goal for all peoples,⁹¹ therefore a case study of a global peace movement in the years leading up to Perestroika can give us a sample of global civil society in the making.

It is my position that the case study of Doukhobor correspondence provides an important case study of state-society relations, for it explores the establishment of global networks by state sub-groups within states at an unfriendly phase of relations with one another. This is what is here deemed to constitute a nucleus of global civil society and, moreover, a historical example of how global civil society in its modern form was developed.

⁸⁹ Keane, p. 5-6

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 1, 5

It should be noted as well that it is not coincidental that the Doukhobor correspondence studied here was both an incidence of citizen diplomacy and early global civil society; indeed, this is at the crux of what can be learned historically from this case study: That the former existed as an example of the latter in its developmental stage.

In order for global civil society to reach higher stages of development, it is logical that meaningful and natural communication must be reached between non-governmental and non-commercial citizens. Ideally, this communication should voice awareness of global issues and the willingness to effect change in the world, in accordance with Scholte's theory of civil society. As will be further illustrated in the following chapter, the case of Soviet-Canadian Doukhobor correspondence meets both of these criteria.

Chapter Three

Doukhobor Correspondence and Canada-USSR Relations

In order to show the independence of the Doukhobor connections from Soviet state policy, it is necessary to illustrate the many transformations in official relations between the USSR and Canada. In so doing, it will be made apparent that there are few parallels between Doukhobor relations and state priorities for international diplomacy – for while the tides of détente and conflict in official USSR-Canada relations rose and fell in accordance with treaties, wars, political scandals and the whims of politicians, the Doukhobor contacts remained fairly constant throughout good times and bad.

It should be noted as well that the Doukhobor contacts were not originally initiated by either state, only facilitated by them in the latter half of the Soviet Union's history. The constancy of international Doukhobor correspondence continued even throughout the darkest days of Stalinist repression; thus it is not surprising that the content of Doukhobor correspondence in the period studied also exemplifies independent ideological understanding of the other state, in contrast to the propaganda presented at the time.

In order to show this contrast explicitly, a short background on the portrayal of Canada and all things Canadian in Russia and the Soviet Union must be presented: The strange bipolar nature of Canada's relations with the Soviet Union has roots in the early Russian vision of Canada, which is ambiguous, and defined largely by two quite different narratives.

Early Images of Canada in Russian Culture

The first of these narratives is negative, and projects an image of Canada in the American mirror as a nest of bloodthirsty capitalists luring hordes of immigrants from Russia and its environs with false promises of prosperity. The émigrés themselves are viewed with suspicion, seen as reactionary converts to capitalism serving the aims of an exploitative government. According to this vision, Canada is little more than an extension of its American neighbour – as well as under the thumb of the Vatican – and should not be expected to differ a whit from its neighbour to the South in its policy toward the Soviet Union.

P. B. Struve, a Russian political economist and editor writing in the early twentieth century, was one of the first to articulate this vision, and much of the later Soviet literature featuring this archetype can be understood by reading his description of the Canadian dynamic he observed and so despised. According to Struve, the Russian unskilled workers who came to Canada in 1908-1909 were ‘enticed’ by Canadian propaganda and made to suffer at the hands of greedy capitalists who were working them to the bone. He wrote,

This contingent of immigrants is comprised mainly of peasants, lured to Canada with promises of high wages. For the majority, these promises are unfulfilled, and the immigrants often become victims of barefaced exploitation . . . Behind immigration propaganda are shipping companies, seeking advantage through the business of transporting settlers.⁹²

Struve’s damning account of the immigrant experience in Canada was combined with expressed disdain for other ethno-religious groups within Russia, who he considered to be traitorous elements. Canadians, according to Struve, “found themselves cunning agents, mainly among the Jewish population in Russia, Austro-Hungary and Germany.

⁹² V.A. Kolenko, in Bolkhovitinov, N. N. (ed.) *Amerikanskii Ezhegodnik, 2000* Moscow: Nauka, 2002, p. 277

The Russian countryside from Vizsla and West Dvina to Dneiper and further, falls under the influence of their mysterious propaganda.”⁹³

The other Russian narrative concerning Canada painted a very different story – one of a peace-loving, prosperous and progressive country that espoused a different political and social philosophy than did its American neighbour. This vision was put forward by those who saw Canada as a possible bridge between Russian and the United States, and by those who saw Canada – a country geographically similar to Russia – as a beacon for possible reform in Russia.

An early version of the latter narrative of Canada was employed in the nineteenth century by a Russian writer named Nicholas Karamzin. Karamzin’s Canada, unlike its southern neighbour, was hardworking, peace-loving, thrifty and (perhaps most importantly in terms of facilitating the political possibility of comparison with Russia) loyal to its monarchy. That Canada was, for Karamzin, enjoying a more enlightened monarchy than Russia at the time, seemed to suggest that it should serve as a beacon for prosperous future Russia.⁹⁴

Soviet Echoes of Early Russian Archetypes

In Soviet times, this image of Canada was presented when trade relations or political agreements between the two countries were thought to be improving, or when the Soviets thought a disruption of the balance of global power was possible by befriending and influencing allies of the United States.

⁹³ V.A. Kolenko, in Bolkhovitinov, N. N. (ed.) *Amerikanskii Ezhegodnik, 2000* Moscow: Nauka, 2002 p. 277

⁹⁴ J. L. Black, *Canada in the Soviet Mirror: Ideology and Perception in Soviet Foreign Affairs, 1917-1991*, p.1.

Throughout the Soviet period, Moscow's view of Canada diverged between these two narratives, depending on the political climate of the day. When the former, negative one was prevalent, it was almost always accompanied by an ebb in friendly relations and trade between the USSR and Canada; when the latter was prevalent, it signaled a thaw in relations between the two countries.

Post-Stalin Soviet Foreign Policy and Canada

The dynamic of state-society relations and Soviet foreign policy present in the period studied only began to take shape after Stalin's death. With the death of Stalin in 1953, the Soviet foreign ministry sought to improve relations abroad and enter into more cooperative international partnerships. The aftermath of Stalin's excesses had ensured that in 1959 the USSR "was one of the most isolated societies the modern world has ever known"⁹⁵ and on many fronts, the Soviet leadership now sought to move away from this isolation.

Khrushchev's government also hoped to mend fences with the West and find in Canada a "sympathetic ear if not an ally"⁹⁶ and in 1955, Canadian Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson paid a visit to Moscow, the first visit to the Soviet Union by a foreign minister of Canada or any other NATO country. Pearson had been a key geopolitical player on the question of disarmament, and political and cultural initiatives between the two countries increased and in 1956, a trade agreement between the USSR

⁹⁵ Christopher Shulgan, *The Soviet Ambassador: The Making of the Radical Behind Perestroika* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 2008, p. 53

⁹⁶ Black, p. 223-224

and Canada was signed, giving mutual 'most favoured nation' status for customs duties and charges on trade between the two countries.⁹⁷

Accordingly, the literature of the Khrushchev period presented a more nuanced image of Canada than that which had preceded it. This literature acknowledged the existence of a diverse bourgeoisie who were unwilling to accept the role of Canada as a 51st state, and were moving away from American economic domination and were looking for other trade options, notably with the Soviet Union.⁹⁸

On the diplomatic front, the afterglow of Pearson's visit to Moscow was severely dampened by the Hungarian crisis of 1956. The specter of Soviet tanks rolling into Budapest reawakened fears of a Soviet threat in Canada and crushed Soviet hopes of a less unified NATO. By the end of the year, Soviet-Canadian relations were shaped chiefly by mutual mistrust once again.⁹⁹

Post-Stalin Soviet Foreign Policy and the Doukhobors

Significantly for the Doukhobors, travel restrictions to and from the Soviet Union were relaxed in June 1953.¹⁰⁰ During this period, Doukhobors were making private links with one another across borders. A regular feature of the Russian-language Doukhobor weekly (now monthly) *Iskra* was a "Letter From Russia", from a Doukhobor or friend of Doukhobors who was living in the Soviet Union, sent to one of the Canadian Doukhobors. The writers of the letters hailed from varied locales in the Soviet Union,

⁹⁷ Black, p. 225

⁹⁸ Leigh Sarty, "Détente, Cold War, and Perestroika: Canadian-Soviet Relations Since 1980" *CCSS Reports*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter 1991) p. 4-6

⁹⁹ Black, p. 230-231

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 218-219

including Central Asia¹⁰¹ and the content of the letters suggest that the writers were neither the direct kin of the recipients nor had they known one another previously.

One such letter, sent to E.I. Strelyaevim of Shoreacres, B.C. in 1956 and printed the same year in the June 8th edition of *Iskra*, introduced his family to a Canadian recipient with details that would have already been known to someone who had met him before. “Hello from the Don!” the letter begins; after telling the recipient about where he lives, the Soviet Doukhobor introduces his wife and family, including simplified occupations of each member, to the recipient in such a way that it would be scarcely possible that the two had ever met one another previously.¹⁰²

In 1954, nine Canadian Doukhobor delegates went on an excursion to the Soviet Union and met with Russian Doukhobors William A. Chutskov and Vladimir V. Chertkov. In a subsequent interview with one of the Canadian Doukhobor participants, it is clear that even at this early stage of the exchanges, the Doukhobors saw these initiatives as a way to build peace and understanding between peoples.¹⁰³

Not surprisingly, the bitter state of Soviet-Canadian relations in the wake of the Hungarian crisis prompted the return of the uglier Canada in the Soviet mindset at the behest of the Soviet intellectual elite. This time, the Doukhobors were cast in the role as duped immigrants: a 1957 essay in *Slaviane*, for example, described the Canadian internment of Freedomite Doukhobors in shocking terms, saying that the Doukhobors had been placed in a “British Columbia Buchenwald”; the article went on to state that

¹⁰¹ *Iskra*, No. 578, 15 July 1956

¹⁰² *Iskra*, No. 577, 8 June, 1956

¹⁰³ Tarasoff, Koozma “Trip to the Soviet Union (an interview with W.A. Soukoreff)” *The Doukhobor Inquirer*, vol. 1, no. 6 July 1954, p. 5

“immigrants would not find work in Canada, that they could never afford to own their own homes and that the cost of health care was exorbitant.”¹⁰⁴

The events of the late 1950s and early 1960s also revealed the limitations of the Khrushchev thaw that would continue to pose a potential threat for Doukhobors international society and its aims throughout the later Soviet period. In the autumn of 1961, despite his proclamations encouraging disarmament, Khrushchev unexpectedly made the decision to renew nuclear tests in the USSR though the other leading nuclear powers had lately observed an informal moratorium on thermonuclear tests.¹⁰⁵ When the Soviet scientist A.D. Sakharov tried to prevent this from happening, Khrushchev sharply rebuffed him and spoke out against pacifists at the XXII congress of the CPSU, saying that it is impossible to constrain the military machine of aggressors by talking about peace.¹⁰⁶

Even in such a hostile climate, progress continued with the Doukhobors' international contacts and with the organizations connected with them. In 1957, thirteen Canadian Doukhobors went to the World Festival of Youth and Students in the USSR (the festival's slogan was 'Peace and Friendship') where they met a Doukhobor from the Caucasus named Vasily Chutskov.¹⁰⁷ It appears, moreover, that the Russian Doukhobors who had met the Canadian delegates in 1954 were maintaining contacts; a Canadian Doukhobor publication featured an article written by one of them in 1958 describing life as a Doukhobor in the USSR and putting forth their religious stance and so on.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Black, p. 239

¹⁰⁵ Pavlova, T.A. “Istoricheskie Sudby Rossiiskovo Pasifizma” *Voprosy Istorii* August 1999, p. 34

¹⁰⁶ Pavlova, T.A., p. 34

¹⁰⁷ “Retrospect: The VI World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow USSR 1957”

by Koozma J. Tarasoff — November 15, 2008, www.spirit-wrestlers.com

¹⁰⁸ William Chutskov “Doukhobors in the USSR” *The Doukhobor Inquirer*, vol. 5 nos. 1+2, Feb-March 1958, p. 16

Citizen diplomacy in the State Mirror

While examples of such correspondence might appear trivial in a larger geopolitical context, the Trudeau government would later recognize this kind of human diplomacy as a “valuable and sometimes essential servant of the more traditional forms of secret diplomacy.”¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe it was the mission of the Canadian delegates to expand contacts from simply state-sponsored contacts to more privately-initiated individual contacts. The reasoning for this can be summed up thusly:

Over the last three decades each side had developed its own over-simplified and emotionally charged Cold-War stereotypes of the other that had obscured the changed nature of the conflict. Therefore it was to be the challenge of people-to-people diplomacy to cultivate more realistic perceptions and appreciations that were not clouded by ideology.¹¹⁰

The Soviet press came out against this idea in the aftermath of this Helsinki conference, associating it with “lien bourgeois ideology.”¹¹¹ One could make the argument that the Doukhobors, being Russian, fell outside the Soviet concern for international contacts between ethnic and religious groups; however, there is evidence that the Doukhobors stood together with other ethnic groups on this question and related ones, such as the right to emigrate or move freely from one country to another.

For example, in one account of a Doukhobor excursion to the USSR in 1971, one man related that someone in his group asked the assistant director of Intourist if Jews could also go to the USSR, “meaning whether they are persecuted there” and on behalf of

¹⁰⁹ Balawyder, Aloysius *Canadian-Soviet Relations, 1939-1980* Oakville, ON: Mosaic Press, 1981, p. 68-69

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 69

the Doukhobors he wrote that “we hope, that there is free exit from the country for all those who want it, especially workers who have been victimized in the past.”¹¹²

As this incident suggests, the Soviets were by no means under the illusion that the Canadian Doukhobors subscribed to the Party line in the Soviet Union. In fact, the Doukhobors sometimes stated this fact explicitly and openly in front of Soviet officials.

Ivan I. Verigin, speaking at a conference in honour of the Soviet Minister to Canada

Boris Mirochenko, who was visiting Grand Forks at the time, said:

We Doukhobors, a religious society, do not share the political views of the Soviet state, but we can stand shoulder to shoulder together with the Soviet people and with all other people who wish for peace. In principle we agree with this, that a man should guard his work so that cruel people cannot destroy him [. . .] but on the other hand, we have a past, where our ancestors gave up their lives as evidence that love conquers evil, that it is stronger than evil. We intend to stay on the path of our ancestors and hope that there will be peace and love on Earth, that the words, which we often repeat – your kingdom come – become a reality, and not only words.¹¹³

One favourable development for Soviet relations with Canada was Trudeau’s election to the Prime Ministerial office in 1969. The Soviets viewed this as a positive development and were overjoyed when, in 1969 the Trudeau government decided to cut Canada’s NATO commitment in half.¹¹⁴ It would seem that the Soviets were, however, overly optimistic as they went so far as to predict that the end of NATO was imminent and while they were pleased with Canada’s participation in a 1969 European Security Conference, they were much less pleased with Trudeau’s invoking of the War Measures Act in 1970 (as the CPSU had as one of its chief policies the assistance of ‘national liberation movements’).¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Iskra*, No. 1278, 29 Jan. 1971.

¹¹³ *Iskra*, No. 1266, p. 6 -7, 14 Aug. 1970

¹¹⁴ Sarty, p. 6

¹¹⁵ Black, p. 263-270

Trudeau's 1970 foreign policy review was deemed by the Soviets to correspond with the USSR's trade aspirations (although overall the Soviet interpretation of the White Book was that Canada was pledging to maintain its status as a 'tactile and docile' U.S. partner), and Trudeau's 1971 visit to the USSR was also an auspicious sign of better relations. In the same year, an Agreement on Cooperation in the Industrial Application of Science and Technology along with a General Exchanges agreement between the two countries were also signed.¹¹⁶ Notwithstanding such developments, the USSR at this time was still building up weapons arsenals and did not call for universal disarmament.

Doukhobor Contacts in the Years of Rapprochement and Relapse

Although Doukhobors contacts dated back to the time of emigration from the Transcaucassus, the 'big push' for correspondence began in the late 1960s, after John J. Verigin responded to an appeal for peace in 1967 from the Soviet government to the world at large. While the Doukhobors had conducted similar exchanges in the past, as one Doukhobor put it "this was an opportune time for the Doukhobors in Canada to strongly uphold their views on War and Peace."¹¹⁷ The contacts further intensified in the 1970s, a decade that saw over 300 Doukhobor visits to the USSR.¹¹⁸

It is apparent looking at Doukhobor correspondence in the late 1960s that there was a sense of drawing the Soviet and Canadian Doukhobor communities closer together. For example, in Fyodor Tomlin's account of the Malovs's visit to the Soviet Union, he describes their visit to other Doukhobors in Rostov, showing the intent of both Soviet and Canadian Doukhobors to bring the two sides closer together. For example, he mentions

¹¹⁶ Black, p. 266-270

¹¹⁷ Stoochnoff, p. 44-45

¹¹⁸ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava* p. 210

that the Malovs gave warm greetings from all the Canadian Doukhobors and he expressed the wish that the Soviet Doukhobors could be close with them despite the distance between them. "How it is dear to us to know and to feel that you have cherished in your hearts the feeling of brotherly unity and love for us" he says in a letter of greeting to all Canadian Doukhobors. "This means that we live in unity, like a family of Christ."¹¹⁹

The Canadian Doukhobors had a chance to return the hospitality when two Doukhobors from the Soviet Union, Dmitri Mospan and his aunt Lusha Vugnyava, visited Doukhobors living in the B.C. interior. While on their visit, Petr and Lusha Voikiny described Dmitri's professional interest in their gardens and his love for the mountains of British Columbia.¹²⁰

Perhaps most telling is the following letter from Fyodor Tomlin to the Canadian Doukhobors, describing the importance with which the Soviet Doukhobors regarded correspondence from their Canadian brethren:

Your letter was read at our little spiritual meeting of brothers and sisters, who strive for the unity and fellowship of all people and for worldwide peace. All the brothers and sisters who listened with big love and hope accepted your brotherly greeting and wishes for a happy new year and sent from themselves deepest thanks, and warm brotherly greetings to all of you, our dear family of brothers and sisters in Christ.¹²¹

Notably, even amidst the atheistic political climate of the USSR, this letter makes reference to religious terms in expressing wishes of goodwill to the Canadian

¹¹⁹ Fyodor I. Tomlin "Vstrecha s Malovimi" *Iskra* no. 1165, 15 Dec. 1967 p. 3-4

And Fedor I. Tomlin "Privet Doukhobortsam v Kanade" *Iskra* No. 1165, 15 Dec. 1967, p. 4

¹²⁰ Petr and Lusha Voikiny "Dorogie Gosti iz Sovetskovo Soyuz" *Iskra* No. 1158, 27 Oct. 1967

¹²¹ Fyodor I. Tomlin "Privet ot Doukhobortsev iz Sovetskovo Soyuz" *Iskra* no. 1178, March 22, 1968, p. 3-4

Doukhobors. In addition, a clear statement of the two sides working as one toward the unified goal of peace and friendship worldwide is explicitly expressed:

Let God send to us and to all of you the strength of love and for the future of our life on earth to develop and strengthen this love more closely, as between yourselves and us and with all people on our planet earth, for there to be worldwide peace [. . .] From your letter we see that you work for the restoration of peace; let God give you strength and insight in the continuation of these holy works, which we will bolster and add to your voices and thoughts for worldwide peace and for fellowship of all peoples.¹²²

Many of these contacts were facilitated through the Society for Cultural Relations with Compatriots Abroad, re-named the Rodina Society in 1975 (earlier, in the 1950s and 1960s, it had operated under the name of the Slavic Committee). The Rodina Society was a state-sponsored organism of the USSR whose goal was to “broaden contacts and cultural ties with compatriots abroad and their organizations which are working for friendship and cooperation with the Soviet people, and generally to learn about the Soviet way of life.”¹²³

The involvement of a state-sponsored association in Doukhobor correspondence makes all the more necessary to show a strong dichotomy between the Soviet line of ideology and policy and the sentiments and ideas expressed in the correspondence. Fortunately, records of this dichotomy do exist and are especially convincing when taking into account the fact that even minor deviations from the Party line in the Soviet era were cause for government consternation, as the *Doveriye* experience illustrated.

For example, in light of the resistance to disarmament in the Cold War environment, one letter from Vasily and Tamara Chutskov in Tbilisi to Doukhobors in Cowley, Alberta is of particular interest as it strongly suggests social activism among the

¹²² Fyodor I. Tomlin “Privet ot Doukhobortsev iz Sovetskovo Soyuz” *Iskra* no. 1178, March 22, 1968, p. 3-4

¹²³ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 205

Russian Doukhobors that included support of demonstrations against biological weapons.

The letter reads as follows,

We have good memories of the days of our meeting, the warmth that you and all the Doukhobors of Alberta showed us. Your good work and work of all your friends, brothers and sisters serves as a living example of virtue, carrying out humanitarian principles – honest working life in peaceful settlements and friendship of all people, in affairs embodying international feeling, with proper preservation of national properties. All people of their own free will are anxious that mad, greedy people will drop biological and chemical weapons. The aim of honest people is to expose the conduct of all vile works of accumulating biological weapons by means of demonstrations. Here we are reminded of the demonstration of the Doukhobors in Suffield.¹²⁴

The Chutskovs end their letter with a quote from a Soviet professor declaring: ‘We don’t doubt that our call will resound in the hearts of millions of people all over the world.

Reason must triumph over madness. The future is in science which is life-affirming, promoting human happiness and not for science that leads us to death and devastation.’¹²⁵

Communication on the question of nonviolence between Soviet and Canadian

Doukhobors took on a more outspoken tone in some cases. One letter from Slav Delkinov in Bulgaria to P.P. Legebokov in Canada states at the end;

Here it is not long since the International opponents of war gathered among them 30 people under the leadership of H. Bing and F. Parker from England. They outlined today’s dangerous socio-political situation of the world and came to the conclusion that a revolution for the prevention of war was necessary, but the revolution should be completely in the nonviolent sense. Forgive my outspokenness, with brotherly greetings to all Doukhobors.¹²⁶

It is hard to imagine how talk of a revolution of any kind, particularly with the involvement of foreigners, was allowed to escape the Soviet censor in 1970. However, it is not the only letter from behind the Iron Curtain in this period that contained potentially

¹²⁴ *Iskra* No. 1253, 13 Feb. 1970, p. 15-16

¹²⁵ *Iskra* No. 1253, 13 Feb. 1970, p. 15-16

¹²⁶ “Letter From Bulgaria” *Iskra* No. 1270, p. 14, 9 Oct. 1970

subversive content. In January of 1970 a letter from Bulgarian collective farm workers to the Canadian Doukhobors was published in *Iskra* describing the problems of typical collective farm life in Bulgaria. The author recounts a conversation he had with a local librarian, and that upon telling her that the people of his presumably Doukhobor collective farm do not spend their money on drink like most people do, she replied “In our kholhoz, drunkenness is known to effect not only ordinary kholhozniks, but also the leaders.”¹²⁷

There were also interesting incidences of literary exchanges spearheaded by Doukhobors at this time. A letter written from Petr Chumaka from Moscow to P. N. Malovim in Thrums, B.C. on 27 January 1971, entreated: “Please help me find the address, if it is not too difficult for you, of the Canadian professor and writer Farley Mowat. Last Autumn he was with us for the first time, at Chukotka”. Chumaka, in exchange, proposed that he send a copy of ‘Pionerskaya Pravda’ (a Soviet newspaper for youth) so that the Doukhobors can see it and if they like it to subscribe for one dollar a year each subscription. If interested, they were to do this through ‘International Books’ in Toronto.¹²⁸

Following the 1971 apex of friendly relations, 1972 saw the eight-game hockey series between the USSR and Canada which was a significant sporting event and provided a precedent for future cultural exchanges. In these early years of the 1970s, however, not all developments were positive in the realm of Soviet-Canadian relations. In 1973 Alexander Yakovlev became Soviet ambassador to Canada, a development which was not without controversy given that his appointment was widely believed to be a

¹²⁷ “Bulgarskiye Kolkhozniki” *Iskra*, No. 1250, p. 8-9, 2 Jan. 1970

¹²⁸ *Iskra* No. 1253, 13 Feb. 1971, p. 28

demotion from his previous post, it was rumoured that he did not have much pull with the Soviets anymore, and his own staff disobeyed him, engaging in caprices that further damaged his reputation.¹²⁹

At the same time, Canadian Doukhobors and their pacifist ideology were brought to the fore of international visibility by the Soviets; Paul J. Semenoff, the secretary of the USCC, went as a delegate-observer to the World Congress at the Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin, which opened on the 25th of October, 1973. Topics of the Congress included disarmament, social progress, individual rights and peace. Mr. Semenoff spoke at the meetings, about the Doukhobor outlook regarding war and the likelihood of peace on Earth. After all the delegates spoke, the Bureau of the Commission recommended that war budgets be reduced by 10% in each country, with the money saved re-directed to fulfill social needs at home and abroad.¹³⁰

In August 1975, a young Doukhobor from the Ukraine named Natasha Vladimirovna Shkuratova visited Grand Forks and other towns of the Kootenay region. She was the first visitor of her age group from the Soviet Union to Grand Forks, visiting her great-aunt in Canada, and many were eager to meet with her. *Mir* reported that throughout her visit,

Natasha never displayed the slightest hint of a feeling of eliteness, either due to her Doukhobor family background or in being a prime young Soviet student. Instead, her humility, coupled with her refreshing outgoing personality and sincere candid maturity left their imprint on all who had the good fortune to meet her.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Shulgan, p. 139-148

¹³⁰ *Iskra* No. 1353, p. 27-30, 21 Dec. 1973

¹³¹ "Visitor From the USSR" *Mir* (A Doukhobor Youth Publication) Volume 3, No. 2, Sept. 1975, p. 12-14.

Importantly, this illustrates that what would have been a first impression for many young Doukhobors of a Soviet youth was much less politicized and much less characterized by mutual distrust than the erstwhile Cold War environment at the state level. One caption accompanying a photograph of two young women perched on a couch looking at photos together reads: *“Natasha and Natasha” (Horkova and Shkuratova – Same name, same age, many common interests transcend the miles separating Canada and the U.S.S.R.*¹³²

To be sure, while this exchange did transcend the particular political dynamic of the Cold War at the state level, this does not mean that the event was de-politicized by its participants in the wider sense – that is to say, without any political purpose at all. A subsequent article in the Doukhobor youth newsletter about Natasha Shkuratova’s visit and other recent exchanges discussed their significance, observing that

They broaden people’s outlooks, and bring people from different backgrounds to a closer understanding. We feel that, if it were possible for all the citizens of “east” and “west” to meet and really get to know each other, this would preclude any possibility of these people going to war against each other.¹³³

In at least one case, the exchanges even brought together a Canadian Doukhobor and a Soviet citizen who later embraced the Doukhobor movement when the two got married and moved to Canada together. Jim Kolesnikoff, the Canadian Doukhobor, was on exchange at Moscow State University when he met Nina, a fellow student from Poland, and they married and moved to Canada together in 1968. In a 1975 interview with *Mir*, they related the personal cultural compromises they made both to make their marriage work and as a matter of personal interest.

¹³² “Visitor From the USSR” *Mir* (A Doukhobor Youth Publication) Volume 3, No. 2, Sept. 1975, p. 13

¹³³ “Canada-U.S.S.R. Exchanges a Welcome Activity” *Mir* (A Doukhobor Youth Publication) Volume 3, No. 2, Sept. 1975, p. 14

Jim, for his part, stated he had taken to learning Polish in order to communicate better with Nina's parents, and Nina stated that she had essentially become a part of the Doukhobor movement, saying "I felt that the philosophical aspects of Doukhoborism, the idea of pacifism, were so impressive and so important that for me it was very easy to accept Doukhoborism as such, and to want to be a part of the movement."¹³⁴

Jim also related things he had learned from the marriage, for example the peaceful inclinations of most Soviet people: "In my personal discussions with my relatives through Nina, with the students I have encountered, I have always found that they do not want war, they do not want the whole world to turn communist, they want to live in peace"¹³⁵ Moreover, his experience had clearly given him an understanding of the concept of freedom that was less paternalistic and more constructive:

We can talk about political freedom when we compare ourselves to other countries, which have a degree of freedom. The Soviet people today are only beginning to compare their type of freedom to the freedom outside their country, because they now have the opportunity to travel abroad and to see with their own eyes and to experience what other people are doing.¹³⁶

Thus, instead of trying to encourage freedom in the Soviet Union through outside criticism or military threats, he like many other citizen diplomats perceived citizen diplomacy as the best way to encourage greater freedoms in the Soviet Union via a nation's own citizens.

In the years that followed, however, the optimism for a more lasting partnership at the state level faded fast. This was marked by a series of events: 1976 saw Canadian criticism of human rights in the Soviet Union and increased cooperation between Canada and the U.S.; in 1978 Canada expelled 13 Soviet embassy workers on the grounds that

¹³⁴ "An Interview With Jim and Nina Kolesnikoff" *Mir*, Vol. 3, No. 1 May 1975, p. 8

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 44

¹³⁶ *Ibid*

they had been spying, and sought compensation for the crashing of the Soviet Kosmos 954 into Canada's northern territories, and the Soviets responded by painting Canada as a "paradise' for war criminals".¹³⁷

There had been efforts on the part of the Soviets to rekindle the spirit of rapprochement with Canada, if for nothing else than symbolic purposes. They suggested a new economic agreement and another visit by Trudeau to Moscow, but by this time the Canadian government deemed these gestures to be mostly ineffectual.¹³⁸

These inauspicious developments, however, had no discernable effect on the international Doukhobor contacts and overseas initiatives. From June 30 to July 28 of 1977, thirty Doukhobors from Canada went on a 'Doukhobor History Tour of the Soviet Union'. This was one of over a dozen tours to the Soviet Union that were organized by the Doukhobors themselves,¹³⁹ and a detailed account of the organization of this excursion reveals that various organizations and individuals contributed, the chief overall organizer of whom was a Doukhobor named Nick Verigin who was a high school principal in Pass Creek, B.C.¹⁴⁰ As usual, Intourist and Obshestva Rodina assisted the excursion. The aim of the Doukhobor tour of 11 Soviet cities was threefold:

- 1) To visit the historic sites relating to their history
- 2) To record select activities on film and sound tape, and
- 3) To seek out relatives. It was a time to observe, to share experiences, to learn and the make contacts across international boundaries.¹⁴¹

It was observed during this history tour's stop in Slavanka, Azerbaijan that the Doukhobor hosts declared peace to be "the *most important* hope of mankind" and that

¹³⁷ Black, p. 271-278

¹³⁸ Sarty, p. 8

¹³⁹ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 210

¹⁴⁰ "Canadian Doukhobors Tour Historic Sites in the Soviet Union" *Iskra* No. 1455, 18 Nov. 1977, p.23-27

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*

“differences in views must not be allowed to lead to wars.”¹⁴² In Tbilisi, Georgia the group stayed with Wasili and Tamara Chutskoff and family, whom Koozma Tarasoff, a Canadian Doukhobor, had previously met at the World Youth Festival in the 1950s. What is most interesting to note is that the Soviet Doukhobor hosts defined Doukhoborism as a “social movement for peace” that encouraged them to continue contacts and relations with other people overseas.¹⁴³

In December of that same year, the 28th symposium for the international Joint Doukhobor Research Committee, held in Castlegar, B.C., featured an important speaker from the Soviet Union who cooperated with a major research initiative of the Committee. At this meeting, the sister of the deceased Doukhobor leader designate Peter Verigin the 3rd, Mrs. Markova, delivered a speech about Verigin’s life with her in the USSR. The purpose of the speech was for Mrs. Markova to witness in front of the Canadian Doukhobors that Verigin had died despite rumors to the contrary from the Freedomites and Reformed Doukhobors, a fact that was confirmed through a joint investigation (it is implied of the Committee) with the International Red Cross and with co-operation from Soviet authorities.¹⁴⁴

Youth were also involved at times in the international Doukhobor contacts. Canadian Doukhobors Cheryl Kanigan and Tamara Malloff’s trip to the USSR to meet with Doukhobors in Orlovka, Tbilisi, Rostov and other cities and villages provided for dialogue on life in Russia, and fashion in Canada. What is more, their description of their entry into the Soviet Union even suggests their trips may have been more independent as well: “We were met at the Turkish border by an inspector and the Meletsea [sic] (police)

¹⁴² “Canadian Doukhobors Tour Historic Sites in the Soviet Union” *Iskra* No. 1455, 18 Nov. 1977, p.23-27

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 25

¹⁴⁴ *Iskra* No. 1457, 16 Dec. 1977, p. 34-35

[. . .] We explained to them just what places we wanted to see. They were very kind and said they would help us as much as possible.”¹⁴⁵

Degeneration of Détente: The late 1970s and early 1980s

Although there was a long-term USSR-Canada economic agreement signed in 1979, the overall state of relations between the two countries was by that time very grim. The Soviets now reverted to the old charges that Canada was a land of “unrealistic illusions” and stories about the hardscrabble lives of immigrants in Canada and the tides of émigré nationalism influencing the Canadian government to be more reactionary.

At this time Jim Popoff, another Canadian Doukhobor, traveled with a group of Doukhobors to the Soviet Union for a three-week visit; his remarks about the visit were mostly positive and emphasized the peaceful nature of average citizens there; however, he remarked after visiting Red Square in Moscow that the experience left him with an unpleasant sensation due to the unabashed militarism on display there.¹⁴⁶

Still, Popoff’s remarks showed no trace of an inclination to weigh the two societies against one another in order to decide which was the superior, an inclination very much rampant at that time (as evidenced by Popoff’s statement that since he had returned from his visit, the question he was most asked by Canadians was which society he thought was the superior one). In response to this, he reasoned that he could not compare the two societies in a competitive manner because any such evaluation would “depend to a great extent on one’s own perspective. For example, what would be the

¹⁴⁵ “Trip to the USSR” *Iskra*, No. 1478, 3 Oct. 1978, p. 34-35

¹⁴⁶ Jim E. Popoff, “Diary of a Soviet Journey” *Mir*, No. 17, May 1979, p. 42-56.

point of asking a Devout Jew and a Catholic to decide which is better, Kosher food or Continental Cuisine?”¹⁴⁷

At the state level, there was much less room for such equivocal philosophizing, and the nail in the coffin of détente between Russia and Canada was the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. This resulted, among other things, in a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games by Canada and the imposition of sanctions. Moreover, Conservative Joe Clark was also elected in 1980, prompting a postponement of official, commercial and cultural visits between the two countries, as well as a reduction in the number of flights between Montreal and Moscow.¹⁴⁸

Despite this, there was at least one cultural partnership between Canada and the USSR that continued during this period, which the Doukhobors participated in. To celebrate 1979 as the year of the child, a “Canada-USSR Children’s Art Exchange” took place whereby selected paintings and drawings from school children in Canada toured the large cities of the USSR and vice-versa. This exchange, sponsored by Interarts in cooperation with the Canada-USSR association, remained uninterrupted by the events of 1979-1980 and eventually was exhibited in the schools and community centers of Doukhobor communities in Grand Forks, B.C.¹⁴⁹

In this year Canadian Doukhobor Koozma Tarasoff went to the Olympics in Moscow as a representative of the Canadian Doukhobors in order to ease East-West tensions, and also served as a Slavic representative for North America on this occasion – one of three designated world bridge builders along with one Russian from Australia and

¹⁴⁷ Jim E. Popoff, “Diary of a Soviet Journey” *Mir*, No. 17, May 1979, p. 42

¹⁴⁸ Black, p. 273-283

¹⁴⁹ “Detskie Risunki iz SSSR” *Iskra*, No. 1512, Feb. 8, 1980 p. 16-17

another from Finland. The Joint Doukhobor Research Committee presented the situation thusly:

In view of the polarization in international affairs between the so called East and West blocks, it was extremely important to continue whatever link [sic] possible between the two blocks. The antagonistic situation in the world was very dangerous. It could trigger off an out and out atomic war. In this confrontational situation, it should bring the Doukhobors to the forefront in their traditional role of peacemakers and those who put forth their utmost efforts to see that peaceful means are employed to solve world problems.¹⁵⁰

In Canada, political change turned into foreign policy change again; the grain embargo imposed under Clark was lifted mere months after it started, as within that time Trudeau had returned as PM once more and secured a commitment from the USSR to buy no less than 25 million metric tons of grain in the next five years – a figure that would be greatly surpassed in reality due to bad harvests and increased domestic consumption in the Soviet Union.¹⁵¹

Trudeau's return to office improved the state of affairs slightly, but the two countries continued to clash over human rights and the specter of a Soviet threat. In 1980, Trudeau found out that the USSR planned to put newer, more dangerous nuclear missiles called SS-20s along its borders with Western Europe. The Soviets had already accrued three times the conventional weapons arsenal of the West by this time, but this announcement was more serious and came at a particularly bad time, just as the SALT II negotiations were in process.¹⁵²

Around this time, more localized developments were underway which would influence the course of disarmament in global policy. Shulgan, in his biography of

¹⁵⁰ Popoff, Eli (ed.) *Joint Doukhobor Research Committee: Symposium Meetings 1974-1982*, symposium # 54, p. 567

¹⁵¹ Sarty, p. 15

¹⁵² Shulgan, p. 229

Yakovlev, states the Soviet ambassador took his vacation in the spring of 1980 to a Doukhobor village, finding a taste of his homeland and some people who shared his idealism in the process. Yakovlev had often in his career sought to establish a middle-ground between the heavy-handed corruption of the Communist party in the USSR and what he saw as the exploitative individualism of the Western system.

He found like-minded people in the Doukhobors of Western Canada and his description of them in his memoirs reveals the strong affinity he felt for them: "They were batted about the world by the ill will of those with whom they disagreed [. . .] These stubborn people, though at times naïve in their misconceptions, have sustained through all their ordeals an implacability toward deception, hypocrisy and violence."¹⁵³

In a collection of his own Perestroika-related pieces, an article about the Doukhobors equating Doukhobor beliefs with a kind of ideal communism for the USSR features first.¹⁵⁴ Like Karamzin before him, Yakovlev was pointing out something in Canada that embodied an ideal to be learned from.

By 1981, there were slogans of the USSR that called for disarmament¹⁵⁵, but not all was well in the arena of Canada-USSR relations. Developments in Poland that saw the declaration of martial law against Solidarity caused the Canadian government to impose a new set of sanctions on the USSR in 1982, postponing important Canadian-Soviet delegations in the process.¹⁵⁶

Again, this state of affairs had little to no effect on the intensity of Canada-USSR Doukhobor relations; in Castlegar in June of 1982, there was an International Doukhobor

¹⁵³ Shulgan, p. 237-238

¹⁵⁴ Shulgan, p. 237-238

¹⁵⁵ "Maya Poezdka v Sovetskii Soyuz" No. 1553, 2 Oct., 1981, p. 12-13

¹⁵⁶ Sarty, p. 17

Intergroup Symposium at which over 1,000 people were present. This included not only Doukhobors from different countries and many from the USSR but also some Molokans, Mennonites and Quakers, as well as Lev Tolstoy's great grandson Ilya Vladimirovich Tolstoy. The objectives of the event were the following:

Exchange ideas across national and international boundaries, provide a forum for research and interaction on a global basis, provide social science knowledge on topics of societal development and adaptation in a pluralistic society, provide opportunity for Doukhobors and other social movements, examine their desired future in the wider context, share in the cultural and social events of the local community, build bridges of understanding between East and the West; and find a common framework for World Peace.¹⁵⁷

In May of 1982, the Doukhobor community also sent delegates to an international religious conference in Moscow, titled "Religious workers or saving the sacred gift of life from Nuclear catastrophe", where John J. Verigin made an address to stop the sale of arms to other countries.¹⁵⁸

It was only in 1983 when then-Politburo member M. Gorbachev headed an official Soviet visit to Canada with ambassador Yakovlev that there was again a significant positive turnaround in Soviet-Canadian relations.¹⁵⁹

First Stage of the Great Thaw: 1983-1985

In Trudeau's last few months as Prime Minister, he scheduled what would become known as the Peace Initiative of 1983-1984. Unsettled by the 'ominous rhythm of crisis' that followed the Soviets' shooting down of a Korean aircraft that had ventured into USSR airspace in 1983, Trudeau traveled the world and visited various cities in an effort

¹⁵⁷ Friesen, p. 204-205

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 207

¹⁵⁹ Black, p. 285-291

to “lower tensions, to civilize the dialogue, to get out of the Cold War era.”¹⁶⁰ The effort met with limited success due to Andropov’s ill health at that time which prevented the Soviets from giving a decisive response.¹⁶¹

In February of 1984, Konstantin Chernenko succeeded Andropov as General Secretary of the USSR. In this year several cooperative agreements were signed, such as a new bilateral Fisheries Treaty and a two-year bilateral Arctic Science Exchange Program. The latter had been negotiated since the 1980s, but for years an agreement had been hindered by the Soviets’ unwillingness to include the social sciences as part of their Northern development research.

Two years prior, in 1982, a Soviet draft text had emerged that provided for cooperation in social and ethnographic research of the North which was the basis for the 1984 agreement. Sarty asserts that this agreement was an important milestone because “The 1984 Protocol was a harbinger of much greater openness in Soviet Arctic Policy under Gorbachev, a useful reminder that ‘new thinking’ was not without antecedents in the pre-1985 period.”¹⁶²

The mid-1980s saw an acceleration of rapprochement between Cold War powers, and with this came the opportunity for Doukhobor-affiliated groups to increase pressure for greater cooperation between Canada and Russia. In 1983, a letter from V.M. Chutskov, a Soviet Doukhobor from Tbilisi, to ‘The Chairman of the Committee for struggling for peace’ voiced support from all Doukhobors of the Soviet Union for the committee’s endeavours, in particular a recent anti-war demonstration. In addition to this, the letter strongly suggested that the Soviet Doukhobors were agitating for disarmament

¹⁶⁰ Sarty, p. 21

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p. 15-23

and peace in their own sphere, and that there was a strong connection between these movements.

A change in tone from previous letters written by the Chutskovs to the Canadian Doukhobors, as evidenced by the sentences written in capital letters for the first time, shows a heightened enthusiasm and strengthened sense of purpose for Doukhobor peace activism. The letter read:

Dear members of the Committee for struggling for peace! [. . .]
 You are wished the best of luck from all the husbands and wives, and children of the Soviet Union, mothers and sisters who have experienced grief and horrors brought about by war, FROM YOUR LOVED ONES AND COUNTRYMEN, FROM ALL DOUKHOBORS OF THE SOVIET UNION. Mothers know how hard it is to bury sons and brothers. This is why now they are coming out to the front lines of the fight for peace, they all are actively standing up for the right of life for all people of earth, the right to peaceful industrious life. All people know, that to protect life, you must stand up for PEACE, and not tolerate the possibility of looming nuclear catastrophe. WORK AND PEACEFUL LIFE! PEACE TO THE WORLD! HAPPINESS AND FUN FOR CHILDREN! MATERNITY AND HAPPINESS TO MOTHERS!¹⁶³

Second Stage of the Great Thaw: 1986-1991

Post 1985, the most decisive game-changer in Canadian-Soviet relations was Gorbachev's focus on 'mutual security' that moved away from zero-sum game conceptions of security that had defined the Cold-War era, effectively bringing the Cold War to an end in the process.¹⁶⁴ Perestroika saw the opening up of society toward greater freedom of speech, publicity, freedom of assembly and associations; along with this, a set of nongovernmental antimilitaristic groups emerged in the public sphere. Among these,

¹⁶³ "Pismo ot V.M. Chutskova" *Iskra*. No. 1584, 15 April 1983, p. 11

¹⁶⁴ Sarty, p. 25

the most well-known both then and today is the group “Soldiers’ Mothers” a protest group against violence and cruelty in the army.¹⁶⁵

However, the sense of progress for the anti-war movement, disarmament and international cooperation that is now associated with the Perestroika period and Gorbachev’s term as General Secretary of the USSR in fact preceded Gorbachev’s coming into office and was initiated by citizen diplomacy that allowed for warmer relations with Western parties. Andrea Goldsmith explains how this was accomplished in her study of post-Soviet international partnerships:

Golubka, Sacred Earth Network, ISAR, IPPNW – all trace the roots of their East-West partnerships to the citizen diplomacy movement during the Cold War. [. . .] They feel that contact with Westerners empowered the Russians, and this allowed Gorbachev to warm the relations with the West; in fact, many of those involved in the movement credit citizen diplomacy with stopping the Cold War.¹⁶⁶

Doukhobor Correspondence and the Question of Independence

When examining the great question of agency in Doukhobor relations, there are a few points of contention which must be addressed in regards to their independence from state activity. The Doukhobors did function independently of the state in the sense that they were not an official state organization or an offshoot of a party committee. However, as state organizations acted as intermediaries for many of the exchanges, it is pertinent to examine the nature of state committees such as the Rodina (Motherland) Society and the Canada-U.S.S.R. Friendship Society, which also assisted in the organization of exchanges, though to a much lesser extent than the Rodina Society.

¹⁶⁵ T. A Pavlova, “Istoricheskie Sud’by Rossiiskovo Pasifizma” *Voprosy Istorii* Aug. 31, 1999, p. 37

¹⁶⁶ Goldsmith, Andrea, p. 53

In the *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, Tarasoff, describes the Doukhobors'

ties with other organizations, writing that

Society Rodina and its predecessor, the Slavic Committee, have since the 1960s enabled community and independent Doukhobors to meet Soviet citizens, including Doukhobors, in the areas of university education, cultural exchange, and support for peace and the environment. The Toronto-based Canada-USSR Association has facilitated tours, the showing of Russian films, and presentations by Russian speakers, as has the Association of Canadians of Russian Descent.¹⁶⁷

In the instance of the Rodina Society, there appears to be a lack of consensus among academics as to their role in state-society relations. Tarasoff has argued that the Rodina Society, despite having been sponsored by the Soviet government, was in reality more of a 'public organization' that was in essence non-governmental.¹⁶⁸ However, C. Andrew and V. Mitrokhin allege that the Rodina Society was an organization established by the KGB which used the cause of promoting 'cultural relations with compatriots abroad' as a front for recruiting agents among émigré groups, with vice-president P.I. Vasilevych heading a secret Rodina intelligence section.¹⁶⁹

Certainly, a higher level of rhetoric expressed by Rodina Society members can be found in recorded Doukhobor interactions with them than in Doukhobor-to-Doukhobor correspondence.¹⁷⁰ However it is difficult to gauge the bearing this has on the relative autonomy of Rodina Society as a whole, since it was not unusual even for regular Soviet

¹⁶⁷ Tarasoff, "Doukhobors" *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999 p. 432-433

¹⁶⁸ Tarasoff *Discovering Soviet-West Cooperation. A Handbook on Soviet-West Bridge-Building Initiatives* (Ottawa: Peace Train Foundation, 1992), p. 128, 159

¹⁶⁹ Christopher Andrew and Vasily Mitrokhin *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999, p. 650

¹⁷⁰ In addition to many letters sent out by the Rodina Society urging Doukhobors to celebrate Lenin's birthday, one Canadian Doukhobor remarked that the Rodina Society's language changed in accordance with that of Soviet officials when referring to the U.S.C.C. Previously, Jim E. Popoff remarked, Soviet government and Rodina Society officials (or officials of the predecessors of Rodina Society) had referred to the Doukhobor visitors as 'Russian-Canadian', 'Doukhobors' or members of the U.S.C.C. but in the latter instances, would always omit the words 'of Christ'. By the 1978 visit, however, he noted that they stated the full name of the U.S.C.C. (Jim E. Popoff, "Diary of a Soviet Journey" *Mir*, No. 17, May 1979, p. 46)

citizens to adapt their speech to reflect what might be euphemistically referred to as the erstwhile political etiquette.

As for the Canada-USSR Association, formerly the Canadian Soviet Friendship Society, it was founded by Dyson Carter, a member of the Communist Party of Canada, and Doris Neilsen in 1949. This organization was established in order to present Canadians with an alternative and more positive image of the USSR than they received in the Canadian press.¹⁷¹ After 1956, however, due to the damaged image of the USSR abroad, the Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society was re-configured to appeal to 'average' Canadian citizens, not just Communist Party Members. In 1960, Carter was replaced as the head of the Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society and the group changed its name to the Canada-USSR Association, a move that reflected a shift towards political neutrality.¹⁷² Finally, in 1970 the erstwhile head of the Canada-USSR Association, Micheal Lucas, broke all ties with the Communist Party of Canada.¹⁷³

It stands to reason that a more conclusive analysis of the role of the Rodina Society and the Canada-USSR Association is desired, but not feasible within the scope of this thesis and perhaps a worthy topic for another study. Nevertheless, the Doukhobor society was not the Rodina Society or the Canada-USSR Association, and was most certainly in itself a non-governmental system. The Doukhobors worked with the Rodina Society in order to organize their exchanges and maintained correspondence with them, much in the same way that émigré groups might work through an organization for multiculturalism sponsored by the Governor General's office in Canada to facilitate global contacts.

¹⁷¹Jennifer Anderson, *Propaganda and Persuasion in the Cold War: The Canadian Soviet Friendship Society, 1949-1960* PhD Thesis, Carleton University, 2008, p. 2-3

¹⁷² Anderson, p. 9

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 271-272

In the same vein, any similarity of desired impact for the contacts which the state-sponsored system might share with the émigré group – such as neutralizing Cold-War hostilities in the case of the Doukhobors or increasing multicultural awareness and international cooperation in the case of an émigré group in Canada working through a Governor-General sponsored organization – is not here considered to be excessively detrimental to a group's non-governmental status as long as there remains a sufficient distinction between the group itself and any state-sponsored groups they may be working with.

In answering the question of whether or not the social advocacy expressed in Doukhobor contacts bore a controversial element in the Soviet Union, it might initially appear that the aims for the Doukhobors and the Soviet leadership for sponsoring the exchanges were the same: after all, John J. Verigin had initially appealed to the Soviet government in order to facilitate a bolstering of Doukhobor exchanges based on a declaration for peace by the Soviet government in 1967.¹⁷⁴

However, to consider this as evidence that the Doukhobor correspondence did not bear a controversial element would be misleading for it is based on the assumption that a similar expressed aim was all that was necessary to show adherence to Party policy in the Soviet Union. This was not in fact the case, as the persecution which some pacifist groups suffered was not as a result of their aims (as in some cases their expressed aims were practically synonymous with Soviet peace proclamations) but was a result of the agency which such groups assumed, as such distancing from the overall government effort was interpreted as criticism of the government.

¹⁷⁴ John Phillip Stoochnoff, *Men of Goodwill* Calgary, Alberta: MacLeod Printing, 1976, p. 44-45

Some of these groups bore interesting similarities to the Doukhobors in terms of purpose and ideology, especially groups that were formed from the 1970s and onward. One observer noted in 1972 that along with the spread of more pacifistic feeling within Soviet society, “there is a new awakening of struggle for an increase in moral standards of life – for vegetarianism and against alcohol and so on”¹⁷⁵.

An example of one such group in Moscow and other cities of the USSR was a group named *Doveriye* (Trust). *Doveriye* was created in 1982 and had scientists, engineers, doctors and teachers among its members. This independent peace-making movement arose out of the deteriorating international situation connected with the invasion of the Soviet army into Afghanistan in 1979 and the declaring of a state of emergency in Poland; like the Doukhobors, the proclaimed purpose of *Doveriye* was to facilitate more trusting relations between East and West.¹⁷⁶

Moreover, like the Doukhobors, *Doveriye* advocated the expansion of contacts between the East and the West at all levels, promoting exchanges between children, teachers, students, scientists and art workers, carrying out joint space research and joint aid initiatives to developing countries, facilitating tourism and so on. *Doveriye* also appears to have used the same peaceful and cooperative methods as the Doukhobors in achieving their aims, as they did not criticize the official Soviet program of disarmament and declared its willingness to cooperate with any and all Soviet peace-making organizations.

Its size was small, as the members of group did not exceed 40 people, with 2000 people in different cities supporting it and like the Doukhobors the group’s activity was

¹⁷⁵ “Pis’mo iz Shvetsarii” *Iskra* No. 1320, Sept. 15, 1972 p. 9

¹⁷⁶ Pavlova, T. A. “Istoricheskie Sud’by Rossiiskovo Pasifizma” *Voprosy Istorii* Aug. 31, 1999, p. 36

relatively noncontroversial; hosting scientific seminars on problems of the world and the arms race, exhibitions of anti-war posters and other materials which were state-approved, and holding peace demonstrations and so on.¹⁷⁷

Despite this, the group increasingly drew suspicion from the KGB and in many cases their activities were stopped in advance. They faced persecution, as one member was detained for 15 days on a trumped-up charge of “malicious hooliganism”, others placed in psychiatric hospitals, and six people arrested and sentenced to various terms of stay in correctional labour colonies.¹⁷⁸

Jack Boag explains the reason why peace campaigners such as those from *Doveriye* were persecuted in the USSR despite a genuine Party interest in promoting peace:

The ‘error’ of the independents is to have set themselves up as wiser and more radical than the party, to have undermined solidarity by their approaches to like-minded groups in the West, and implicitly, though not explicitly, to have impugned the sincerity of the peace aims of their own government and party.¹⁷⁹

It is interesting, considering the fact that the Doukhobors also called for change from outside the Party’s authority and in conjunction with Western parties, that the same fate never befell them for their similar actions. This is especially intriguing when confronted with the fact that the Doukhobors shared so many other similarities with the group as previously noted. The reason for this dichotomy is not clear, however the well-established international scope of the Doukhobor contacts may have insulated Doukhobor society from similar persecution (as such persecution would have been cause for greater international embarrassment for the Soviets).

¹⁷⁷ Pavlova, p. 36

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 36-37

¹⁷⁹ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 11

Nevertheless, the question begs answering, how did the Doukhobors express their pacifist beliefs, and how did this affect their relations with the state in the Soviet Union? As stated in the Introduction, the Doukhobors and their traditional beliefs and customs were discriminated against in the USSR and especially under Stalin, but perhaps not more than any other religious group.

Pacifism, as noted earlier, had been rendered less visible in the Soviet Doukhobors by a combination of force and willingness¹⁸⁰ but it remained strong in the Canadian Doukhobors and more exposure to Canadian Doukhobors would be likely to influence the Soviet Doukhobors in the same direction.

While this idea of pacifism being at odds with the official propaganda for peace might appear paradoxical, this was indeed the case – for despite the more conciliatory stance of the post-Stalin Soviet administration, pacifism was still considered to be a dangerous idea that was greatly discouraged in the Soviet populace.

In the USSR, the term ‘peace movement’ was almost synonymous with the idea of a ‘workers’s movement’ as it was propagated that Bolshevism was always fighting for a lasting peace on earth. Thus, the idea of peace was always championed, as long as the subjects of the state were willing to engage in military combat in the name of peace. Pacifism was in another category altogether; Lenin once wrote that pacifism was “one of the means of duping the working class” and in the USSR it was considered a bourgeois concept and discouraged.¹⁸¹ As one Russian scholar writes of the time,

Pacifism, especially domestic, was as though a taboo subject within the decades of Soviet authority’s existence. The society militarized to the limit, and aggressive Bolshevik ideology prohibited the opportunity of

¹⁸⁰ Kinyakin p. 162

¹⁸¹ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 8

objective study of history of peace-making ideas and movements in Russia. To define or consider the concept of "pacifism," it was necessary to accompany this concept with the definitions "abstract" or "bourgeois"; it was considered a cosmopolitan idea which was alien to Marxist-Leninist dogmas about class struggle and dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁸²

The significance of this transcends its immediate meaning, for other accounts have also suggested that to endorse pacifism in the Soviet Union was not only subversive concept in and of itself but also became a symbolic idea connected with wider opposition to the totalitarianist system as a whole. For example, in 1962 the scientist Andrei Sakharov wrote that he considered the erstwhile time as a boundary of change, which by the end of the 1960s took shape in the concept of a nonviolent alternative for Russia and for the whole world.¹⁸³

This concept was indissolubly connected with protest against a totalitarian state which suppressed any free idea, as it seemed clear to Sakharov and his contemporaries that if this kind of state continued to exist, third world war would be imminent. Thus, it is through this concept that pacifism was connected to the appeal for socio-economic reforms in the USSR, for human rights, and for a rapprochement between socialist and capitalist systems.¹⁸⁴

This resulted in a new era for the struggle of Soviet antimilitaristic forces against Cold War, and in addition, this period has been also been described as having been characterized by a broadening of social contacts and familiarizing with new faces and layers of society in a spirit of antimilitarism and silent support for the sacrificial struggle of dissidents.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Pavlova, pp. 28-42

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 34

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 35

Indeed, the force of this movement was so compelling that Soviet officials began to show their support for worldwide anti-nuclear campaigns, though this was also partially rooted in the increasing problem of affordability of ever-growing nuclear arsenals. A Russian scholar of pacifism has noted, however, that the participation of Soviet representatives in anti-nuclear campaigns should not be exaggerated.

On the one hand, she points out, the Soviet authorities continued to attack Western pacifist organizations, accusing them of “a crusade against socialism”, and on the other hand they continued to attack many domestic grassroots organizations that were emerging in the name of pacifism.¹⁸⁶

The Doukhobor correspondences most certainly did not reflect such vitriol for Western pacifist organizations, since they in fact constituted one themselves and worked with other Western pacifist organizations. The language of their entreaties for peace did not lay one-sided blame on either Eastern or Western parties for the violent and tense political situation of the Cold War, and this was vital to the success of their relations as ongoing peacebuilding initiatives.

It also telling that Soviet-Canadian Doukhobor correspondence persisted throughout the ebbs and flows of the political tide in the post-Stalinist period without interruption as evidenced in this chapter; for while the Soviet government encouraged friendship initiatives during times of Soviet-Canadian rapprochement, it was less encouraging of such initiatives during less amicable periods. Therefore, if the Soviet state saw the Doukhobor relations as a wing of their own diplomacy, it is evident that they had a poor servant in the Doukhobors; for instead of mirroring the sporadic lurching back and

¹⁸⁶ Pavlova, p. 36

forth of official USSR-Canada relations, Doukhobor contacts from 1967-1985 grew slowly and steadily, and without interruption.

To be sure, the citizen diplomacy represented by the Canada-USSR Doukhobor contacts served a certain purpose both for the Canadian and Soviet governments. Since Khrushchev's ascent to political power, greater global disarmament was desired by the Soviet state as the cost of accumulating nuclear weapons arsenal was becoming too high to keep up with, and therefore fostering ties between pro-disarmament factions such as the Doukhobors was a boon for this cause.

The Doukhobor relations also served the interests of the Canadian government as by the 1970s, the importance of human diplomacy was gradually recognized as an important tool of Cold War influence. The logic behind this realization was that even repressive regimes had 'constituencies susceptible to the influence of human diplomacy' which could be manipulated by exposure to groups living in Canada and offering a Canadian perspective on various matters.

Thus, while it is clear that both states sought to benefit in some way from the Doukhobor contacts, this does not mean that the Doukhobors were tools of the state successfully used for strategic influence. In carrying out their contacts with one another, the Doukhobors showed considerable agency, pressuring their own governments for change and gaining greater prominence for their protests because of their international activities.

The Soviet government, for its part, would be forced to accept that those Doukhobors who were Soviet citizens were forging and developing intimate bonds with foreigners who explicitly did not subscribe to Soviet ideology, thus creating a segment

within society who would not easily be manipulated by the Soviet press and its ever-fluctuating portrayal of Canada and of Canadians. In addition to this, the Soviet Doukhobors were not simply concerned with agitating for disarmament abroad, but also at home.

Canada, for its part, would be forced to accept that these Doukhobor contacts would result in greater leverage for Doukhobor protests regarding domestic policy as they would have increased international visibility. However, it is more pertinent to this thesis that such a dynamic existed also in the Soviet sphere, where political agency is often thought to have been nonexistent.

Thus, while there still may be some unanswered questions as to the degree of independence with which the Doukhobors conducted their correspondence, there is evidence enough to show that their degree of independence from state activity was sufficient to constitute a nucleus of global civil society.

Given this conclusion, an analysis of how the Doukhobors were able to successfully occupy such a unique place in the Cold-War political environment is of particular interest. The nature of the Doukhobors' interactions is also central to this thesis, as it explains this unique dynamic so that the implications of this case study might be made more clear.

Thus, the following chapter is formulated specifically to answer the question of how the Doukhobors were able to make headway in the realms of citizen diplomacy and global civil society.

Chapter Four

Unique Dynamics of Doukhobor International Relations

As Cold-War era scholars were often wont to point out, the tricky business of diplomacy – state diplomacy or citizen diplomacy – in the Cold-War period required a flexibility of perspective in the participants. Both liberal and conservative Western parties could err by attempting to understand the Soviets only from a parochial perspective.¹⁸⁷

The Doukhobors certainly had an advantage in this area, since they were already equipped with Russian language skills and knowledge of Russian cultural life. However, these things alone could not have compensated for what was the chief obstacle for so many other groups, which was the failure to ally themselves with common interest groups or focused demographics comprised of regular citizens.

Overcoming Obstacles: Factors for Success in Citizen Diplomacy

Since in the structure of Doukhobor society there was sufficient commonality between Eastern and Western parties as well as a mutual understanding of motivations, there lay a true partnership potential which did not exist in many other cases. The absence of such alliances meant that the Soviet authorities often selected the individuals and groups who would meet with the non-Doukhobor Western groups, and also that there was not the same opportunity to build relationships over a period of time that could serve to foster trust and enrich dialogue between the two sides.

With such an unfocused approach to citizen diplomacy, the task of ‘understanding the Soviets’ was rendered much more difficult as there were so many differences between

¹⁸⁷ David D. Newsom, (ed.) *Private Diplomacy with the Soviet Union* Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1987, p. 138

particular demographics and associative groups that lingered behind the façade of Soviet uniformity. Moreover, an awkward communicative barrier existed that has been described in no more complex terms than that those on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain were “just not used to talking to each other, except perhaps surreptitiously.”¹⁸⁸

There was a great need for understanding in the context of East-West citizen diplomacy in the Cold War years, as the political climate often caused a high amount of suspicion between sides. This needed to be tempered by a cooperative working relationship founded on respect and goodwill that was less attainable when the groups did not share enough in common with one another.

To illustrate the exceptional dynamic of the Doukhobor correspondences and demonstrate particular aspects of the case study that enable its categorization as examples not only of citizen diplomacy but also of a developing global civil society, it is useful to examine similar case studies of groups which conducted friendship visits and correspondence between the USSR and the West – but who lacked the sustained contact and unity of social purpose characterized by the Doukhobor contacts. The first of these is a Quaker group from the United Kingdom who visited the Soviet Union on a peacemaking mission and met with local religious groups and official committees.

The second of these is a variety of cultural and scientific exchange initiatives organized by various organizations, such as American-Soviet governmental initiatives aimed at promoting citizen diplomacy and the bridge-building efforts of the Canada-USSR Friendship society, an ongoing Toronto-based initiative associated to varying

¹⁸⁸ Andrea Goldsmith, *East-West Nongovernmental Partnership for the Environment* M.A. Thesis, Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University, 1994, p. 89

degrees with the Communist Party of Canada and aimed at bringing the two cultures together on a social level.

These case studies bear similarities to the Doukhobor case, as the Quakers' peacemaking mission also bridged cultural gaps with religious commonality and the Canada-USSR Friendship Society conducted ongoing communication initiatives between the same two countries as did the Doukhobors, often with the participation of Doukhobors.

The uniqueness of the Doukhobor case is made apparent through the juxtaposition of these groups, however, because the Doukhobors, unlike the Quakers, were able to continuously meet and correspond with members of their own specific religion/society in the USSR and they were able to connect on a cultural level. On a very basic level, the Canadian Doukhobors' ability to speak Russian assisted this connection, but culture denotes much more than simple language.

Culture, broadly defined, encompasses "the accumulated, shared knowledge and experience of a people through which meaning is created, situation are perceived and interpreted, and actions are decided on."¹⁸⁹ The Canadian Doukhobors, who could also understand Russian cultural nuances and connect on a spiritual level with people who had a shared history all contributed to a decidedly affectionate manner of correspondence.

More importantly, the potential for partnership in the Doukhobor case due to the building of personal relationships and a brotherly approach to correspondence between group members meant that Doukhobor contacts were less beholden to specific points of Soviet propaganda that often accompanied the more state-affiliated cultural exchanges, or

¹⁸⁹ Davies and Kaufman p. 7

exchanges between citizens that the government was able to control because of a lack of network between the Western groups and ordinary Soviet citizens.

However, before examining these case studies and comparing and contrasting them with the case of the Doukhobors, there is another case which could appear similar to that of the Doukhobors but is in fact too different for an in-depth analysis of it. This could appear strange if one is not well acquainted with the particularities of the Russian Orthodox Church. Why, one might ask, are the Quakers – a Western-originated religious group – given ample consideration and not the Russian Orthodox Church, which has and had many followers overseas during the period in question?

The Russian Orthodox Church

In the time period in question, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia did not have substantial relations with either the Soviet Patriarchate or the Catacomb Church. The reason for their lack of relations with the former is an ideological or philosophical one. A statement by Metropolitan Philaret, head of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia from 1964-1985, sheds much light on the existing position of them as regards the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union. Philaret said that while his Church always considered itself intrinsically part of the Russian Orthodox Church, “the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has never had nor ever will have any relation with the Soviet Patriarchate which has placed itself on the false path of betrayal to the Church”.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ *Pamyatka 50-ti L'tiya Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi Zagranitsey 1920-1970* Montreal: Monastery Press, p. 19

As for the Catacomb Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia claimed to speak *for* them, but did not claim to speak *with* them, or even have first-hand knowledge of their existence. Proof of the existence of the Catacomb Church is given in the book by way of atheist literature referring to this church, and not from first-hand experience with them.¹⁹¹

In praising the Catacomb Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia indirectly showed their abhorrence for the Soviet Patriarchate and the USSR, saying that the Catacomb Church kept the true faith because they recognized “that there is nothing in common between light and darkness and no agreement between Christ and Belial (II Cor. 6, 14-15)”.¹⁹² It is interesting that even among a group of largely Russian-descended people steeped in Slavic culture, many of whom speak the language, the idea that they could have ‘nothing in common’ and ‘no agreement’ still prevailed.

Thus, the wide chasm between the relations of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and its USSR counterparts and the Doukhobors can be seen both in terms of the relations between Eastern and Western members of the religion and in terms of approach toward the other. For while the Canadian Doukhobors publicly rejected Bolshevism as well, and they too had undergone a religious division between a larger group – many of whom went to Canada – and a smaller group, their actions bespoke an approach to those living in the USSR that certainly did not uphold that there was ‘nothing in common’ and ‘no agreement’ that could be had between themselves and their Soviet counterparts.

¹⁹¹ *Pamyatka 50-ti L'tiya Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi Zagranitse 1920-1970* Montreal: Monastery Press, 1972, p. 46

¹⁹² *Ibid*, p. 54

Contrast the passage from Corinthians quoted in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's jubilee book, for example, to Doukhobor Koozma Tarasoff's statement in favour of promoting cultural, scientific, economic and trade exchanges between Canada and the USSR:

The more that political and ideological boundaries can be transcended the more likely that the peoples of the world will get closer to the experience of living together as human beings and solving their common problem by intelligent cooperation rather than by resorting to that dehumanizing force - - violence.¹⁹³

In addition to this philosophy, which will be extrapolated upon later, the size of the two groups may also help to explain the difference in approach to their overseas counterparts. Certainly, the fact that some of the Doukhobors corresponding with one another across borders were in fact related by blood might render the warm, cordial and familiar tone of their correspondence as well as the frequency and relative inhibition of their relations unsurprising; however, it is clear that in much of the correspondence where this dynamic can be observed the parties in question are either unrelated or in had never met one another before at all.

Culture of Communication in Doukhobor Correspondence

One account from a Canadian Doukhobor about a Doukhobor group visit to the USSR states that in the village of Trudolyubimoye, where they were visiting, they met with local Doukhobors at the home of Ivan Aleksandrovich Kazakov. He writes that the group "was small, but everyone was so anxious to meet us, there were tears in their eyes when

¹⁹³ "Creating International Linkages: The Soviet Union and the West" *Iskra*, No. 1315, June 7, 1972 p. 34.

we exchanged greetings with them and said hello from the assembly to all Doukhobors and all Soviet people.”¹⁹⁴

Tears, it appears, were a somewhat regular occurrence in the meetings between Canadian and Soviet Doukhobors. In 1973 a group from Grand Forks went to the USSR partly to visit with their Doukhobor brethren abroad, and Peter P. Abrosimov wrote a log of their journey, and one excerpt from his account shows a close bond between the Canadian and Soviet Doukhobors:

When we had gone 10 miles from the village, the driver of our bus saw around the corner that someone had caught up to us on a motorcycle and stopped the bus. It was Tatiana Mikh. Lukyanchuk. Crying, she joined us on the bus [. . .] The bus had to go, and she said she would go with us to the hotel in Rostov.¹⁹⁵

The sharing of emotion was key to maintaining the steadfast bond that kept the Doukhobors – hailing from two nations which were so divided at the time – close in terms of community and common purpose. This appears to have been an early Doukhobor tradition as well, as Tarasoff has remarked that a Doukhobor will call another Doukhobor *brat* (brother) whether or not he has ever met him.¹⁹⁶

In one account of a visit by the Canadian Doukhobors to the USSR, the writer recalls another instance of sharing of tears between the Soviet Doukhobors and their Canadian visitors. The locals and visitors both went to a site near the Georgian town of Bogdanovka which was the place the Doukhobors had set their firearms ablaze in protest in June of 1895; as the group visited the historic site, “the tears flowed as Doukhobors from Canada and the USSR met to pay tribute to this wonderful event.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ *Iskra* No. 1350, p. 5, 9 Nov. 1973: “Nasha Poezdka po-Sovietskemu Soyuzu.”

¹⁹⁵ *Iskra* No. 1349, 26 Oct. 1973: “Nasha Poezdka v Sovetskii Soyuz”

¹⁹⁶ Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava*, p. 7

¹⁹⁷ *Iskra*, No. 1455, Nov. 18, 1977 p. 24

The emotional content of the Doukhobor international relations is particularly evident when contrasted with their correspondence with USSR state officials. Though the involvement of state organizations, particularly on the side of the Soviet Union, in overseas Doukhobor relations was high, it is evident that the relations with these state bodies took a different form than between the Doukhobors themselves, and that they remained distinctly separate.

In one February 1983 issue of *Iskra* there are three different messages bearing good wishes for the New Year to the Canadian Doukhobors. Two of these seem standard and formal, and one seems more intimate and informal: the former two are from a representative of the radio station 'Rodina' in Minsk, from the editor of 'Golos Rodiny' respectively.

Far more personal, however, is the latter letter which is written by a family of Doukhobors from the Soviet Union. The message in the letter, from the Chutskovs in Tbilisi, not only wishes the Canadian Doukhobors health and happiness in the New Year, but also wishes them success in their struggle for peaceful toil, brotherhood and justice – and expresses the hope that “your noble dream of putting an end to the destruction of people on planet earth” would be realized.¹⁹⁸

From these messages one can see a clear difference between Canadian Doukhobor correspondence with official Soviet organizations and correspondence between the Canadian and the Soviet Doukhobors. In the case of the latter, solidarity in defying the militarism of their respective nations is evident, and suggests a bond between the two parties that is greater than any patriotic loyalty.

¹⁹⁸ *Iskra* No. 1579, p. 12-13. Feb. 4, 1983

It appears also that the difference in tone in correspondence has less to do with whether the two parties are familiar with one another, and more to do with the motivation and identity of the writer. In other words, the cold, official mode of discourse is here reserved only for official government types and those within the social action group take on a more personal and affectionate tone when addressing one another – regardless of whether they have had any previous contact.

In some cases, the letter-writers used examples of individual people as a common role model who represented what they stood for. For example, one man who had spent time in the USSR in the 1920s described one ‘surprising representative of the Russian people’, Ivan Koloskov, who as was previously mentioned in the introduction, set up a temperance society in Russia:

Up until now I have seen him as alive, in a white peasant shirt with a belt, crossed legs leaning on a stick, with a pock-marked face and goatee, not handsome, small (like Ghandi!) but with eyes deep in the sockets, totally strong and affectionate; and what’s more, with a limitless peaceful tolerance.”¹⁹⁹

These letters and many others like them clearly were successfully sent back and forth across Soviet boundaries between the Doukhobors, something which the Quakers and other Western cultural and scientific exchange partners found elusive and frustrating. As one Quaker commented on the process of exchanging scientific information and materials,

Letters sent to individual scientists in the U.S.S.R. are seldom answered, even when they are addressed in Russian characters. It is not usually possible to know for certain whether they arrive at their destination. Even the most important scientific libraries in Great Britain seem to have found it impossible to obtain Soviet periodicals regularly. This leads to such a state of exasperation that many non-Soviet scientists and librarians have almost or entirely abandoned the attempt to make friendly overtures to

¹⁹⁹ “Pis’mo iz Svetsarii” *Iskra* No. 1320, Sept. 15, 1972 p. 9

their soviet colleagues.²⁰⁰

There were a few more lasting delegations, as some of the Canadian Doukhobors who went to the Soviet Union in the 1967-1985 period moved there permanently. Though this kind of migration is most associated with the early years of the USSR, there was the occasional Doukhobor who longed for Russia enough to return to their ancestral homeland.

One Andrei Verashagin did just that in 1975 based on his favourable impressions of the USSR after visiting it in 1971. In August 1973 he gave an application for Soviet citizenship which he was granted in September of that year; Verashagin cited his reason for doing so was that “the Soviet Union seems like a country that is most concerned about friendship, humanity and general well-being.”²⁰¹

The Quakers and their Friendship Tour of the USSR

One issue of contention that the Quakers were presented with upon their peacemaking visit to Russia was which groups to speak to, and which to ally themselves with. Jack Boag acknowledged that some of the independent peace activists in the USSR shared more in common with the Western peace movements than the official Soviet Peace Committees. However, the Quakers also desired their peacemaking efforts to be effective, and to have a lasting impact on the great powers behind Cold War animosity.

Boag also describes the dilemma in terms of how Western groups should relate to them thusly:

In order to ‘speak truth to power’ we must speak and listen to those who have the power, or at least to those who enjoy the approval of those in

²⁰⁰ Richenda C. Scott, *Quakers in Russia*, London: M. Joseph, 1964 p. 76

²⁰¹ *Iskra*, No. 1393, June 4, 1975 p. 9

power. To demand basic changes in Soviet internal policies before engaging in dialogue at all is not a policy for reconcilers.”²⁰²

The Quakers also perceived that an important issue of contention was which groups could be considered genuine peace organizations and which were ‘peace organizations’ only in the Soviet sense – in other words they advocated only the cessation of Western aggression, defending Soviet military actions and policy as necessary and offering no criticism of it. The Quakers observed in particular that the Defenders (or Partisans) of Peace, a Soviet-based movement that had garnered support among socialist groups abroad were toeing the Soviet line and not honoring the same principles of peace that the Quakers believed in.

One likened the request for Quaker support of the Partisans of Peace to being used in order for the group to appear more legitimate, protesting that the language of their documents was “belligerent, and not reconciling” and noted similar trends in the various other Peace Congresses of the USSR.²⁰³

The Quakers did meet with the Soviet Peace Committee during their visit, and met with a limited success here – for while the members of the Committee listened respectfully to the Quakers’ views, they made it clear that the peace they sought could only be realized after the ‘bandits’ (Western politicians) were taken to task for their actions, and one Quaker observed that a woman university lecturer present could not hide her expression of disgust when they spoke of their Christian fundamentals.²⁰⁴

²⁰² East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 11

²⁰³ Kathleen Lonsdale, *Quakers Visit Russia* London: East-West Relations Group of the Friends’ Peace Committee, 1952 p. 2-3

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 19-20

It is not surprising, considering this reaction, that the Quakers subsequently met with religious groups in the Soviet Union. Not all religious groups in the USSR were treated the same, as some – such as the Russian Orthodox Church – were at least officially tolerated, some were not and many people from both types of religious groups suffered great persecution, exile and imprisonment for practicing their faith.²⁰⁵ At the time of the Quakers' visit to the USSR, however, there were many churches that operated and had official representatives for them to meet with – not only from the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, but from many Protestant denominations as well.

The Quakers had better luck in terms of establishing an affectionate common ground similar to that of the Doukhobors when they met with members of a similar faith (the Baptist Church in Russia). One witnessed the meeting of the two groups, saying the following,

Many of them [the Baptists], as they embraced us, said just one word “mir” – the Russian word for “peace” – and said it with such sincerity that it would have been impossible to suppose that these people were playing a part, or that they had been dragooned into signing the peace petitions, as we had sometimes been told in Western papers. To them, at least, it was genuine and they welcomed us both because of our religion and because we had come in the name of peace.”²⁰⁶

Unfortunately, even here where they were met with this like-minded reception, there was an adherence in the higher echelons of the Soviet line of peace ideology; after eating a meal together, the President of the Baptist Church told the Quakers that he had sent messages to Baptist Churches abroad, urging them to protest against ‘the aggression of the United States in Korea’ – mirroring the one-sided political aims expressed by the Partisans of Peace. Indeed, the following passage suggest that for them to have

²⁰⁵ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 11

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 26-27

established peaceful correspondence on more neutral grounds (as the Doukhobors did) would have been politically risky,

[Gerard Butler, one of the Quakers] said it was this adherence of the Defenders (or Partisans) of Peace to the policies of the Soviet Government and the tacit assumption that all who held a different view were aggressors, that made it so difficult for the Quakers to support it. Why did they not, he asked, seek to make contact with their fellow Baptists in the West on the basis of their underlying spiritual unity, laying aside for this purpose the polemical or, at best, controversial declarations of the political “peace movements”? This seemed to bewilder them: There was an awkward silence.²⁰⁷

Indeed, the problem with establishing effective inter-religious dialogue between East and West was that the different religious faiths accused one another of being overly political; when the Quakers met with Patriarch Alexius in the same excursion of 1950, they explained that they were interested in establishing a conference between the Western Churches and leaders of the Russian Church, along the lines of the World Council of Churches’ appeal for greater religious unity. To this the Patriarch replied that the World Council of Churches was too politically involved for this purpose, mirroring the same concern the Quakers had with the Partisans of Peace.²⁰⁸

Of course, this did not mean that the Orthodox Church shied away from making political statements when making the case for peace; one need have only looked at one of the copies of *The Russian Orthodox Church in the Fight for Peace* which the Patriarch handed the Quakers to see this. A typical excerpt from this book either extols the peaceful virtues of Stalin, calling him “the first champion of peace” or vociferously attacks Western influence in its various manifestations as the enemy of peace, stating, for example, that

²⁰⁷ Lonsdale, p. 27

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 35

The Patriarch himself denounces the “Vatican and the leaders of the Catholic hierarchy for the beastly hatred which they have for peace and for the People’s Democracies,” as well as the “handful of blood-thirsty Anglo-American businessmen who seek to warm their hands over the fire of a new war.”²⁰⁹

These excerpts, combined with the Baptist leader’s statements and the Partisans for Peace proclamations, present a pattern clearly followed by peace groups that met with official approval in the Soviet Union: this pattern dictated that they make the cause of peace and the cause of Bolshevism and its leaders highly synonymous – in the same vein, it also dictated that they should place all blame for the nonexistence of World Peace in the hands of the Western powers and their citizens.

Noticeably absent in the Doukhobors’ correspondence with one another is this pattern, for neither party made it a point of their discourse to plainly and repeatedly indicate which side was more at fault in the obstruction of peace, nor did they indicate consistently that any side was more at fault than the other to begin with. Compare this to the question that the Quakers were often confronted with by the Soviet people they met of “why, if we wanted greater intercourse between the Soviet Union and the West, did our Government refuse the Sheffield visas?”²¹⁰

The East-West Scientific and Cultural Exchanges

The issues of mutual blame and suspicion between citizens of states on opposite sides of the Cold War applied to the artistic and scientific delegations as well. In the years after the Cuban Missile Crisis, Brownell observed that the theme of international suspicion became a ‘hot topic’ at the Pugwash conferences on science and world affairs. She cites

²⁰⁹ Lonsdale, p. 36-37

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

one delegate of these conferences as having said one could hear "Western scientists wondering whether Eastern ones were independent spirits or government hacks pushing a Party line, and to hear Eastern scientists expressing similar doubts."²¹¹

Part of the problem with the Pugwash conferences in terms of having a frank exchange of ideas across Cold-War fronts was that the delegates represented their nations in various ways and had privileged positions within their societies. This was especially the case in the Soviet Union and as Sarah Brownell notes in the case of the scientists, "it was impossible to separate Soviet science from Soviet politics."²¹² For evidence that the type of scientist chosen to represent the USSR at the Pugwash conferences would need to toe the Party line, one need look no further than Soviet scientist Sakharov's persecution due to his outspokenness, as was documented in the introduction.

In the arena of arts and culture, there was a similar connection with politics in the Soviet Union. Cultural and scientific exchanges between East and West were often viewed as a competition, a zero-sum game between sides. This was not only the case for sporting events, which were loaded with political significance (the common view in the West reflected Richmond's statement that the Soviets "use athletic victories as evidence that 'socialism' is the superior system and will inevitably triumph over capitalism"²¹³) but in almost all areas of exchange.

Overall, Richmond states that the Soviets' main objectives for the exchanges were to access American science and technology, to gain world acclaim for their achievements in art, culture and science and to gain capital; the main American objective,

²¹¹ Brownell, Sarah "The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs: Canadian and Soviet Perspectives" Ottawa: Carleton University Institute of European and Russian Studies, 1999 p. 75

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 81

²¹³ Yale Richmond, *U.S.-Soviet Cultural Exchanges, 1958-1986: Who Wins?* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987. p. 83

on the other hand, was “to open the Soviet Union to Western influences in order to change its foreign and domestic policies” as well as encourage citizens of the satellite states to seek independence from Moscow.²¹⁴

There was a separation of scientific and cultural exchanges in the 1970s in America due to the signing of eleven Soviet-American scientific cooperation agreements which were more profound than the exchange agreements. Thus, an exchange agreement signed in 1973 was strictly cultural – a realm that encompassed many sub-spheres such as education, sport, tourism and public diplomacy.²¹⁵

As a result, in the 1970s many private organizations in America began to participate in direct exchanges with their “Soviet counterparts”²¹⁶ – however, while the American organizations may have been private, their ‘counterparts’ often were not, and in the cases where they were not directly affiliated with any state-led organization of the USSR, they were selected as delegates by state organizations such as the Soviet Peace Committee.²¹⁷

As in the case of the Quakers, because there were no proper matches between corresponding groups to comprise a cooperative cross-border society, cultural exchanges and public diplomacy in this context was problematic. The differences in organizational structure for artistic institutions between the two sides combined with the lucrative financial opportunities of sending performing artists to the other side of the Iron Curtain led to squabbles over payment issues, and defections of Soviet artists to the United States in the late 1970s were cause for diplomatic incidents and disagreements stemming from

²¹⁴ Richmond, p. 1-6

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 11-12

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 13

²¹⁷ Newsom, p. 4

U.S. refusal to grant the 'security' which the Soviets desired for their performing artists while on American territory.²¹⁸

Nor was there sufficient common ground regarding student exchanges, as the Western idea of a 'student' was different from that of the Soviets; Soviet students sent abroad on exchanges tended to be older and more accomplished (the only undergraduates sent on exchange to America were English-language students studying to be translators) and usually in the realm of science, while American students tended to be younger.²¹⁹

There was also a chasm between institutions of academic instruction and administration that was off-putting for both sides; for example, Valentina G. Brougher, who met with officials at Leningrad State University and Central Sputnik (the agency for foreign student travel arrangements) expressed mild shock in her log of these meetings on account of the rigid respect for hierarchy of power shown by the Soviets within their academic system and took great notice of the prominence of political affairs in this system.²²⁰

Overall, the student exchanges represented a small portion of the public diplomacy; for example even in 1985-1986, only 600 American and 250 Soviet students went on exchange to the other country, compared with 10,000 from the People's Republic of China in 1983-1984.²²¹

Another method of diplomacy was seminars; this, however, meant that governments had the power to choose the delegates who would discuss pre-arranged topics in a pre-arranged format, resulting in dialogue that replicated in many ways the

²¹⁸ Richmond, p. 21-22

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 31

²²⁰ Newsom, pp. 101-103

²²¹ *Ibid*

same discussions at the state level. The mistrust of the other side in such matters only added to this problem; Yale Richmond, for example, wrote that for the seminars between U.S. citizens and their own citizens, the Soviets “staff their delegations with seasoned and skilled propagandists who are veterans of international exchanges. They speak, not for themselves, but for the Soviet government.”²²²

However, Richmond’s subsequent warning to the American participants in such seminars also suggests that they should use a similar approach, as he openly warns them against publicly criticizing American policies as “it’s bad enough to have the United States attacked from one side of the table, without it being attacked from the other side as well.”²²³

Perhaps the most striking difference between the cultural exchanges between citizens described above and the Soviet-Canadian Doukhobor relations is the vulnerability of the former exchanges to changes in the political climate; after the Soviets shot down a Korean airliner in the 1980s, one American official commented that “it was not only the passengers and the plane that were shot down, but the negotiations on the cultural exchanges.”²²⁴ Similarly, a U.S.-Soviet communiqué on the Middle East in 1977 was denounced in the United States because it was “not acceptable within the broad spectrum of American political life.”²²⁵

When cultural exchanges did not become victim to existing political antagonisms between countries due to a politically sympathetic Western party, the attainment of dialogue with a satisfying degree of true openness was still elusive. This was discovered

²²² Richmond, p. 60

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 60

²²⁴ Newsom, p. x

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xi

by Dyson Carter, co-founder of the Canada-Soviet Friendship society, as Anderson writes,

Soviet culture was the USSR's best propaganda tool, and one of the hardest for Canadian authorities to counter. Dyson Carter was aware of this, and promoted Soviet culture and cultural actors with all his energy and publishing ability. His message unfailingly emphasized that the social and political system that produced these artistic works should be admired.²²⁶

The Doukhobor Experience of East-West Dialogue

Contrast these two examples of East-West "dialogue" and their equal frustrations, with the account of Canadian Doukhobor Margaret Soukhoroff. In an essay detailing her visit to the Soviet Union, she wrote that the trip marked "the beginning of a deeper understanding of the views shared by people in other countries, of their problems, aspirations and their history as a whole."²²⁷

For the Doukhobors, the attainment of dialogue with a satisfactory level of openness seems to have been a product of the relationship based on mutual understanding and brotherhood which they had established over the years. The approach of the other groups, in absence of a proper match of peoples with common goals, was instead a product of the relationship based on antagonism that had developed between Eastern and Western parties at the behest and encouragement of state policy on both sides.

In addition to this, the Doukhobors had the added benefit that their Russian members already were at least familiar with the concept of pacifism and understood it, even if they were not strictly pacifist themselves. The absence of this posed another problem for the Quakers, as some of those in the USSR whom they spoke to about pacifism reacted with incredulity; for example, at the Peace Committee meeting in

²²⁶ Newsom, p. 271-272

²²⁷ "Visit to the USSR" *Iskra*, No. 1269, Sept. 25, 1970 p. 21

Leningrad one member considered the idea of pacifism very strange, asking the Quakers “but surely you would fight for peace?”²²⁸ This was one barrier that the Doukhobors in their relations did not have to contend with.

Of course, as previously mentioned, an additional barrier that may have contributed to the lack of cooperation between the religious representatives in this case was the fact that the Quakers did not speak Russian, or at least spoke very little Russian. The group certainly had many translators but this could not compensate for the natural flow of direct conversation to establish amicable relations; perhaps this is why, in a retrospective of the Quakers’ visit to Russia, one arrived at the conclusion that it is “probably impossible to understand any country and its people properly without learning their language. This is because it is in language that a nation’s collective experience is embodied.”²²⁹

This observation was reiterated in the specific experiences of the delegates as well, as one commented that despite the professional translation available to facilitate their conversations with the Soviet people, “at times it seemed as if our understanding of the meanings of words were as different as our habits of thought and our national customs.”²³⁰

In a sense, the Doukhobors’ emphasis on the learning of Russian from childhood was a perfect preparation for their later role as peacemakers across borders. Because of the youth learning Russian from a young age, the relations between members of Doukhobor society across borders did not die out with the aging and death of those who

²²⁸ Lonsdale, p. 44.

²²⁹ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 7

²³⁰ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 86

had originally emigrated and still had family in Russia. Instead, relations were renewed and dialogue was re-established with each new generation.

This, of course, was instrumental to maintaining an ongoing ‘dialogue’ – an important step in the international bridge-building that the Doukhobors at times explicitly listed as one of the key reasons to continue to learn Russian. On one such list, this reason was listed as the second most important motivating factor in continuing Russian instruction among Doukhobors since it provided for communication between “two seemingly irreconcilable ideologies”.²³¹

Similarly, though in their friendship tour they had not had a strong command of Russian, the Quakers noted the importance of learning the language as it “increases our understanding of each other. It enables us to discover common ground and to become aware of our common humanity. Dialogue is itself a step in the construction of peaceful relations.”²³²

Cultural attributes were another area where a close connection with their Russian background helped the Doukhobors to understand Soviet people. Unfamiliarity with such traits posed a danger of causing rifts in citizen diplomacy, as one American educator who met with Soviet university and state agency officials noted that “we had to keep reminding ourselves that just because they were not smiling pleasantly at us most of the time did not mean that they were indifferent or angry or hostile”²³³

This establishment of general dialogue, based on the common ground of affectionate correspondence, is an instrumental aspect of how people in two very

²³¹ “Multiculturalism, Russian Language, and Doukhobors” Koozma Tarasoff *Iskra*, no. 1366, June 21, 1974 p. 20-23

²³² East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 3

²³³ Valentina G. Brougher in Newsom, p. 101.

different nations could establish a certain measure of unity in the ranks of their common community. A realization of how this common ground is necessary for East-West peace-building was later acknowledged by the Quakers, as they noted that an openness and sensitivity to one another's fears and insecurities brought about by such dialogue provided for a more loving confrontation of tensions and disagreements. Thus it was proposed for further Quaker peacebuilding efforts, "perhaps we need to bring into the centre of the stage the third principle – of fraternity"²³⁴

Evaluation of Exchanges and Their Impact

1984 saw an increase in prominence for citizen diplomacy in the Soviet Union, as the government of the USSR appointed a third secretary at the Soviet embassy in Washington solely to handle nongovernmental initiatives.²³⁵ However, like the Quaker friendship tours that preceded the cultural and scientific exchanges, these exchanges failed to produce the existence of a cooperative global civil society due to the many flaws in the structure of the exchanges – most prominently the lack of a meaningful match of special interest groups.

This caused one erstwhile observer to make the bittersweet remark that "It is, of course, true that many delegations are visiting the Soviet Union [. . .] yet all this does not amount to what the scientist and the ordinary man want: normal, unfettered intercourse and communication."²³⁶

²³⁴ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 5

²³⁵ Brougher in Newsom, p. 140

²³⁶ Newsom, p. 77

One of the major factors that separated the Doukhobors from other organizations was the nature of their network, namely that they maintained a remarkable level of cohesiveness to their counterparts in Canada and constituted an early example of a truly cross-border association. In this sense, they were an anomaly – associations in the USSR (as is largely the case in modern-day Russia as well) tended to be either entirely domestic, drawing support and membership wholly from inside the Soviet Union and Soviet Bloc, or Western-led, the latter often perceived more specifically as ‘Western-imposed’.

This factor is most important because it also accounts for why the Doukhobors succeeded where other religiously-led friendship missions to the USSR did not. Peter Jarman, writing about the East-West friendship tours led by the Quakers which brought them to the Soviet Union, saw a key obstacle to the success of such missions being a lack of a cohesive base for mutual understanding between the two sides. A shared desire to rid the world of nuclear weapons was a good start, but according to Jarman, the weapons were but “symptoms of an underlying tension and sickness in East-West relations” which the peace movements on both sides of the Iron Curtain would have to come to terms with if they were to achieve lasting peace. He concluded that for such movements to be successful,

There needs to be a realistic appreciation of common interest to transform the climate of East-West relations from one of fear to one of hope, and from distrust to at least one of limited trust which from time to time could survive being bruised by particular incidents and issues.²³⁷

The Soviet leadership well knew how to undermine or attack both of these variations – repression of the domestic organizations, and dismissal of the Western-led ones on the

²³⁷ East-West Committee of Quaker Peace and Service *Bridging the East-West Divide: Quakers Share Information, Experience and Perspective* London: Quaker Peace and Service, 1984, p. 21

grounds that they had no root in Soviet society and were imperialist instruments. In the latter case, it could even be argued that the Soviet leadership had no need to quash such movements, as they lacked the lateral power and cross-border mobilization to ever get off the ground. However, it was less equipped to deal with such a case as the Doukhobors, who had both a legitimate base in Soviet lands (the movement had begun there, after all) and high-profile overseas membership.

The intercourse and communication of the Doukhobors, of course, was not always totally unfettered, but it seems clear in the presentation of the evidence that their communication and correspondence was not only more unfettered (both by outside forces as well as their own cultural baggage) but was also more natural, more human.

Overall, it appears they achieved a dialogue between members of their organization that was not only more close to the kind of conversations one might have with members of one's own country, but also closer to the kind of familiar dialogue normally reserved for friends and family, but here exercised among those of the same social and ethnic group regardless of whether they had ever encountered one another previously.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

The provision of proof for the overarching thesis that Doukhobor correspondence from 1967-1985 constituted an example of both Citizen diplomacy and a nucleus of Global civil society is dependent on many variables, and the variety of approaches contained in the preceding chapters systematically tackles each of these variables.

In the introduction, for example, a synopsis of the history of Doukhobor relations and the development of contacts and exchanges pre-1967 illustrates a tradition of social activism independent of state control among their membership. This is a key factor in establishing a historical basis for alleging that their correspondence after that date was not manufactured by a change in Soviet policy that gave greater lip service to the cause of world peace, as it had existed long before this change in policy.

In the second chapter, the analysis of terms such as citizen diplomacy and civil society set forth a standard by which the evidence of ensuing chapters can be measured against. While this chapter focuses on discussion of the terms themselves, one is able to deduce the relationship of the terms to the case study due to periodic confirmation of the case study's compatibility with such terms.

The description of various Doukhobor correspondences in the case study period juxtaposed against the political climate between the USSR and Canada provides concrete proof for the assertions stated in the previous chapter and introduction. In this chapter a pattern of consistency in Doukhobor correspondence is made evident, which prevailed against a flowing and ebbing tide of détente in official state relations.

The content of the correspondences, and accounts of visits, also shows an expressed awareness of global issues – one key criterion for conceptual fulfilment of a

budding global civil society – and a willingness to act for the promotion of both at their own behest. The extent of the independence of Doukhobor contacts is also re-iterated at the end of this chapter. In this section it is made clear that the Doukhobors in their international contacts did carry forth their actions on their own initiative, receiving only facilitatory support from government-sponsored agencies.

Having established the fulfilment of criteria for Doukhobor correspondence as a case study of citizen diplomacy and global civil society in the making, the subsequent chapter manifested the unique aspects of their correspondence which differentiates this case study from other forms of citizen and public diplomacy. It shows how these aspects provided for a functional bridging of the contacts from simple citizen diplomacy to a nucleus of global civil society, and how other groups without such aspects were not able to do so.

Impact

Certainly, proof of an existing nucleus of global civil society in the USSR during the Cold War is in itself of important consequence. However, recent scholarship has also suggested that this nucleus of global civil society – together with other civil societal groups and social capital in the USSR – created an impetus for the social change revolutions of Perestroika and Glasnost.²³⁸

The idea behind this conclusion is that state-society relations in the USSR began to shift pre-1985 due to the increasing initiative of unofficial groups and individuals within the state to shape its present and future – a dynamic which opened up the former

²³⁸ S. Frederick Starr, "Soviet Union: A Civil Society" *Foreign Policy*, No. 70 (Spring, 1988), pp. 26-41 (Published by: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)

top-down structure of activism in the USSR and eventually led to formal recognition of this new reality by way of Glasnost and Perestroika.

Thus, despite a prevailing perception in both Eastern and Western circles of Gorbachev as the great reformer, S. Frederick Starr's view is that Gorbachev purposely distorted the situation and minimized the initiative that Soviet society at large had taken in the years that preceded Perestroika. This, he argues, was done in order to appear as a "revolutionary leader calling a somnolent nation to action" in lieu of a "conservative reformer trying to save a system facing pressures beyond his control."²³⁹

He discredits a statement by Gorbachev in June 1986 that "Soviet society is ripe for change" calling it a rhetorical device aimed at distorting the situation. At this point, Starr writes, Soviet society was not 'ripe' for change but was already experiencing rapid change – what had yet to change was not society but the state apparatus (which, in order to keep up with the pace of society, was forced to undergo reform).²⁴⁰

The Doukhobor correspondence of the pre-Gorbachev era further proves Starr's theory and contradicts the still-prevalent perception that social change in the USSR chiefly followed Gorbachev's Perestroika and Glasnost instead of vice versa. In this article, he documents a blossoming of youth culture, the unofficial economy and so on, stating of the Brezhnev administration and post-Stalinist thaw,

Long before the economy went flat about 1978, the regime had become petrified and oligarchic thereby repressing the very forces that might have stimulated economic renewal. Where Gorbachev is seriously wrong – and where many Americans err in accepting his view – is in his claim that the manifest stagnation in the Communist party and bureaucracy pervaded Soviet society as well.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Starr, p. 27

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*

²⁴¹ Starr, p. 26

By the early 1980s, he asserts, “the initiative for ideas had shifted from state to society in a process of de facto democratization” largely due to the increased accessibility of communications technology.²⁴² In a similar manner, increased communication technology contributed greatly to the blooming of communications between Soviet and Canadian Doukhobors in this period, allowing them to develop a forum for social change which also became an important source of influence and ideas for the state.

Thus, though many scholars in the past have labelled the Soviet Union’s legal and political culture as almost exclusively top-down in nature, there is evidence that one of the greatest political turnarounds of the modern era was motivated by the grassroots. In particular, the case study of Russian-Canadian Doukhobor relations in the period in question shows that they formed a part of this community which provided an impetus for state reform. Thus, the extent of the impact is incidental to the main focus of the thesis – that of the Doukhobors having established for themselves a well-structured and harmonious international partnership between regular citizens.

We know, for instance, that informal protest existed in the Soviet Union and was especially prevalent from the 1960s to the 1980s as the grip of Stalinist terror had loosened and phenomena such as internal immigration opened up the populace to varied perspectives. One Russian scholar states that in this period the “broad audiences of intelligency” quietly protested against state totalitarianism, against Soviet violence in Czechoslovakia, and against lies of official ideology and infringement of human rights in the Soviet Union – but that this quiet protest is hard to quantify with empirical evidence:

To conduct authentic statistical analysis of this informal protest is obviously not possible because of its underground character; but we contemporaries - we know how it was expressed: in never-ending

²⁴² *Ibid*, p. 33-34

conversations and disputes behind a tea table in private houses; in the jokes criticizing the government and command system as a whole, transferred by word of mouth; distribution of the underground press; active devotion for spiritual doctrines, religion and church. In these circles of intelligence they began to debunk the communist myth about aggressive animosities of western countries in relation to Soviet Union, and in so doing also eroded the concept of cold war itself.²⁴³

Thus, though this informal movement had many witnesses, it had a significantly less weighty paper trail. Fortunately, in the case of the Doukhobors, a paper trail for informal protest such as this does exist as it was kept and published by the Doukhobors in Canada and so the unique circumstances of the movement here serve to shed light on one segment of informal protest in the Soviet Union. This, together with the other segments, eventually proved strong enough to herald a new era of disarmament during Perestroika and put an end to the Cold War.

Having examined this question within the context of the later Soviet period is also useful for imagining how nongovernmental forces might affect change in contemporary Russian society. For in Russia, the Soviet Union represents their legal and social heritage, key elements in any national culture – and especially in Russia where events have proven, time and time again, that “history never withers away completely.”²⁴⁴

The implications of the chief finding of this thesis – namely that the Doukhor correspondence did constitute an example of global civil society in a context where few other groups were able to achieve this – is that for further successes to be facilitated, compatible groups must be matched and a common culture of correspondence arrived at in order to produce successful East-West partnerships. As previously stated, this idea can be extended to provide more specific implications for international relations.

²⁴³ Pavlova, p. 35

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*

Implications

The chief implication of the findings of the study is that this adds to the historical and theoretical understanding of global civil society, which is a relatively new concept with a dearth of focused academic analysis surrounding both its development and its potential for future development. As it has been previously established in the thesis that global civil society often acts as a deterrent to destructive and autocratic forms of governance, it is therefore desirable to map previous patterns of its development. This provides the political scientist with a more informed perspective on how one might cultivate global civil society in a challenging political environment (i.e. one where global civil society has no firm foundation).

Another related implication is that many of the factors which were found to contribute to the success of the Doukhobor relations in constituting an example of the aforementioned terms can also be found in other émigré groups in Canada, ergo there is much unrealized potential for émigré groups to engage in citizen diplomacy with citizens currently residing in their country of ancestry.

This, as suggested by the evidence in the thesis, may be particularly true when the country of ancestry is one hostile to Canada, and these groups may be much better suited to communicate perspectives gained from living in Canadian society to people in the state of their ancestry than those who have no prior experience with the other culture or those who have the capacity only to correspond on a formal level through interpreters.

This idea is not merely one of perspective, but one of identity. One of the themes that has most dominated the art and expression on the immigrant experience in Canada is the

idea of being ‘in between’ – in between cultures, in between political nations, in between two senses of identity.²⁴⁵ This state of being ‘in between’ puts Canadians of foreign origin in a privileged position for citizen diplomacy – and by extension, global civil society – a concept clearly grasped by Canadian Doukhobors such as Tarasoff who commented that “as a Doukhobor and being, in a sense, a product of both the “Capitalist” and “Communist” worlds, I was interested in creating links between the two camps and particularly in seeing how convergence could take place in a non-violent manner.”²⁴⁶

Despite this, many ethnic groups have not taken advantage of this opportunity. Instead, many active Canadian diaspora groups have instead sought to affect geopolitical realities and particularly Canadian foreign policy through more domestic avenues. For example, the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada has formed many political organizations, most of whose efforts are coordinated by the largest and most influential of them, the Ukrainian-Canadian Congress – and these have been directed more toward influencing affairs through the Canadian political system.

The Congress’s activities are many, but by far their biggest expenditure is operating the Ottawa-based UCC National Information Bureau.²⁴⁷ The Congress advocates certain policies to the Government of Canada and is used as an information resource by the

²⁴⁵ My experience working for the Canada-Hungary Education Foundation, an organization devoted to Hungarian-Canadian history, arts and culture, news, etc. exposed me to many works of art and literature that expressed this sentiment. For example, Tamas Wormser, a Hungarian-Canadian filmmaker, explained one of the key themes of his films in an interview, saying “When you leave for the new place, it will never be your home; but the old place will never be your home again.” (Marlin, Marguerite “Profile of Filmmaker Tamas Wormser” *The Hungarian Presence in Canada* Ottawa: The Canada-Hungary Education Foundation, 2008)

²⁴⁶ “An Interview With Koozma J. Tarasoff” *Mir*, Feb. 1976, no. 11, p. 6

²⁴⁷ Karmel Schreyer, “Ethnic Groups and Foreign Policy: A Case Study of the Ukrainian Canadian Community and Canada’s Foreign Policy Toward Ukraine, 1985-1992” (M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1994) p. 44

Government,²⁴⁸ but does not undertake any significant initiatives of citizen diplomacy and thus acts more as a bridge between the Ukrainian-Canadian communities and the Government, and not between the Ukrainian-Canadian communities and Ukrainians living in Ukraine.

The second implication is that in absence of a pre-existing cultural commonality based on heritage, NGOs and global civil society initiatives looking to establish partnerships in post-Soviet states should make a priority of establishing a common culture of communication and networking to ascertain the most auspicious matches of groups across borders who share their goals most closely.

Goldsmith outlines the imperative of this principle for East-West partnerships, writing that “projects or programs that are ‘parachuted’ in from outside generally prove to be unsuccessful in the end, and can even be deleterious. Indigenous interest in and desire for the program are imperative, as is the indigenous capacity to manage it in the long run.”²⁴⁹

This is related to the dynamic demonstrated mainly in the fourth chapter, namely that that the Doukhobor culture of communication bears stark differences in contrast to Western NGOs and other groups that make up civil society. For while the Doukhobors were and are as much of a social action group as these groups, their correspondence was rife with overt displays of emotion and sentimentality toward one another – a factor which was present to a much lesser degree in the cases of the Quaker friendship tour and the East-West cultural and scientific exchanges due to the fact that such a dynamic does

²⁴⁸ Schreyer, p. 49

²⁴⁹ Goldsmith, p. 20

not exist to the same extent in the Western culture of communication between similar groups.

Thus, as the initiatives and organizations that make up global civil society spread out and network across the globe as they have increasingly been doing, it seems evident that fine-tuning their culture of communication to be more personal when dealing with a post-Soviet populace may resound better with the public and result in more harmonious partnerships.

Simply to understand this culture and its past political machinations is useful, as it was the political leadership, and not the culture itself, that was overhauled in 1991. This thesis might also be useful as a way to understand how Russia in our present era might be reformed, since the Soviet Union represents Russia's legal and social heritage, an important element in any nation's culture and especially in Russia where events have proven time and time again that "history never withers away completely."²⁵⁰

Such a study may also prove useful to more universal theory on law and society, as any inclusive study of state-society relations should take into account many socio-political contexts, especially those not familiar to Western observers. Thus, this supposition lends itself to support for more international networks between like-minded groups or groups with cultural or other similarities in different states.

²⁵⁰ Yakovlev *Striving for Law in a Lawless Land: Memoirs of a Russian Reformer* 1996, p. 7

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