

THE DOUKHOBORS:
History, Ideology and the Tolstoy-Verigin Relationship

by

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ABSTRACT

In 1894, Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy first came in contact with the obscure “heretical” sect called the Doukhobors, or Spirit Wrestlers. Once acquainted, a sense of mutual respect and interdependence developed between the writer and the sect as a whole. From what type of religious and social climate did the Doukhobors emerge? How closely does Tolstoy’s personal philosophy correlate to that of the Doukhobor faith? Pacifism, vegetarianism, anarchism and a belief in non-institutionalized religion are aspects traditionally shared between the writer and the sectarians. What other historical and ideological factors contributed to Tolstoy’s interest in groups, such as the Doukhobors and their faith-based cousins, the Molokans?

By completing his novel *Воскресение*, and by using the royalties on behalf of the Doukhobor cause, Tolstoy enabled this sect to emigrate to Canada in 1899, and to escape further persecution at the hands of the tsarist government. Certainly Tolstoy’s generous financial contribution toward the Doukhobor emigration indicates he did influence their futures in some way. In which area, however, did Tolstoy most greatly influence Doukhobor thought? In what ways and to what extent did Tolstoy shape and challenge the moral and practical thought of the then incumbent leader, Petr V. Verigin throughout their fifteen year correspondence?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Doukhobors: History, Ideology and the Tolstoy-Verigin Relationship

	Page
Preface.....	1
Introduction.....	3
Chapter One The Doukhobors: An Apologetic and Interpretive History	5
1.1 The Advent of the Doukhobors and Their Formative Years	7
1.2 From Accommodationist Doukhobor to Dissenting Sectarian	17
1.2a Luker'ia Kalmykova	17
1.2b Petr Vasil'evich Verigin	18
1.3 A Journey to Canada	25
1.3a Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans	27
1.3b Sergei L'vovich Tolstoy	32
1.3c Early Settlers	34
Maps	
1.1 Location of Non-Conformists (Milky Waters region of the Caucasus)	38
1.2 Doukhobor Colonies in South Russia: 1802-1845.....	39
1.3 Doukhobor Settlements in Transcaucasia (Wet Mountains region)	40
1.4 Geographic Movements of the Doukhobors: 1898-1913	41
Chapter Two The Doukhobors: What They Believe	42
2.1 Doukhobor Identity	41
2.2 Doukhobor Theology	47
2.3 Doukhobor Ideology	52
2.4 Doukhobor Traditions	58
Chapter Three Tolstoy as a Religious Thinker	63
3.1 The Sermon on the Mount and Tolstoy's Theology	65
3.2 Anarchism and Non-Resistance to Evil	74
3.3 Human Pleasures: Luxury, Diet and Sexual Relations	78
Chapter Four L. N. Tolstoy and P. V. Verigin: a Friendship Through Correspondence 1895-1910....	82
4.1 The Genesis of a Friendship	82
4.2a The Correspondence: Facing the Issues	86
4.2b The Correspondence: Wrestling with the Mentor	94
Conclusion: Remaining Evidences of Tolstoy's Touch on the Contemporary Doukhobor Community	98
Maps	
C.1 Doukhobor Migration Route in Canada – 1899	105
Works Cited	106

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The seed for this thesis was planted in my mind nearly a decade ago, when leisurely reading Tolstoy's journals, I came across the name *духоборцы*. Immediately curious to discover more about these people, of whom Tolstoy frequently wrote, I slowly read books on their history, beliefs and of Tolstoy's involvement in their lives. Although I regret not taking the opportunity earlier to research this movement, the truth remains that there has been no better time to study the Doukhobors than now. The year 1995, the centenary of the Burning of Arms, saw the advent of Doukhobor and other Russian sectarian participation in the internet. This medium greatly facilitated my preparations before embarking upon this research, namely, but not limited to the *Doukhobor Home Page*, the *Molokan Home Page* and the *Doukhobor Genealogy Website*. I am grateful for the archival documents and research recently published by the Spirit Wrestlers Associates and the Slavic Research Group of Ottawa University, in particular *Л.Н. Толстой и П.В. Веригин: nepenucka*, (1995) edited by Andrew Donskov, *History of the Doukhobors in V.D. Bonch-Bruevich's Archives (1886-1950s)*, (1999) by Svetlana A. Inikova and translated and edited by Koozma J. Tarasoff, *Sergei Tolstoy and the Doukhobors*, (1998) edited by Andrew Donskov and translated by John Woodsworth, and finally, *Russian Roots and Canadian Wings: Russian Archival Documents on the Doukhobor Emigration to Canada*, (1999) compiled, translated and annotated by John Woodsworth. Their work has immeasurably aided my own research.

In particular, I am grateful to Koozma J. Tarasoff, Doukhobor historian and ethnographer, who has graciously sent me much needed material and information, as well as granted me permission for the use of historical and regional maps from *Plakun Trava* (1982). I also gratefully acknowledge the support and help I have received from Professor John Woodsworth of Ottawa University. His willingness to correspond with me on a number of issues regarding the Doukhobors has been much appreciated. I would be greatly remiss if I did not, likewise, include Ryan Androsoff among my list of informants. Above anyone else, he has helped me to appreciate the Doukhobors not only as historical figures, but also as real, modern day people. Without Androsoff's *Doukhobor Home Page*, and indeed, without his candor and willingness to respond to my constant barrage of questions over the past three years, my research would have lacked a well-rounded richness that I can only hope is conveyed through these pages. In the editing and shaping of this thesis I have been wonderfully aided by Professor Robert Porter and Dr. Andrei Rogachevski of the University of Glasgow, whom I sincerely thank for their efforts.

In regard to the transliteration, I have tried to remain faithful to the established Princeton method. I have detoured from this only in cases where a proper name is well-

established in the English world according to another method (e.g. Tolstoy, rather than Tolstoi, and, of course, most saliently Doukhobor, not Dukhobor), where a proper name has taken on an accepted form in an English-speaking country, as is the case of many Canadian Doukhobors (e. g. Peter Maloff), and when quoting from another source, I remain faithful to the source rather than to this specific method of transliteration. No attempt has been made to retain the pre-revolutionary orthography. All quotes are recorded according to modern Russian spelling. All Biblical quotes have been taken from the New International Version.

My hope is that this thesis sheds some light on the Tolstoy-Doukhobor connection, as well as a greater appreciation for the continuing pacifist legacy of труд и мирная жизнь, toil and peaceful life.

INTRODUCTION

Doukhobor means spirit wrestler, a name given to the sectarians decades after the group had officially congealed into a proper sect. From the onset of their existence in the eighteenth century, they have wrestled with both political and religious authorities, struggling to structure their lives according to their personal beliefs. This spiritual struggle was far from alien to Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy. Even without the knowledge of the Doukhobors interconnected history with Russia's great writer, it is not difficult to imagine why each should have admired the other.

The Doukhobors were certainly not the only sect wrestling against an oppressive church and state; they were not the only pacifist groups, nor the only "heretics" with spiritual and social ideologies similar to, and sympathetic with, Tolstoy's own. Moreover, the Doukhobors were not alone in suffering from persecution at the hands of the tsarist government and a state recognized Orthodox Church. The Molokans, the Mennonites, the Quakers, the Starovertsy and dozens of others could have made such claims. It was the Doukhobors, however, who would receive the greatest benefit from Tolstoy's attention and ceaseless praise. The Spirit Wrestlers possessed characteristics, which set them apart. The Doukhobors, unlike the Mennonites and Quakers, were largely Russian, thus appealing to the patriotic Tolstoy. They were pacifists, anarchists, and iconoclasts, even placing the individual soul above any church or holy writ. In addition, Tolstoy received constant news of the Doukhobors' suffering and valiant efforts in rebelling against the authorities by zealous Tolstoyans, such as Pavel I. Biriukov, Ivan M. Tregubov, Vladimir G. Chertkov and others. Initially, the kudos on behalf of the sectarians might have been slightly exaggerated, thus distorting Tolstoy's perception of them into an idyllic image; yet, Tolstoy's enthusiasm in finding a group of people with whom he was able to establish a spiritual kinship remained acute. In any event, Tolstoy, along with the English and American Quakers, donated personal funds toward the sectarian migration. I. I. Popov, reflecting on previous events, writes from Moscow in 1908 how Tolstoy "принял живое участие и в их судьбе" (Maloff, 578).

In a broad sense, this thesis serves a two-fold purpose. Firstly, all attempts have been made to describe the historical, cultural and religious factors contributing to the formation of the movement as a whole and the spiritual philosophy, as is unique to them. As regards this purpose, it is my hope that this description is related in a wholly objective manner, candidly admitting human frailties when necessary, and yet, dispelling much of the previously exaggerated and unflattering misconceptions of both the historical and contemporary Doukhobor people. For example, an historian and university lecturer, contemporary to Tolstoy and the Doukhobor migration, considers the writer's efforts to aid the group vain and ineffectual since they turned out to be a sect of "fanatic and excessive

autocracy,” returning to the “simplicity of the naked savage, until the Canadian government put an end to their unseemly practical demonstration of Christian anarchism” (Sarolea, 296-297). Such protests at the Doukhobors’ expense were not uncommon. I aim to stress that positive attributes of this movement do exist, despite some serious incongruities in theology and practical living, as well as the modernity of the sect’s ideology, despite their former reliance on oral tradition and folkloric values. Secondly, I endeavor to demonstrate the dominant ways in which Tolstoy influenced the Doukhobor movement, most particularly through his ethical teachings, moral ideals and his relationship with the initially exiled leader Petr Vasil’evich Verigin.

Four chapters comprise this thesis, the first two focusing exclusively on the Doukhobors, and the final two concentrating on Tolstoy and his relations with the Doukhobors’ spiritual development, most specifically with Verigin. Chapter One is an interpretive history of the Doukhobors’ religious and social developments, giving special attention to L. N. Tolstoy’s role in their migratory history. Chapters Two and Three discuss the religious philosophies and belief systems of Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, respectively. In devoting entire chapters to each of them, I have attempted to provide a clear picture of the central issues, which the Doukhobors share with their “Grandfather Tolstoy,” as he is still sometimes referred. Although these chapters concentrate primarily on the similarities in their *Weltanschauung*, I have also included a couple of areas of dispute in order to evince that both parties developed their individual world views independently of one another. The final chapter, the heart of the thesis, is to be read as an examination of a spiritual journal shared between two like-minded men. How it fits into the entirety of the thesis ought to be clear: Tolstoy influenced the physical and social lives and surroundings of the Doukhobors as a whole, but he also deeply influenced their leader morally, intellectually and spiritually. Their histories are not one, but certainly interdependent.

1. THE DOUKHOBORS¹: AN APOLOGETIC AND INTERPRETIVE HISTORY

They were referred to as Иконоборцы, the iconoclasts, giving birth to a lesser known Reformation throughout the Russian Caucasus, just prior to Martin Luther's own birth. Иконоборцы, however, was a negative label given by those to whom the priests, and saints, the icons and liturgical history were all sacred. They simply called themselves Божиим люди (the people of God), Христововерцы (true Christians), or even simply Christians.

These were the forebears of such indigenous Russian sects as the Хлысты (flagellants), Скопцы (castrators), Прыгуны (jumpers), Малеванцы (followers of the Russian protestant-khlyst, Kondratii Malevanyi),² Молокане (milk-drinkers) and the Духоборцы (spirit-wrestlers), among others. Although they were all arguably derived from the original Иконоборцы, each of these sects³ emerged with its own history and genesis. As will be shown in this chapter, the Doukhobors experienced a creation formed incrementally. They did not burst into existence as the result of one man's or group's religious teachings. Instead, they evolved gradually through well-established historical events and ideas. This evolutionary process created a sect akin to many others from the region and historical time frame, yet also with a slightly different identity and code of beliefs.

Just as the Christians of the first century accepted a name bestowed on them by people antagonistic to their beliefs, so the Doukhobors also adopted a label in much the same way. In 1785 the Archbishop Ambrosius Serebrenikov of Ekaterinoslav, deeply concerned at the potential threat posed by a particular group of heretical sectarians, first used the derisive term, "духоборы." In accusing them of wrestling against God's Holy Spirit, he condemned them as slanderers and enemies of the true Church. The believers themselves were undaunted, and readily accepted their new name, re-interpreting it to mean they wrestled in cooperation with God's Spirit for the truth. The name "Doukhobors" grew to mean more to the truth-seeking sect than a mere title or reference; the name eventually aided in forming their history and distinctive identity.

"Духоборы были наследниками антицерковного движения. Уже в самом названии «духоборы» утверждался активный характер новой секты, как борцов за

¹ Although the name of the sect would be rendered as "Dukhobor" according to modern transliteration, the accepted form of the name in English is "Doukhobor," as previously noted in the preface.

² For an introductory discussion on the difficulty in classifying Russian sects, particularly those derived from the Raskol, see Aleksandr Etkind's treatment of Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruевич's attitude toward Russian sectarianism in *Хлысты: Секты, Литература и Революция*. Москва: Новое Литературное Обозрение, 1998: 636-638.

³ While the Orthodox Church saw these various groups as sects, the adherents of these groups believed they were merely reviving early Christianity as it was meant to be lived and practiced before others detoured from the original path.

дух, за одухотворение.” (Porakishvili, 18). As they progressed through their history, the Doukhobors began to understand themselves in terms of persecution, displacement and suffering. As they wrestled to worship God “in spirit and in truth” (see John 4 as Jesus talks with the Samaritan woman at the well), the Doukhobors would eventually wrestle both inadvertently and intentionally against the Orthodox Church, tsarist Russia, the Canadian government and the Soviet regime. Illarion Pobirokhin, one of the Doukhobors’ early leaders, is quoted in Myler Wilkinson’s article “Written on the Wind: Word and Belief in Doukhobor Literature” as saying, “We [are] a people of a wandering pilgrim nature because we are always moving from a symbolic land of Egypt, or land of oppression, - from a state of confusion – towards attainment of the promised land, a land of enlightenment and truth.” (Wilkinson, 206). This is an early statement of the Doukhobor faith and typifies even today the interpretation and emphasis they place on spiritual homelessness and suffering. “Истинное крещение должно состоять в страдании. Как Христос крестился не водой, а страданием, так и духоборец должен креститься страданием.” (Bulgakov, 327 – 328).

From the very onset of the Doukhobors’ existence, their people have known compulsory migration due to the fear and disapproval of the Russian state and the Orthodox Church, two forces working tightly together. From the Молочные воды (Milky Waters) in the Tavrida region in the Caucasus, to Transcaucasia, Siberia, the Ukraine, Finland, Cyprus and across the ocean to Canada, the Doukhobors lived out a forced migratory lifestyle, proselytizing to a certain extent among some of the indigenous peoples like the Tatars, Armenians and Cossacks whom they met along the way.

“The history of the Doukhobors can in fact be characterized by one word – exile. These people have moved restlessly across two continents in search of a permanent home.” (Wilkinson, 207). Exile and suffering have played significant roles in shaping the Doukhobors’ history, belief system and their place in the world today. By addressing these issues not only in the present but also subsequent chapters, this project will examine the answers to the question, “What is a Doukhobor?” As the questions are addressed, it will become clearer that forced migrations, a history of persecution and suffering, assimilation into a foreign culture, and even a partial loss of their own culture have, paradoxically, ensured the survival of the Doukhobor faith.⁴

This chapter, like many histories of the Doukhobors, breaks the chronological events down into segments convenient for historical explanation and interpretation. Z. I. Porakishvili,⁵ for example, divides Doukhobor history into five periods based largely on the dates of the Doukhobors’ migratory treks. The Canadian historian, ethnographer and

⁴ For a broader and more detailed discussion on the Doukhobors’ belief system, see chapter two of this thesis.

⁵ as found in *Духоборы в Грузии*. Тбилиси: Издательство ЦК КП Грузии, 1970.

musicologist Kenneth Peacock,⁶ on the other hand, seems to define his “three main summation phases” more in terms of a topical approach. That is, Peacock defines them according to how far the Doukhobors have progressed in their principles and teachings. While both of these methods of viewing the history appear reasonable, this author deems it appropriate to examine Doukhobor history from yet another vantage point, that is by personalities. While this is not a particularly innovative way of looking at these unique people, the hope is to further acquaint the reader with the individuals and personalities who gave rise to, defined and maintain this branch of Christianity.

The formative years and early leaders comprise the first area of study in this history. Secondly, this chapter will deal with the two most illustrious leaders the Doukhobors knew: Luker’ia Kalmykova and Petr Vasil’evich Verigin. Finally, the events and people contributing to the Doukhobor emigration to Canada will be examined, along with the people and events involved in their first few decades in a new and strange country. It is in this section that Lev Tolstoy and his intervening efforts will be discussed.

1.1 THE ADVENT OF THE DOUKHOBORS AND THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS

As stated above, the Doukhobors did not experience an instantaneous genesis derived from a single or primary historical event. Instead, their origins remain somewhat muddled and unclear. It would be tempting to confirm their advent in 1785 when they were first named by their adversaries or to group them with other early sects such as the Bulgarian Bogomils, the Bohemian Adamites, the Quakers and Molokans, as others have intimated. However, in order to exercise the greatest amount of historical integrity, ignorance must openly be admitted in certain areas. In other words, the history of the Doukhobors cannot be definitively delineated through time. Due to illiteracy and lack of early records, their precise origin remains unclear.

In order to be thorough and to gain the clearest appreciation of the Doukhobors’ development, it is necessary to go back to Russia in 1471, twelve years prior to Martin Luther’s birth. There emerged in Novgorod a teacher by the name of Scharius. His teachings were in many ways more radical than Lutheranism. Scharius stressed a disbelief in icons, the supernatural or miraculous birth of Christ and in the trinity of the Godhead. These sectarian views apparently gained somewhat in popularity, for by 1504 the Orthodox Church was so worried and incensed that strict laws were enforced and executions resulted. The reason behind the Church’s displeasure with these heretical teachings is relatively obvious; the Church was by no means willing to relinquish any power over its people by admitting its infallibility, or condoning independent beliefs. It was, indeed these

⁶ as found in *Songs of the Doukhobors*. Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for Canada, 1970.

independent beliefs, which appealed so strongly to the peasants of the time. These early “heretical” evangelists preached an individualized spiritual revelation, inspiration not through the Church, but through one’s own spirit. Early sectarian ideas paved the way for the emerging Doukhoborism, as well as other similarly Tolstoyan beliefs. These sectarian concepts largely emphasized the practical elements, rather than the theological, as the peasant masses could more readily comprehend the social implications of Christianity, rather than the theological (Anderson, 409). For the average peasant, such theological discussions were incomprehensible and useless. Through these independent sectarian beliefs, Christianity suddenly revealed itself as a practical, discernible, and attainable religion.

Dissent against the State Church remained more or less subdued thereafter until the well-documented event in the 1650’s threatened to splinter the Church from within. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich ordered a revision of the Russian Bible and the prayer books as contextual and orthographical errors had allegedly crept in through the years. This undertaking was accomplished by Patriarch Nikon. In comparing the Russian Bible in use at the time with Greek manuscripts, he “corrected” the spelling of Jesus’ name. Further revisions included the shape of the emblematic cross, the method implemented in crossing oneself, the number of fingers required in doing so and the number of times Alleluia was to be pronounced in a worship service (Wright, 10). This new Bible was distributed and made compulsory among the people. A group of them, however, balked at these changes. While such changes might appear trivial, the “Old Believers,” староверцы as they called themselves, were furious. They regarded these alterations or “Nikonian novelties” as blasphemous (Elkinton, 286). In this way the well-known “Raskol” or the Great Schism occurred. While Old Believers were still in effect Orthodox, this split was, of course, significant in relating them to the future Иконоборцы, a branch of the schismatics from the early 1700’s. The protest of the Old Believers set a precedent for openly disputing the hitherto omnipotent Church, and in remaining true to the “original faith” as they perceived it. It would one day be this readiness to question and lead, rather than follow, which would attract at least partial sympathy from Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy.

The divisions and disputes did not stop there. Almost instantaneously there were two branches of the “Old Believers,” the поповцы (those who held on to the institution of the priesthood, liturgical and church traditions) and the беспоповцы (those who rejected these traditions). From the latter the иконоборцы were derived. Not only did they reject the priesthood and the icons, but the entire concept of the supremacy of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The suppression of selfish personal appetites concerned them as much as the social injustices perpetrated by secular and religious institutions. They regarded the whole far-flung empire of Church wealth and power – the hierarchy of the priesthood, the political influence of the state, the pomp and ceremony, the theological dogmas, the condoning of warfare – as materialistic perversions of the simple message of love and brotherhood expounded by Christ. (Peacock, 3).

Eventually from the Иконоборцы emerged various sects and religious affiliates. This was the origin of early groups such as the “Israelite” cult, the “божии люди,” or khlysty, as they were derisively called since they practiced self-flagellation in order more fully to attain the perfection of Christ. While this was by no means the sole note-worthy characteristic of the khlysty, outsiders latched on to this idiosyncrasy as it was distinctive from other groups. The Doukhobors owe a substantial amount to the khlysty in terms of religious beliefs and their Weltanschauung, or мировоззрение, of pacifism and inner spirituality. The khlysty, or their own preferred term, божии люди, regarded human life as both sacred and divine. Each individual bore the spirit of God within himself or herself, and this spirit would direct each personally in the right path (Peacock, 5). There was no need for organized religion, nor were the adherents under obligation to the Church.

The seeds which the schismatics and early post-schismatic sects were planting would come to fruition in the lives of the Doukhobors. According to Russian archival documents, however, the Doukhobors, although indebted to previous groups, remained unique in their religious outlook. “Some observers of the schism call Doukhoborism a rationalistic sect and trace its derivation to the teachings of Calvin and the Quakers. In view of the disjointedness and, to some extent, absurdity of the doctrine, as well as the Doukhobors’ crude ignorance, their superstition and want of common sense, one can hardly call them rationalists, in the true sense of the term. It is only their lack of an outward church and the complete denial of any kind of ritual that allows them to be classified [sic] as ‘rationalistic’, in contrast to those persuasions which are founded exclusively on a perverse interpretation of isolated Scriptural texts and on the ritualistic aspect of religion” (Woodsworth 1999, 19).⁷

While the police, obviously, were not particularly favorably disposed toward the Doukhobors, and while it is yet debatable to what extent foreign theological ideas such as the Calvin doctrine influenced Russian sectarianism, the above quote is valuable inasmuch as it offers some insight into the peculiarity of Doukhobor history and religious thought.

⁷ in Woodsworth 1999, ‘Brief Historical Outline of the origin and development of the Doukhobor sect’. Undated. [prepared by a representative of the Department of the Police.]. Typescript, 9 pp., 41/2 L.). Case 1053 L.024-028r [Document №1895-11-01c]

Peacock poses a question quite apropos to this issue. “Did this heresy [that is, that of the advent of Doukhobor ideology] arise spontaneously, or was it based on traditions surviving from previous centuries?” (Peacock, 4).

Connecting the viewpoint of early “heretics” like the иконоборцы and khylsty to the Doukhobors, while also demarcating the vast ideological differences between the Old Believers and the religious sects of the time, is Danilo Filipov. He is the first of such prominent and important figures in the wider span of Doukhobor history. The khlysty, or божии люди, most rightfully claim him, but his tremendous influence lingers on in other sects, the Molokans and Doukhobors in particular. Filipov was a mere peasant, but clearly intelligent, with an above average aptitude in theological matters. He was a biblical scholar who believed in the superiority of mankind since the Spirit of God resided in each individual. He preached “святому духу верьте!” and proclaimed the priority of “духа над буквой” (Klibanov 1965, 43). Although this religious leader studied and used the Bible as the primary basis for his teachings, he eventually rejected it in place of a more subjective, personal and liberating means of listening to the spirit within. Filipov regarded himself as the spirit of the resurrected Christ and believed that this same spirit would be continually reborn in men of exceptional spiritual understanding (Woodcock, 26). This belief in Christ incarnate remained a part of the Doukhobor faith and history for over a hundred years, though the belief eventually died out in Canada. Later, he threw the Bible and church books into the Volga. This was not only the onset of Danilo Filipov’s new spiritual journey, but also the true origins of both the Molokans and the Doukhobors. This event survives through the centuries as a Doukhobor hymn.

Он шел, прошел, молодой юноша.
Он идучи, слезно плачет,
Тяжелехонько вздыхает.
И на встречу ему, Сам Иисус Христос:
-Ты о чем плачешь, молодой юноша?
Да и как же мне, да не плакать?
Потерял же я золоту книгу,
Уронил в море церковный ключ.
-Ты не плачь, не плачь молодой юноша.
Золоту книгу я ее выпишу,
А сине море я его высушу,
И церковный ключ я достану,
И на истинный путь я наставлю. (Peacock, 59).

Although Danilo Filipov was originally known as one of the first khlysty or Христововеры, an alternative name to the Christian sect, his place in history and the above hymn are still very much an integral part of both the Doukhobor and Molokan heritages. In fact, the two sects were most likely one group, which eventually separated over ideological differences, namely the status of the Bible.⁸ Some discrepancies, however, remain concerning the derivation of the name “Molokan.” Many historians claim this name originated with leaders from the Orthodox Church, who were dismayed to discover the sect continued to eat dairy (молочные) products and other prohibited foods during times of fasting. Ethel Dunn asserts that the term “Molokan” came from without and further ties the two sects together both historically and ideologically. “Although they were properly called Spiritual Christians, Doukhobors and Molokans came to prefer what were originally terms of opprobrium, saying that the Molokans were nourished by the milk of the Spirit and that Doukhobors wrestled with the Spirit and were made stronger.” (165). Klibanov, however, states that the name came from within. “Названные секты, по толкованию ее идеологов, основанно на евангельском тексте: ‘Возлюбите чистое, словесное молоко.’” (Klibanov 1965, 176).⁹ Molokans firmly believed in the preeminence of the Bible as the source of spiritual knowledge. Likewise, they preached the salvation of humankind through faith in Jesus Christ, and also held fast to the belief in the trinity of the Godhead. (Klibanov 1974, 176). These beliefs defined the Molokans independently from the Doukhobors. Although the Doukhobors disagreed with all three of the above mentioned theological points, it was the Molokans’ faithfulness to the Bible which would irrevocably divide them, causing historians and theologians to label them peculiarly as evangelicals (Brock, 444).

The idea of the Molokans as evangelicals, that is, so closely related to the Anabaptists, demonstrates how far the tiny sect evolved from their original roots (i.e. looking back on the teachings of Scharius and the иконоборцы) and the estimable role foreign religious thought might have played in their evolution (e.g. the Quakers and Mennonites). Sergei Stepniak, a nineteenth century Russian revolutionary with first hand knowledge of Russian sectarianism quoted in George Woodcock’s *The Doukhobors*, even goes so far as to say that the Doukhobors and the Molokans “were the only sects which grew up on their own ground independent of the Raskol” (Woodcock, 25). While this is feasible, it seems highly doubtful for a sect to emerge entirely independent of society and its surroundings. In summation, according to Klibanov, the Molokans adhered more to the

⁸ This sectarian schism took place during the rule of Illarion Pobirokhin, most likely in the final decade of the 1700’s.

⁹ a reference to I Peter 2:2, “Like newborn babies, crave spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”

Bible than the Doukhobors, who relied heavily on “inner revelation”, “на внутреннем откровении” (Klibanov 1965, 85).

In approximately 1740, twenty or thirty years after Danilo Filipovich threw the Bible in the Volga, an unknown foreigner appeared in the Kharkov province, planting the seeds of spiritual independence. This foreigner is briefly mentioned in police archival documents from 1895 as instructing the people that God dwells within them through their inner voice. (Woodsworth 1999, 20).¹⁰ This religious wanderer might have even been the spiritual father of a peculiar brand of pacifism, a conviction for which the Doukhobors would one day be most noted. His ethnic origin and initial occupation are ambiguous, though “for some unknown reason Metropolitan Arsenij calls him a ‘Polish Jew and Protestant proselyte’; Father Novitskij¹¹ had grounds for supposing him a Quaker, while for other observers he was an army deserter” (Woodsworth 1999, 25).¹² It was not, however, until Siluan Kolesnikov assumed a position of religious authority that the Doukhobors were molded into a proper sect by a distinctive philosophy.

Described by S.V. Bulgakov as a well-read cossack, “начитанный казак,” Siluan Kolesnikov is known as the founder, (основатель) of Doukhoborism, the first religious leader, melding together an otherwise loosely bound people (Bulgakov, 323). Emerging in the Ukrainian village of Nikol’skoe as a disciple of Danilo Filipov and his followers, Kolesnikov immediately gained the people’s attention. He was an articulate, highly intelligent and mild mannered leader. As he preached in homes and preferred the “soft-spoken answer,” Kolesnikov drew little attention from the authorities, thus maintaining a peaceful existence for his followers. Kolesnikov purposefully instructed the sectarians that answering questions from outsiders in an evasive, non-committal manner would ensure their survival (Woodcock 1999, 27).¹³ This is most probably the origin of suspicion and deep-seated distrust of the authorities, which many who were involved in the Doukhobor emigration to Canada would one day find peculiar. Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruevich, a Russian ethnographer who lived among them in Canada for one year, was drawn to Bolshevism and eventually served as Lenin’s personal secretary. He named sectarianism as an ancient mystery of the life of the people, “вековая тайна народной жизни” and was able to speak to the sects in their own mysterious tongue, “на их тайном языке.” (Etkind, 634). Bonch-Bruevich quoted the Doukhobor I.P. Abrosimov as saying, “Many Doukhobors learned the ...text by rote as a psalm. There was a tradition in this group of

¹⁰ in Woodsworth 1999, ‘Brief historical outline of the origin and development of the Doukhobor sect’. Undated. [Prepared by a representative of the Department of the Police.] (Typescript, 9 pp./41/2L.) Case 1053 L. 024-028r [Document №1895-11-01c]

¹¹ The reference is to Orest Novitskii, who in 1832 prepared the first dissertation on the Doukhobors. Even today, his work *О духоборцах* is invaluable in terms of knowledge on early Doukhobor history and culture.

¹² ‘Brief historical outline of the origin and development of the Doukhobor sect’.

¹³ *ibid*

memorizing especially important texts by rote, so that, if questioned by strangers, everyone would answer the same way.” (Inikova 1999a, 21). Kolesnikov believed, as did his mentor Danilo Filipov, that God dwelled within man. He taught that in bowing to one’s fellow man, one was recognizing and, indeed, worshipping the God within man. “Духоборы служат богу духом: тело их – храм божий, душа – образ божий.” (Porakishvili, 18). Kolesnikov warned against the continual battle of good and evil. He taught that “human souls are angels, fallen under the influence of the spirit of evil long before the creation of the world. Because of these souls’ crimes, God created prisons for them – namely, our bodies.” (Woodsworth 1999, 21).¹⁴ Precisely because of this fleshly struggle humanity must undergo the “repentance of purification,” that is the complete rejection of Satan’s temptations. Kolesnikov still preached from the Bible, though he also taught that living simply, from the heart, was the purest form of Christianity. “An apple,” he is most noted for teaching, “is recognized by its taste, a flower by its scent, and a Christian is recognized by the good deeds of his life.” (Peacock, 6).

Due to Kolesnikov’s non-confrontational style, the authorities did not interfere with the expanding group, so their number of converts grew considerably. By Kolesnikov’s death in 1775, these sectarian teachings had spread to Russia proper, and were being echoed back from the small village of Goreloe, just southeast of Moscow. Although Illarion Pobirokhin, a fur-trading merchant, claimed his right to authority from Siluan Kolesnikov himself, he was an altogether different man in many respects. While short in stature, he was a forceful, at times arrogant, and innovative leader. Unlike Kolesnikov, Pobirokhin immediately discarded the Bible, asserting it was the source of discord and confusion, the cause of dissension among Christians.

This decision early in his leadership served as a kind of unwanted, but self-fulfilling prophecy. It was, in fact, Pobirokhin’s nephew Semeon Uklein, who gave rise to the voice of discontent and protest among a few of the sectarians. So, it was in the beginning of Catherine the Great’s reign that Semeon Uklein led fellow sectarians to join the Molokans believing Illarion Pobirokhin had strayed too far away from a Bible-centered religion (Brock, 443). “Thus came about a schism...” the police inaccurately recorded Doukhorbor history, “and from that time to the present day [1895] the Doukhobors and Molokans live in irreconcilable enmity.” (Woodcock 1999, 23).¹⁵ This is, of course, entirely untrue. The relations between the two groups were never inimical, but on the contrary, they have always maintained amiable relations. The Tolstoyan Mikhail Maksimovich, a Doukhorbor in Kaluga, writes to Vladimir G. Chertkov informing him of

¹⁴ in Woodsworth 1999, ‘Brief historical outline of the origin and development of the Doukhorbor sect’. Undated. [Prepared by a representative of the Department of the Police.] (Typescript, 9 pp./41/2L.) Case 1053 L. 024-028r [Document №1895-11-01c]

¹⁵ *ibid*

arrests and of his gratitude toward the Molokans as they continue to come to the Doukhobors' aid. "Several Molokans have begun offering us help, they give us bread and money, which they have begun taking to the prisons. Praise God." (Woodsworth 1999, 77).¹⁶

Whereas Kolesnikov was an unassuming teacher, Pobirokhin was harsh and candid. He blatantly condemned religious symbols and icons, rejected church doctrine, and proclaimed himself to be the "first Christ" in a continuing line, that is, the embodiment of Christ's eternal spirit. (Porakishvili, 20). Once he had established this right of reverence among his people, Pobirokhin set up a panel of twelve apostles to aid him in carrying out the work of the Doukhobors. He trained them to be people of the truth, "люди воистинных" (Porakishvili, 20). In essence, they became his watch dogs. The police archival documents affirm "the old man went mad," (Woodsworth 1999, 23). However, it seems more plausible that Pobirokhin desperately wanting to secure his future with the Doukhobors, merely grew overzealous and even tyrannical in his leadership. Pobirokhin's rule was noted for his "theocratic despotism," (Woodcock 1999, 29)¹⁷ but also for an attempt at genuine communal living. The fact that this endeavor was not fully realized should not be looked upon as failure. Goreloe, where he was based, was home to Doukhobors, as well as other Russian peasants, who were not necessarily sympathetic to their cause. Pobirokhin's effort in building Christian communism as well as the Сиротское, an orphanage and communal meeting place, was exceptionally important in setting a precedent for what was to come under Luker'ia Kalmykova and Petr Verigin.

In 1779 government officials first began to look into this heretical sect. By the 1790's Illarion Pobirokhin was exiled to live out the remainder of his life in Siberia, but not before leaving a legacy of religious instruction in the oral tradition. The prayer "Be Devout" and the catechism "What Manner of Person Art Thou?" are still today part of the Doukhobors' *Book of Life*.¹⁸

As Catherine II was ending the years of her reign, Savellii Kapustin began his leadership of the Doukhobors. Kapustin, who had served twenty-five years in the armed guard, was well aware of how to organize and lead people. He was known as the Doukhobor "Moses" as he set down societal laws and confirmed many of the tenets of faith the people had accepted under Pobirokhin (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, ix). In fact,

¹⁶ Copy of agent-intercepted letter from I. Tregubov, Rossosha, Voronezh Province, dated 22 February [5 March] 1896, to Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy, Moscow, Khamovniki Lane, Private House" 1 March 1896, S.S. 642/96. With copy of enclosure: Letter from Doukhobors in Slavjanka (Elizavetopol Prov.) (Typescript, 2pp./1L) Document #1896 - 02 - 27c)

¹⁷ in Woodsworth 1999, 'Brief Outline of the subsequent history of the Doukhbor sect'. Undated. Prepared by a representative of the Department of Police. (Typescript. 7 pp./31/2 L.). Case 1053 L. 030v-033. [Document №1895-11-01e]

¹⁸ compiled and first published in St. Petersburg, 1908 by Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruevich as *Животная книга дубхоборцев*. Translated in English as *Book of Life of the Doukhobors*. Saskatoon and Blaine Lake: Doukhobor Societies of Saskatchewan, 1978

Kapustin shared Pobirokhin's outlook on many issues, such as his love for oral literature and his disregard for the Bible. "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:6). Through this love for oral tradition, Kapustin more firmly set the Doukhobor psalms and hymns in place. He had an extraordinary memory and could sing perfectly over two hundred Doukhobor hymns. "What is a Doukhobor?" was authored by Kapustin. "A Doukhobor is one whose body Christ has chosen for the continued manifestation of God's Spirit that was within him...It was necessary for Jesus Christ to have a body and be a physical being, for it is through the lips of man that God speaks." (Peacock, 7).

Kapustin was likewise similar to Pobirokhin in his overzealousness and arrogance. "Бог живет в сердцах всех истинных христиан," he preached, "но душа Христа переселяется в одного избранного человека." He even had the temerity to claim, "Я действительно Христос, ваш господь, падите ниц передо мною и обожайте меня." (Porakishvili, 20). The Doukhobors readily accepted his teachings, exchanging the Orthodox priests for a Christ-incarnate leader.

With the deaths of Catherine the Great and the unsympathetic Paul I came the reign of Aleksandr I and lenient times for the Doukhobors. To this day the Doukhobors look upon Aleksandr I as a tsar-benefactor. At the request of a few leading Doukhobors, Aleksandr I gave permission for the scattered sect to be re-located at government expense to the Молочные воды region of the Tavrida Province along the Black Sea. The Doukhobors had, up until this time been living in random villages in Voronezh, Tambov and Ekaterinoslav provinces. These happy migrations from 1804-1816 allowed the Doukhobors to set up a communal lifestyle and work together on fertile soil in a relatively warm climate with neighbors of similar pacifist and agrarian philosophies, such as the Mennonites and Hutterites. While Aleksandr I was an "enlightened" tsar in that he saw no value in persecution, he was also operating under the day's politics of ostentatious liberalism, "показного либерализма" (Klibanov 1965, 86). Orest Novitski, an ardent supporter of the Orthodox Church, carried out detailed research during this particular time in Doukhobor history. He lightly praised the sect, saying: "To the credit of the Doukhobors, one must say that they are sober, laborious and frugal, that in their houses and clothing they are careful to be clean and tidy; that they are attentive to their agriculture and cattle-breeding, occupations which have been and still are their chief employment" (Wright, 17).

By settling down in the Молочные воды region, Savelii Kapustin successfully organized a fully-operating, largely self-contained communal society. He also established the Сиротское where orphans, a girls' choir and the elderly and others unable to work were housed and taken care of. The Сиротское was likewise utilized for communal prayer meetings. Similar to Pobirokhin's twelve apostles, but more confrontational and regimented, was the Council of Thirty which Kapustin founded to prevent the Doukhobors

inadvertently disclosing secrets or the “mysteries of the faith” to outsiders (Woodsworth 1999, 31).¹⁹

Regardless of any despotic overtones, the Doukhobors were happy and flourishing in their new home with Kapustin, although by the 1820’s some had actually begun to own property. For a brief period of time in their history, the Doukhobors appeared to be successful and free from persecution and interference, that is, until the death of their leader.

When the charismatic leader passed away, the sect lost some of its cohesiveness and vision. With no obvious leader visible, some of the less disciplined Doukhobors began to drink heavily. Rumors leaked all the way to the tsarist government of drunkenness, orgies, tortures and even brutal murders. (Wright, 18-19). The Orthodox Church, long concerned at the power this heretical sect might eventually wield over the people, jumped at this opportunity for the government to reinstate their investigations. How does a pacifist sect of teetotalers degenerate so quickly? What happened to these previously peaceful, simple people? It is impossible to gauge the validity of the government’s findings so long after the fact. It seems likely that a few of the sect’s members, for one reason or another, turned violent, unfortunately maligning the genuine faith of the majority of the Doukhobors. Woodcock quotes Koozma J. Tarasoff’s typical, yet credible Doukhobor response. “Even when certain criminals are found within the Doukhobor community, was it justifiable to condemn the whole group?” (Woodcock, 60).

The validity of the tsarist authorities’ findings is further brought into question since the group was charged with no criminal activities, other than with heresy against the Russian Orthodox Church and refusal to submit to its authority. Thus, forty years after enjoying the “balmy” climate of the Milky Waters as their home, the Doukhobors experienced their second migration since achieving citizenship and growth into a successfully organized sect. This time, in 1839, the migration to the Wet Mountains (Мокрые горы) of Transcaucasia was forced. Between 1839 and 1843 more than 4,000 Doukhobors were transported from the Milky Waters to the Wet Mountains region. Only a handful of people would succumb to the authorities’ wishes, profess the Russian Orthodox faith, and remain in their former homes (Wright, 19). The government was most likely hoping the troublesome, pacifist sect, whom they feared would try to proselytize among their own Orthodox, would eventually be annihilated midst Tatars, Turks and other local warring and nomadic tribes (Tarasoff 1995, 20). They, however, not only survived but proved to be an inimitable force, expanding and converting even among the Cossacks of the area.

¹⁹ in Woodsworth 1999, ‘Brief Outline of the subsequent history of the Doukhobor sect’.

1.2 FROM “ACCOMODATIONIST DOUKHOBOR” TO “DISSENTING SECTARIAN”²⁰

Although the climate and land of Transcaucasia were far from ideal, the Doukhobors did much to impress their new neighbors in quickly transforming the grasslands by successfully growing various flourishing crops, and gradually collecting livestock. By the mid to late 1840's the new orphanage, Сиротский дом was built in Tbilisi province and functioning much as the previous one had. The Сиротский дом eventually created a lucrative bank account under the Tbilisi peasant mutual agricultural bank, “Тифлиского крестьянского взаимного сельскохозяйственного банка” (Klibanov 1965, 99).

The Doukhobors were still, however, deprived of a leader. Savelii Kapustin's son, Vasili Kalmykov²¹ had died before the migration and his grandson Illarion had died shortly thereafter. From then on Illarion's son, Petr Kalmykov grew up in the Сиротский дом “under the watchful eye of the council of ruling elders” (Peacock, 9). The council of elders acted as a collective interim leader. The institution was held intact, eventually serving as financial and economic advisers.

When he came of age and, according to their beliefs, the resurrected spirit of Christ entered him, Petr Kalmykov stepped in as the next leader of the Doukhobors. Kalmykov was a pitiful spiritual leader. He drank heavily, led a life of sexual promiscuity and lived largely for himself. Although he and his young wife had no children, no obvious heirs to take over as theocratic ruler, Kalmykov's sudden death at the early age of twenty-eight, came more as a relief. Kalmykov, when still in his early twenties, had married Luker'ia Gubanova, considered to be the most beautiful girl of Doukhaboriia, and in 1864 Luker'ia Kalmykova ably stepped in as the first female leader of her people.

1.2a Luker'ia Kalmykova

While Luker'ia, “Лукашечка” to all who loved her, had not the theological aptitude of her predecessors, she compensated for it in other ways. Doukhaboriia became both spiritually disciplined and financially successful under her care. She was known to be witty and charming, compassionate, yet firm. The people admired her shrewd administrative skills and her Solomon-like wisdom in dealing with the everyday troubles of the people. Possibly in response to her poor marriage, or perhaps because Luker'ia cared for her people's safety, the new leader would take it upon herself to punish any wayward actions. It is said she particularly had no patience with drunkards and wife-beaters. The Doukhabor historian S.F. Rybin tells how Luker'ia Kalmykova, “заставляла

²⁰ taken from Nicholas B. Breyfogle's typology in his article, “Building Doukhaboriia: Religious Culture, Social Identity and Russian Colonization in Transcaucasia, 1845-1895.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, 1995).

²¹ Vasili took the surname Kalmykov from his maternal grandparents by whom he was raised.

молодых ребят пороть пьяниц розгами перед публикой и приговаривала: 'Не слушаете духу, то послушаете обуху'" (7).

Practicality and affection were the trademarks of Luker'ia Kalmykova's rule. Her friendly nature, combined with her reasonableness, worked together to diminish significantly the belief in the divine incarnation of Christ. Although the years of her rule were unprolific in terms of new Doukhobor psalms or hymns, they were among the happiest in Doukhobor history. Kalmykova fought diligently, however, for these years of quietude and for the authorities' temporary, albeit thoroughly, laissez-faire attitude toward Doukhobor conscription. By living unobtrusively, the Doukhobors worked hard at placating the tsarist government's irritation toward them. Luker'ia, on the other hand, was gifted in diplomacy. Her energy was spent in keeping the outside world at arm's length from Doukhoboriia. By the mid 1870's, however, the threats and attempts at conscripting Doukhobors began to make her uneasy. In 1878, in the midst of the Russo-Turkish war, she was finally forced to make the most difficult decision of her years as Doukhobor leader. Luker'ia struck a deal with the Russian authorities, bending the Doukhobor rules of pacifism, and in taking advantage of her excellent diplomacy and previously established relationship with the governor of the Caucasus. She promised on behalf of the Doukhobors, that her people would provide horses and food supplies to the Cossack armies, as long as the Doukhobors were exempt from active combat (Peacock, 10). This compromise and accommodation to the state authorities was exactly what was needed if the Doukhobors were to remain unhampered in their daily lives.

Unfortunately, success was to be short lived. Conscription was apparently inevitable, and just a few years after her death in 1886, the Doukhobors were forced either to relent and serve in the tsar's army, or to endure persecution, imprisonment and exile. History reveals, that at the time, there were both Doukhobor prisoners as well as soldiers.

1.2b Petr Vasil'evich Verigin

Years before Luker'ia Kalmykova's death, however, a young, arrogant and idealistic Doukhobor caught her attention. Petr Vasil'evich Verigin's mother was the granddaughter of Savelii Kapustin. As young Petr was growing up, his mother educated him well in the Doukhobor faith. Already as a young man he was able to sing a phenomenal number of Doukhobor psalms, so that it was said that the spirit of his great grandfather was in him. Although Petr was already married with an infant son,²² Lukeria divorced Petr from his wife, Evdokiia and moved Petr into the house with her to be trained as the next spiritual leader.

²² Petr Petrovich Verigin would eventually be brought over from Russia to Canada to lead the Canadian Doukhobors. His rule was disastrous, as he lived the life of a reprobate, placing the Doukhobors in an extremely awkward situation with the Canadian authorities.

Once more the Doukhobors experienced controversy, rather than accord, in accepting their designated leader. Those predominantly concerned with monetary issues sided with Mikhail Gubanov (Luker'ia's brother) and Alex Zubkov, claiming Verigin was not in line of ascendancy to the Doukhobor "throne" (Woodcock, 78). Gubanov-Zubkov supporters made extreme compromises in their faith, even to the point of volunteering for military service. To complicate matters further, Verigin's mother professed that Petr's true biological father was the morally loose Peter Kalmykov. While this piece of sensationalism had scandalous implications, the majority, whether they believed it or not, took in this revelation as proof of Verigin's divine right to leadership. Clearly the matriarch's shocking news was concocted solely to establish him legitimately as leader, for there was no evidence supporting her claim (Woodcock, 82).

Verigin was not among his people for long. Because of fear of governmental interference and the internal leadership disputes, Verigin covered his assumed authority, and indeed, the entire Doukhobor faith in a blanket of secrecy. This only increased the authorities' suspicion of the evasive cult. Petr was soon arrested and subsequently exiled to Shenkursk, and finally to house arrest in Siberia.

While Petr was still in Shenkursk he was able to communicate regularly through letters and an occasional visit with his followers. In this way, he was still able to exercise his influence as leader. In 1893, Verigin first became acquainted with Tolstoy's writings secondhand through fellow exiles, as well as from books published by Posrednik (Wright, 63), and eventually began passing the writer's ethical teachings off as his own. Verigin was enthusiastic to find such edifying material and beliefs so similar to his own. While he spent long periods of time reading and hosting dinner parties for the hungry and needy, the remaining Doukhobors were left to live out their pacifist and agrarian ideals as best they knew how, given the increasingly hostile stance against them. The authorities were exiling them more and more, and they were constantly being faced with the choice between conscription and persecution. Unfortunately, a substantial number of them opted to submit to the conscription. Difficulties with the authorities, meshed together with the Doukhobors' economic success, became disconcerting and demanded they "challenge notions of what was a 'Doukhobor,' especially in terms of human equality, aid to poorer members of the community and, broadly speaking, morality. Seeds of social and spiritual conflict were planted there that blossomed in the 1890's" (Breyfogle, 34). As times were growing steadily worse for his people, Verigin sent a warning to his people through his brother-in-law, Ivan Konkin. He admonished the people to redistribute the wealth more evenly among them, to realize more fully the concept of Christian brotherhood. A letter from the summer of 1895 instructed against the use of tobacco, alcohol and the eating of meat; he likewise discouraged sexual relations while his followers were subjected to severe trials, "подвергнуты жестоким испытаниям" (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 13). J.F.C.

Wright, in *Slava Bohu*, comments on the difficulties in striving to live in such an extremely chaste and moral manner: “The powerful philosophizing of Tolstoy helped Verigin to decide how to live his life, and he promptly decided for his followers who, unlike himself, were not living in semi-monastic isolation” (69). The Doukhobors were seeing a leader of high ideals and expectations emerging, although he was still far from them. In fact, it would be a decade later and in another continent before his followers were to lay eyes on him again. By that time, however, much of the spell in the belief of a divine leader would have faded. When the middle aged Verigin met up with them in the heart of Canada, he had retained his charisma and definitive authority as their leader, but, in the eyes of the people, divinity had eluded him.

29 June 1895, Verigin celebrated his name day and his thirty-sixth birthday while in Siberian exile. This date, however, remains as unarguably one of the most important dates of Doukhobor history. It represents the culmination of the “seeds of social and spiritual conflict” and sees them reaching maturity. It is the year of the Burning of Arms. As Josh Sanborn points out in his article “Pacifist Politics and Peasant Politics: Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, 1895-1899,” the Burning of Arms was a carefully choreographed and well-executed protest against war and violence in general. Verigin had created the primary idea of this event a year previously, in 1894. Although he would not be physically involved, he meticulously instructed his followers in how to carry out these protests and demonstrations, starting in Bogdanovka,²³ then in Elizavetopol and Kars. (Sanborn, 62). Verigin chose the day due to its personal significance, but he also wanted to take advantage of the symbolism involved in Easter Sunday, a beautiful metaphor of renewed life not to be overlooked by the Doukhobor faithful. Matvei Lebedev and ten others led the first group in Bogdanovka in collecting firearms. All the privately-owned weapons previously used for hunting or protecting life and property were gathered in a large bonfire, fuelled with sun-dried manure bricks (Tarasoff 1995, 8). As the weapons burned, the Doukhobors sang psalms, little realizing the horror that was shortly to come. While they stood watching the burning weapons, the Doukhobors believed they were participating in the fulfillment of the biblical prophecy, “a literal conversion of swords into ploughshares” (Tarasoff 1995, 8).²⁴ This Old Testament verse has been often quoted in regard to the Doukhobor belief in pacifism, and, more specifically, in connection with the Burning of Arms. Whether or not the Burning of Arms was an intricately orchestrated protest, or whether or not the Doukhobors spontaneously destroyed their weapons as a symbol of pacifism, is immaterial to appreciating their convictions. Although the

²³ present day Dzavakhetiia, Georgia.

²⁴ from Isaiah 2:4, “He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”

demonstration deserves to be commended as an act of bravery and conscience, perceiving it in such poetic terms, that is as a “*literal* conversion of swords into ploughshares,’ would be naive and even unfair, trivializing the Doukhobors’ ultimate aim of true world peace. When the Doukhobor “Small Party” (i.e. those who had earlier sided with Gubanov and Zubkov) heard of their plans, wishing to slander them, they informed the authorities that there were plans for an uprising (Chertkov, 4). This malicious intent resulted in a great amount of pain, torture, rape and brutality for the Doukhobors. The Cossacks rushed on the singing groups indiscriminately flailing and beating as they rode. To commemorate the misery and courage of the Doukhobors, Peter E. Diachkoff, who had himself participated in the 1895 event, wrote the hymn “Вспомним братья, мы всю стражду” in the early 1900’s.

Вспомним братья, мы всю стражду
За что бросили дом;
Нас изгнали ведь за правду,
Мы страдалцы за Христа.

Мы познали путь Господний
И всемирную любовь,
И за правду, за свободу
Проливали свою кровь.

Наш Христос Душеспаситель,
Он путь жизни нам открыл,
И Своею крестной смертью
Закон Божий утвердил.

И любовью вдохновляя,
Он велел врагов любить.
Мы оружие побросали,
Чтоб убийцами не быть.

Взявший меч погибнет всякий,
Миру Он всему сказал.
Кто же слов Его не слушал,
Меч убийства в руки взял.

Мы же словом дорожили,
Чтоб убийства нам избежать:
Ружья мы в костер сложили,
Ночью в поле стали жечь.

Пламя ружья пожирало
И клубился дым столбом.
Ружья там, в огне стреляли,
Издавая звук кругом.

Братья, сестры собирались,
Пели Господу мольбу.
Вдруг казаки показались -
Приготовились к бою.

Сотня целая казаков
Быстро скачет к нам сюда;
Сотник Прага, как разбойник,
Закричал войскам: "Ура!"

Словно буря урагана
Налетела на людей,
Потоптать хотел нас Прага
Копытами лошадей.

Сыпались на нас удары,
Только слышно свист плетей.
Кровью все мы обливались,
Становились все тесней...

Нас избитыми погнали
Губернатора встречать.
Мы же шапок не снимали
И не стали величать.

Все оружие сгорело,
Только в память осталось:
Ружья, шашки, все что было -
В одну груду все слилось.

И в войсках служить не стали
Кто тогда солдатом был,
Всех их в тюрьмах истязали
И сослали всех в Сибирь.

А по селам в наказание
Власти ставили надзор:
И что делали казаки -
Не расскажешь весь позор...

Мы во кротости, в смиреньи
Положили злу конец,
И живем теперь в моленьи,
Христос наш Царь, Бог - Отец. (Peacock, 82-83).

This one event caught the attention of some of Tolstoy's most prestigious friends and disciples. Vladimir G. Chertkov penned *Christian Martyrdom in Russia* while in exile in England as an attempt to accrue international sympathy and funds for his friends. Possibly because he himself was of the aristocracy, and possibly because he did not wish to be interpreted as bitter or to unduly irritate the Russian authorities, he writes a peculiarly soft accusation against the Doukhobors' offenders. "It cannot be," writes Chertkov with apparent naiveté, "that the Russian authorities really desire to exterminate these people by the inexorable demand and the ceaseless persecution and torture of them on this account. There is probably here some misunderstanding" (Chertkov, 6-7).

This demonstration of the Doukhobor belief in pacifism transformed a relatively quiet, appeasing group into dissenting sectarians. They demanded to be heard. Although they most likely did not realize how far their voices carried from their bonfires, the international community soon learned of their faith and their deeds. "The Doukhobor uprising gave tremendous hope to pacifists around the world... The Doukhobors made Christian pacifists think their dreams were not utopian" (Sanborn in Tarasoff 1995, 66).

The next few years after the Burning of Arms were among the most difficult for the Doukhobors. Again the authorities planned to exterminate, or at least to exile them (this time in the Batum region) and shut them off from any communication with the outside world (Maude 1904, 34). By 1896, out of fear for their lives and concern for their survival, the Doukhobors were already considering emigrating to any new welcoming land. They longed for a place where they might live out their philosophy, труд и мирная жизнь, where they could live in Christian brotherhood, unencumbered by governmental authorities or outside forces. With the help primarily of Lev Tolstoy, but also of both the English and American Quakers, Vladimir G. Chertkov, Ivan M. Tregubov, Pavel Biriukov, Aylmer Maude, Leopold Sulerzhitsky and Tolstoy's son Sergei, with of course many others, groups of Doukhobors set sail for Canada between the years 1898 and 1904.

Finally released from prison in 1902, Petr Vasil'evich Verigin arrived in Canada to resume his role as spiritual and social leader of the Doukhobors. Verigin remained living in Canada until his untimely death in 1924. As he was traveling between Brilliant and Grand Forks, British Columbia while surveying communal lands for possible purchase, his train car suddenly exploded, killing Verigin, and eight others. It has been speculated for decades that he was assassinated by a Soviet spy or sympathizer, or by a member of the Sons of Freedom (свободники), a rival faction of the mainstream Doukhobors. Others

have intimated that the Canadian authorities were involved, that he committed suicide, or even seemingly the most logical of the theories, that an old train car with gas lighting and heating accidentally exploded while in the mountains (Rybin, 235-236). Peter N. Maloff lends a mystical feel to the historical event by depicting Verigin as a Christ figure at the time of his death. Clearly, Maloff wishes the reader to be convinced that Verigin, aware of his eminent death, relents, boards the train, and becomes as a “lamb led to the slaughter.” Days before his journey, Verigin gathers his closest friends together for a meal. As the leader pours a glass of fruit juice, he says, “Сегодня у нас будет тайная вечера, такая была у Христа...мы сделаем такой же пример как Христос.” Despite prophetic warnings from fellow believers, Verigin, nevertheless, embarked upon his journey 28 October 1924. As they were pulling out of Grand Forks, Verigin heard the train whistle blow, and turning to his traveling companions, said, “Ну братья, прощайте и простите меня, - едем в дальний путь” (Maloff, 146-147). Given the folkloric emphasis of the history, these details appear to be merely literary devices included in order to depict the God-man mythology. In any case, the matter remains unsubstantiated. “Verigin was killed not by a villain’s will,” wrote the Doukhobor F.I. Vishlov to Bonch-Bruevich in 1927, “but he perished as a sacrifice for repeating the teachings of Jesus Christ through actions and proclaimed the second coming” (Inikova 1999a, 101)²⁵ Curiously enough, the Doukhobors at the time of Verigin’s death juxtaposed the image of the crucified Christ as the holy scapegoat with the recent memory of Petr Vail’evich Verigin’s alleged assassination. They, thus, recreated Verigin’s death into the image of a holy martyr and a second Christ. The peculiar quote above by Vishlov is indicative not only of the reverence some still held toward the Doukhobor line of leadership, but also of the Doukhobor reliance on suffering as a proof of spirituality. A line from the Doukhobor catechism, “Где вы идете?” embodies this latter principle.

-За что вас гонять?

-За слово Божье, за свидетельство Иисуса Христа и за правду Его (Bonch- Bruevich 1901b, 30).

If Verigin truly died at the hands of terrorists and murderers, in some curious way, Vishlov, distorting the idea of a sacrifice, was able to perceive his death with some sense of comfort as an eternal example of a divine life. This interpretation of events would have given their beliefs and lifestyle a sense of even greater legitimacy.

Verigin remains the most influential, respected and beloved of Doukhobor leaders. As Kapustin is remembered for his legacy of psalms, Kalmykova for her years of peaceful service and affection, Petr V. Verigin will be embraced in the eternal memory of the

²⁵ quoted from the State Museum of History and Religion, in St. Petersburg (SMHR). Fo 2, inv. 7. F.35, p.4.

Doukhobors for his incredible vision of Christian communism and for his leadership during the course of the Doukhobor migration to Canada.

1.2 A JOURNEY TO CANADA

Directly after the Burning of Arms incident which catapulted the obscure sect into international recognition, the Doukhobors were scattered, some in exile in the Batum region of Siberia, and the remainder residing largely in Transcaucasia in communities in Kars, Elizavetopol and Tbilisi regions. This fame and recognition, however, came at a price. Not only did their unified pacifist stance earn them the admiration of many like-minded groups and individuals overseas, but it also served to incriminate them in the eyes of the tsarist officials. They had once again become enemies of the state. Mavor writes in his historical travelogue that, “the pilgrimage [to Canada] did not originate exclusively in religious excitement, but largely in a feeling that the climate was too severe for the people and *that if they made a demonstration the government would remove them to a milder region*” (15). This certainly attributes much more political cunning to the Doukhobors than might traditionally be expected. It will later be shown that Verigin himself, was not, by any means, politically ignorant or inept. However, Mavor does not intend to ignore religious issues, or other concerns, such as the physical well-being of the members, which might have likewise compelled the Doukhobors to seek emigration. The Doukhobors were, namely, suffering from a “feverish yellowness and paleness” due to the extreme heat of the Caucasus (Cherkov, 61).

The Burning of Arms inspired many Doukhobors to muster the courage to refuse military service. It also sparked a fresh series of exiles and persecutions. In response to the Doukhobors’ complaints of the rapes committed by Cossack officers on the night of 29 June 1895, the Police Chief Markarov dismissed them saying, “Since the Doukhobors do not wish to obey the government, complaints from them will not be heard” (Woodsworth 1999, 50)²⁶ Fry strangely argues that no particularly severe depredations or threats of persecutions occurred against the Doukhobors in the Caucasus other than the night of 29 June 1895, and that the English publication articles were probably grossly exaggerated (393). Chertkov, admittedly, wrote his *Christian Martyrdom in Russia* with a bit of an excessive flourish. However, it is difficult to belittle the Doukhobor’s plight after reading some of their own accounts, as well as the allegedly objective police documents. In the months immediately following the anti-weapons demonstration, eighty-three Doukhobors were arrested for returning conscription cards and thirty-four were regarded as “the most guilty” for maligning the Tsar’s name, calling him a murderer who sends the people to

²⁶ in Woodsworth 1999, “Events of 1895.” Undated and expanded. (Typescript. 11 pp./6L.). Case 1053 L. 046-051r [Document #1895-11-01g]

shed blood (Woodsworth 1999, 50).²⁷ It was soon after this that many of the mass exiles to Siberia began, and continued on into 1898, when Doukhobor Vasia Pozdniakov was exiled to Yakutsk. In his article “Правда о духоборцах в Закавказье и в Сибири,” Pozdniakov discusses the two reasons the majority of the Doukhobors refused to serve in the army. Although it may have appeared the Doukhobors were unified, they were, in actuality, split into two ways of thinking,

одни из них хотели отказаться от убийства потому, что они сами сознавали, что убийство противно закону любви и совести. Они укрепляли свои убеждения учением Христа...Они решили лучше помереть за отказ от убийства, чем идти убивать других и самому быть убитому на поле битвы. А вторые хотели отказаться от службы для того, чтобы исполнить приказание Веригина (Golinenko, 199).²⁸

After all it was Verigin who had contrived the entire demonstrations and had returned his people to vegetarianism and pacifism. For the majority of Doukhobors, however, as for Tolstoy, the life of the individual paled in comparison to maintaining the moral and ethical stance, particularly in the face of adversity and danger. For these exiled Doukhobors insult was often added to injury when prison guards would feed them only meat and water; very rarely would they receive a crust of bread. According to Pozdniakov, however, none of the Doukhobors transgressed against their vegetarian convictions. Like the biblical Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego they refrained from meat,²⁹ but unlike their Hebrew ancestors, according to Doukhobor mythology, they merely grew weaker from lack of nourishment (Golinenko, 200, 202).

James Mavor, professor of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, writes in a letter of October 1898. “The circumstance that in a few months a number of their young men will fall to be drawn for military service, and the fear that the permission granted by the Czar to leave the country may be withdrawn, coupled with the dread of a return to active persecution, are the chief impulses which impel them to seek another country at all hazards of suffering from inadequate shelter in an inclement weather” (Brock, 452).

²⁷ ibid

²⁸ emphasis mine

²⁹ Daniel 1:11-16

1.3a Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans

As will be discussed in chapter three “Tolstoy as a Religious Thinker,” Tolstoy vehemently opposed even the existence of the state system. He interpreted, according to his theology and moral philosophy, the simplicity of the peasants’ lifestyle as synonymous with the divine calling to peace and heavenly wisdom. Since Tolstoy remained convinced that “the contradiction between the corruption and violence of the upper classes and the innate morality and nonviolence of the lower classes would inevitably produce a nonviolent revolution that would bring about the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth,” it is little wonder that Tolstoy, elated by the news of the Burning of the Arms, rushed to the Doukhobors’ aid (Sanborn, 59).

Verigin in 1897 writes to the Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna from exile in Obdorsk in an attempt to free his people from persecution and grant them permission to emigrate. The fact that Verigin addresses his petition to the Empress and not to her ruling husband is intriguing in and of itself. However, Verigin proves himself to be a man of political and psychological cunning as he focuses on the two areas that would most likely appeal to her emotionally, and they are, the plight of women and the spiritual tribulations of Russian laborers.

Господь Бог да хранит твою душу, как в сей жизни, так и в будущем веке.

Сестра Александра! Я раб Иисуса Христа, живу в послании и благоденствии Его истины. Нахожусь в ссылке с 1886-го года из Закавказья, духоборческой общины. Слово духоборец нужно понимать,- что мы в духе и душою исповедуем Бога: Сие из Евангелия (встреча с Самарянкой у колодца).

Умоляю тебя во Христе-Господе, сестра Александра, упроси супруга своего Николая пощадить от гонения христиан на Кавказе. Я обращаюсь к тебе потому, думаю, твое сердце обращено более к Господу Богу. Там же сейчас более страдают дети и женщины. Сотни мужей и родителей заключены в тюрьмы, и тысячи семей разосланы по горским аулам, где властями внушается жителям обращаться грубо; в особенности на женщинах-христианках это отражается тяжело. Недавно стали садить и женщин от детей в замки. Вина с нашей стороны та, что мы по возможности стараемся стать христианами, в некоторых поступках может и недоумеваем. Тебе, вероятно, известно учение вегетарианства. Мы сторонники этих гуманитарных взглядов и недавно оставили употреблять в пищу мясо и пить вино и

много такого, что ведет к развратной жизни и затмевает светлость души человека - не убивать животных. Мы человека лишать жизни ни в коем случае считаем невозможным: убивая человека, даже хотя бы и разбойника, нам кажется, что мы решаемся убить Христа. и вот в этом главная причина. Государство требует от наших братьев обучаться приемам ружья, чтобы хорошо обучиться к убийству; христиане на это не соглашаются, и их сажают в тюрьмы, бьют и морят голодом, а над сестрами и матерями грубо поношаются, как над женщинами. Очень часто там же с насмешками взывают: где же ваш Бог? Почему он вас не спасает? Бог же наш на небесах и на земле и творит Он все, что хочет (псалмы Давида 113 и 134). Сие печально более потому, что это все происходит в христианской стране. Община наша на Кавказе состоит из около 20000 человек. Неужели такое малое количество может оказать вред государственному организму, если с них не брали бы солдат? Сейчас, хотя и берут, но бесполезно, 30 человек находятся в екатериноградской крепости в дисциплинарном батальоне, где над ними только производят пытку. Человека мы считаем храмом для Бога живого, и готовиться к убийству его ни в коем случае не можем, хотя бы за это нам угрожали смертью. Самое удобное - поселить нас в отдаленном местечке, где мы и жили бы покойно, занимались бы трудом. Все государственные повинности в форме податей мы вносим, только не можем быть солдатами. Если на это правительство сочло бы невозможным согласиться, то пусть бы дало нам право выселиться в одно из европейских государств. Мы охотно пошли бы в Англию или, самое удобное, в Америку, где массу имеем братьев в Господе Иисусе Христе.

От полной души прошу Господа о благоденствии Вашего семейства.

Раб Христа Петр Васильевич Веригин (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 89-91).

The Doukhobors were granted permission to emigrate at their own expense on 31 December 1897.

Inikova has gleaned from the archives of Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruevich a few substantive reasons why Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans would have been so attracted to the Doukhobors. First, whereas they may not have been as ideologically linked as Tolstoy imagined, he did see the Doukhobors sharing identical beliefs in their conception of God and man's purpose. Second, the Doukhobors had, according to the Tolstoyans, "resolved the contradictoriness between the social organization which was the commune and

personal freedom of its members” (Inikova 1999a, 74). For Tolstoy this meant that the Doukhobors had proven the state system obsolete. Third, as fellow Christians, Tolstoy and his followers desired to help the Doukhobors out of simple, human compassion (Inikova 1999a, 74-75).³⁰ Above all, it was most probably human compassion which fuelled the unwavering support of the Tolstoyans and others.

Pavel Biriukov, arguably the most devout and idealistic of Tolstoy’s disciples, was not even immune to the slander and bias of the previous media coverage on the Doukhobors. In his confessions, “Мое Первое знакомство с духоборцами,” he admits to believing the Doukhobors to be “из наиболее суеверных, грубых и вредных” (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 159). Having previously made contact with the sect, Prince Dmitrii Khilkov escorted Lev N. Tolstoy and a group of Tolstoyans, including Biriukov, to Siberia to make the acquaintance of certain Doukhobors. The group met Verigin’s brother, Vasilii Vasil’evich Verigin and two more Doukhobors, Vasilii Gavrilovich Vereshchagin and Vasilii Ivanovich Ob”edkov in the local hotel “Peterburg.” According to Biriukov’s report, all in the party were eager to meet them, including Tolstoy, who as yet knew little about the “heretical” sect other than the fact that they adhered to pacifism (160). Although Biriukov admits that the Doukhobors invariably answered in strict agreement to all questions Tolstoy put to them, and although any direct questions as to their religion were answered with some sort of mysteriousness “с какою-то таинственностью,” the meeting seemed to confirm to the Tolstoyans the worth and singularity of the Doukhobor people (162). Few others would equal the level of enthusiasm and praise that Biriukov would eventually express for the Doukhobors. “Никому из нас ни раньше, ни после – не приходилось встречать подобных людей вне духоборческой среды” (161).

If those who came to the Doukhobor aid (e.g. the Quakers, the Tolstoyans and even Tolstoy himself) had given identical ideologies as stipulations for receiving aid, the Doukhobors would eventually have been in dire straits. As Aylmer Maude, James Mavor and Sergei L. Tolstoy³¹ can all testify, the Doukhobors frustrated, and at times disappointed the Tolstoyans. However, human compassion was, indeed in play, as Aylmer Maude beautifully illustrates as he speaks of the Doukhobors. “They are men with human limitations and deficiencies, and not the plaster saints that I had supposed after reading the literature published about them. Being men, they are much more interesting and better worth helping. Had they been saints, it would have seemed almost a pity to prevent their being martyrs also” (Chertkov, 73).

³⁰ SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 257, 412, 756; Manuscript Section of the Russian State Library in Moscow (MS RSL), Fo. 369, K. 43, f.1, pp. 792-793, 830-844).

³¹ see *A Peculiar People*, *My Windows on the Street of the World*, and *Дневник С.Л. Толстого*, respectively.

Tolstoy enlisted the help of his three closest disciples Vladimir G. Chertkov, Pavel I. Biriukov and Ivan M. Tregubov, who in 1896 penned and published *Помогите!* (*Help!*) in hopes of accruing both sympathy and financial support for the Doukhobors. They were successful. By 1897 Tolstoy and his followers were already working on the details of the Doukhobor migration. Both English and American Quakers contributed both financial and organizational support toward the sect's exodus. By 1898 Tolstoy had decided to publish his *Воскресение* and reverse his personal rule in refusing royalties from his works. He collected the profits and turned them over for the passage and re-settlement of the Doukhobor people (Klibanov 1965, 113).

Due to the constant fear of persecution and the authorities' refusal to recognize pacifist beliefs, the Doukhobors began to consider relocation to foreign lands. They had heard from certain Tolstoyans that Turkey, Chinese Manchuria, Texas, Cyprus, or the Hawaiian islands might be the promised land, that in one of these new locations they might truly live out their simple philosophy of "труд и мирная жизнь," unfettered by government intervention (Woodcock, 119). Initially Chinese Manchuria seemed to be the most viable option almost exclusively for its geographic proximity. Problems arose slowly with each of these lands. Arkansas arose briefly as a possibility, but its mountainous terrain made it seem an unlikely location for agrarian vegetarians (Donskov 1998, 56). Life on Cyprus was attempted, but culminated in agricultural failure, sickness and death of many of their members (Woodcock, 129).

Prince Khilkov, a Tolstoyan who had sold his land to the peasants and had recently taken a great interest in Russian pacifist sects, (Etkind, 637) had volunteered his time and influence in helping the Doukhobors to relocate. S.L. Tolstoy described the prince as "не очень деликатный человек," (Donskov 1998, 18) and it seemed he eventually showed little ability in negotiating with the Canadian authorities. Prince Petr Kropotkin, who had observed successful Mennonite settlements in Canada on his 1897 travels, first suggested the North American country. Khilkov, then, went over with the first reconnaissance group in October 1898 along with Aylmer Maude, and located the first plots of land for Doukhobor settlements (Inikova 1999a, 47).³² Khilkov is primarily blamed for not adequately researching into how the Canadian government dealt with land purchases. This eventually caused difficulties for the early settlers. On reaching the Canadian shores, the Doukhobors were stunned to discover the Canadian government would expect them individually to purchase land as private property, rather than communally as they had been accustomed to back in Russia. Although under the 1870s Dominion Land Act the Doukhobors were permitted to work the land communally, they were required to sign individual property rights on a 160-acre homestead, allocated to each

³² SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 933

Doukhobor (Wright, 111). While the Doukhobors could have most likely reconciled themselves to this, a deeper, more spiritually personal issue cut them to the quick. The Canadian government expected each immigrant homesteader to take the oath of allegiance to the Queen. Ironically, one of the major contentions between the sect members and the tsarist authorities was what the Canadians, who claimed a land of religious freedom, were demanding of them now. "It thus seems probable that nobody at the time even thought of mentioning what was later to become one of the most important causes of controversy between Doukhobors and other Canadians" (Woodcock, 134). As the problem was only exacerbated by the Doukhobors' determination, Verigin, in 1907, spoke on behalf of the Doukhobor people, expressing his own exasperation,

Is it possible that you did not know why the incident [the loss of their lands in Russia] has taken place between us and the Russian government and why we left our country and migrated to your country, Canada? This happened only because we did not choose to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas Aleksandrovitch (Tracie, 5).³³

Aleksandr M. Bodiansky, whom the police authorities labelled a "Tolstoyan agitator," (Woodsworth 1999, 100)³⁴ became the Doukhobors' salvation for a time. He upheld the Tolstoyan principle that land belongs to God, and can, therefore, be neither bought nor sold. An unlikely hero in the Doukhobor estimation, Bodiansky was at times crass and bold in his actions. Although some Doukhobors would eventually take on private property, Bodiansky resolved the issue at the time using "strong agitation" with the Canadian government. (Mavor, 22-23). Although communalism had been an integral part of Doukhoborism, re-instigated through Verigin's teachings in the late 1880's and 1890's, the people had never been forced to deal with the issue outright, since they they had always lived on government land in Russia. Even though they were torn on how to resolve the land issue, the Doukhobors adhered to Bodiansky's proposal in purchasing the land as a group in order to avoid the weakening of the commune in the case individuals might eventually want to live on their own (Inikova 1999a, 55-57).³⁵ Even in the early months of settlement, the Doukhobors encountered such obstacles which threatened to undermine and divide them.

³³ a quote from the government of Canada in "Papers Relating to the Holding of Homestead Entries by Members of the Doukhobor Community" Ottawa: Government Print Bureau, 1907.

³⁴ Letter from Head of Civil Affairs in the Caucasus Senator Adjutant-Gen. Prince Golitsyn to minister of Internal Affairs [I.L. Goremykin]. 1[13]August 1898. No.691. 'Secret'. (Typescript, 8 pp./ 4 L.). Case 1053 L. 612-615. [Document #1895-08-01a]

³⁵ SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 775

When the Doukhobors left for Canada in 1898 and 1899, it marked a schism in the sect. Those who boarded the boats westward were for the most part, devoted to Verigin's leadership. Those who freely chose to remain behind in Russia, were either members of the previously factioned "Small Party," or individuals who had begun to question whether or not Verigin's doctrine had embarked upon extremism. This "new Doukhorism," then, was borne on the seas to the new land through the ascetic followers of Petr Vasil'evich Verigin's teachings. It was "the purified essence of Doukhorism distilled over the course of a turbulent century by dogged adherence to the simple credo 'Trud i mirnaia zhizn'" (Fry, 4).

1.3b Sergei Lvovich Tolstoy

Four boats set sail to carry the Doukhobors to Canada. The *S.S. Lake Huron* on 22 December 1898, the *S.S. Lake Superior* on 4 January 1899, and later the same year on 18 April, and finally the *S.S. Lake Huron* in one more voyage in the beginning of May 1899, all carried the Doukhobors to a new land. Out of approximately 7500 immigrants who boarded those ships seeking a life free of persecution and banishment, approximately twenty-one died and one was born at sea (Donskov 1998, 1).

Out of respect for his father and out of personal interest in the people as well, Sergei L'vovich Tolstoy took on the enormous task of traveling with the second boatload of immigrants, sailing from the port in Batumi, on the Black Sea to the eastern shore of Canada. Traveling on the *S.S. Lake Superior*, Sergei Tolstoy docked in the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia on 27 January 1899, and with the Doukhobors, covered the vast spaces to Toronto and Winnipeg and on to the Canadian prairies. He acted as their translator and coordinator. His journal written on the way to Canada acts to humanize the Doukhobors as no other piece of literature written about them or by them has done. From his entries written over a period of five months, we can readily see their faith and vision, their suspicion and frailty. S.L. Tolstoy speaks of their monotonous and drawn out psalms, "однообразные протяжные псалмы" (Donskov 1998, 66) when the previous day he had just been delighted to see "молодые подростки, у них открытые, здоровые лица" (Donskov 1998, 65). Perhaps despite the fact that he was L.N. Tolstoy's son, a more evenhanded, impartial and reasonable man could not have been found. His objectivity extends to his actual treatment of the Doukhobors and is felt through his exacting written accounts, giving the reader an even more significant sample of history. S.L. Tolstoy "seems to walk a middle line between the customary idealisation of the Doukhobors by their supporters on the one hand and outright censure from their critics on the other, between his father's almost unequivocal praise for the sect and their official condemnation by the Church and the State" (Donskov 1998, 14).

Sergei Tolstoy was particularly impressed with the amiability and gentleness of these people. In his journal entry of 3 [15] December 1898 he makes a special effort in notating this. “Духоборы совсем особенный народ: за все время переезда и жизни их здесь, а первая партия здесь уже пятый день - ни одного недовольного или резкого слова, все идет в порядке и спокойно. А приехали с багажом и семьями, выгрузиться, разместиться, кормиться и т.д. двум тысячам не очень просто и легко” (Donskov 1998, 59).

S.L. Tolstoy was hardly a disengaged volunteer. He took every opportunity to have friendly chats with the immigrants of all ages, and soon became a trusted sympathizer, if not friend. Not affronted by their mysterious answers and secrecy, Sergei Tolstoy was not afraid to pry into their most sacred of realms: their view of Petr Vasil'evich Verigin. “Меня интересовало, за кого духоборы чтут Петра Веригина, и я спросил [Ваню] Подовольникова. Он сказал, что мы никак не чтим его, а почитаем его за разумного человека, за настоящего христианина... ни разу не слышал, чтобы они его назвали Богом, как говорят они его называют” (Donskov 1998, 79).

Both S.L. Tolstoy and the doctor on board, Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich's future wife, Vera Velichkina, spent time discussing the paranoia and suspiciousness of the Doukhobors toward any type of officials or regulations. Whereas Velichkina in her “С духоборами в Канаду (Мои воспоминания)” relates her experiences with slightly more irritation and in a less discriminating manner, Tolstoy provides the reader with quotes but few embellishments, leaving the work of interpretation to the reader, rather than taking it upon himself. Because a case of smallpox was found on the *S.S. Lake Superior*, the ship was quarantined at the port of Halifax for twenty-seven days. It was necessary to disinfect everything, including baggage which were labelled with bright red crosses (Woodsworth 1999, 182).³⁶ Unfortunately, the Doukhobors interpreted these crosses as iconic symbols and as an eerie instrument of Christ's execution. In perceiving these crosses as ill omens and as contrary to their iconoclastic beliefs, the Doukhobors grew extremely agitated, saying, “да нехорошо глядеть: сперва они навесят нам кресты, а потом напишут в газетах, что мы согласны принять эти самые кресты, а потом заставляют кланяться им.” Another fearful Doukhor moaned, “Мы ушли из наших райских мест от этих самых крестов, а теперь нас здесь опять заставляют кресты принимать” (Donskov 1998, 107). Although the Doukhobors eventually understood the necessity for these markings, and no longer perceived it as an attack on them, the upheaval concluded as one

³⁶ in Woodsworth 1999, Article from the paper *Русския Ведомости* of 26 May [8 June 1900] (№ 145) entitled ‘С духоборами в Канаду (Мои Воспоминания): II. В карантине.’ ‘From the Review of 27 May 1900, № 113. Article 2’ Signed: ‘V. Velichkina.’ (Print, 7 col./3pp./2 L.) Case 12.1. A L. 88—89r [Document #1900-1RV-f]

of the many incidents which widened the chasm between the Doukhobors and the outside world, regardless of continent or government.

Another example of misconceptions and distrust is portrayed in *Slava Bohu*, this time with a sense of irony and humor. As the new immigrants embark on their train journey westward toward Winnipeg, the Doukhobors and Canadians could be heard uttering the following uneducated phrases amongst themselves:

“Doukhobors – Look there are more of those *Anglichani* witht their fur coats on inside out, such ways of doing things...

‘Englishmen’ – Those Russians, Dook-ho-bors, wearing their coats inside out with the bare hide on the outside...

Doukhobors – Englishmen chewing tobacco and spoiling the white snow, spitting brown patches in it...

Canadians – Why don’t they shave off these mustaches which make them look like walruses...

Doukhobors – Are they Christians?

Canadians – Are they Christians?” (Wright, 131).

Sergei Tolstoy concludes his travel journal with the following words of esteem and praise for the Doukhobors:

Я счастлив тем, что почти полгода провел среди них и узнал их. И я не только не раскаиваюсь в том, что участвовал в их эмиграции, но я горжусь тем, что хоть немного содействовал ей. Жаль, что эти хорошие люди выбыли из России, но эмиграция их была необходима. Разумеется, первые годы их жизни в Канаде будут очень тяжелыми, но будущее их обеспечено (Donskov 1998, 142-143).

1.3c Early Settlers

The Doukhobors’ prosperity, however, was not to come easily. The first half of the twentieth century was full of trials and difficulties for the Doukhobors. Their eventual economic and social success in Canada, however, would be hard won. Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich has broken their early Canadian history down into four digestible segments.

1.) “From the immigration [1899] to the end of 1902 when Petr Verigin finally arrived in Canada from exile” (Inikova 1999a, 45). This was a particularly crucial period for the sect. Although the Doukhobors had grown accustomed to being physically distanced from their leader, the strains and problems of settling into a foreign land, where they could not even communicate, proved distressing. Acting in complete ignorance of the impending outcome and in complete disregard of any copyright infringement, Chertkov collected the correspondence from 1895 to 1900 between L. N. Tolstoy and P.V. Verigin,

published it in Russian and distributed it in Canada (Woodcock, 176). Until this time, the two men had enjoyed a correspondence characterized by a lack of inhibition to articulate even the most fanciful or radical ideas. Maude even wished for more Verigins in Tolstoy's life, believing it would have created a more balanced and reasonable aspect to Tolstoy's reactionist nature. "Reading these letters, one regrets that so many people (including myself) have often urged Tolstoy to be more moderate, and to recognise the good side of existing industry and institutions. Had he but been surrounded by people who...outran him in the adoption of extreme conclusions, we might have had from him...sound practical sense and...an appreciation of things as they are" (Maude 1911, 511). Maude was specifically referring to a letter of 14 October 1896 in which Tolstoy responds to Verigin's bizarre disavowal of metal production, literacy and books.

Плакаться же о том, что люди не могут теперь жить без орудий, как лесные звери, питаюсь плодами, все равно, что мне, старику, плакаться о том, что у меня нет зуб и черных волос и той силы, которая была в молодости. Мне надо не вставлять зубы и подкрашивать волосы и не делать гимнастики, а стараться жить так, как свойственно старику, ставя на первое место не дела мирские, а дело Божье – единения и любви допуская дела мирские только в той мер, в которой они не мешают делу Божьему. То же надо делать и человечеству в его теперешней поре жизни. Говорить же, что железные дороги, газ, электричество, книгопечатание вредны, потому что из-за них губятся людские жизни, все равно, что говорить, что пахать и сеять вредно только потому, что я не во-время вспахал поле, дал ему зарости, а потом посеял, не запахав, т.е. сделал раньше то, что следовало бы сделать после (Donskov 1995, 3/29).

This correspondence, which had disastrously been made public, had acted as a safe haven where one could voice whatever strange seeds of social philosophy were growing in their minds. Unfortunately, Chertkov deemed it of public concern and created not only another schism in the struggling sect, but also an excuse for the Canadian public to label them "zealots" and "fanatics." 1 August 1896 P.V. Verigin had written to Tolstoy,

Я иногда позволяю себе – идеализировать мысль свою в общем, не принимая в расчет времени и обстоятельств. – Оставление грамотности в наше время - и за скорый период, то есть моментально, равносильно тому, что если бы всех людей лишить обуви, или женщин современной жизни

лишить шляпок, уснащенных кружевами и перьями птиц... Я полагаю, что самый высокий культ эмансипированной женщины, если она не будет носить шляпки, мозги ее и мысль несколько от этого не пострадают. – Так и грамотность, это своего рода «мода времени»... Скажите пожалуйста, разумно ли трактовать о свободе писать целые томы, не подразумевая того, что чрез это самое писание я держу миллионы людей в подземных рудниках для добывания принадлежностей, с помощью которых осуществляется грамотность... Я считаю это все крупно незаконным. Без сему же подобной обстановки, грамотность, неосуществима (Donskov 1995, 2/16, 18-19).

Out of fanaticism and misunderstanding the “Sons of Freedom” (свободники) were born. The “свободники” began to protest the “decadent” lifestyle of Canadians and mainstream Doukhobors by conducting nude marches through towns. They freed “Brother Ox and Sister Cow,” not wanting to enslave any living creature. These acts greatly embarrassed the less zealous of the Doukhobors, who were hard pressed for decades to come to help outsiders differentiate between the factions. Once Verigin arrived in Canada, however, he did much to assuage the conflict, largely by ignoring the fanatic protests (Woodcock, 177, 181). In one dramatic instance, Verigin, despite the courts’ inclination to let them off with a mere warning, insisted on the arrest and conviction of four “crazy” Doukhobors who had burned down a piece of agricultural machinery in a protest. The court in Regina, Saskatchewan had no other option but to sentence them to three years of penal servitude. Again embarrassed and angered by the protests, Verigin refused to assume responsibility for the actions of the свободники, hoping this would distinguish the communal (общинники) from the “fanatics” (Mavor, 27-29).

2) “From 1903 to 1924 when P.V. Verigin was head of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood [CCUB]. The commune flourished at this time” (Inikova 1999a, 46). It became easier for the Doukhobors in Canada once they were able to place themselves unreservedly in Verigin’s hands and to rely on his organizational wisdom, as well as his burgeoning social and agricultural plans.

The difficulties which the early settlers during this period struggled with the most were the land act and local prejudices. Due to these innate prejudices and misconceptions, that is the idea that “the ideal immigrant ought to be of ‘pure’ English stock,” and the alleged lawlessness of the communal Doukhobors, in 1907 and more thoroughly in 1939 the Doukhobors lands were usurped from them by the Canadian government (Tarasoff 1995, 11). The authorities demanded they own property privately, and not be permitted to answer as a group. These demands, along with a Doukhobor group naming themselves единоличники (Independents) for their willingness to own property individually moving

westward from Saskatchewan to British Columbia, went a long way in tearing down the мир, the commune system the Doukhobors had known for centuries.

3.) "From 1925 to the late 1930's is a period of the rapidly progressing economic and moral decay of the commune" (Inikova 1999a, 46). This period marked the shocking death of their leader and the end of an ably and morally led people. Petr Petrovich Verigin, neglected for years by his father, was called eventually from Russia to lead the Canadian Doukhobors. This, however ended in disaster, for like Petr Kalmykov, P.P. Verigin was overly fond of drink and women. On multiple occasions he served only to shame and disgrace the people he came to lead, not to mention seriously damaging his father's hard-earned achievement.

Ironically, Petr Vasil'evich Verigin's son Petr Petrovich Verigin and his leadership dissolved the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood, one of the primary reasons for the Doukhobors initially immigrating to Canada. Instead the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC) was formed in 1938 and is now the largest Doukhobor fellowship (Inikova 1999a, 66-67). Although P.V. Verigin's dream was destroyed, the Doukhobors began to accentuate their common issues, which have particular relevance today, and define any modern Doukhobor: a belief in pacifism, internationalism, or universal brotherhood, and the ancient tenet of the divine spark within.

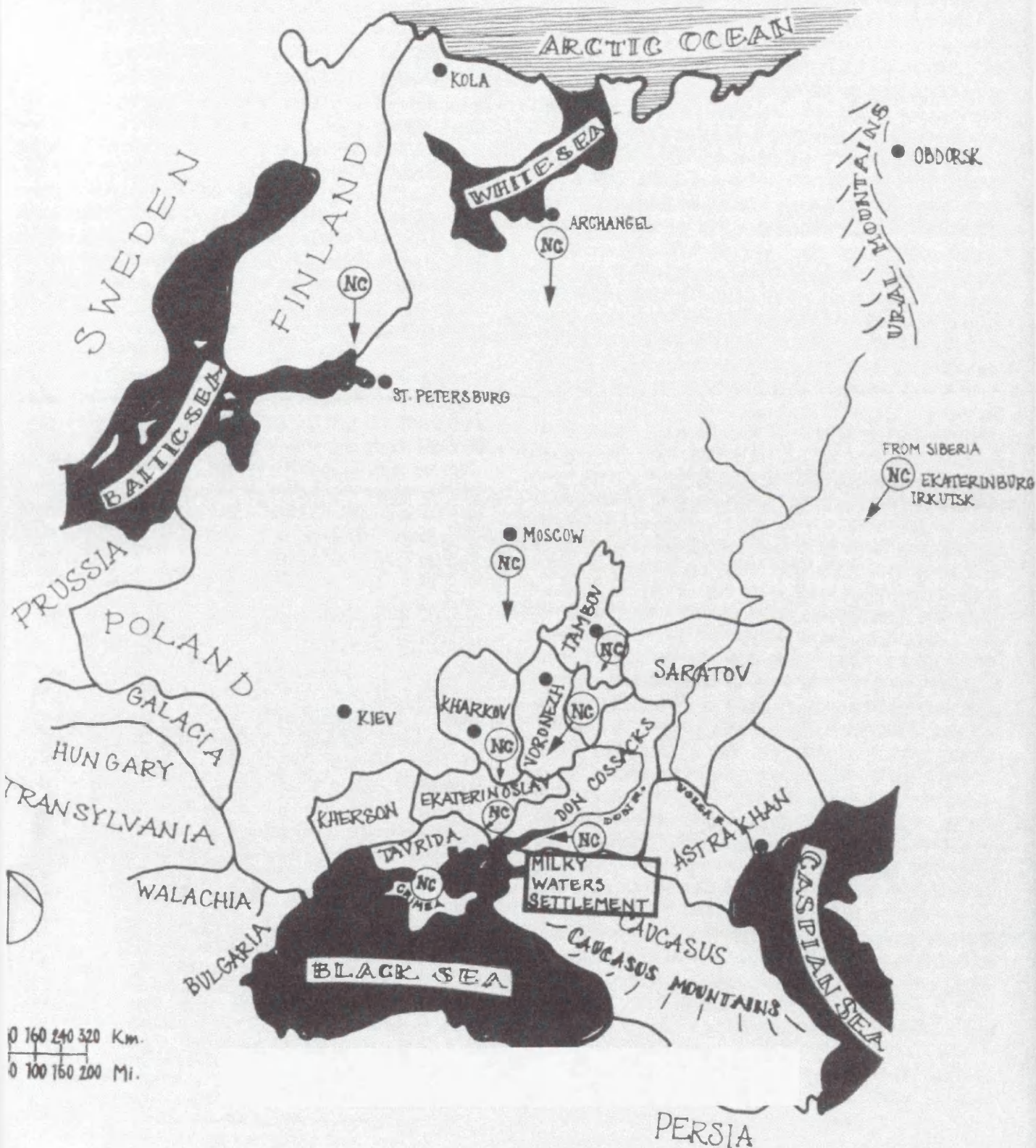
4.) "From the late 1930's to the early 1950's" (Inikova 1999a, 46). It was not until this period that the Doukhobors began genuinely to assimilate into Canadian culture. When Peter G. Makaroff received a law degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1918, he was the first Slavic and Doukhobor student to graduate from a Canadian university. Although this was indeed a step toward full cultural assimilation, integration into formal education did not gain popularity until the 1950's and even 1960's. (Tarasoff 1995, 15). Even though the sect still had to fight against their "Dirty Douk" image, (Tarasoff 1994, 150) the Doukhobors had, by this time for the most part, learned English and were freely trading, conducting business, and interacting socially in the mainstream community.

By the 1950's, and in fact through to the present day, one of the Doukhobors' main concerns has been how to manage morally and responsibly their economic success. "Следующие сто лет духоборческому народу," writes Vladimir Tolstoy, L.N. Tolstoy's great great grandson on the one hundredth anniversary celebration of Doukhobors in Canada, "предстоит доказать, что им по силам побороть искушение благополучием и достатком, и сохранить свой дух, свои традиции, свою веру и свое единство. Чего я искренне им желаю" (Woodsworth 1999, x).

LOCATION OF NON-CONFORMISTS

WHO MIGRATED TO THE MILKY WATERS SETTLEMENT (MOLOCHNAYA VODA) IN TAVRIDA PROVINCE FOLLOWING TSAR ALEXANDER I'S UKAZE OF 1802.

TE: A few mistakes in the transliteration need to be amended. On this, and the following maps, Galacia Galicia, Slavanka, Slavianka, Peshcheri, Peshchery, and finally Ordzonikadze should read Ordzhonikaidze.



Map 1.2

DOUKHOBOR COLONIES IN SOUTH RUSSIA : 1802 ~1845

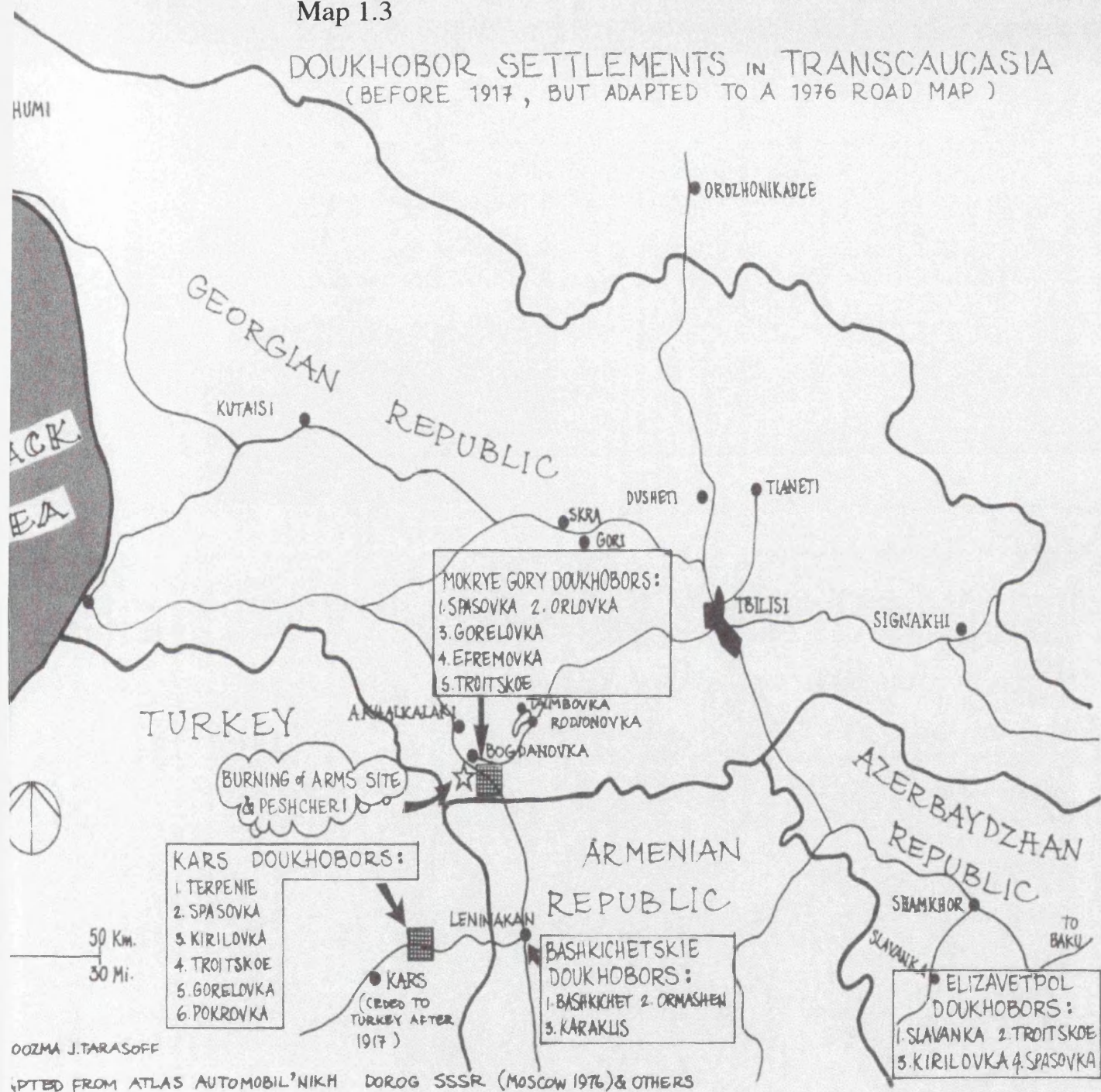


ADAPTED FROM LETTS (LONDON 1877), EPP (TORONTO, 1974) & OTHERS

© KOZMA J. TARASOFF

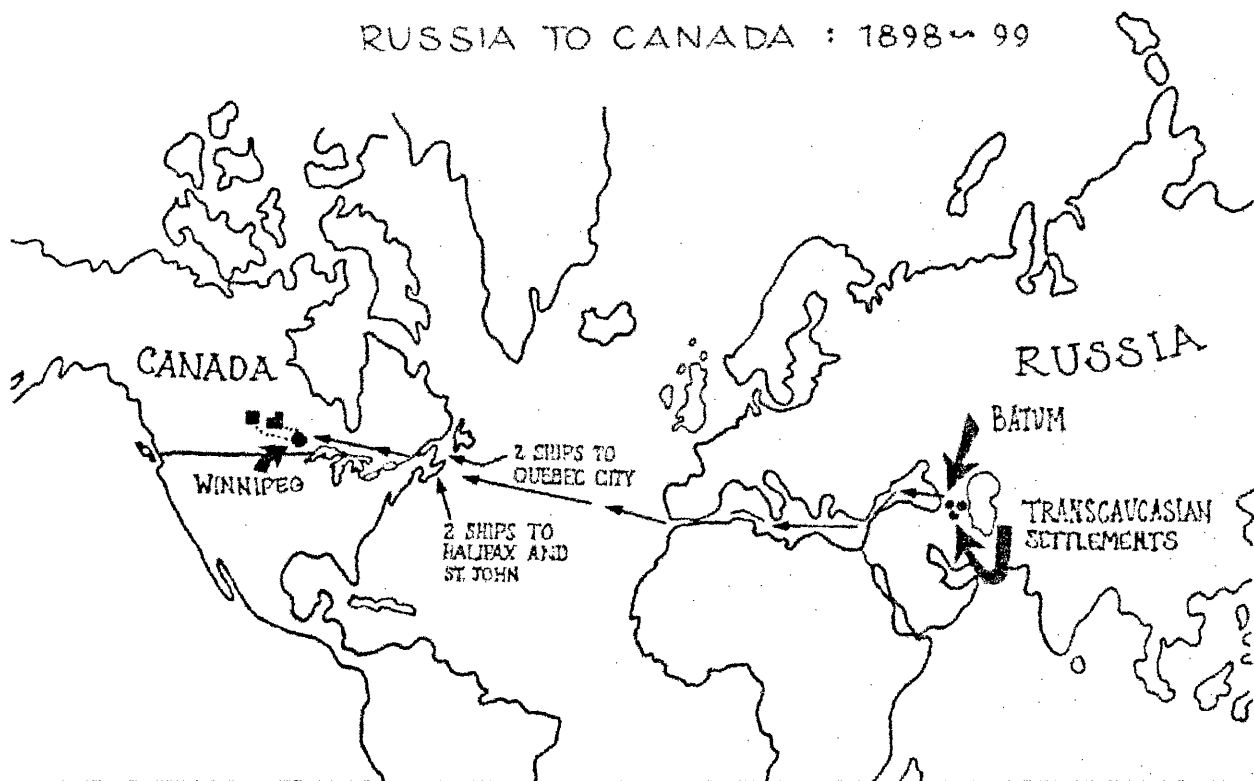
Map 1.3

DOUKHOBOR SETTLEMENTS IN TRANSCAUCASIA
(BEFORE 1917, BUT ADAPTED TO A 1976 ROAD MAP)

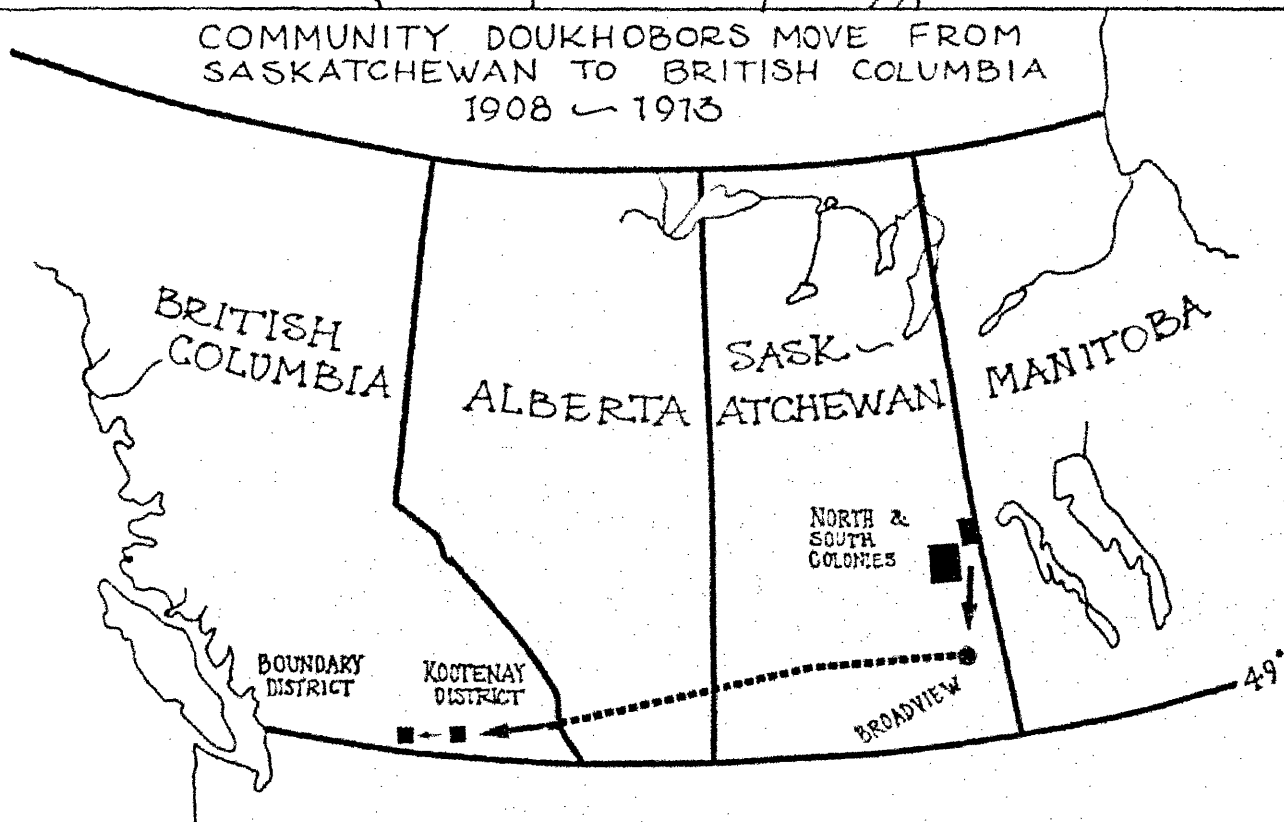


GEOGRAPHIC MOVEMENTS OF THE DOUKHOBORS : 1898-1913

RUSSIA TO CANADA : 1898 ~ 99



COMMUNITY DOUKHOBORS MOVE FROM
SASKATCHEWAN TO BRITISH COLUMBIA
1908 ~ 1913



2. THE DOUKHOBORS: WHAT THEY BELIEVE

Neither saints, as Tolstoy purported for a time, nor demons as the Orthodox Church supposed, the Doukhobors were an imperfect group of people in search of a land free of laws and regulations, a land where they could practice spiritual freedom and their ubiquitous motto: toil and peaceful life, “труд и мирная жизнь.” Although the Doukhobors were of peasant origin and with little education, for the most part, their ideology and religion resembled many contemporary concepts and values. Indeed, because of their firm pacifist stance and their concept of inherent spiritual equality, Tolstoy heralded them as “people of the twenty-fifth century”, “людьми из 25. столетия” (P.S.S. 71, 497).

Like the Old Believers, the Doukhobors initially protested against the “Nikonian novelties” of the Russian Orthodox Church, yet unlike the Old Believers, their protestations were not limited to orthography and aesthetics. The Doukhobors objected to the entire concept of organized religion. The unnatural inequality which they had experienced within the Orthodox Church, the hierarchy of the priesthood, the preeminence of the Bible and church dogmas, as well as the Church’s virtual legal tie with the State all repelled the Doukhobors from remaining any longer within the confines of such a perceivedly un-Christian institution. They began to seek a different life, one of simplicity, unity and peace.

As each new Doukhobor leader contributed to the burgeoning faith and understanding of this new sect, their common bonds were formed and strengthened that much more by their history and distinctive philosophy. The Doukhobors were, and still are, united by their religion, culture, a particular awareness of their common history and suffering, as well as a sense of shared ethnicity torn from a larger ethnic group (Inikova 1999a, 122). Four basic arenas imperative in comprehending these people, and more specifically, what they believe will be covered in this chapter.

2.1 Doukhobor Identity

Whereas Klibanov distinguished Russian sects as pre- and post- emancipation, oriented predictably for a Soviet sociologist around economic and social protests, others have since chosen to differentiate the Christian sects based on other criteria. Porakishvili admitted further complexities involved in the classification of sects. He condensed and compartmentalized them according to their various and respective religious beliefs. These sects were divisible according to their approach to *spiritual freedom*, as follows:

- a.) Sects in which spiritual freedom is outweighed in importance by a lack of rationalism. These are the mystical sects, namely Skoptsy, Pryguny and Malevantsy.
- b.) Sects in which a rationalized spirituality is believed by its members to have achieved a good balance between emotion and intellect. These are the evangelical sects, such as the Russian Baptists and the Molokane.
- c.) Sects which include those who untiringly strive for spiritual freedom, unfettered by dogmatic traditions, the written word or religious zealousness. They are primarily the Doukhobors (67).

While Porakishvili's classification of sects in no way disputes those of others, such as Brock and Fry, it is interesting to note the difference in focus. Porakishvili concentrates on the individual groups' spiritual beliefs, while Brock divides the sects according to their historical and ideological origins. Even though there is considerable overlapping among these classifications, particularly between a. and b., Brock appropriately breaks them down in a relatively workable fashion:

- a.) Sects which derived from the Raskol of 1667. These were predominantly the Old Believers and the subsequent offshoots *поповцы* and *беспоповцы*.
- b.) Sects of an independent and indigenous origin. Among these groups nearly all were pacifist, such as the Doukhobors, the Molokans, the Skoptsy, Pryguny, etc.
- c.) Sects which were introduced from abroad in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Overlapping is to be noted here as well, for although this grouping is strictly of foreign extraction, many of them are also known for their pacifist beliefs. Here are the Quakers, the Baptists, the Mennonites, Hutterites, the Seventh Day Adventists, etc. (442).

These two distinct, but hardly contradictory, methods of classifying Russian sects aid in ascertaining the core issues of the Doukhobor identity. From the above charts we can correctly assess that the Doukhobors are an indigenous, pacifist sect, which gained impetus from, but did not directly result from the Great Schism, and a group of people who placed an unprecedented emphasis on spiritual freedom. The Tolstoyan Pavel Miliukov differentiated this spiritual Christianity from evangelicalism, even though they both rejected the ecclesiastical tradition. The latter, Miliukov asserted, held to a Calvinist reliance of the Gospels and the implicit need for salvation. The former, on the other hand, achieved a "primacy over all external ritual and Scriptural trappings" (Fry, 36).

As their historical origins, their societal and religious placement shaped the Doukhobors, so did the conditions by which they found themselves despised and

persecuted. These conditions of exile and enforced mobility influenced their progress and feeling of group identity. Mavor examines Doukhobor sociology and psychology to articulate his observations in terms of the conditions and effects of equality for the Doukhobors in Canada. "In the case of the Doukhobors we have to deal with uniformity, in the case of the surrounding society with averages, or with minima or maxima" (36) The list below is applicable throughout the duration of their wanderings from the Milky Waters region, i.e. Молочные воды to the Wet Mountains, i.e. Мокрые горы to Cyprus and, indeed, on to North America (see maps 1.1 through 1.4 at the end of Chapter One).

Conditions:

- 1.) The Doukhobors, throughout their history, have been acutely aware of the blatant inequalities surrounding them, e.g. the serf system, pressure from tsarist authorities to conform to religious and military obligations, the general implications stemming from religious and prejudices towards minorities, etc. Instead of attempting to influence their surrounding community, the Doukhobors have continually opted to protest against inequality by rejecting the unequal society, and by ostracizing themselves from the larger "shell of an unequal society" in order to recognize the equality of all their people.
- 2.) The second condition is segregation of the group. Whether by their own doing, governmental or societal, the Doukhobors have lived a life on the outer fringes of society.
- 3.) Territorial isolation is the third condition, rendering equality possible. Throughout Russia and in Canada, the Doukhobors were given territories and reservations geographically removed from other groups, thus allowing them to maintain their societal equality free from external influence. (This condition, of course, would not be long-lived.)
- 4.) Common racial origin, a common language and religion, yet also distinctive from the surrounding peoples, likewise contributed to the Doukhobor establishment of equality. Even while still in Russia, due to living in a closed society, the Doukhobors spoke a unique variant of Russian, influenced also by peasant dialects and the Tatars, their neighbors in the Milky Waters region.
- 5.) The final condition for social, spiritual and material equality is the presence of a dynamic leader who would frequently and decisively act to stamp out dissension among themselves. The sense of dictatorship which the leader displayed needed not be a pervasive trait, but certainly timely. Examples of this can be seen throughout Luker'ia Kalmykova's rule, during the Russo-Turkish war, and through Verigin's correspondence with L.N.Tolstoy, I.M.Tregubov, N.T. Iziumchenko and others, particularly regarding teetotalism and abstention from meats and other "impurities."

Effects:

- 1.) The Doukhobors are unified by a strong sense of identity and group feeling.
- 2.) There is, however, an obvious absence of social (or national) solidarity, particularly in recognition of the wider, external community.
- 3.) The Doukhobors seem to accept gladly the sense of finality in growth and progress. There is no need to learn, study or write. Luxury and knowledge merely lead to dissension and pride and are, therefore, sinful (Mavor, 35-36).

While some of the conditions and effects mentioned above are as timely and valid now as when Professor Mavor first observed them, others have faded as human laws and prejudices have faded and disappeared over the decades. Language, a history of exile and revulsion towards violence have continued, however, to remain an integral part of the Doukhobor identity. Certainly through the 1960s, and arguably into the 1970s, English was indisputably a second language to Canadian Doukhobors. By this time there were few first generation Doukhobors in Canada, and even fewer who actually had any recollections of the journey over from the Black Sea. Even so, Russian remained the dominant language, surviving at least the initial pangs of cultural integration. Although an extremely low number of the younger generation of Canadian Doukhobors speak Russian fluently, the older generations believe that without a grasp of the Russian tongue their religion would certainly die, so integral is it to their faith (Woodcock, 261). Remarkably, regardless of age, location and native tongue, the majority of Doukhobors see themselves as inextricably bound spiritually and ethnically.

The Doukhobor identity is not contrived solely from a rejection of the outside, “secular” world, but also from an embracing acceptance of a microscopic world, membership and self-association into one of the three main factions of the Doukhobors. Although simply by boarding a boat westward 7500 Doukhobors unintentionally created a schism in their sect in acting on a conviction that Petr Verigin was their chosen leader and that they were being honorably led to where they could live out their noble lifestyle. Those who remained behind had already begun to doubt Verigin’s wisdom and divine leadership; these inadvertently comprised the members of the named schism. This “break,” however, became significant as it initially developed no variance in ideology, and as the groups were so far removed geographically from one another. Soon after arriving in Canada every Doukhobor eventually identified with one of the three factions below.

Canadian Doukhobor factions:

a.) Community Doukhobors (общинники)

These communalists were the faithful followers of Petr Verigin. A great number of them moved to British Columbia during the 1910s after refusing to own private property and to swear allegiance to the King. British Columbia is still home to the vast majority of общинники.

b.) Independents (единоличники)

These less regimented Doukhobors opposed Verigin's authoritarian ways, along with the communal system, and eventually were the first to reject the concept of a Christ-incarnate leader. These Doukhobors remained behind in the initial lands in Assinboia (Saskatchewan) but live scattered throughout the four westernmost provinces today.

c.) Sons of Freedom (свободники)

These were the more fanatic of the Doukhobors, not known for moderation or tolerance, now residing largely in British Columbia. Originating from a misunderstanding in Verigin's correspondence with Tolstoy and their own extremism, the свободники instantly became known to the Canadian and American media through their nude marches and acts of vandalism and arson during protests. The media, as usual bent on sensationalism, did much to exacerbate the misconceptions concerning the Doukhobors' lifestyle, as well as cloud the "subtle" differences among the three factions.

All three groups share a pacifist stance. While the свободники often have appeared to act hypocritically in the past, in theory, they have never intended to harm a living creature, human or animal, only the instruments of commonly putative materialism and slavery which humans have created. Although the свободники will be neglected generally in this research, there are numerous incidents which cause one to question the probity of the group. In 1896 Verigin wrote from exile in Obdorsk naming the общинники, or Community Doukhobors "Христианская Община Всемирного Братства" (Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood). Verigin changed the Doukhobor name to correlate with another respected communal group in Essex, England, J.C. Kenworthy's Brotherhood Church (Woodcock, 96). Verigin claimed that no one understood the name духоборы, that they strove "чтобы бороться против плотских немощей и греха." The new name, he convinced his followers, would avoid confusion, would be easier for the public to comprehend that they "considered all people brothers and sisters according to the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 92). Likewise, Verigin most likely wanted an easy way whereby he could distinguish his followers from those in Russia who had remained to follow Gubanov, as well as from those who did not necessarily subscribe to a communal lifestyle. Today, of course, the

CCUB is now referred to as the USCC, the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (Tarasoff 1994, 6). The единоличники are predominantly members of the Canadian Doukhobor Society, while the свободники are now more widely referred to as the Christian Community and Brotherhood of Reformed Doukhobors (Woodcock, 330).

Brock labels the three factions as follows: the общинники are the center; the единоличники are on the right and the свободники on the left. In so doing, he attempts briefly to describe their sectarian ideologies (453). These labels, however, do not work as effectively as intended. The labels are arbitrary and depend heavily on the perspective of the analyzer or observer. Although it demands more of an effort, it is important to understand the nuances of Doukhobor identity emerging from each of these factions, which are discovering more harmony and unity in the modern world than they have previously known.

“История Духобории... основанная на христианском понимании братства, равенства, любви, имеет большой познавательный интерес” (Klibanov 1965, 89). The “познавательный” or cognitive interest is distinctly wrapped up in the Doukhobor identity. As will be shown below, brotherhood and love, peace and equality are more than emotionally charged ideals, but are core beliefs of the faithful Doukhobor.

Doukhobor identity in terms of labels and factions, history and culture have thus far been discussed. The Doukhobors’ own sense of identity, however, is of course, the most significant. Through their psalms and hymns, through their beliefs of non-resistance to evil, and universalism, even a casual observer would note the close association to suffering and spirituality.

Verigin’s written words to his people speak most articulately on how these people view themselves, and who they believe themselves to be. “Слово духоборец нужно понимать, - что мы в духе и душою исповедуем Бога” (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 89).

2.2 Doukhobor Theology

Although it might be revealing to juxtapose Doukhoborism with an ancient Eastern religion such as Buddhism, or with philosophies which have emerged since Christianity, such as Gnosticism or the Bahai faith, or even to concentrate on the contrasting points between the Doukhobor and Orthodox faiths, this research will be limited predominantly to an explanatory discussion of the sects’ transformable hermeneutics. This concept is generally expressed today as the fluidity of the Doukhobor philosophy. As Danilo Filipov and his successors taught, God resides within each individual, denying the necessity, or even legitimacy, of human-ordained rulers, either political or spiritual. In fact the Doukhobor theocracy has been considered to be based upon four interlocking pillars. 1.) God is the ultimate and powerful source. 2.) All Doukhobors, indeed all peoples, share an undisputed equality. 3.) The Doukhobors are led by one wise leader (somewhat in

contradiction to the second pillar). 4.) The commune of believers is managed by the administrative structures to be found in the Council of Elders (Breyfogle, 31).

God is actively involved in guiding the Doukhobor through daily life, placing the prominence of the Bible and its precepts far below the idea of personal, spiritual freedom in religious relevance. According to the Doukhobor faith, the Bible is to be interpreted as a progressive truth, never complete in its revelation, but continuing and perfecting itself through history, oral tradition and the good deeds of humanity (Hawthorn, 116).

The Doukhobors readily accepted the teachings of their earliest leaders that the written word was intrinsically dangerous, and at times, false. Considering the fact that the majority of these peasants were illiterate, it is not difficult to appreciate how the Doukhobors could have argued such a seemingly illogical position for so long. They understood Christ's word at face value, not being in possession of the analytical or interpretive skills necessary to grasp the contextual meaning. "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life." By this they understood not only a condoning of, but also an admonition to complete illiteracy (Klibanov 1965, 101). In not using the Bible as definitively inspired by God, the Doukhobors take upon themselves a religious teaching centered around the "God-man concept; a hermeneutics expressed in the average people's language" (Nikitina, in Tarasoff 1998, 276). In more practical terms, the Doukhobors recognized no spiritual authority, except the divine spark residing in themselves, and the Christ-incarnate authority of their leader.

The Bible is a holy book insofar as it records the Ten Commandments, which the Doukhobors follow as rules of the highest morality, and the New Testament Gospels, namely the sayings and teachings of Jesus Christ. Although the Doukhobors did believe in the Ten Commandments and reservedly in the Gospels of Jesus, those who were able, did not regularly read the Scriptures until they were under the leadership of the erudite P.V. Verigin (Inikova 1999a, 119). Even then, Rybin recalls during his youth under the leadership of Kalmykova and Verigin, his marginally literate father reading to the family in the evenings from the Gospels, much to the dismay and annoyance of neighboring Doukhobor families. Theirs was the only New Testament in the village (327).

"Веруем мы во единого Бога Отца, Вседержителя, Творца, который сотворил небо и землю и всех людей..." The anonymous Doukhobor writer of *Разъяснение жизни христиан* began his explanation of the "key of faith" in this way. The writer continues to affirm the Doukhobor belief in the true, holy, apostolic Church and a genuine belief in the Trinity of the Godhead, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Bonch-Bruevich 1901b, 15-16). While there is nothing to suggest blatant deception on the part of the writer, the reader of this religious credo must be aware of the potentially misleading usage of vocabulary. The true, holy Church is, indeed, not the Orthodox or Catholic churches as the wording would indicate, but rather the Kingdom of God on earth, led by

His Spirit in each individual. The church sings psalms together, worships together, works and lives together. Even the Doukhobor idea of the Trinity is distinctly different from the belief of most Christians. According to Doukhobor theology, the Trinity is a convenient imagery for concepts of faith. The Trinity is found in nature as the Father – light, the Son – life, and the Holy Spirit – peace. Light, life and peace are all gifts and manifestations of this Doukhobor Trinity. The Trinity most indicative of the Doukhobor belief is that which is embodied within every human believer. The Father is memory, the Son is wisdom, and the Holy Spirit is will-power (Bulgakov, 326). Jesus Christ is a son of God just as every human creature is a son or daughter of God, the Father. Jesus, as a divine being, or as an exclusive component of the Trinity, is a rejected notion in the Doukhobor faith. All are sons and daughters of God. In this way, every Doukhobor participates as an active member in the Trinity.

The importance of the historicity of Christ, according to the Doukhobor idea, pales in significance to the indwelling of Christ's Spirit in his people. The corporeal being in which the Spirit of Christ is said to be the strongest is, of course, in the Doukhobor leaders. Even Luker'ia Kalmykova, whom the people loved more as a person, probably than any other leader prior to her, thus, belittling the idea of a Christ-incarnate leader, was looked upon as a uniquely spiritual woman.

Rybin remembers the simple faith of his mother, who incidentally was a close friend of "Лущечка," and his own feelings of hopefulness in his young Doukhobor faith.

Я рыдал, что теперь нет Лущечки и не будет больше солнышка... но утром я увидел солнышко и без Лущечки, не покидает нас. А потом мать мне сказала утешительное слово: Святой дух перешел от Лущечки к бывшему Журушке, а теперешнему "Петюшке,"¹ и что Бог был с нами, есть сейчас и всегда будет... с нами духоборцами живет Бог в лице вождя и что мы самый счастливый в мире народ (330-331).

Although this "transmigration" of Christ's Spirit from revered leader to revered leader appears contradictory to the previously mentioned beliefs in equality and theocratic rule, it does much, however to explain the Doukhobors' view of Jesus' identity, and his current role in their lives. Just as the evangelicals and Anabaptists understood human behavior in terms of "original sin," so did the Doukhobors. However, according to Doukhobor thought, the issue was resolved centuries before through Christ's sacrificial death and spiritual resurrection into the bodies of believers even to this day (Fry, 70).

¹ Журушка and Петюшка were fond nicknames for the Doukhobor leaders Petr Kalmykov and Petr Verigin.

Although humanity is sinful, Christ's rejuvenating Spirit is constantly at work transforming sinners into true Spirit-wrestlers.

All humanity is spiritually interconnected with God. "The foundation of the Doukhobors' teaching consists in the belief that the Spirit of God is present in the soul of man, and directs him by its word written within him" (Chertkov, 2). The predominant teaching and law of the Doukhobor faith is love and the acknowledgement of this love living within humanity is bowing before that person, recognizing and celebrating with reverence the God within him. Whereas Anabaptists, Penecostals, the Orthodox, and the vast majority of Christian denominations believe the Holy Spirit acts as an individual's conscience, guiding and inspiring them through life, the Doukhobors believe a divine presence inhabits them, permitting them to participate more directly in divinity, granting them an assumed greater spiritual freedom.

The Doukhobors described God's residence within them as the "divine spark within," or the "inner voice." As Mavor likened this method of spiritual epistemology to Ebionitic Gnosticism, (15) Fry likewise compared Doukhoborism to the ancient philosophy of Gnosticism. Whereas Doukhoborism posited a superior spiritual awareness through reason and conscience, that is, through the "divine spark within," Gnosticism was also interested in "gnosis" or knowledge. For the gnostics, knowledge was acquired not through Christ and the Scriptures, but rather through the "illumination of the divine inner light" (Fry, 57). Even so, the Doukhobors received knowledge and spiritual understanding through the "inner voice." "Each one when considering any question is guided *exclusively* by his own spiritual understanding. That is why they are so energetic, joyful and free, more so than it is possible for any of us to be. And all their actions which seem to us extraordinary are to them quite usual" (Chertkov, 65).

This concept of inner revelation, however, eventually became somewhat of a stumbling block to a few of Tolstoy's followers. The euphoria with which the Tolstoyans initially became acquainted with the Doukhobors soon began to grow lukewarm as they slowly realized reason and conscience were not always the Doukhobors' guiding forces, but more practically, Petr Verigin. The Tolstoyans are indeed to be commended for not abandoning their friends at the first sign of weakness and human frailty, but they continued aiding them in any way possible, although at times, in a much more guarded manner. A.M. Bodiansky, one of the more audacious of Tolstoyans, in particular was perturbed at their moral and intellectual dependence on Verigin. They "live almost unconsciously as a herd," he criticized and "concluded that they have very few Christian qualities" (Inikova 1999a, 77)² It is understandable that many Tolstoyans would have been shocked by the Doukhobors' clearly unorthodox views of Christ and their

² As found in SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 271, pp. 2-9

relationship to Him. However Bodiansky seems somewhat overcritical of the sect, swinging from zealous patronage to harsh denunciations in a relatively brief period of time.

If the Doukhobor reverence for their leader disturbed the Tolstoyans, their mutual love of simplicity and a personalized religion drew them nearer. As was discussed in Chapter One of this research, the Doukhobors established early in their history as a sect a distaste for religious rituals and trappings. As far back as the peasant revolts of the late 18th century, the Doukhobors protested against the doctrine of transubstantiation, and rituals in general, saying it was not necessary to worship God through acts of mimicry, but by the spirit (Porakishvili, 13).

The Doukhobors rejected all forms of icons, symbols and rituals, considering them to be meaningless and false. The only symbols they have maintained in worship are the symbols of hospitality: bread, salt and water, which are present at every Doukhobor prayer meeting. Even so, the actual objects are not looked upon as sacred in and of themselves, but are given to hungry children after worship, or the water is poured for any thirsty psalmist during the singing. Bread, salt and water – the ubiquitous Doukhobor symbols of peace and hospitality, are recognized as ordinary physical objects to be regularly consumed (Doukhobor HomePage, Eli A. Popoff, April 18, 1968).

What may be construed as formality and ceremony to a non-Doukhobor is their habit of bowing three times to others in recognition of the God within each individual. By bowing three times, Doukhobors affirm that the divine spark resides still in each fellow-believer, that is in memory, wisdom and will-power.

While the sign of the cross encompasses the essence of Christianity for the majority of Christians, the Doukhobors do not use it necessarily as a symbol of remembrance or salvation. They do consider it, however, a lesson in terms of spiritual traits to be developed. For example, the earthly cross represents the power to endure insult without revenge. The heavenly cross reminds the Doukhobor of meekness and humility. The general Christian cross epitomizes the narrow path, voluntary grief, voluntary humiliation and a wandering in Jesus, “тесный путь, вольная скорбь, вольная нищета и странничество во Иисусе” (Bonch-Bruevich 1901b, 17-18)

Baptism, whether infant or adult, whether by sprinkling or immersion, is not performed by the Doukhobors. For the sect, baptism was not a sacrament to be administered, but rather a way of life (Lunkin, 86-87). The Doukhobor life is to be lived simply and with great devotion to Christ’s precepts.

Actual facts of a person’s changed mode of living is the real outward evidence of this rebirth, and the symbolic act of cleansing away the old self by water baptism is really meaningless if life goes on as usual – and to a Doukhobor way of thinking the harm

in practicing it is that it beclouds the issue of what Christ really wanted of us – and that is – a life dedicated to service of our fellowman (Doukhobor HomePage, Eli Popoff, April 18, 1968).

Chart 2.1

“The Difference Between Doukhoborism and Other Christian Faiths”

Doukhoborism	Other Faiths (Catholic, Orthodox)
1. Rejection of Church and priesthood	1. Traditions and priesthood preserved
2. Against liturgy, icons and symbols	2. Practices maintained
3. Fasts not observed	3. Fasts observed
4. Baptism not practiced	4. Infant baptism essential
5. Marriage not bound by laws of Church and State	5. Marriage bound by laws of Church and State
6. Rejection of Bible as ultimate source of inspiration	6. Bible is the source of spiritual inspiration
7. Redemption through individual spiritual inspiration	7. Redemption through suffering of Christ
8. Rejection of literal conception of Christ’s resurrection	8. Belief in literal physical resurrection
9. Heaven and Hell are states of mind and the states of affairs of humankind on earth	9. Heaven and Hell exist literally
10. Humanity guided by the Divine Presence in each person	10. Humanity guided by Holy Spirit and Scriptures

(Doukhobor HomePage)

2.3 Doukhobor Ideology

Труд и мирная жизнь, toil and peaceful life is, easily, the Doukhobor motto which best defines the dominant points of Doukhobor ideology. Their practice of pacifism, vegetarianism and a communal lifestyle are all directly related to this theme. Under this banner of toil and peaceful life all Doukhobors are unified.

Although some of these facets of the Doukhobor ideology have been synonymous with the Doukhobor faith since the beginning, many of the Doukhobors lapsed in their moral struggle. It was not until around 1893 when Petr Verigin’s teachings became more focused, after reading several of Tolstoy’s works, that pacifism, vegetarianism, abstinence from alcohol and a stricter communal lifestyle were reformulated as intrinsic, irrefutable qualities, defining Doukhobor ideology. The Doukhobors, more precisely, Verigin, merely needed a stimulus from the outside to reactivate and re-enliven their former pacifist-agrarian convictions (Brock, 449).

With the ascendancy of Luker’ia Kalmykova, but more profoundly of Petr Verigin, the Doukhobors were now led by a social thinker. Although Verigin wisely made no demands on his followers to become involved in the process of forming the ostensible

new Doukhobor ideology, he did speak at great length to them concerning it. Verigin was less of a religious, and more of a social-ethical leader (Inikova 1999a, 120). This new ideology was unique to the Canadian Doukhobors and marked something of a departure from the traditional religious beliefs, namely divine leadership, while placing importance on the mutual humanistic notions, namely equality, universal brotherhood and peace (Inikova 1999a, 122). Possibly, for this reason, Tolstoy considered them people of the twenty-fifth century, forerunners into a modern era.

That said, pacifism directly derived from the Doukhobor religious belief in the “divine spark.” If God has a home in each individual, so the argument goes, it is, therefore, impossible for a Christian to kill, maim or harm another life under any circumstances, for any reason, including war and defending one’s own life (Bonch-Bruevich 1901b, 11). This belief has, over the decades, made them unpopular with war veterans and governments, among others, as the Doukhobors in the post-World War era have emerged as an active, although tiny, force voicing their hopes for the eradication of war. One such Doukhobor motto on pacifism is : “The welfare of all nations is not worth the life of one child” (Barnes, in Tarasoff 1998, 22). Here the Doukhobor emphasis on human worth and the indifference to governmental stability is evident.

Although Doukhobor vegetarian habits were also inspired by their insistence on non-resistance to evil, the sect as a whole did not refrain from meat until Petr Verigin initiated the idea, after Tolstoy’s words had begun taking an effect on him. Just as slaying a human being was sinful, so was it wrong to kill any of God’s living creatures. Thus, the idea of vegetarianism was for the Doukhobors primarily a religious practice, and was only secondarily followed for the health benefits (Doukhobor HomePage, Jim Popoff, Grand Forks, BC, January 1995).

During a trip to London, presumably on his way back to Canada in 1904, Verigin participated in a certain question and answer session regarding the Doukhobor beliefs. When the question was posed to him as to how he reconciled the fact that Jesus ate fish with his own vegetarian beliefs, he replied thus:

По нашему учению Христос - человек, живший две тысячи лет назад. Мы думаем, что Он открыл только дверь к истине и оставил нам свободу прогрессировать (Rybin, 236).

Verigin’s retort is indicative of two things: the time honored tradition, dating back to Kapustin, of remaining reticent on sectarian queries, and the aforementioned progressive aspect of spiritual revelation. Many of Verigin’s directives which eventually came to comprise the new Doukhobor ideology, i.e. pacifism, vegetarianism, abstinence from

tobacco and alcohol, restrictions on paying taxes and communal living were adopted from his correspondence with Tolstoyans and even from Tolstoy himself.³

Hawthorn claims that Verigin's "ideas were accepted, not on the basis of conscious, rational decision, but because of his strong, moral position as a martyred leader exiled by the government" (47-48). Even though other historians, such as Pozdniakov (Golinenko, 199) and Rybin (19) give credence to this view, it is a deceptive statement in that it assumes all Doukhobors thought in a clearly uniform manner. This, however, was not the case, for the early decades in Canada saw the Doukhobors pulling away from traditional religious ideas. While some Doukhobors remained faithful to Verigin's inheritance of divine leadership, it is debatable whether the man himself in any way encouraged the people to maintain this belief. Likewise, there were others, namely the Sons of Freedom, who took Verigin's word to extremes, such as the Independents, who opted for holding individual property, and the Yakutian Doukhobors, who grew dissatisfied with the frustrating communal lifestyle, (Inikova 1999a, 34) and who felt free to think independently of their leader.

Communalism was a long practiced ideal among the Doukhobors, although their history reveals inconsistency in this practice as well as tensions and conflicts of interest. During Kalmykova's "reign," in particular, many Doukhobors became relatively wealthy after acquiring and working on private property (Klibanov 1965, 95-96). Klibanov tends to disregard Doukhorism's religious elements and concentrates on the social-economic reasons for the Doukhor communal lifestyle. According to his theory, the Doukhor movement rallied around the peasant movement for rights of citizenship (86). The basis for this idea is subject to argument. While the prevalence of communally operated peasant villages most probably influenced their view of labor, the Doukhobors had a much more interconnected Weltanschauung. In earlier days under Kapustin, the Doukhobors had practiced communal working and living more evenly, to the point of cooperatively operating the сиротский дом and mutually owning all crops and profits from their harvest. Certainly by the time Verigin rose to authority the idea was well-established, although not consistently followed. The teachings of the Doukhobors were, in their own right, responsible for the strengthening sense of individualism, personal growth and enterprise (97).

The Tolstoyans readily observed this personal growth. While still being able to observe the well-administered social organization of the Doukhobors, they believed the sect had "resolved the contradiction between the social organization which was the commune and personal freedom of its members," and praised them for being "ideally peaceful people, full of love for their enemy...They found a way to combine complete

³ The nature of this influence will be analyzed in the fourth chapter of this research.

personal freedom with the equality of position and the material basis of peace and order in a communal establishment” (Inikova 1999a, 74).⁴

Clearly, the Tolstoyan-Doukhobor relationship was a turbulent one. Unfortunately, neither Tolstoy nor his followers were ever able to appreciate fully the Doukhobors for what they were. Each one initially idealized them, recognizing mutual qualities and beliefs, interpreting them to mean what they wanted to see. For this reason, the disillusionment was that much more profound. Once Chertkov was convinced the Doukhobors revered Verigin as a Christ, he wrote a reproachful letter, while Verigin was in exile, to Ivan E. Konkin, Verigin’s brother-in-law and an acting interim leader of the Doukhobors. Angry at Chertkov’s condemnation, Konkin writes, “unfortunately, none of them was able to understand the simplicity of the Doukhobor life, which is based on equality and brotherhood of all people” (Inikova 1999a, 78).⁵ With Konkin labeled as a fanatic by some historians, (Porakishvili, 76) and Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans desperately hoping to find the “ideal people,” none of the parties involved seemed to speak objectively concerning the Doukhobor principles (Woodcock, 112).

Verigin, nevertheless, remained candid with Tolstoy, revealing his concerns at the Doukhobor emigration in a letter of 15 August 1898 written in Obdorsk.

Я лично *почти* положительно *против* переселения. Потому люди нашей общины нуждаются в самоусовершенствовании и следовательно куда бы мы ни переселились, понесем свои слабости с собою; а что за границей свободней жить личности вообще, я думаю разница может быть небольшая. Человечество всюду одинаково (Donskov 1995, 35).

Once Verigin realized the extent of the Doukhobors’ desire to emigrate abroad, he aided them through correspondence and organization to achieve their goal. Upon their arrival in Canada and until he arrived a few years later, Verigin continued to send authoritative advice and instructions on how to organize their communes. Although Verigin was recognized as the spiritual leader of the sect, his “advice” was extremely practical, further evidence of his influence being primarily of a socio-economic nature, rather than religious. He advised the Canadian Doukhobors to keep dairy cattle and horses, to own stock, ploughs and other agricultural equipment communally, to arrange their villages in patterns of fifty houses, one for each extended family, and to line their streets with trees as windbreakers for the gusty Canadian prairies (Woodcock, 154).

⁴ as found in SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 546, pp. 28-29

⁵ as found in SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 524, pp. 1-6

Undoubtedly, more than any other tenet of faith or ideology, the two beliefs which the Doukhobors most closely shared with Tolstoy were pacifism and rejection of governmental or any human-ordained authority. Tolstoy focused his discussion regarding this belief on accusing the Church and state for condoning and perpetrating violence. The Doukhobors formulated the phrase “human universalism” to articulate their desire to see all people truly equal and to break down the concepts of nationality and patriotism. Koozma J. Tarasoff, a modern Doukhobor ethnographer, claims multi-culturalism to be the way of the future. As bridge builders, according to Tarasoff, Doukhobors must synthesize “liberal individual rights and collective community rights” (Tarasoff 1998, 332).

The state authorities, and many outside the Doukhobor sphere, perceived the sect’s anarchist ideology to be derived directly from Tolstoy. The police reports had Ivan E. Konkin classified as “the first promoter among the Doukhobors of Tolstoy’s anti-government teachings and the organiser of a criminal brotherhood” (Woodsworth 1999, 90).⁶

During Klibanov’s field research on various sects, he recorded several dialogues on salient subjects which distinguished the various groups one from another. Although posed to a general Tolstoyan and not specifically a Doukhobor, the question and answer below are interestingly similar to a potential Doukhobor response.

В: С уничтожением власти исчезнет ли экономическое неравенство?

О: Власть только нужна для поддержания экономического неравенства. Если бы было равенство, не было бы и власти (Klibanov 1974, 117).

The Doukhobors, however, were in search of a thoroughly non-interventionist government. More than economic equality, they wanted anarchy, or if anarchy were an impossibility, a government that did not act as a government. In the same London gathering as mentioned above, Verigin responds to the query of what the Doukhobors would like to see from the Canadian government.

Мы хотим, чтобы нам позволили свободно жить, не вредя соседям. Земли нам нужно на каждого человека ровно столько, сколько он может обработать. И мы хотим, чтобы

⁶ ‘Copy of representation from Assistant Prosecutor of Elisavetopol’ Regional Court to the Prosecutor of Elisavetopol’ Regional Court, dated 10 [22] February 1898, № 2001’ (Typescript, 12 pp./6L) Case 1053 L. 596-601 [Document #1898-03-126]

земля эта была общая, и чтобы никто не насиловал нашей совести (Rybin, 237).

In brief, the Doukhobors recognized one ultimate authority above them: God and His law; all other authorities were secondary or even immaterial. They rejected royalty as they considered all men their brethren, “для нас все братья” (Bonch-Bruevich 1901b, 10). For this reason, Verigin, in his letter to the Empress Aleksandra, addresses royalty in the informal second person. All of humanity is equal before God, and indeed, before one another. Land belongs to the Lord. Ownership is robbery. They admitted no fatherland; they did not recognize citizenship to any country. “Мы - члены христианской общины всемирного братства” (Bonch-Bruevich 1901b, 11).

As was discussed in Chapter One of this research, the government grew angry at the perceived insubordination of these peasants. Tolstoy, in an attempt to gain positive public opinion and support for these people, published several articles and editorials abroad in England, as well as at home in Russia. “К политическим деятелям” and “О веротерпимости” were both pivotal in publicizing the Doukhobors’ plight, not to mention his correspondence with Quakers, other foreign religious groups, and even with Tsar Nicholas II. Tolstoy wrote in order to stress his point that religious persecution, indeed any persecution, merely diminishes the prestige of the government. In “О веротерпимости” he explains: “мученичество только ослабляет нравственный авторитет гонящей церкви и увеличивает силу гонимых” (P.S.S. 34, 292).

Indeed, men such as Tolstoy, Chertkov, Biriukov and Tregubov did much through their public discourse and correspondence in creating martyrs out of these simple sectarians. Moreover, the Doukhobors were not uncomfortable with their emerging public reputation. As has been discussed, suffering and homelessness (i.e. universalism) are central to Doukhor ideology. Aylmer Maude, brought up in the Quaker faith, also accomplished much on behalf of the Doukhor movement. Not only was he pivotal in the organization of the Doukhor exodus to Canada, but also in his attempts in providing Tolstoy with a more notably objective view of the sectarians themselves. Peter Makaroff, a lawyer and the first university educated Doukhor, spoke to the Canadian newspapers at the time of Aylmer Maude’s death at the age of 80. “While other Tolstoyans were bent on painting the Doukhobors to Tolstoy as they thought he wished to see them, Maude continued his objective investigations. He was a morally courageous man with a keen sympathy and admiration for Tolstoy’s zeal and genius, but this he tempered with an English practicality. In this Aylmer Maude did much to make Tolstoy’s pacifist and other conclusions valuable to men and women in everyday life” (Wright, 432).

While the Doukhobors could have been perceived by the authorities over the years as a highly obstinate and belligerent group, the Doukhobors saw themselves merely as

obeying the law of God, listening to the “divine spark within.” It would have been impossible for them to breach the demands of inner reason and conscience. The sect seemed eventually to rely on suffering as a kind of spiritual marker, or became addicted to suffering, as Inikova proposes. “Enduring hardships,” writes Konkin to Tolstoyan E.I. Popov in May 1896, “they, the sufferers, found spiritual purity for themselves. At the same time, they serve as heralds, luminaries, and examples for the next generation” (Inikova 1999a, 28).⁷

Whether or not the sect was actually addicted to suffering will not be settled here. However, they were certainly prepared for all kinds of abuses and ill-treatment. They must have had a sense of pride in continually doing what they regarded as right, regardless of consequences. Their leader prepared them for this when he wrote the undated letter that soon after became a sort of credo of the Doukhobor faith, prompting many to memorize it word for word.

Эта задача наша может навлечь на нас оскорбления, обиды, страдания, даже смерть. Нас ожидают: непонимание, ложные толкования, клевета... жестокие правители, власти, - все это может соединиться, чтобы уничтожить нас... (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 13).

2.4 Doukhobor Traditions

Nearly all Doukhobor traditions are either intricately sewn together by the threads of spirituality and faith which have woven a religious foundation over the generations, or ironically, they seem to be derived from pagan or cultural influence, often seemingly contradicting their beliefs. The love of the spoken word, whether in the genre of a religious hymn, authoritative psalm or nostalgic folklore is a fundamental example of the former. From the *Book of Life*, the Doukhobors learn that “Jesus did not spread books, but instructed with the word learnt by heart” (Inikova in Tarasoff 1998, 307).⁸ A cultural pride can be discerned from this ancient folk tradition, nearly to the point of despising literacy and looking with disdain upon printed materials. Although their leader, Petr Verigin, did not always pass on all his personal beliefs to the Doukhobor members, nevertheless, it is possible to gain some insight into his aversion to and suspicion of the written or printed word, an aversion which he, indeed, partially inherited from his Doukhobor background. Literacy, according to Verigin’s letter of 4 January 1896 to Nikolai T. Iziumchenko, destroys the appeal of human contact, “влечение встречи с

⁷ as found in SMHR, Fo. 2, inv. 7, f. 354

⁸ found in *Book of Life* (1909), Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruevich, Ed. St. Petersburg. Psalm 14, p. 72

человеком” (Rybin, 45). As more clearly seen in his correspondence with Tolstoy,⁹ Verigin believed one on one contact with another human being was the nearest one could approach divinity on earth. Printed matter only alienated humans one from another, and, therefore, humanity as a whole from God.

Verigin’s concern over the loss of the divine in human life provides a smooth transition in which to explain the Doukhobor belief and tradition that living breath is as the breath of God, so that oral communication is, indeed, throughout the generations, as receiving God’s own word from one’s neighbor. “This constantly evolving body of work, named the *Living Book* because of its preservation and transmission from one living generation to the next, truly was written on the wind, its existence guaranteed by the breath of one living soul passing on its spiritual truth to another receptive soul” (Wilkinson in Tarasoff 1995, 207).

Few religious groups have been able to, or have been desirous of, maintaining this archaic form of oral tradition. Even though the Doukhobors have now merged with modern society, it is nothing less than astonishing to realize the hymns and psalms they sing during prayer meetings are the very same in content and in musical form as those that were sung in the days of Pobirokhin and Kapustin. In comparing the Doukhobors with other sects, Nikitina informs us that the Old Believers would be encouraged to carry an entire trunk of books in case of another migration, the Molokans a Bible, and the Doukhobors would be satisfied with their collective memory (Nikitina in Tarasoff 1998, 280). So the infallibility of one man in the Church shifted to the infallible memory of the people as a whole.

The Doukhobors have always sung a capella. This is largely attributed to the cultural influence of the Orthodox Church’s practices and to the correlation the sect makes with instruments, as well as the seductive and fatal dancing of Salome (Hawthorn, 13).¹⁰ The songs of the Doukhobor prayer meetings are sung at a slow pace in even, lengthy, drawn-out phrases (Nikitina in Tarasoff 1998, 274).

Doukhobors sing in octaves, rather than in musical parts, such as bass, soprano, alto. The melody of the hymn or psalm is centralized, creating a comparable sound, according to Peacock, to a jazz combo where each person is a soloist, performing and listening simultaneously “with the complex musical structure around him” (14). Even today, the Doukhobors rely exclusively on memory and improvisation in performing their musical traditions. Again, this is evidence of the success of the preservation of the oral tradition; indeed, very little has been altered over the centuries. Women allegedly tend to remember the psalms and hymns more perfectly than men, and are often heard correcting

⁹ Donskov (1995) Л.Н. Толстой и П.В. Веригин: Переписка. St. Petersburg, 1 August 1896, pp. 16-22

¹⁰ Mark 6: 14-29

the song leader in their repetition of a phrase. Canadian Doukhobors are said to have maintained the same style of singing as the Russian Doukhobors with the trivial exception that in Canada the hymns are sung at an insignificantly swifter rate (Peacock, 15). “To have projected these ancient musical forms via oral tradition into the alien environment of Canada in the mid-twentieth century is a remarkable cultural feat” (16).

While the two former Doukhobor traditions adhere precisely to Doukhobor theology, the following appears to go contrary to a normative understanding of Doukhobor faith and culture. As have other Russian peasants, the Doukhobors incorporated the use of incantations into their culture and system of beliefs so early that it is difficult to discern their origins. Historically, the Doukhobors have been extremely hesitant in repeating their incantations in the presence of strangers. This reluctance reaches back to their tradition of suspicion toward authorities. It also potentially accounts for Velichkina’s negligence in divulging any homespun “cures” aboard the *Lake Huron* en route to Canada (Woodsworth 1999a, 165-191). Although she was administering medical aid to those suffering from dysentery, small pox and other less severe ailments, her accounts as recorded in her “С духоборами в Канаду,” published in the *Русския Ведомости*, never once recounted the Doukhobor practice of home cures. Could this be because she was never privy to them?

Although the incantations which were frequently used often contained the names of pagan or unknown gods, or symbols of witchcraft and sorcery, the Doukhobors referred to them as a type of prayer, a means of supplication to God (Inikova 1999b, 20, 28). Lekarkas (healers) or sheptukhas (whisperers) were those women who were renowned for their gift from God to cure diseases or deflect harmful situations by merely repeating a well-uttered chant or incantation. From curing an illness, to protecting from robbers or casting various spells, the Doukhobors, as did other peasants over the centuries, believed strongly in these powers (20). Those somewhat superstitious tendencies may seem at odds with the Police Department’s categorizing the Doukhobors as largely a “rationalistic” sect.¹¹ However, it must be remembered that the Doukhobors did believe that God, himself, performed the healing through the gifted healer, and that they did not view the use of incantations as witchcraft. Thus, this was an aspect of their religious beliefs, and not merely a curious cultural trait.

Inikova leans toward the argument that incantations were a specific part of the Doukhobor traditional folk culture, whereas Bonch-Bruevich “воспринял духоборческие заговоры не столько как часть традиционной народной культуры, причем очень древней, а скорее как свидетельство невежества”. Indeed, superstition was a

¹¹ In Woodsworth 1999a, 19 ‘Brief Historical Outline of the origin and development of the Doukhobor sect.’ Undated. [Prepared by a representative of the Department of Police.] (Typescript, 9 pp./ 4 1/2 L.) Case 1053 L. 024-028r [Document #1895-11-01c]

ubiquitous aspect of their background and culture. The majority of them believed in “the evil eye,” unclean spirits and various malevolent powers (38).

One such evidence of the Doukhobor superstition coupled with the mention of pagan gods and notions is an incantation against depression, “от тоски,” which was believed to be the result of evil spirits. The healer would normally lay her hands on her patient and repeat this incantation three times.

Где есть чистое поле? В чистом поле – золотая груша. В золотой груше – золотое гнездо. В золотом гнезде сидит царица Шалавица. Пытает Бог: ‘Что ты, царица Шалавица, не утишаешь колдунов и колдуниц, еретиков и еретиц, парней распоясанных, девиц простоволосых?’

Я не могу унять их, а могу сделать, чтобы у рабы Божьей [имя] сердце не тосковало, желтые кости не ломили, красной крови не сушили. Я ее выговариваю, вычитываю с ее ретивого сердца... как заря с зорями кротко, смиренно утихает, так у рабы Божьей [имя] порча, тоска, досада, кручина утихла. Аминь (56, 58)

This particular incantation mentions a Queen Shalavitsa, known to be a Russianized form of the Greek goddess of the Moon, Selene, and contains peculiar wording obscure in meaning (e.g. золотая груша, золотое гнездо, парни распоясанные, девицы простоволосые). It is clear, however, that the Doukhobors did not necessarily believe the content of the spells as they did with their psalms and hymns, but more specifically trusted in the act of repetition as well as in the person’s ability who was uttering them (46).

Although Rybin is not telling a story specifically regarding the use of incantations, his recording of the event of an ailing Doukhobor certainly represents the extent of their superstition during this time in their history, and the reverence in which they held their leader. He relates how Petrunia Gorkov, a hard working and honest Doukhobor, went to Petr Verigin for medical advice after he had become exhausted and ill from long, physical labor, as many were in the habit of doing, rather than to a costly doctor. Upon questioning Verigin and with an avid belief in “Петюшка,” Gorkov was advised by his beloved leader to sleep out in the courtyard in the open air. (It was in the middle of a Canadian winter). “Несчастный человек всю ночь напролет лежал на морозе и щелкал от холода зубами. После такого лечения, он вскорости помер” (218-219).

Curiously enough, the sect’s “rationalism” was not immediately evident through the Doukhobor’s set of beliefs and traditions. The Doukhobors have, however, been consistent through the generations in passing down a knowledge of their history and creed, as well as training younger generations in the singing of the psalms and hymns. Not only

was it the responsibility of the parents to bestow this education on the children, but the duty and interest of the entire Doukhobor community to do so (Chertkov, 2).

Although malleable over time, the identity, theology, ideology and traditions of the Doukhobor people have remained largely intact, amazingly preserved through persecution, suffering and migration. Wildly contradictory in certain aspects, the Doukhobors, nevertheless, captured the attention and admiration of Lev N. Tolstoy. Not always in agreement, Tolstoy and his followers perceived the Doukhobors, above all, as a people passionate in their humanitarian convictions.

“I have always said,” Pavel Biriukov wrote in 1928 to Bonch-Bruevich from Canada,

and will always say that in the second half of the nineteenth century there were two great phenomena in world history. They shone brightly and give [sic] a mighty push to the moral and social development of mankind; these two phenomena were Lev N. Tolstoy and the Doukhobors (Inikova 1999a, 81).¹²

¹² as found in MS RSL, Fo. 369, c. 240, f. 8, p. 16

3. TOLSTOY AS A RELIGIOUS THINKER

By the time Tolstoy first came in contact with the Doukhobors and their exiled leader Petr Verigin in 1894, he was already past middle age and had been undergoing his new spiritual awakening for well over a decade. By this time, the great Russian writer had forsaken the concept of art, and had instead embraced his role in didacticism; he was progressing along on his great journey for “truth.” The Russian lion would eventually die confused and frustrated at his limitless failures, for it was to be his old age, not his youth, which would throw him into the most tempestuous inner turmoil.

Tolstoy’s spiritual transformation however was not instantaneous, but gradual, involving, as it were, a slow, progressive revelation. He gives us evidence of this in both *Анна Каренина* and in *Воскресение*. Unlike Chekhov, for example, Tolstoy invariably places himself in the forefront of his fiction. He is the protagonist of all his monolithic themes. His voice, whether triumphant or despairing, is always heard. “The ‘I’ telling the story” is intertwined with the “‘I’ who experiences it,” so that the reader is obliged to perceive the protagonist “through the eyes of the omniscient narrator” (Sorokin, 26). By the end of the novel, Levin-Tolstoy of *Anna Karenina* embraces the teachings found in the Sermon on the Mount, which became so central to the life of the writer. He is full of happiness and love for all in his life. Levin-Tolstoy, however, is realistic enough to admit that he will not always be perfect, that he will still at times act harshly when he forgets life’s meaning and beauty. Levin’s love for Kitty and his spiritual renewal is expressed in very practical words,

Это новое чувство не изменило меня, не осчастливило, не просветило вдруг, как я мечтал... но чувство это как же незаметно вошло страданиями и твердо засело в душе. Так же буду сердиться на Ивана кучера, так - же буду спорить, буду нехотать высказывать свои мысли, так же будет стена между святой святых моей души и другими, даже женой моей, так же буду обвинять ее за свой страх и раскаиваться в этом, так же буду не понимать разумом, зачем я молюсь, и буду молиться, - что жизнь моя теперь, вся моя жизнь, независимо от всего, что может случиться со мной, каждая минута ее - не только не бессмысленна, как была прежде, но имеет несомненный смысл добра, который я властен вложить в нее! (PSS, 19, 399).

Aylmer Maude, Tolstoy’s biographer, translator and disciple, alludes to Levin’s revelation while he speaks of the writer himself. “No sudden break was apparent in his external life: what followed evolved from what had gone before.” (Maude 1911, A). Inner

transformation is a recurring theme throughout Tolstoy's works. "Tolstoy's novels resemble the sentimental novel of education called the *Bildungsroman* - a development of a traditional genre that employs the simple narrative of the picaresque tradition to depict a leisurely odyssey to self-awareness by a hero who ripens into maturity after a series of adventures that range from the sensual to the sublime" (Sorokin, 23). While this is accurate of Levin's experience, it is also an unmistakable description of Nekhliudov's awakening, or resurrection. Just as the writer of *Анна Каренина* had aged considerably by the time he wrote *Воскресение*, so had Nekhliudov progressed spiritually from Levin. In the final words of the novel, witness Tolstoy's intent, if not his actions.

С этой ночи началась для Нехлюдова совсем новая жизнь, не столько потому, что он вступил в новые условия жизни, а потому, что все, что случилось с ним с этих пор, получало для него совсем иное, чем прежде, значение, чем кончится этот новый период его жизни, покажет будущее. (PSS 32, 445).

While both Levin's and Nekhliudov's revelation seem clear and penetrating, Tolstoy, in reality, struggled immensely in attempting to follow through with his own beliefs. He was forever torn between his spiritual nature and earthly nature. This war between natures would continue to rage until the end of his life. Because his beliefs were so strict, and his expectations were so unyielding, Tolstoy often fell short of his spiritual aims. Ironically, in this way he seems to pattern the apostle Paul, whose dogma he despised, claiming it gave "a fatal bias to Christianity, which...prevented the majority of men from understanding what Jesus meant" (Maude 1911, 40-41). Paul writes to the Christians in Rome, "For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing... making me prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members" (Romans 7:19, 23b). It was the evil of earthly pleasures and temptations of a "luxurious" life, which tormented Tolstoy. This theme of continual self-betrayal and guilt is found early on in his journals. Even after his spiritual transformation, like Levin and the apostle Paul, he often found himself doing the very things he despised and rejected. Seemingly, everything had changed internally; externally, however, very little may have been altered.

This chapter will touch on the most notable aspects of the writer's and philanthropist's spiritual philosophy and theology as they seem most closely related to this discussion of the Doukhobors. Tolstoyism as a religion or philosophy may be easier to identify and categorize than the thoughts of the mere man. As a man's thoughts and ideas change and grow, so it is difficult to pin point a specific creed, which Tolstoy held definitively for the majority of his life. Throughout his life Tolstoy was at war, and almost never at peace. He was at war primarily with himself, secondarily with God. Maksim

Gorkii in his memoirs of the Russian author, reflects, “С Богом у него очень неопределенные отношения, но иногда они напоминают мне отношения «двух медведей в одной берлоге».” (Gorkii, 18).

At the onset of his spiritual transformation in 1881, Tolstoy immediately discredited all the great works of literature he had written including *Война и Мир* and *Анна Каренина*. He regarded them as sinful, decadent and regretted even having written them (Mavor, 89). Although Tolstoy turned to didactic writing, discrediting his own literature, must we also discredit these works at his mere word? In terms of understanding the man between the years 1881 to his death in 1910, yes we must. In terms of appreciating his influence on the world, even on his followers, no, by no means.

It was to be, however, from *Исповедь* in 1881, to *Царство Божие внутри вас* in 1893, to finally, *Воскресение* in 1899 which would most profoundly influence the Doukhobors and their charismatic leader Petr Verigin. What follows is the crux of Tolstoy's religious beliefs as most germane to the Doukhobors. This chapter is by no means meant to be a comprehensive study of Tolstoy's religious thinking, but merely a summary of the beliefs, which were mostly closely shared by the Doukhobors.

3.1 THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT AND TOLSTOY'S THEOLOGY

Theologically, Tolstoy had never aligned himself with the status quo, that is, either with the consensus of society or the Orthodox Church. While still in grammar school, little Lev listened with rapt attention as a neighboring peer announced during a visit one day that their school had made a great discovery: there was no God. This news apparently made a large enough impact on young Tolstoy, for he mentions it on the first page of his *Исповедь*. From that point on in his young life, it seems Tolstoy had acquired the knack of questioning, doubting and challenging any idea, which might otherwise be construed as traditional or superstitious. As will be seen later on, Tolstoy, much like Christ, most ferociously despised all that was senseless, misleading and insincere. It was to be the superstitious dogma of the Church and many of its members' insincerity that was to eventually cause Tolstoy to speak out against such a faith. It was also to bring about his inevitable ex-communication from the Orthodox Church, on the one hand, and his eventual influence in the international community, on the other.

Но Христос никак не мог основать церковь, т.е. то, что мы теперь понимаем под этим словом, потому что ничего подобного понятию церкви такой, какую знаем теперь с таинствами, иерархией и, главное с своим утверждением непогрешимости, не было ни в словах Христа, ни в понятиях людей того времени. (PSS. 28, 45 *Царство Божие внутри вас*).

Infallibility was a dangerous concept. It meant complete control. It assumed there would be no questioning. Infallibility paved a path for the vulnerable and uneducated to be exploited. Infallibility of one church, a man-made institution, ignored the holiness of the individual. It ignored the “inner spirit,” the “God within man.” Tolstoy was eventually to discover the meaning of his life in service to others, namely the Doukhobors and other persecuted people and religious sects. This service, he argued, must be carried out only through admission of the truth. “For behold,” he quotes, “the Kingdom of God is within you.”

This embodiment of God’s kingdom was a concept not originating with Tolstoy. On various occasions the writer refers to it as the “inner voice” or the “inner spirit”, thus speaking in the same tongue as the Doukhobors. One major fallacy of the Orthodox Church, according to Tolstoy, was that divine truth was given strictly through the united whole. This, of course, rendered the individual immaterial and subservient to whatever the priests and patriarchs deemed true. Tolstoy believed that even a child could read the Gospels and understand what was important, because the words of Christ were clear, and because a piece of the divine resides in each individual, not in an institution.

The concept of the “inner spirit” has already been adequately discussed in Chapter Two on the Doukhobors’ belief system. Although modified in varying degrees, the “inner spirit” or “inner voice” is also evident in the Quaker faith, Gnosticism, the Bahai faith, and to a lesser extent in some of the Protestant groups like the Anabaptists. This “inner spirit,” according to Tolstoy, empowered the individual to live a simple life, but a life closely connected to Christ’s teachings. As Tolstoy speaks through his protagonists, he illustrates his belief that all spiritual awakenings and enlightened understanding are due to this inner consciousness, the divine spark within. Nekhliudov, in *Воскресение*, prays to God once he realizes his hypocrisy and asks God to purify him from any deceit. “О чем [Нехлюдов] просил, уже совершилось. Бог, живший в нем, проснулся в его сознании. Он... почувствовал не только свободу, бодрость и радость жизни, но почувствовал все могущество добра. Все, все самое лучшее, что только мог сделать человек, он чувствовал себя теперь способным сделать.”(PSS 32, 103).

Tolstoy, as a profound observer of the human mind and spirit, believed life ought to be lived simply and unceremoniously. The idea “все самое лучшее, что только мог сделать человек” boggled the imagination, rather than limited his vision. It demanded he strive for perfection and achieve it, rather than resign himself to the fact that he was a mere mortal with a sinful nature. It demanded moral perfection. Because of this, his vision went beyond living from Sunday to Sunday, going through the motions of the sacraments. His life should be patterned after Christ’s teachings and these teachings should embrace the whole of his life. (PSS 23, 451, *В чем моя вера*).

What the Orthodox Church, and indeed many institutionalized religions, had fashioned was a set of rules and pointless activities, i.e. sacraments, completely extraneous to the Gospels or the teachings of Christ. These sacraments seemed to Tolstoy all the more horrid because they mystified the masses into thinking that by attending special services and holding the two fingers and the thumb together in crossing oneself, one was fulfilling the purpose of life, that there was special meaning in eating some bread and drinking some wine if a priest gave it to you on Sunday morning, whereas if you partook of this simple meal at home, you were only getting a bite to eat. Whereas Christ said, “worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:26), the Church took great pains in teaching the young how to cross oneself properly using the two fingers and thumb. Whereas Christ said, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” the Church year after year ignored the plight of the poor and perpetuated fear and dependency among the people.

In his most didactic novel ever, Tolstoy stands on his soap box accusing society, law, the judicial system, the penal system, land ownership and most blatantly and cynically, the Orthodox Church (among other religious groups). Like both the narrator and Nekhliudov, Tolstoy simultaneously attacks the Church and the Tsarist government, believing them to be inextricably tied together. Although he attacks the Church on the grounds of being a violent institution, he most frequently used Nekhliudov to attack it for their indulgent use of sacraments, namely what Tolstoy viewed as the preposterous sacrament of transubstantiation.

The idea that the priests taught that Christ’s body could be preserved and then given to the public to eat, as a token of remembrance was both grotesque and blasphemous to Tolstoy. Nekhliudov views a prison worship service aghast at the ridiculous event. He is left feeling amazed that no one sees the contradictions in praying “*toro camoro Bora, которого он ел.*” (PSS 32, 136). Elsewhere in the same novel, Tolstoy again raises his voice against the Church blinding people to the clear and simple message of Christ from the Gospels. The Church was, in effect, the mediator and the people only had to follow. Tolstoy this time uses the wrongly accused Maslova to emphasize his own point, “*И никому из присутствующих... кончая Масловой, не приходило в голову, что тот самый Иисус... запретил одним людям называть учителями других людей, запретил молитвы в храмах... и что молиться надо не в храмах, а в духе и истине; а запретил всякое насилие над людьми, сказав, что он пришел выпустить плененных на свободу.*” (PSS 32, 137 - 138). Tolstoy’s theology differed from Orthodoxy in that Tolstoy’s “God” never created senseless behavior. According to Tolstoy, God would never entangle people in factions and usury, or incite people to violence and war in His name (Kozlov, 84).

Tolstoy differentiated between the Christian religion and the Christian church. He saw the two in terms of extreme polarities. The former joyfully welcomes in new beliefs as they are tested for the truth. Each individual is to reject what is not in agreement with reason, and accept what advances the truth. The latter looks upon every doctrine as not only foreign but also threatening and therefore, harmful. “Но христианская религия,” he states, “и христианская церковь не есть одно и то же, и мы не имеем никакого права предполагать, что то, что свойственно христианской религии, свойственно и христианской церкви” (PSS 34, 293 *О веротерпимости*). In attacking the “христианская церковь” Tolstoy primarily has the Russian Orthodox Church in mind, as it is the Church most visible in Tolstoy’s life and immediate surroundings. That said, however, the Catholic Church, indeed any highly institutionalized religious organization, would have suffered the brunt of Tolstoy’s displeasure with those controlling the people behind a veil of superstitions and contrived doctrines. The Orthodox Church was to excommunicate him in 1901, but Tolstoy had rejected the Church many years prior to that. He had been in contention with this formal institution for most of his life. In reality, it was Tolstoy who was obliged to reject Orthodoxy on the grounds that the Church refused to acknowledge such believers as Molokans, Old Believers, Protestants, etc; the Church blinded innocent and unsuspecting people to the truth, enslaving them through impossible and meaningless rules. Tolstoy found these grievances impossible to overlook.

From childhood, Tolstoy claims that he understood the essence of Christianity to be the perfecting of love, meekness, humility, self-sacrifice and repayment of good for evil (PSS 23, 304, *В чем моя вера*). Because of the hierarchical structure of the church, the violence, prejudices and hatred condoned by the church in the shape of wars, divisive feuds among denominations, and government institutions such as the penal system and executions, he was forced to deny the Christian Church as synonymous with the Christian religion.

Through a life completely devoted to service and attention to others, namely the peasants, Tolstoy hoped to imbue his own life with the deepest meaning. In so doing, he believed he was bringing the Kingdom of God closer to all, for he despised and considered false the audacious and blatant assertion that Christian instruction deals most exclusively with personal salvation. For Tolstoy, Christ’s teachings demanded personal action, but also encompassed public, political and social questions. “Единственный смысл жизни человека состоит в служении миру содействием установлению царства божия. Служение же это может совершиться только через признание истины...” (PSS 28, 293, *Царство Божие внутри вас*).

Tolstoy reflected frequently and at great length on truth. *What is truth?*, Nikolai Nikolaevich Gay’s poignant painting of an accused Christ being questioned as Pilate searches for truth, only stirred Tolstoy’s heart even more in his own quest (Maude 1911,

410). His understanding of truth was heavily influenced by his love for all the common folk, and by his admiration for Christ as a reasonable and persuasive prophet. Oddly enough, Tolstoy almost never refers to the prophet as Jesus, his given Jewish name, but nearly always as Christ. The name Christ is, of course, from the Greek Χριστός, equal to the Jewish term for Messiah, meaning “the anointed one,” that is, the one holy and set apart by God. For the Jews, in particular, this anointing was for kings, specifically all Kings of Israel. God’s Son, the Christ, was known as the King of Kings. Yet Tolstoy wholly discredited the notion that Christ, that is the man Jesus, was deity.

Tolstoy ranked parts of the Bible according to their perceived religious value. The Old Testament was least significant. It was held in equal weight with the religious writings of other nations and faiths. He considered the Old Testament among some of the world’s finest literature. He at one time listed the story of Joseph’s bondage in Egypt, from the first book of the Pentateuch, as one of the most influential stories of his childhood and youth. On the other hand, however, other portions of the Old Testament were simply vulgar, crude, primitive and immoral. He felt many of the books to be barbaric in their violence, and shameful in their open dealings with sexual relations and polygamy (Maude 1911, 40-42).

He holds the New Testament in much higher regard, believing it to contain essays and historical accounts based on the continuation of Jesus’ teaching. However, this must be carefully weighed against the fact that much of the New Testament Tolstoy is readily prepared to dispose of as a false basis to Christianity. As mentioned earlier, he had no great affection for Paul. He saw Paul as allying the church too closely to the state, and giving false meaning to Christianity through a fabricated scheme of personal redemption (Maude 1911, 41). For example in Romans 13: 1-2,5, Paul writes to Christians in Rome, saying,

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. All authorities that exist have been created by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves...Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

As will be discussed later, Tolstoy, as well as the Doukhobors, would have had major qualms regarding the surface interpretation of these verses. He saw the government impeding Christ’s ideals, not carrying them out. If anything, groups such as the Doukhobors were left with no alternative but to oppose any government which demanded

they act contrary to Christ's law of love and non-violence. In this way, they were obliged to rebel against the authorities "because of conscience."

Another area of disagreement with the apostle Paul was indeed his doctrine on redemption. Tolstoy strove for moral perfection. He saw himself failing every day, but he believed strongly that such perfection was within the human grasp, otherwise Christ would not have set such rigid demands. Tolstoy taught the inherent goodness of humanity. That which was human, "человеческое," was synonymous to that which was decent and spiritual, that is "духовное" (Kozlov, 250.) Paul, however, stresses the fallen state of man and the hopelessness of his condition without the salvation of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Again, Paul writes to the Romans,

There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. (Romans 3:22b-25a).

Tolstoy found such doctrine, which concentrated to such an extent on death both deceitful and morbid. His distaste for Paul and others that preached the scheme of redemption was peculiarly evident in *Воскресение*. While the Orthodox Church took most of the criticism in the novel, the Evangelicals were likewise heavily reproached. This group was gaining in popularity in Russia at the time Tolstoy wrote the novel, particularly among members of high society. In fact, every Redemptionist the reader encounters within the novel is portrayed as ridiculous, hypocritical and affected.

Tolstoy ridiculed the Protestant faiths through the inconsistent, yet benign character of Katerina Ivanova, Nekhliudov's well to-do aunt. This benevolent woman was incessantly busy, bustling about between this and that. She opened her home once weekly for assemblies of the "faithful." Tolstoy describes her as believing in the Redemption as it was in fashion at the time. Although as an Evangelical she did not believe in the use of icons or any kind of outward symbol, she still displayed the Orthodox icons in various corners of her home. (PSS 32, 248 - 249).

The most stinging portrayal of Protestantism in this novel is seen through a character barely mentioned: Keisewetter, the English-speaking German preacher. It is interesting in itself that Tolstoy deems it necessary for the evangelist to be of foreign extraction, more specifically German. It might be intriguing to note here that, with the possible exception of Karl Ivanich in *Демство*, Tolstoy's readers encounter only Germans of inhumane, ridiculous and hypocritical character. In fact, by having him speak in a foreign tongue as well, Tolstoy emphasized, at least through allusion, that salvation must be through Russia. "Спасенье это – пролитая за нас кровь единственного сына

Бора, отдавшего себя за нас на мучение.” Keisewetter preached with great emotion, tears welling up in his eyes as Tolstoy describes, “без ошибки, как только он доходил до этого места своей очень нравившейся ему речи, он чувствовал спазму в горле, щипание в носу, и из глазтекли слезы. И эти слезы еще больше трогали его.” (PSS 32, 261 - 262). Keisewetter is not so much a misguided theologian to Tolstoy and his readers, but a dramatic orator, an actor. Through parody, Tolstoy refutes Protestantism and the apostle Paul’s doctrine of the scheme of redemption.

The Gospels rank higher in Tolstoy’s eyes, yet even here in the territory that is most hallowed for the majority of Christians, he grants himself the right to take issue with a few ideas. His very loose interpretation of the Gospels and the Bible, in general, is possible because he does not view these works as “inspired” or directly from God. For Tolstoy these were didactic works, and in some cases lacking in historical and philosophical accuracy.

Of the greatest significance to Tolstoy were the parables told by Jesus and the sound, practical lessons expounded on, namely in the Sermon on the Mount. Within this sermon, given not only to Jesus’ closest, but also to interested crowds, Christ bestows to all the highest form of truth. Where the Gospels fail is in the insistence on miracles. These miracles only interrupt the flow of beautiful tales and pure teaching. They served no useful purpose and distracted the reader.

“In treating of the Gospel miracles,” Maude writes in his biography of the writer, “Tolstoy is interested only in what moral they convey, for he feels much as Matthew Arnold did, that if one sees a man walking on the water, one may be perplexed but not assured that he is going to speak the truth; for ability to walk on the water is a physical matter, whereas truth-telling is spiritual.” (Maude 1911, 42).

Physical matter and the spiritual are two entirely opposing concepts to Tolstoy. One is substance, the other is eternal, ethereal. While Tolstoy was arguably the closest among the Russian writers of his era, to the peasants and lower classes, he seemed always to be striving to transcend the physical body, rather than appreciate it. To his last days, the physical world and the spiritual would be in conflict.

It was most convenient for Tolstoy that he did not believe even in the infallibility of the Gospels, for in this way, he was able to provide the world with his own kind of translation. *Краткое Изложение Евангелия* was less of a proper translation than a consolidation and paraphrasing of what he had studied primarily from the Russian version and to a lesser extent the Greek. The reader quickly feels the writer’s prejudices and beliefs. Upon reading this Gospel version, the reader can in no way perceive Christ as a deity, nor does the reader encounter a miraculous event, as such. Whereas the Orthodox Church reads the feeding of the five thousand as a miraculous event (Luke 9:10-17), Tolstoy interpreted the same story as a testament to communal work. Within the story, as

retold in *Краткое Изложение Евангелия*, there is no evidence that Christ miraculously materialized bread and fish into existence, but rather it is most likely he had previously set these items aside. The feeding of the five thousand, then, becomes a parable, which demonstrates that humanity will benefit by sharing in the work and likewise, sharing in the harvest (PSS 23, 431-432, *В чем моя вера*).

Because Tolstoy saw Christ as a prophet only and discounted his miracles, it becomes difficult to determine the writer's position on the resurrection and even on the afterlife of humanity. Heaven and hell seem to exist on earth in direct proportion to how we live our lives. Heaven is found in living one's life in dedicated service to others. Without this, there is no meaning to one's own personal life. (PSS 23, 388, *В чем моя вера*). In terms of afterlife, in general, Tolstoy is extremely vague. It is almost as if he is either not convinced of anything himself, or else he discounts the entire subject as of little importance, and therefore, need not necessarily formulate an established opinion. Of the corporeal and spiritual, the latter was by far the most pressing to Tolstoy. "Доказательство бессмертия души есть ее существование." Although Tolstoy agreed with the Orthodox Church inasmuch as they both adhered to the immortality of the soul, Tolstoy had a much less concrete conviction of the soul's fate. "Все изменяется, и это изменение мы называем смертью, но ничего не исчезает. Сущность всякого существа - материя - остается... Сущность души есть самосознание" (Kozlov, 15). The human soul changes with death, but, according to Tolstoy, our consciousness, the soul, never dies. He seems to fluctuate between a belief in a type of reincarnation and an ambiguous belief in some form of afterlife. In any case, Tolstoy is less concerned with the reality of an afterlife and more devoted to the Kingdom of God of the here and now. (Maude 1911, 40). For this reason, it is not difficult to see why he was so taken with groups like the Doukhobors, and why similarities have been drawn between Tolstoy's religious thinking and the Bahai faith, and to a lesser extent, Gnosticism.

Within the Gospels, however, there is one position, which Tolstoy holds as true without exception. According to Tolstoy, Christ came to destroy the Mosaic Law; Christ set out to rid his people of violence and hatred, and in return, gave them clear guidelines by which to lead their lives. This was, of course, the Sermon on the Mount, found in its most extended form in Matthew chapters five through seven. From this extraordinary sermon, Tolstoy gleans from the sermon five commandments or five laws of Christ.

In fulfilling these five commandments found in the Sermon on the Mount, one can, according to Tolstoy's understanding, quicken the Kingdom of God upon earth. This means peace would be the governing principle and all people would embrace each other as brothers. Here Christ's commandments are clear and within human attainability.

- 1.) Live at peace with all men. Never consider your anger against anyone justified. (Matthew 5:21-28).
- 2.) Refrain from sexual relations. If this is not entirely possible, then have sexual relations with the initial partner of one's life. (Matthew 5:27-32).
- 3.) Do not swear, speak in vulgar language, or take any kind of oath. This command includes even oaths given by the state. It is enough to obey the will of God and be answerable to no man. (Matthew 5:33-37).
- 4.) Resist not the evildoer under any circumstances. Practice non-resistance even to the point of fleeing from self-defense or in defending another, even at the risk of being beaten or severely harmed. (Matthew 5:38-42).
- 5.) Love one's enemies. Do good to all alike. (Matthew 5:43-48)
(PSS 23, 347-371 *В чем моя вера*).

While there are only five commandments, as opposed to the ten Mosaic, they encompass all aspects of life. Moreover, Tolstoy was convinced of the possibility of a mere man fulfilling them all.

И со всех сторон я слышу один, разными словами выражаемый, один и тот же ответ: "Учение Христа очень хорошо, и правда, что исполнении его установилось бы царство бога на земле, но оно трудно и потому неисполнимо."
Учение Христа о том, как должны жить люди, божественно, хорошо и дает благо людям, но людям трудно исполнять его
(PSS 23, 372 *В чем моя вера*).

While it might be easy to point fingers at Tolstoy in condemnation that he also did not live perfectly according to his beliefs, one must also appreciate the severity of his standards. Perhaps he is easy to condemn, because his aspirations were so high. Even so Tolstoy possessed a clear vision for everyday living. Although Maude did not agree with Tolstoy's ideas as much as Tolstoy himself would have liked, Maude did have a profound appreciation for the mind of the man.

"One great superiority of Tolstoy's interpretation over the Orthodox lies in the fact that his statement, whether it be a right or wrong presentation of Jesus, means something clear and definite, and links religion to daily life." (Maude 1911, 37-38).

3.2 ANARCHISM AND NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL¹

Tolstoy preached the five commandments of Christ, and indeed tried with varied success to live accordingly. The fourth commandment, however, was closest to him. Tolstoy saw Matthew 5:38-39 as key to the Sermon on the Mount and as the basis for the whole of Christianity. "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth?' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person."

Tolstoy understood these verses to be literal and applicable in every situation. Christ was not demanding that his people turn in fear or suffer, but if it was necessary, they must be prepared to suffer, even through persecution. The Kingdom of God would come only through the perfection of these five commands. "Do not resist an evil person" applied to a cantankerous neighbor, an evil murderer, a thief; it applied to the demands made by the government, and it eradicated the justification of violence on grounds of self-defense, or defending the helpless. Violence only begets violence and can only be destroyed through peace.

The American pacifist Adin Ballou details his apology for peace in his article "How Many Does It Take?" Ballou, who devoted over fifty years of his life to non-violence had been a fellow worker with the illustrious American pacifist preacher William Lloyd Garrison. "Сколько нужно людей," Tolstoy paraphrases Ballou, "чтобы преобразить злодейство в праведность... Один человек не должен убивать. Если он убил, он преступник, он убийца. Два, десять, сто человек, если они делают это, - они убийцы. Но государство или народ может убивать, сколько он хочет, и это не будет убийство, а хорошо, доброе дело...бойня десятков тысяч людей становится невинным делом (PSS 28, 10 Царство Божие внутри Вас).

This law of non-resistance to evil was most imperative in living a Christian life. On various occasions, Tolstoy found himself in arguments with Jewish rabbis, evangelicals, members of his household and correspondents over the efficacy of non-resistance. Not only was this command practicable, but it was non-negotiable. In order for Christ's intentions to be obeyed, one must resist even at the risk of persecution. Although Tolstoy himself, as well as a few of his followers such as Vladimir Chertkov, seemed to enjoy a certain degree of impunity from the tsarist government, the writer immensely admired people who were tested at great cost to their health and lives, and were found victorious. He idealized the Doukhobors, applauded the Molokans and Quakers and surely would have commended the future actions of a young Indian correspondent, Mahatma Gandhi.

¹ Logically, this pacifist doctrine, perhaps ought to be expressed as "non-violent resistance to evil." However, Tolstoy's concept of "непротивление злу" was inspired by Matthew 5:39, which reads, "Do not resist an evil person." In *Царство Божие внутри вас*, Tolstoy, while adopting William Lloyd Garrison's concepts and phraseology, predominantly expresses his ideas in terms of "непротивление злу," except in direct reference to Mt. 5:39, which he articulates as "заповедь непротивления злу насилием" (PSS 28,4). In any case, the abbreviated phrase has become the accepted norm, both in English, as well as in Tolstoy's rhetoric.

“Движение к добру человечества совершается не мучителями, а мучениками. Как огонь не тушит огня, так зло не может потушить зла. Только добро, встречая зло и не заражаясь им, побеждает зло” (PSS 23, 334 *В чем моя вера*). Through the persecution of the righteous, namely the Russian peasants, and their fortitude in long-suffering, the kingdom of God was being realized on the earth.

The perpetrators and persecutors were the government. The difficulty in living out the fourth commandment was that “an evil person” claimed an enormous amount of authority. Tolstoy saw society being corrupted at the hands of government. Violence was a sin in action as well as in thought. Christ taught that to hate a man, or to call him a fool, was the same as murder. Therefore, any evil intention was tantamount to murder; by refraining from helping your fellow brother or sister in need, one was condoning the violence.

Because the government supported so many institutions of violence and hate (i.e. military establishments, war, the penal system, the poverty attached to the peasantry and lower classes) Tolstoy could in no way condone their practices nor keep silent. Even after his break with the Orthodox Church, Tolstoy remained somewhat of a Slavophile. Tolstoy can be construed as a Slavophile in the sense that he loved Russia and saw Russia being saved through her own means, through her own true people, the peasants. Charles Sarolea, the Belgian author of *Count L. N. Tolstoy: His Life and Works*, claimed that Tolstoy “was at heart a patriot, and a nationalist, and that his thoughts more and more centered around his own country. And especially now, ...under the influence of alien principles, he was thrown back on his Russian preconceptions and sympathies, and he asserted himself as a Russian of the Russians” (336). He rejected Western ideas as false and self-centered. The West was inherently tainted. The salvation of humanity was to come through Russia. The Slavophiles and Tolstoy “alike regard Russia as superior to, and more truly Christian than, the rest of the world, and conclude that she should therefore not follow in the footsteps of Western constitutionalism” (Maude 1911, 9). Tolstoy, in many ways, epitomizes the distinctively Russian character of the time. Kozlov confirms Tolstoy’s complex contradictoriness through a quote by the theoretician and critic N. K. Mikhailovskii, “‘Десница и шуйца Л. Толстого,’ отрицая ‘салонность, славянофильство, аристократизм,’ приписываемые Толстому, справедливо подчеркнул глубокую противоречивость писателя - ‘трагический разлад сознания, чувства пробудившейся совести’” (116-117).

Through anarchism his interest in the Doukhobors was roused as he saw them as exemplary leaders in Christian communalism. The Doukhobors were almost exclusively

Russian,² of peasant stock, and they were anarchists, in no way in need of a ruling government. For these reasons Tolstoy appreciated them and eagerly awaited the salvation of the world to come through the Russian people. For these reasons most likely he favored the Doukhobors over other agrarian and pacifist groups, like the American and English Quakers or the German Mennonites. “Tolstoy seems to me,” espouses Mavor, “to be too well aware of the psychology of the Russian peasant to idealise him, as the Slavophiles and many of the revolutionary groups were prone to do” (Mavor, 76). Mavor noticed an enormous difference between Tolstoy and his peasants. Although friendly, Tolstoy’s demeanor toward those he employed was not as a fellow-worker. “The intellectual and moral difference between Tolstoy and his peasants constituted a gulf much wider and more impassable than any social gulf” (68). Mavor was confident that “Tolstoy, had he lived, might have been appalled at the consequences of the Revolution, but had he been told beforehand that civilisation would have been swept away, I do not think he would have been moved. In his Messianism Tolstoy also represented Russia, which looks upon herself as a Messiah among the nations.” (89).

Although Tolstoy detested the tsarist government, he had no affection or preference for any other, for it was government itself, which was the enemy. As highly as Tolstoy lauded the Doukhobors, and their kind, so much more did he blame the government for cruelty to its own people, for destroying those he considered saints, the peasantry and lower classes. “С тех пор,” he writes, damning the government as they had previously damned so many helpless,

началась для Масловой та жизнь хронического преступления заповедей божеских и человеческих, которая ведется сотнями и сотнями тысяч женщин не только с разрешения, но под покровительством правительственной власти...и кончается для девяти женщин из десяти мучительными болезнями, преждевременной дряхлостью и смертью. (PSS 32, 10-11 *Воскресение*).

The American printer and socialist Henry George influenced both Nekhliudov and the real life Tolstoy. George’s single land tax theory, a solution to the wealthy or government owning all the land, was founded on the assumption that land ownership was morally wrong. “We must make land common property,” George argued (George de Mille). George drew further distinctions between “absolute private property” and “conditional private property,” that is the idea that individuals ought to be obliged to pay

² Their forced migratory lifestyle eventually created Doukhobors of Ukrainian, Mordvinian and Cossack descent, as well as Russian.

reasonable rent to the community in exchange for the land, while still retaining the individual property rights. George posed the convincing argument that no one had the right to own property. Land was like sky, water or air: it belongs to all and cannot be bought or sold. Tolstoy reasoned that if one was to “resist him that is evil” one must also avoid the very appearance of evil. Nekhliudov particularly embraces Henry George’s practical ideas with his own peasants. Although, much to Nekhliudov’s chagrin, the peasants do not seem elated with having to pay for rights to the harvest, Nekhliudov remains convinced he has acted morally in giving the bounty of the land to those who work it (PSS 32, 16, 218, 220-226). Tolstoy reasoned further that if one did own property, one would be obligated to defend it in case of physical threat. Perhaps a man would never need to resort to violence to save his property, but the threat would still remain. One must never, on any occasion, be prepared for violence. Therefore, land ownership should not exist.

It is here where one may truly commend Tolstoy for his honesty and fidelity to what he preached. In this belief, like no other, he comes the closest to living according to his ideals than any other writer from his social class, for though he remained on his own land, in 1884 he turned his estate over to his wife and children. Compared to other practical champions of the simple and peaceful life, Tolstoy’s efforts may have seemed pointless. Mavor, for example, elevates Prince Petr Kropotkin above Tolstoy, claiming the socialist-revolutionary had completely reconciled his beliefs to his actions. “He exploited no one and benefited by no hereditary privileges. When he threw himself into the social movement, he knew he must abandon his property. Morally, therefore, he stands on a higher plane than Tolstoy” (105). While it might seem a feeble effort, Tolstoy spent the remainder of his life defending both non-resistance and communal work. Regardless of the fact that Tolstoy never achieved his “realisation of the ideally simple life,” the writer nevertheless, deserves to be considered primarily a moral example rather than a failure. Moreover, Mavor argued that Tolstoy’s “insistence upon ideal life is, however, by no means fruitless. It has the effect of startling otherwise complacently selfish and sensuous persons, and of impelling towards better things even although it does not induce them to abandon their property and their social and domestic obligations” (182). Charles Sarolea, the Belgian lecturer in French literature at Edinburgh University, somewhat hesitantly confirms this. Although Sarolea rather strictly judges Tolstoy for the lack of “courage of absolute self-renunciation” (295), he ultimately admits the beauty and the good in even the weakest attempt toward perfection. “The failures of dreamers like Tolstoy are more constructive and more glorious than the successes of practical statesmen” (315). Some have cynically proposed that guilt drove Tolstoy to come to the aid of the Doukhobors, that “his actions [were] that of a ‘repentant nobleman,’” trying to “compensate for past injustices inflicted on the poor.” (Donskov 1998, 9). A more balanced and honest

approach to Tolstoy's motives might be to appreciate their similar views on non-resistance to evil and land ownership.

“Я верю теперь в то, что благо мое и людей возможно только тогда, когда каждый будет трудиться не для себя, а для другого, и не только не будет отстаивать от другого свой труд, но будет отдавать его каждому, кому он нужен” (PSS 23, 459 *В чем моя вера*). Indeed, he gave enough of himself to ultimately alter a people's destiny.

3.3 HUMAN PLEASURES: Luxury, Diet and Sexual Relations

While it is possible to look upon Tolstoy's motives in aiding the Doukhobors' cause benevolently, admitting the role that guilt played in many of his beliefs is unavoidable. This is, of course, no clearer than his views regarding physical pleasures. Tolstoy was introduced in this chapter as a man lacking in moderation, and indeed, he struggled his entire life to curb various passions, particularly rich foods and frequent sexual experiences. As an old man, he was eventually successful in regimenting himself to a vegetarian diet, which some of his more devoted daughters eventually began to follow as well. Due to the example of William Frey, Tolstoy himself converted to vegetarianism in his later life. V.K. Heins, the original name of the Russian born Frey, visited the Tolstoyans in October 1885, preaching the virtues and moral appropriateness of a strictly vegetarian life style (Maude, 215). While Frey seemed to adhere to vegetarianism on the grounds of decency and health, Tolstoy adopted it as one more doctrine to be followed strictly, one more area of his life which would eventually cause him guilt and remorse. Anna Seuron records in her history of the writer: “And really from that time Lev Nikolaevich ate nothing that was slaughtered, and at one time went so far as to live on oatmeal porridge” (Maude 1911, 218).

As a young man, Tolstoy was often overcome by guilt, painfully aware of his ineptitude to curb his sexual passions. He began early on to record many of his failures in living a chaste and moral life. Tolstoy was twenty-three when he wrote,

Вчера была у меня козачка. Я почти всю ночь не спал... К счастью все тем-же, в несколько дней я не успел переделать все то, чего не оправдываю. Резкие перевероты невозможны. Имел женщин, оказался слаб во многих случаях - в простых отношениях с людьми, в опасности, в карточной игре, и все также одержим ложным стыдом (PSS 46, 87-88; 25 August, 4 September 1851).

Yet it was not only sexual promiscuity that Tolstoy fought against, but also a host of other perceptibly self-indulgent and morally degenerate vices, such as laziness and

egotism. He longed not only to purge himself of the negative traits, but fill himself with everything admirable. Much like the American philosopher Benjamin Franklin, he sought moral perfection and as a young adult in his late teens and early twenties, created a phenomenal amount of work for himself in order to achieve his objective. Unlike Franklin, however, Tolstoy never learned to appreciate any progressive steps he might have made, but instead beat himself emotionally, furious that he could not discipline himself so completely as he wished. Nearly seventy, Tolstoy recorded his feelings in his journal toward his eldest daughter's upcoming marriage. "К браку приманивает половое влечение, принимающее вид обещания, надежды на счастье, кот[орое] поддерживает обществ[енное] мнение и литература, но брак есть не только не счастье, но всегда страдание, кот[орым] человек платится за удовлетворение полов[ого] желания..." (PSS 53, 229). This is not only an outrageously hostile view of marriage, but also a telling statement of the guilt that propelled Tolstoy into further exaggeration in his old age.

Tolstoy's dilemma lay in his understanding of the physical world. He could not bring himself to love boldly food and drink, nor to appreciate his body and sex with his wife, because he saw the physical as evil, or tainted at the very least. If God were in nature, Tolstoy concluded, He could best be obeyed by living according to all his natural impulses. This idea was repugnant to Tolstoy. There remained the converse: God resided outside the physical realm, and therefore, he could best be obeyed by resisting all natural and physical impulses. This extreme understanding created an inner dilemma so intense that Tolstoy would despair over consuming a bowl of pudding, enjoying a game of chess or at his continual failure to resist his wife's physical advances.

For Tolstoy "eating and fornicating constitute two of the human activities through which people seek to satisfy their carnal desire for sensual pleasures." (Le Blanc, 1-2). Food and sex were intricately tied together so that if one transgressed in a single area, one was sure to fail in the other. In a concerned letter of 27-30 October 1895 to his young son Mikhail, Tolstoy warns him against the allurements of food and sex. These things deaden the senses, "stupefy," and deaden the moral conscience. According to Tolstoy, seeking pleasure from food and sex deadens the spiritual part of our human nature, "а и то и другое губит под корень душу человека" (PSS 68, 242). By 1895 Tolstoy had not only become increasingly devoted to perfecting his own "moral conscience," but in also acting as a sort of prophet and example for kindred spirits like the Doukhobors and the burgeoning number of Tolstoyans. For himself and his spiritual dependants it was mandatory he remain strong and not allow himself to be "stupefied" by any immorality no matter how enticing.

Thus was also born his previously mentioned conversion to vegetarianism. A vegetarian diet was the logical result in avoiding fleshly, carnal desires. "Только на то,

чтобы воспитывать зверские чувства, разводить похоть, блуд, пьянство... как одно вытекает из другого, что добродетель не совместима с бифстексом, и как только пожелают быть добрыми, - бросают мясную пищу.”(PSS 29, 84).

In *Анна Каренина* Tolstoy pours his own concerns of both stupefying his moral conscience and promoting fornication and drunkenness through carnivorousism into the scene with Levin and Oblonsky dining at a Moscow restaurant. As Oblonsky, who has just been found out in his sexual indiscretions, gorges himself on oysters and roast beef, the virginal Levin refuses a shot of vodka simply because he feels unclean after seeing a Frenchwoman “вся составленная... из чужих волос, poudre de rit и vinaigre de toilette.” (PSS 18, 37). While Oblonsky is thoroughly enjoying himself, the meal, company and surroundings, Levin feels shamefully provincial in all the decadence and longs for a quick, simple meal of cabbage soup and kasha.

Clearly, Tolstoy never completely lost the physical appetites, namely for food and sex. He possibly vilified them to such an extent, one might assume, that he never permitted himself to simply enjoy anything guiltlessly. Since Tolstoy also believed that a woman’s highest calling was to give birth and raise her children, it’s rather unclear, then, how sexual relations were inherently sinful. Tolstoy did, however, justify sex, at times, within marriage in the hopes and belief that both partners’ appetite for sex would be curbed or would diminish after dutifully having children. “The Christian ideal is that of love of God and one’s fellowman,” Tolstoy taught, “whereas sexual love, marriage is a service of self and consequently in any case an obstacle to the service of God and man and therefore, from a Christian point of view, a fall, a sin.” (Maude 1911, 389).

Within *Воскресение*, Tolstoy provides his readers with a plethora of examples of the high moral fiber of such characters as Simonson, Maslova and Pavlovna. Their moral superiority is manifested not only through good deeds, but even more so through their asexuality. Their search for moral perfection has not been impeded by animal lust.

Simonson, although from Tolstoy’s own land holding class, is the embodiment of the Doukhobor ideals. He is hard-working, against the killing of any creature, and believes his highest service is in protecting and aiding others. He goes so far as to consider himself, as well as Maria Pavlovna, a human phagocyte. This type of white blood cell, while having no part in the reproductive process, carries out its role by attacking any harmful objects such as bacteria within the organism. Simonson, a protector and defender of the helpless and weak, was in love with Maslova, but would never realize this physically; thus he was a human phagocyte. Tolstoy’s voice is unmistakable in Simonson’s conscience: procreation is the lowest function of man, but protecting already existing life is the highest.

After receiving the privilege of traveling with the political prisoners, Maslova’s spiritual love blossoms for mankind and especially in friendship for Pavlovna. “Женщин этих [i.e. Maslova and Pavlovna] сближало еще и то отвращение, которое обе они

испытывали к половой любви. Одна ненавидела эту любовь потому, что извела весь ужас ее; другая потому, что, не испытав ее, смотрела на нее как на что-то непонятное и вместе с тем отвратительное и оскорбительное для человеческого достоинства.” (PSS 32, 368 - 369). Their purity and asexuality is clearly marked in contrast with the novel’s beginning and with Nekhliudov’s lust-driven character. Clearly, the two women were the spiritual ideals in Tolstoy’s mind. Gorkii records him as saying, and surely this is the message to be derived from *Крейцерова Соната*, “Человек переживает землетрясения, эпидемии, ужасы болезней и всякие мучения души, но на все времена для него самой мучительной трагедией была, есть и будет – трагедия спальни.” (Gorkii, 22).

Tolstoy’s turmoil and angst ended only with his death. He died dictating letters to Chertkov for various family members, his biographer and translator Aylmer Maude and a few others. His greatest concerns in his last hours were the emotional state of his family and the weightiness of the legacy he was about to leave the world. He had struggled with his faith the entirety of his life, and it is difficult to conclude whether or not he was satisfied even in death. Whether from obstinacy or from an admirable degree of resolution, Tolstoy spent years in discord with the Orthodox Church, political leaders, and most painfully, with his wife. The Sermon on the Mount, the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, and the minimizing of physical luxuries and pleasures were central to what became known during his lifetime as Tolstoyism.³

While it may be easy to recognize similarities between the Doukhobors and Tolstoy, these similarities do not necessarily betoken his influence over them. The Doukhobors existed nearly a century before the writer’s birth. In order to acknowledge his influence, there must be a change among the Doukhobors. This acknowledgement will be realized through examination of the correspondence, friendship and ongoing debates between the great Russian writer and the quasi-deified Doukhobor leader, Petr Vasil’evich Verigin.

³ These beliefs were central not only to Tolstoy’s profession of Christianity, but also to those claiming to be his disciples, that is, the Tolstoyans.

4. L.N. TOLSTOY AND P.V. VERIGIN: a friendship through correspondence 1895 - 1910

Передайте от нас душевный привет дедушке Толстому и всем братьям.

P.V. Verigin to E.I. Popov 30 March 1895

This chapter seeks not so much to include an examination of the influence of the Tolstoyans on the Doukhobor communities, nor even the Tolstoyan philosophy and “religion,” as to endeavor to assess the influence of Tolstoy the man on the sect. Likewise, it is crucial to make clear that this study concentrates not so much on Tolstoy’s influence on the Doukhobors in general, but more personally and specifically on their then incumbent leader Petr Vasil’evich Verigin. What follows is, foremost, a study of a sincere correspondence and an account of a dynamic friendship. In a letter written 16 August 1898 from Obdorsk, Verigin relates to Tolstoy how the governor of Tobol’sk, when visiting for questioning, inquired of him “каким родом познакомился [Толстой] с Вами?” (how did you become acquainted with Tolstoy?). Verigin explained that he had come to know Tolstoy through an avid correspondence, but the governor was surprised, “что по переписке можно так близко познакомиться!” (one could become so well acquainted through correspondence!) (Donskov 1995, 6/35). Verigin was obviously pleased and proud to be so well acquainted with the famous writer’s thoughts, and indeed, with the writer himself. What follows is an introspective tribute to the joyful discovery of the intellectual and spiritual challenges enjoyed between two like-minded men, between two “kindred spirits.” L.D. Gromova-Opul’skaia proclaims their correspondence as a “замечательный памятник духовного общения двух учителей жизни” (“a remarkable tribute to the spiritual kinship of two teachers of life” (Donskov 1995, 5).

4.1 The Genesis of a Friendship

Tolstoy first discovered the existence of the Doukhobor sect through the enthusiastic recommendations of two faithful followers, Pavel I. Biriukov and Ivan M. Tregubov. It was likewise through these two men that Tolstoy learned a few flawed details of the sect’s pacifist and anarchist beliefs, along with their burgeoning troubles with the tsarist authorities. Upon acquainting himself not only with the sect, but also with the approximate events leading up to their leader’s incarceration and Siberian exile, Tolstoy initiated what would eventually become a fifteen year correspondence, ending only with his own death. “Иван Михайлович Трегубов,” he wrote on 21 November 1895, “переслал мне Ваше письмо к нему, и я очень радовался, читая его, радовался тому, что узнал про Вас и как будто услышал Ваш голос, понял, о чем Вы думаете, как думаете и чем живете” (Donskov 1995, 1/13).¹

¹ From here on this source will be cited merely through an indication of the letter number and page number.

Although Tolstoy never completely renounced his comfortable lifestyle, and indeed, never once took the opportunity to visit a Doukhobor commune, he was easily the most respected individual among the Doukhobors outside their own circle. Certainly, they shared many ideological similarities, and the Doukhobors' respect for "Grandfather Tolstoy" extended even to the point of accepting him and his words as a mouthpiece of Verigin (Woodcock, 168). Verigin was an exceptionally well-read man, who, although he never admitted to plagiarizing Tolstoy's *Царство Божие внутри вас* or William Lloyd Garrison's "Declarations of Sentiments," he freely proclaimed the New Testament (which he allegedly knew practically by heart), the didactic works of Tolstoy and Nekrasov's poetry to be among his favorites (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 206). Petr Verigin was well acquainted with Tolstoy the moralist some years before the writer had even heard the name Verigin. It was in prison that Verigin first began reading Tolstoy. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Verigin's fellow political prisoners passed along second hand copies of Tolstoy's religious writings during the Doukhobor leader's first years in exile in Shenkursk, in the northerly region of Arkhangel'sk province. After reading several of Tolstoy's moral tracts, Verigin, so impressed by Tolstoy's moral superiority, had become a vegetarian himself by 1893 (Woodcock, 89, 91). Doukhoborism had intermittently included the practice of a vegetarian diet. This had, however, been overlooked for a few generations. In re-instating vegetarianism into the Doukhobor lifestyle, Verigin not only established himself as a conservative and ethical leader, but he also, perhaps unwittingly, established Tolstoy's eternal influence on the sect.

Initially Petr Verigin clung to the early spiritual and social traditions of his people. He was raised as a Doukhobor, and readily accepted all the beliefs and ways of life which naturally accompanied it. Although Tolstoy shared many of their beliefs, namely peasant communalism, pacifism, vegetarianism, and opposition to governmental control on an individual level, they disagreed on specific theological points. Tolstoy rejected the mystical, superstitious, or miraculous; the Doukhobors, as uneducated Russian peasants, had incorporated some of these features into their world view [see Chapter 2 of this thesis, especially 2.4 "Doukhobor Traditions"]. Tolstoy also denied any relevance to the concept of theocratic authority (Woodcock, 86). He still believed, at least in principle, in universal equality. It must be stated, however, that to a degree the Doukhobors eventually relaxed some of their "objectionable," dogmatic views regarding spiritual authority during Verigin's leadership, and more substantially after his death. Tolstoy, particularly in the final two or three decades of his life, exhibited a practical and spiritual interest in the religious thought, which was particularly being formed in America and England. Tolstoy's "religious rationalism was feeding on the ideas of the enlighteners...the Unitarians, the English and American Quakers, and the New England Transcendentalists..." (Alexeeva in Tarasoff 1995, 235). In this respect, it seems natural that he became so devoted to

Russian-born or Russian-resident sects with deeply spiritual, rationalist and pacifist teachings, such as the Molokans, Mennonites, Quakers, Stundists, and most pertinently, the Doukhobors.

As has previously been related in Chapter One, Tolstoy's first face to face encounter with the Doukhobors was, unfortunately, blatantly devoid of Verigin's presence. Along with Prince Khilkov, who had arranged the meeting, and Pavel I. Biriukov, in the winter of 1894 Tolstoy met Vasili Vasil'evich Verigin (P.V.Verigin's elder brother), Vasili Gavrilovich Vereshchagin (who died tragically en route to Obdorsk) and Vasili Ivanovich Ob'edkov. Unable to meet with Petr Verigin, and ignorant of the pervasively suspicious nature of the Doukhobor people toward any outsiders, no matter how sympathetic, it is unlikely that Tolstoy learned anything genuine or anything of real significance at this meeting. Tolstoy, eager to welcome "kindred spirits" to his circle of acquaintanceship, enthusiastically questioned the men in regard to their beliefs on non-violence, individuality, the Church, vegetarianism, leadership, etc. Biriukov claims that "а на вопрос о том, как же они все это прилагают к жизни, они отвечали с какою-то таинственностью" (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 162).

Tolstoy obviously felt tenderly toward the sectarian, as is apparent in an early letter Verigin received from his mentor, penned on 14 October 1896. "Вы мне очень дороги, и я стараюсь как можно прямее, по-братски относиться к Вам" (3/30). Even though the two men maintained a lively correspondence for fifteen years, they were fated to meet only twice in their life times. Naturally and significantly enough, on both occasions, in 1902 and again in 1906, Iasnaia Poliana would be the backdrop.

Verigin's predecessor, the beloved Luker'ia Kalmykova, was initially impressed with young Petr's intelligent face, and clever mind (Woodcock, 76-77). However, more impressive to others was Verigin's sheer physical height and massive presence. Leading a largely uneducated and traditionally superstitious group of people, Verigin possessed a host of advantages. He was a man of erudition, shrewd, impeccably dressed, with penetrating eyes and cool, dignified manners (Tarasoff 1982, 110). It was not difficult for this leader to take full advantage of his physical and intellectual superiority over the other Doukhobors.

The unidentifiable И. Р., in his "Воспоминания о П. В. Веригине" gives this awed description of his leader's physique. "Он был очень высок ростом, необыкновенно плотно и прочно сложен... Присутствие большой физической силы чувствовалось в всем его существе; казалось он одним щелчком мог бы уничтожить или стереть в порошок обыкновенного среднего человека"(Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 204).

The two men first met in the autumn of 1902. Verigin had just been released from his term in exile, when he permitted himself to stop over a couple of days near Iasnaia Poliana. The forty-three year old, who had been separated fifteen years from his people, was eager

to be en route to England, then, at last, for his new home in the heart of Canada. His personal priorities, however, are evident in the fact that he pays a “surprise visit” to Tolstoy, but is unable to meet with A.F. Vorob’ev and the other мясники.² Instead he “hastened to go to Canada without stopping to see the Iakutsk brethren or to see you in the Caucasus, as I feel it is my sacred duty to find my elderly mother still alive so that we can see each other again after such a long time apart” (Woodsworth 1999, 221).³

Unfortunately, D. P. Makovitskii was not yet in Tolstoy’s service at the time of this meeting to inform those interested of Tolstoy’s visitors’ thoughts and conversations as he was in 1906. Consequently, little is known of this encounter, other than the fact that Verigin arrived unexpectedly, and Tolstoy briefly recorded it in his journal as “за это время важное” (4 November 1902, PSS 54, 146). Curiously Tolstoy records nothing in his journals of his discussions or initial impressions of this leader. However he is not remiss in mentioning this visit to absent family members and close friends in their correspondence. Tolstoy did write to his son Sergei on 31 October 1902, depicting how “к удивлению и радости нашей... приехал Петр Веригин. Я его больше еще полюбил при свидании” (PSS 73, 315). He likewise wrote to his daughter Tatiana on 21 November 1902, praising Verigin to be an “очень умный и нравственный и, главное, спокойный человек” (PSS 73, 332). Verigin, perhaps even more elated by meeting his spiritual teacher, and by the prospect of immediately embarking westward to reach his people in Canada, and more crucially his aging mother, writes to Tolstoy on 15 November 1902 while enjoying the hospitality of the Chertkovs in England. “Шлю Вам душевный привет... а также кланяюсь всем, которых я видел у Вас” (12/54).

When, in 1906 Petr Verigin, along with an entourage of grateful Doukhobors, returns to Russia on a visit, stopping at Iasnaia Poliana, Tolstoy again, strangely reveals nothing of the group’s week long visit. This, however, can be very plausibly attributed to the nearly month long silence of his journals, brought on by the death of his beloved daughter Masha, a mere week or two prior to the sectarians’ visit. Makovitskii captures some of the strain this must have placed on him, and with what kindness and forbearance he welcomed the visitors. Tolstoy behaved toward the elderly Makhortov “как к старшему брату – с уважением и радостным расположением.” Makovitskii makes the point of noting that Tolstoy speaks kindly to Makhortov, although he is evidently tired and not feeling well,

² Vorob’ev was the leader of the Second Veriginite Party, i.e. the leader of the miasniki, those who refused to abstain from eating meat at Verigin’s request. They opted to remain in the Caucasus rather than emigrate to Canada.

³ ‘Copy of letter from Peter [Vasil’evich] Verigin, England (London suburb of Krejtcher [sic!-i.e. Christchurch]) dated 5 [18] November 1902, to Aleksej Fedorovich Vorob’ev [‘Falinskij’], Village of Orlovsk, Tiflis Province, Bogdanovka Station: I.D. 15662/1902. (Typescript, 2 pp./1 L.) Case 1498L. 0001 [Document 1902-11-05a].

suffering from illness and grief (Makovitskii, *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo* v. 90 Bk. 2, 323-324).

In early December 1906 I. F. Makhortov, P.V. Verigin, P.V. Planidin, D. N. Gridchin, A. F. Golubova, and the twelve year old M.V. Dymovskaia were day guests of the Tolstoys, settling in nearby accommodations. The days were filled with discussions pertinent to the Doukhobors' early years of settlement in Canada, such as literacy, communal living, their relationship and obligations to the government, etc., as well enjoying afternoon walks in the Iasnaia Poliana woods.⁴

Makovitskii's account includes details, such as Makhortov presenting Tolstoy with a tea cup from Canada, and Golubova bringing Aleksandra Tolstaia an Indian (индейскую) pincushion. They all seemed completely at ease with their benefactor, engaging in lively conversation, and even the young girls addressing him in such an informal manner. "А ты, дедушка..." (322).

Makovitskii concludes this section with an ambiguous phrase of Tolstoy's, which leads one to wonder whether the writer and the Doukhobor leader were closer as long-distance correspondents than they ever would have been as daily, intimate friends. "Веригин этот раз мне больше понравился, чем в прошлый раз" (328). Could it be that Tolstoy had been disappointed, or even dismayed at his first encounter with the allegedly spiritual mature leader? His 11 November 1902 letter to P.I. Biriukov seems to indicate so. "[Веригин] мне очень понравился, но странное противоречие, он, поставленный судьбою руководителем одной из самых религиозных в мире людей, как мне кажется, до сих пор еще не родился вновь" (PSS 73, 318).

Had the correspondents lived in close proximity to one another, the respect, tenderness and doting patience with which Tolstoy resumed his correspondence and friendship with Verigin might have been difficult to maintain throughout their daily lives, particularly given the strong personality traits of both men. It is an inconclusive argument, but perhaps the secret to the genuineness of their friendship was due to their physical separation. Perhaps such a slow, methodical spiritual growth could have only been cultivated through letters, ironically through the written word.

4.2a THE CORRESPONDENCE: Facing the Issues

To say that Verigin was inherently a spiritual leader because he introduced the application of Tolstoy's moral principles into the Doukhobors' lives is not entirely accurate. In fact, Verigin was a leader of a socio-religious, indeed a spiritual, sect but as a man, even as a leader, he was a profound pragmatist. His concerns, at least initially, were not as much focused on the religious aspects of Doukhoborism, as on the social and

⁴ For a fuller account of the Doukhobors' week-long visit, see Makovitskii in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo* v. 90 Bk. 2, 322-328.

practical details of daily life. Verigin was a communalist, an agriculturist and a philosopher, yet secondarily, a spiritual individual. This is arguably an accurate description of the charismatic leader, at least in the first years in which Tolstoy was making his acquaintance. Perhaps this is what nettled Tolstoy concerning Verigin, and what he alluded to in his letter to Biriukov. As has just been noted, one small imperfection was mentioned in an otherwise gushing account of the sectarians' first visit. "Как мне кажется, до сих пор еще [Веригин] не родился вновь" (PSS 73, 318).

The metamorphosis of tone and content in Verigin's correspondence with Tolstoy can, in effect, be diagramed into three broad phases. These particular phases have no inherent significance, yet can be implemented as a helpful guide in examining the development of Verigin's relationship with the Russian master, as well as the progress of his own personal, spiritual journey.

Table 4.1 The Metamorphosis of Tone and Content in Verigin's Correspondence

1895-1900	concerned with highly specific, sectarian issues, e.g. literacy, attitude towards material possessions; initiates discussions with outlandish conclusions.
1901-1906	shifts to a much more practical penchant, incorporating topics such as agriculture, re-settlement in the New World, and other aspects directly pertinent to an agrarian, communal way of life.
1907-1910	focused on spiritual, rather than pragmatic goals; a distinct emphasis on liberating the people from superstitions and "от богочеловеческого водства;" further evidence of time spent on personal reflection and spiritual growth.

The chart above, while perhaps an oversimplification, provides a modest starting point from which to gain insight into the general trend and direction of the relationship between the writer/moralist and the agronomist/eccentric, sectarian leader. Particularly through the discourse on general, pragmatic issues, namely literacy, physical labor, and the production and distribution of books, Verigin's curious analytic pattern is easily seen. The sectarian has little shame in sending lengthy epistles to the elderly teacher, or in disagreeing with him in an extraordinarily controversial and argumentative manner, even to the point of accusing Tolstoy of demanding from others what he himself was not willing to do (2/19). Tolstoy's gentleness in tone and refrain from rebuke allowed Verigin not only the freedom

to experiment with potential beliefs, but also enabled him to experience first hand the patience of a sympathetic and encouraging ear.

Although in 1893 and 1894 Verigin's "leitmotifs," as Anderson describes them, were directly gleaned (or plagiarized) from Tolstoy's moral tracts (392), these "mandates," for that is what they amounted to, were not adoptions uniquely created by Tolstoy, but reminders of the Doukhobors' formerly established spiritual history. While not always consistently followed, communal living, anarchism, as well as abstention from alcohol, tobacco and meat, had at one point or another been a part of the Doukhobor philosophy. While these aspects had been embedded in Doukhoborism, they needed a vigorous push from the outside (Brock, 449). Tolstoyism merely "влило свежую струю в начинавшее было застаиваться духоборческое движение" (Anderson, 395).

1895-1900

Far from readily accepting Tolstoy's words as the infallible truth, Verigin, however, was still deeply influenced by the wisdom and gentle challenges, which the moralist had to offer. Verigin very boldly, almost brashly, begins his correspondence to Tolstoy on 1 August 1896 by damning literacy as a fad ("мода времени"), and as a detriment to the spiritual progress of humanity (2/16-17). Tolstoy, apparently not wishing to injure or offend his new correspondent, recognized some truth in the younger man's argument. "Трудность же главная в том," he instructs, however, "чтобы откидывая ложь, не откинуть вместе с ней и часть истины, и в том, чтобы, разъясняя истину, не внести новых заблуждений" (1/15). Tolstoy further retorts, revealing the fallacy in Verigin's argument as "вы сравниваете книгу с живым общением так, как будто книга исключает живое общение" (3/25).

Verigin argued that he appreciated Tolstoy not as a great literary figure, that is, not for his written works, but for the manner in which he lived his life (2/19). The leader's idiosyncratic philosophy ventured so far away from the norm as to take issue with the concept of physical labor. As quoted more fully in Chapter One (see page 32), Verigin expressed his unusual view in the following way: 'Разумно ли трактовать о свободе писать целые томы, не подразумевая того, что чрез это самое писание я держу миллионы людей в подземных рудниках для добывания принадлежностей, с помощью которых осуществляется грамотность' (2/18). In this way, Verigin not only attacks Tolstoy's primary occupation, but sets up a highly unusual debate.

Whereas Tolstoy must have felt the ludicrous nature of such suppositions, he also gave credence to them, granting Verigin complete freedom to express his musings, in short, to experiment in articulating his own world view and conclusions. Tolstoy's gentle tone, "as if he were simply engaged in a fire-side chat with a close friend or relative" certainly aided in making Verigin feel that much more comfortable in open communication with the renowned writer (Woodsworth in Tarasoff 1995, 246). Although plausible, it

seems doubtful that Verigin was merely testing Tolstoy's reaction to outlandish statements, but rather the Doukhobor leader was genuinely struggling with his position on education, material possessions, the "modern world," and the like.

Certainly Tolstoy's gentle tone in questioning and reprimanding was not the only means by which he greatly facilitated Verigin's freedom of expression. Tolstoy himself was not above admitting his own intellectual and spiritual shortcomings, or even his own lack of confidence, at times. "Tolstoy regarded Verigin in one sense as an equal, but also recognized that his Doukhobor friend was in many respects still a pupil in need of instruction" (Woodsworth in Tarasoff 1995, 246). On 20 November 1898 Tolstoy writes to Verigin, expressing his uncertainty on quite a different matter. With a distinctly eastern influence, Tolstoy describes his intuitive belief that life never truly ends, "и потому кончины мира не может быть, а смерть не страшна...что свое добро ведет всегда к общему добру, а свое зло ведет к общему злу." Finally the teacher allows himself to become the student when he actively seeks Verigin's opinion. "Что вы думаете обо всем этом?" (8/45). Verigin would eventually prove less vague and more confident on the topic.

Ultimately, Verigin, concerned with the practicality of living in a different country, and within a different society, capitulates, finding a middle ground. Predicting a successful relocation to Canada, Verigin writes to his people on 6 January 1899, approving basic literacy. For "обучение грамоте даже необходимо. Хорошо бы было, если бы детей учить грамоте, простое домашнее способе, как это преподается в домашнем быту" (Bonch-Bruevich 1901a, 132). One month later Verigin forfeits his argument to Tolstoy, admitting "обучение грамоте детей - включительно и девочек, надо считать на первых же порах необходимостью." He qualifies this compromise, however. "Грамотность я считаю необходимой только ту, чтобы уметь читать и писать, не придавая грамотности положительного воспитательного значения" (9/47). In this respect it was Tolstoy's reasonableness and willingness to listen which influenced Verigin toward a more practical path. His pragmatic strengths would eventually work to his advantage regarding the Doukhobors' pivotal years of re-settlement.

1901-1906

At the turn of the century, and particularly as Verigin received news of the Doukhobors' initial struggles as Saskatchewan homesteading pioneers, the exiled leader focused more dramatically on agricultural issues. His correspondence with Tolstoy distinctly reflected these more "down to earth" worries. During this period Verigin's confrontational manner was diverted from attacking Tolstoy's perceived hypocrisy to displeasure at the oppressive circumstances of his own exile, then at the frequent misunderstanding with the Canadian government (Woodsworth in Tarasoff 1995, 248). Knowing Tolstoy's fondness for, and personal experience with, the Russian peasantry,

Verigin wrote in detail of the issues facing communal agronomists, informing the writer of cattle purchases, communal equipment, various issues specifically dealing with the Doukhobors' shared inventory, and the like. He even sent Tolstoy an itemized list of the Doukhobors' debt to the city of Winnipeg to be paid in full without interest by the autumn of 1904 (18/68-69).

Verigin deemed it natural that he should inform their benefactor, who was so knowledgeable on agriculture and so sympathetic to their belief system, on the unique troubles facing his people. Tolstoy responds with equal candor, never fearing to speak the truth, as he perceived it. Upon working so diligently for the Doukhobors' emigration he agrees with Verigin's indecision, reminding him, "Я совершенно того же мнения - именно того, что важно не место, в котором мы живем, и не условия, нас окружающие, а наше внутреннее душевное состояние. Познаете истину, и истина освободит вас, везде, где бы вы ни были" (7/42). Interestingly, and to Verigin's credit, he never responds to Tolstoy as a resentful man, void of the possibility of daily comforts and freedom, but as a brother accepting sound, well-intended advice. Indeed, Verigin rarely complains to excess of his physical conditions when under house arrest. Witness the contentment, or at least resignation, he feels concerning his living quarters in Obdorsk. "Несколько слов о моей жизни в данное время: квартиру я занимаю комнату в квадрате 6-тиаршинном⁵...комната довольно удобная и светлая... здоров слава Богу" (7/49).

Tolstoy continued to express his displeasure frankly whenever he received word that the Doukhobors were acting contrary to his perhaps idyllic expectations of them. On 17 January 1902, while Verigin still remained in exile, Tolstoy verbalized his disapproval of the Doukhobors reverting back to property ownership. "Мне очень не нравится их отказ от принятия земли в личную собственность...Еще будут вопросы, когда для них придется отстаивать свои христианские верования или скорее, христианскую жизнь" (11/52).

From the first moments of Verigin's reunification with the Doukhobors on the Saskatchewan prairies in late 1902, it was clear how close the people were to the leader's heart. In a letter written to Tolstoy on 12 January 1903 Verigin attempts to articulate his joy upon spotting the first Doukhobor communal settlements, and of course his aged mother. "Вы можете судить, добрейший Лев Николаевич, как душа моя была переполнена восторгом радостных чувств при въезде в первое село Духоборцев...Второе село было, где живет моя мать, которую я застал очень бодрой и по летам довольно здоровой" (13/55).

⁵Quite possibly a deliberate allusion to Tolstoy's "Много ли человеку земли нужно," emphasizing the stark and humble conditions in which he lives, devoid of any luxuries.

Even prior to Verigin's focus on truly spiritual themes, the allegedly God-incarnate leader exhibited a particular love for children. He clearly spent time observing their play and was concerned as much for their specific physical and emotional needs as for the adults. Worried over difficult times and the efficacy of their economic lifestyle, he confides to Tolstoy: "детей не надо держать в холоде и голоде, а пока остаться со всеми братьями и воспитать их" (13/57). Later Verigin rejoices in the well-being of the children. His vision of them as the imminent future and success of the Doukhobor people is evident. "Дети все в духоборческих селах поют привет весны... Как искренно желал бы я, дорогой Лев Николаевич, чтобы Вы могли быть в духоборческих селах и видеть детей...Эти картины - артели детей, могли бы быть значительным вознаграждением за Ваш долгий труд - как борца за истину" (20/72-73). The happiness of the children coupled with the improving economic stability of the Doukhobors in Canada gave him cause for tremendous satisfaction. When Verigin wrote to Tolstoy, however of the particulars concerning their success with the crops, cattle and other agricultural aspects (16/62), Tolstoy returned a tender warning against the dangers of material comforts. "По всей вероятности, Вы сами знаете то, что я скажу Вам, но не беда и лишний раз повторить мысль, если она справедлива," he prefaces, not wanting to offend his correspondent and friend. "Не увлекайтесь, милый друг, материальным успехом общины. Помните, что успех этот основан на том единении, которое возникло из религиозного сознания" (17/64). Tolstoy supplements this spiritual reminder by again emphasizing the preeminence of the Kingdom of God, rather than the kingdoms on earth, "что только единое на потребу: установление царства Божия, которое достигается любовью людей друг к другу" (14/58-59). Here Verigin is revealed as a true pragmatist, implying that spiritual well-being is possible only once physical well-being is assured. If his correspondence with Tolstoy from 1895 to 1900 alone were examined this might seem a startling statement. His arguably outlandish views on literacy and physical labor would have, perhaps, depicted him in an extremely impractical, idealistic light. Ironically, however, Verigin was, quite possibly in many respects, a more balanced and sensible man than Tolstoy ever was. The congenial debate between the earthly and the other-worldly, between practicality and spirituality was, in a way, indicative of the differences in their relationship. It was symbolic of Tolstoy's own unsuccessful inner struggle between the idea of man as a principally spiritual or material being; it was a struggle and a self-perpetuating debate, which was never to be satisfactorily resolved in the mind of the writer.

Tolstoy, predominantly concerned with the Doukhobors' spiritual state, eventually expresses his pleasure on hearing they are evermore placing the spiritual above the material aspect of life (19/70). Earlier, however, Tolstoy had warned the Doukhobor leader of attempting to control his people too much, even for their own good. Their

superstition toward a chosen leader, according to Tolstoy, only inhibits them from maturing on their own. Instead, he stressed, “в христианском обществе все равны и все поучаются друг у друга: старый у молодого, образованный у неученого и умный у недалекого умом, и даже добродетельный у распутного... Особенных людей нет: все грешны и все могут быть святы” (10/50). As will be further addressed in a subsequent section, this letter of 20 January 1901, eventually proved to be a significant prediction of imminent concerns, which Verigin would face in attempting to lead the Doukhobor factions in a modern and foreign country. “All this time Tolstoy persisted with his encouragement, guidance and ever-so-gentle rebukes, warning Verigin, for example, against unconsciously playing to the superstitions of the sect members, expressing his ‘unhappiness’ at the Doukhobors’ refusal to accept personal ownership of land as required by the Canadian government” (Woodsworth in Tarasoff 1995, 248). Commenting on Verigin’s desire to loosen the Doukhobor traditions, Tolstoy warns “на моем личном опыте... решение это, для того чтобы оно было твердо, должно вытекать из сознания каждого отдельного человека” (33/94). Tolstoy, in voicing his opinion and directing Verigin through spiritual advice on a critical aspect of the sectarian theology and tradition, indirectly altered the leader’s thinking, and the future of Doukhoborism.

1907-1910

As Verigin’s affection and respect for Tolstoy became even more apparent, and particularly after Verigin’s December 1906 visit to Iasnaia Poliana, the sectarian leader began to engage himself in a distinctively spiritual correspondence. His tone became gentle, “добрее сердцем,” “kinder of heart,” (32/93) arguably more Tolstoyan. A greater number of lines in his letters were occupied with phrases like “чтобы мы делались милостивее,” “so we might become more gracious” and “цель жизни для человека,” “the purpose of man’s life” (23/79). Whether or not face to face and heart to heart discussions with the great writer specifically transformed Verigin’s perspective, or whether or not the change is to be attributed to a force external to the correspondents’ relationship is, more or less, undeterminable. Wherever credit is due, however, its existence is easily detected in his gracious language and joyful expressions concerning life and humanity. Note the following example, “Христос проповедывал [sic] основную заповедь: милосердия. И вероятно не такое милосердие, что в неделю раз сходить в церковь и час или два побыть милосердным, а остальное время совершенно служить злему умыслу” (32/93). During this final phase of correspondence with Tolstoy, Verigin is experimenting with the concept of liberation from religious, even sectarian dogmas or rituals. He is searching for the crux of the Doukhobor lifestyle, and finding it, indeed, through the spirit, and not through the letter. “For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6).

On 9 March 1907 Verigin begins a new type of epistle, one full of spiritual reflection, and focused on self-perfection, “самосовершенствование.” Here Verigin focuses in more sharply on his spiritual aim; he begins his own spiritual rebirth with “сохранять свое сердце от зла” as his new emerging mantra. “Я все более и более убеждаюсь, что спасение человека или смысл моей жизни заключается в том, *чтобы сохранять свое сердце от зла*. Это наша высшая задача - усыновление Богу-отцу”(28/87). By addressing his elder tenderly as “дорогой Лев Николаевич,” Verigin softens his previously contentious and confrontational tone in order to disagree with Tolstoy’s view on humanity’s purpose on the earth. Tolstoy perceived things in somewhat Manichean terms, that is, all things good are wholly spiritual. Verigin’s thinking, superior in that it was much more balanced, professed that true spirituality was achieved by embracing the material world with love and compassion.

А если желаешь быть Духоборцем, только всего и надо: сохранить свое сердце от зла. Где бы человек ни был, в церкви ли или идет за плугом, условие одинаково...Вы часто говорите, что цели на Земле у человека нет и не может быть. Я думаю-чувствую, что сохранение себя от зла можно поставить целью и эта цель достижима (32/93).

Verigin’s new found spiritual-pragmatism extends to all arenas. Examples of this include Verigin’s assurance that the Doukhobors are emerging as kind, humane Christians, “добрыми людьми-Христианами,” even though they may have forfeited a communal life, “отпадают от общинной жизни” (32/91). Likewise, Verigin began to see less rationale for a ritualistic way of life. Given their iconoclast history, he perceived the irony in bowing ceremoniously to their fellow man, in superstitions regarding leadership, and even in obligatory prayer meetings (34/95). Although Verigin still remained somewhat aloof from his sectarian followers, his mannerisms, thoughts and speech all took a demotic turn. This is true even of his spiritual reflections, which eventually drew him into a contemplative examination of his belief in eternal life. This topic was particularly important as the traditional view was rather ambiguous. Doukhorbor theology had been notoriously vague in regard to the validity of Jesus’ miraculous powers, and even ambivalent concerning the nature of eternal life and resurrection (Anderson, 378-379). Verigin’s willingness to experiment with his personal views gave greater freedom to the fluidity and suppleness of the Doukhobors’ belief system. He refused to see death as the end, and like his mentor he permitted himself the freedom to accept an understanding of death in terms of renewal and eternity. Unlike his mentor, however, Verigin chose to express his spiritual musings with extremely earthy and practical illustrations. Like Christ, he returned to the soil for his analogies. “Все то, что появилось, не может

уничтожаться, а только видоизменяется - как мы наблюдаем. Например, где росла картофель, там роскошно появляется пырей и тому подобное” (38/106).

Included in Verigin’s reflective thoughts on eternal life is the concept of will or desire. Verigin, seeing these as synonymous, was convinced that a spiritual resurrection was possible if one had faith and wished for it. “Бессмертие вполне возможно, если человек сам пожелает этого. Христос называет это желание верой... Я предполагаю, что начало моей жизни основалось здесь на земле от тела, без моей воли – духовное же сознание я должен выработать сам добровольно” (38/105-106).

Approximately Verigin’s final words to Tolstoy were on this issue of death and eternal life, which the writer struggled to come to terms with his entire life. Penned almost as a challenge and final word of hope to a man merely months from the grave, Verigin concludes a vibrant and substantive correspondence.

Как говорит справедливо Декарт: ‘Я мыслю и потому убеждаюсь, что я живу’⁶... дух живет вне времени и пространства. С каким удовольствием я вспоминаю, уважаемый Лев Николаевич, когда встречался с Вами и хотя немного разговаривал. И это воспоминание возрождается во мне очень часто. Воистину можно сказать: ‘Дух дышит, где хочет, откуда приходит и куда уходит, не известно’... Все зависит от воли, от желания человека... все желания могут исполниться (38/106-107).

4.2b THE CORRESPONDENCE: Wrestling with the Mentor

Undisputedly, Tolstoy influenced the Doukhobors, primarily Petr V. Verigin, through his moral tracts. Not only is this influence visible in their correspondence, but also in Verigin’s instructions to the sectarian members concerning their re-commitment to pacifism, vegetarianism, communalism and teetotalism. However, Tolstoy influenced more than the opinions of Verigin, but also the man himself. It is not difficult to discern a transformation, a kind of spiritual rebirth, which Verigin experienced following his correspondent’s example. Indeed patience, mercy, compassion and humility all seemed to be traits that Verigin was striving for, albeit imperfectly.

His occasional failings toward this aim surprised Tolstoy at times, but did not dishearten the writer. To the end of his life, the Doukhobors, and Verigin in particular, never lost Tolstoy’s utmost respect and admiration. A poignant rebuke, according to Tolstoy, was all that was necessary to shepherd his flock back onto the proper path.

⁶ Petr Verigin has, of course, paraphrased, or even distorted, Descartes’ famous statement, “I think therefore I am” (Cogito ergo sum). Typically, this is rendered in Russian as, “Я мыслю, следовательно, существую.”

Indeed, at times, this is all that was required in softening Verigin's coarseness or arrogance.

After settling an ongoing difficulty concerning some elderly Doukhobors who had been robbed before trying to emigrate, Verigin had become exasperated with them. He writes to Tolstoy, thanking him for the financial help (through Maude) and the successful outcome. Then, losing patience confides, "Я очень суров сердцем и к таким старым людям как Фофанов и Щербаков я, кроме презрения, ничего не могу иметь. Они ищут, чего сами не знают, и в результате получается беда и хлопоты для старого человека, вместо того, чтобы покойно кушать насущный хлеб и славить Господа" (16/63). Clearly his severity had interfered to the detriment of his compassion. The brevity by which Tolstoy reprimands Verigin as he is relating business details only seems to sharpen Verigin's shame and guilt. "Меня удивило Ваше строгое отношение к ним," writes Tolstoy. "Мне кажется, они этого не заслуживают" (17/64).

Verigin's penitent response appears to be equally concerned with Tolstoy's opinion of him as with correcting his own ill thinking. "Милый Лев Николаевич, простите меня, что я грубым отзывом о старичках нанес Вам оскорбление. В этом виновато всем нам присущее зло. За все Ваши хлопоты пошли Вам Господи телесного здоровья и Душевного благополучия" (18/66).

This is just one illustration of Verigin struggling to perfect himself after Tolstoy's image of humility. Not all his erring ways were so readily mended. In early 1907, after returning home from Russia and his visit to Iasnaia Poliana, Verigin still felt the sting of Tolstoy's chastisement regarding his extravagant dress, superfluous pomp and arrogance. He immediately set to work to make amends. His gentleman's attire was substituted for rough clothing and "trousers bound at the leg-bottoms with binder-twine" (Tarasoff 1982, 111). Simplicity became his hallmark in dress, in speech, in travel (he began traveling no longer by car or train, but by simple wagon or on foot) and in work as he toiled side by side with his fellow sectarians. It appeared Verigin had curbed his arrogance, harshness and aloofness. The people reacted positively, saying, "He scolds no one nor gets angry, and even eats with us from one bowl" (Tarasoff 1982, 111).

This new, benevolent Verigin was not to last forever. The leader would struggle with his conceit and anger the rest of his life. Eventually frustrated at his people's inability to focus, to live according to the "law of love" rather than rituals and traditions, Verigin, ironically, reverted to his stern ways. Discouraged by their lack of commitment, he obliged capricious women to cut off their hair, while he threatened men with expulsion from the sect if they did not strictly adhere to the community's practices (Tarasoff 1982, 111-112). Rybin's *Труд и мирная жизнь*, whose minor theme seems to be the fallibility of the Doukhobor leaders as well as the beauty of spiritual equality, emphasizes Verigin's

inability to continually control his impatience and exasperation. He suggests Verigin's high expectations and grave disappointment possibly tempted him to revert to his former ways (117).

Verigin, naturally, possessed both positive and negative qualities. While his arrogance might have repulsed many, Tolstoy, however, refused to dismiss him as insincere. His love for the Doukhobors was genuine. Although perhaps not consistently, Tolstoy's influence was evident throughout the two men's lives. On 1 April 1905, while Verigin points out the Doukhobors' imperfections, he writes of the sect with tenderness, and a surprising degree of patience and understanding. "Духовная жизнь Духоборцев, дорогой Лев Николаевич, идет обычным порядком. Ведь они не были и вообще высоконравственными людьми и сразу требовать от них 'Ангельской' жизни невозможно" (21/75).

Certainly the Doukhobors were not angels, yet neither were they, nor Petr Verigin, demons. Tolstoy and Verigin both agreed on the moral complexity of humanity. They saw people not in terms of good and bad, but in terms of their potential, and their commitment to self-perfection. Tolstoy articulates it most profoundly in *Воскресение*.

Одно из самых обычных и распространенных суеверий то, что каждый человек имеет одни свои определенные свойства, что бывает человек добрый, злой, умный, глупый, энергичный, апатичный... Люди не бывают такими... но будет неправда, если мы скажем про одного человека, что он добрый или умный, а про другого, что он злой или глупый... Люди как реки: вода во всех одинакая и везде одна и та же, но каждая река бывает то узкая, то быстрая, то широкая, то тихая... Каждый человек носит в себе зачатки всех свойств людских и иногда проявляет одни, иногда другие и бывает часто совсем не похож на себя, оставаясь всё между тем одним и самим собою (PSS 32, 193-194).

Verigin's gradual transformation from an argumentative, unrefined leader, "quite unaccustomed to play[ing] second fiddle to any one" (Maude 1911, 510) into a truly spiritual man, was largely accomplished by steady correspondence with Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy, his friend and mentor. As noted above, Verigin, himself, admits he became "добрее сердцем," that is "kinder of heart" (32/93). Particularly by 1905 Verigin is no longer bickering with Tolstoy in regard to issues, such as literacy or nationality. This is largely due to the sectarian leader's gradual spiritual growth, which Woodsworth sees as an echo of Tolstoy's spiritual conversion two decades earlier (Woodsworth in Tarasoff 1995, 246). This insight is particularly significant as Petr Verigin was foremost a socio-

ethical leader, and only developed a definitively spiritual maturity after fifteen years of avid correspondence with his “kindred spirit.”

Their spiritual kinship becomes clearly apparent by 1905. Both men disagree candidly when necessary, but also unashamedly express their affection for one another. “Слово ‘дорогой’ у нас вошло в простое любезное слово, тогда как Вы, любезный Лев Николаевич, по истине для меня состоите дорогим человеком” (23/78).

Tolstoy reciprocates this admiration and affection. Although he fails to respond to Verigin’s eager invitations to visit or live among like-minded people, he affirms his love and happiness for the Doukhobors’ constant struggle for the attainment of the Kingdom of God on earth. “Передайте мою любовь братьям и сожаление мое о том, что вещественно разлучен с ними и с Вами. Желаю же быть в душевном общении” (36/103).

Finally, on 17 May 1910, in his final letter to the Doukhobors’ long standing friend, and his personal confidant, Verigin concludes their correspondence with a simple expression, a sign of an accomplished friendship. “Как бы я желал сейчас видеться с Вами и беседовать лично!” (38/107).

CONCLUSION:

Remaining Evidences of Tolstoy's Touch on the Contemporary Doukhobor Community

At the Grand Isle National Park, located portside in Quebec along the St. Lawrence seaway, there is a commemorative plaque in honor of the Doukhobors' arrival and entry into Canada over a hundred years ago. The plaque honors the memory of the thousands who emigrated to Canada from Russia, the few who suffered from disease en route to the new land, and reads as follows:

On June 6, 1899, 2,275 Doukhobor immigrants were forced to disembark at Grosse Isle. The presence of several cases of smallpox on board the *Lake Huron*, which left a Russian port 23 days before, necessitated completely disinfecting the ship, vaccinating all passengers and keeping them under observation.

More than 7,500 Doukhobors arrived in Canada that year, followed by a series of smaller groups until 1912. Fleeing the religious and political repression then occurring in Transcaucasia, the immigrants took advantage of the opening of the Canadian West to settlement. They located in Saskatchewan for the most part.

Today, Canada numbers close to 40,000 descendants of the Doukhobors (Doukhobor Genealogy Website).¹

Both the history and ideology of the Doukhobors have been greatly influenced by Lev N. Tolstoy. His fervor for Russian and pacifist sects provided the sectarians with an immensely influential and loyal benefactor. It has been substantiated throughout this research that Tolstoy, indeed, played a pivotal role in the welfare and lasting ideology of the Doukhobor movement. Although the Doukhobors' descendants will be forever indebted to Tolstoy's financial contribution toward their people's migration and re-settlement, it will be, most assuredly, the writer's moral works, which will prove to be the most significant endowment toward Doukhoborism, and the Doukhobor people as a whole. Tolstoy's much needed external "stimulus," as Brock expresses it (449), primarily took the form of *Царство Божие внутри вас, К веротерпимости, В чем моя вера, К политическим деятелям*, and the collective correspondence with the long-standing leader P. V. Verigin, that is, the writings dealing specifically with non-resistance to evil, universal brotherhood and anarchism, notwithstanding the spirited substance of the personal letters between Tolstoy and Verigin.

¹ Found within an article entitled "Doukhobor Interpretive Panel Unveiled at Grosse Isle National Park in 1999."

From the earliest encounter with Tolstoy, the Doukhobors reacted positively, elated by the strong similarities in their faith and intended way of life. Upon first attending a reading from one of Tolstoy's works, the Doukhobors eagerly exclaimed, "Да это все как у нас! И откуда только узнал все это дедушка!" (Anderson, 397). The respect and beatification in which the sectarians held him neared that of any Doukhobor leader. According to Doukhobor thought, the Russian moralist, had captured the essence of their spiritual movement, and thus, rose immediately to the position of prophet and teacher – a position unattainable to any other outsider. Many claimed, "что дедушка Толстов просветлел разумом, как узнал от наших стариков все заветы наших предков; научившись и постигши всю эту великую премудрость он теперь и стал столбом до небес" (Anderson, 397).

While views on oral tradition and property ownership have changed, it is the Doukhobors' adamant stance on non-resistance to evil, which most perfectly demonstrates Tolstoy's continuing influence on them as a group. The Doukhobors' pacifist stance has not been adjusted to conform to contemporary thinking. If anything, it has become permanently fixed in their Weltanschauung as a whole. This is exemplified in Tarasoff's comment that the single most important issue for the future of Doukhoborism is "maintaining the passion for the peace message (getting rid of the institutions of militarism and war). The main rationale for the movement is this passion for peace and non-violence in human affairs. Without this thrust in energy and commitment, there is no need for the movement" (5 March 2001).

Among twentieth century Doukhobor "heroes," the most illustrious is Peter G. Makaroff. He both epitomizes the Doukhobor faith, and yet was a forerunner in Canadian assimilation. As was touched upon in Chapter One [see page 34], Makaroff holds the distinction of being the first student of non-Anglo-Saxon parents to graduate from the University of Saskatchewan. Moreover, he was the first Doukhobor anywhere in the world to receive a university level education, and the first to enter into a trained profession. Although it would be a few decades before the trend was to change broadly, Makaroff established the precedent of participating in public education, social and civic assimilation, which other Doukhobors would eventually follow. Not only did Makaroff leave behind an agrarian occupation, but he also grew into a premier example of an outspoken peace champion. Other than the peculiar *свободники* (Sons of Freedom) who were at one time notorious for arson and nude demonstrations, the Doukhobors are, almost by nature, a people who have shrunk from the public eye, particularly on an individual level. In many ways, Peter G. Makaroff has emerged as a transition figure, a living pattern for future Canadian-Doukhobor generations on how to live out their ideals in the contemporary Canadian cultural and social framework.

Born in Kars, Russia, Makaroff emigrated to Canada with his family when he was four years old. (He was born the same year as the Burning of Arms.) He caught the eye of the American Quakers, who educated him in Philadelphia. Makaroff went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts in 1915 from the University of Saskatchewan, and later a Bachelor of Laws in 1918 (Small in Tarasoff 1995, 272).

Ironically, he was a political animal, an ardent member of the Progressive Party. In 1940 Makaroff campaigned in support of his friend J.S. Woodsworth's lonely stand in the Canadian Parliament in opposition to Canada's entry into World War II. Makaroff eventually became active in the World Federalist Movement after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Like all Doukhobors, and many other pacifists throughout the world, Makaroff was convinced that the best alternative was the "rule of law under a world federation of nation states" (Robertson/Stromberg). From this belief emerged Makaroff's inspired World Federalist Prize open to any student or faculty member in any Canadian university "for the best annual essay relating to world peace through world law" (Robertson/Stromberg). Before his death in 1970 he established the \$500 prize, which is still in existence today.

Remaining evidence of Tolstoy's touch and lingering influence on the Doukhobor community is most obvious in their persistent conviction of non-violence, and even in their more high-profile demonstrations, particularly those which took place during the 1960s. The Doukhobor brand of pacifism reflects Tolstoy's view even in their rejection of royalty, nationalism and statehood due to their allegedly indirect relation to violence. Contemporary Doukhobors, however, do not apply their views in such extreme Tolstoyan manners. That is, they no longer reject outright property ownership, nor federal or provincial education.

Certainly Makaroff was involved in these peace demonstrations, as were many fervent Doukhobor believers. During the summer of 1964, approximately four hundred Doukhobors and Quakers met to celebrate the anniversary of the Burning of Arms, and the next morning traveled 320 kilometers together to protest against the development and usage of chemical, biological and radiological weapons at the government military laboratory at Suffield, Alberta (Verigin, Michael in Tarasoff 1998, 243). Makaroff was only one of those delivering speeches in Suffield. He condemned rationalized hypocrisy by stating:

All through history men have served the cause of peace with fighting. Yet it is the law of nature and of God that you cannot do the right thing by wrong means... We look across this fence and ask ourselves, 'Can you imagine what men would do today - and still in the interests of peace?' (Tarasoff 1982, 181).

Again similar demonstrations were held at Orcadia Radar Base in 1964, and at Dana Radar Station in 1965 in Saskatchewan. Likewise hundreds of Doukhobors, Quakers, Mennonites and Molokans participated in the 1966 International Meeting for Peace at the International Peace Gardens (Small in Tarasoff 1995, 272).

Due to unfortunate length restrictions, no space remains to include an originally intended fifth chapter detailing the accomplishments and challenges of the Doukhobors of the twenty-first century. This author has, nevertheless, covered the topic in an, as yet unpublished, article entitled "Current Issues Facing the Modern Doukhobor," specifically discussing questions of ethnicity, self-identification, and the demise of the Russian language among the younger generations, as well as the accomplishments of the peace movement and Doukhobor contributions to literature and the world wide web.

While the occasional protest still occurs, it appears to be largely a phenomenon of a by-gone era. Today, the Doukhobors tend to utilize a broader means of expressing their humanitarian and pacifist concerns. Through formal education, field research, public policy making, conferences, international exchanges, choral tours, cultural heritage museums, documentaries and web sites, contemporary Doukhobors are using their "inner voice" to articulate their convictions through contemporary media (Tarasoff 1994, 26-29). These modern Doukhobor activists are working co-operatively with groups, such as the World Federalists of Canada, the Society of Friends, the War Resisters' League, Project Plowshares, Operation Dismantle, Mennonites, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation to champion a world-wide peace effort (Tarasoff 1982, 240).

A group of Georgian women ethnologists wrote a book on the relations between the Doukhobors of Bogdanovka and the local Armenians. In the book they asked whether any Doukhobors in Canada shared the same belief of the Doukhobors in Gorelovka which is that when the world comes to an end, a place will open up where the Burning of Arms took place and all the Doukhobors of the world will be reunited there (Molokan Home Page).²

While this belief in the sacred consecration of the location of the Burning of Arms seems much in the spirit of oral tradition and folklore, it remains a significant tale in that it accentuates their enduring pacifist roots. It is not mandatory to verify whether or not the sectarians truly believe this to be an apocalyptic fact. The importance of such a statement lies in the assumption that their humble efforts toward peace and the freedom of expression have created a place of historical, cultural and religious homage. On 26 – 27

² Found in Molokan News; feature report by Koozma J. Tarasoff, entitled "More Doukhobors Move from Georgia to Russia," Ottawa, ON 1 April 1999.

February 2000 fifty delegates from the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC)³ met at the USCC community centre in Grand Forks, British Columbia to discuss, among other things, their efforts toward convincing the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to designate an area in present day Georgia as a World Heritage Site in recognition of the Burning of Arms event, the Doukhobors' peaceful protests against violence (*The Openminder*). Thus far, these efforts are still in the initial stages of discussion.

Homage is still paid to Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy throughout Canadian Doukhobor communities as their benefactor, champion, moral teacher and friend, a fact which is not lost even among the youngest generations today. Many Saskatchewan Independents (единоличники) continue to keep Tolstoy's works and photographs among their cherished library materials in their prayer house (Kosachova, 34). They are not alone in this. Indeed, it seems to be a relatively common practice among various Doukhobor groups.

The Doukhobors themselves have not been the only ones to recognize the Spirit Wrestler – Tolstoy connection. In 1987, the Soviet government, as a gesture of good will and diplomacy, presented two statues of the great writer to the Doukhobor people of Canada. In cooperation with the Cultural Affairs Department of the USSR, the Doukhobors erected a statue to Tolstoy at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village in Verigin, Saskatchewan, as well as another at the Kootenay Doukhobor Historical Society Museum in Castlegar, British Columbia. Il'ia Tolstoy, L.N. Tolstoy's great grandson, was present, "participating in a shared project which would bring our people closer together through the Verigins and the Tolstoys" (Friends of Tolstoy).

These statues were presented to Doukhobors and the Canadian peoples by the Soviet government in honor of Russian ancestry and their ideals of brotherhood among all nations. It also honors Tolstoy's crucial and timely assistance in their emigration (Doukhobor Home Page)⁴

Both statues depict Tolstoy in a familiar stance, that is, in a loose peasant-style blouse with one hand slipped inside a home-made belt.

Due to problems as diverse as civil wars, regional unrest, localized discrimination against all national or religious minorities, lack of employment and insufficient infrastructure, many Russian Doukhobors, who had been long living in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, in particular, received financial assistance, authorized by Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov in 1998 to migrate to Russia proper. Although approximately

³ Official name the Community Doukhobors (общинники) gave themselves in 1938, after changing it from the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood

⁴ Found under "Timeline of Significant Dates in Doukhobor History."

1000 remain in Transcaucasia, feeling themselves to be “disenfranchised peoples,” a substantial number have already relocated their villages to Tula and the surrounding area (Molokan Home Page).⁵ This places the modern Russian Doukhobors near Iasnaia Poliana, the home-estate of Lev Tolstoy, one hundred years after their brothers and sisters had successfully emigrated to North America.

The geographic proximity of the Russian Doukhobors to Iasnaia Poliana gives a covert sense of homage to this highly respected literary and moral figure. The Canadian Doukhobors have recently created a more overt means to expressing their appreciation. Due to the expanding number of tourists annually to the estate, (an estimated 250,000) many Doukhobors and friends of Tolstoy proposed the revitalization of a bakery/cafe to facilitate refreshments for visitors, conferences, meetings, and even occasional weddings. Currently there are no amenities in the region to serve these guests. By the spring of 2002 the bakery/cafe should be fully operational, able to accommodate eighty people with additional seating outdoors. While the Iasnaia Poliana estate will cover the expenses for the construction, “friends of Tolstoy” are aiming to accrue \$400,000 (Canadian) for the outfitting of the cafe itself. Every Canadian Doukhobor is encouraged to contribute \$100, that is, one dollar for every year they have been privileged to live in Canada. “Canadian Doukhobors have initiated this Project out of gratitude to Tolstoy as part of their Centennial” (Friends of Tolstoy).

Tolstoy himself, providing a conclusion to Chertkov’s *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, doggedly sought international aid and moral support for the Doukhobor people. The religious philosopher delightedly believed he had found something which had nearly become extinct – living examples of true Christianity.

What, then, is important for the realisation of the Christian life? It is surely not by diplomatic negotiations...socialistic congresses, and so on, that man will advance to that for which the world endures. For, if the Kingdom of God, i.e. the kingdom on earth of truth and good, is to be realised, it can only be by such attempts as were made by the first disciples of Christ, afterwards by the Paulicians...Quakers, Moravian Brethren, Mennonites, all the true Christians of the world, and now by the ‘Christians of the Universal Brotherhood’⁶ (Chertkov, 52).

⁵ Found under Molokan News; feature report by Koozma J. Tarasoff, entitled “More Doukhobors Move From Georgia to Russia,” Ottawa, ON 1 April 1999.

⁶ i.e. the Doukhobors

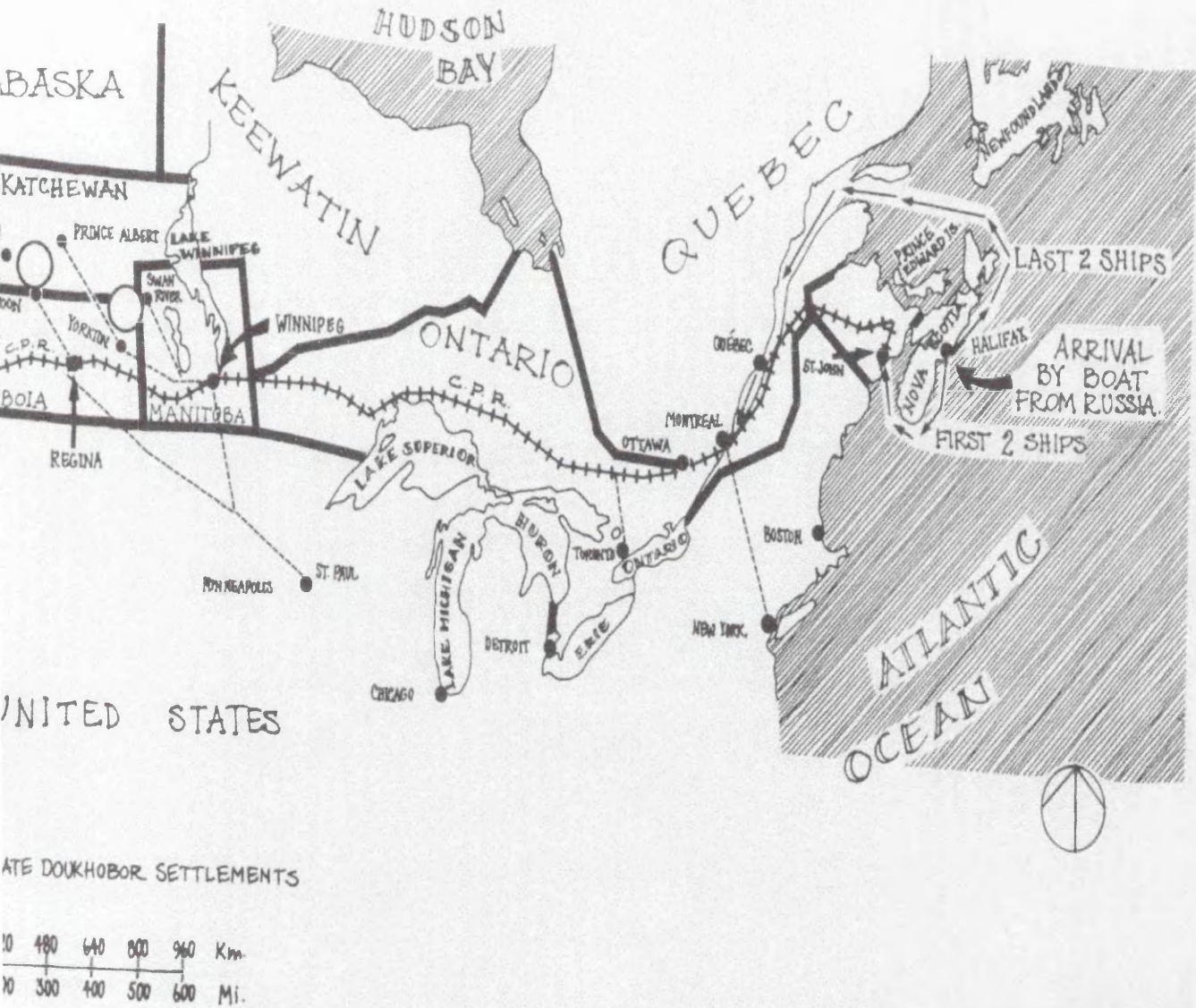
As long as Tolstoy's readers flourish and take his teachings to heart, as long as Doukhobors, Quakers, Molokans, pacifists and Christians of all sects and denominations strive toward universal perfection, Tolstoy's legacy will be constantly rejuvenated, appearing contemporary and attainable to each succeeding generation.

It is to be hoped that the lofty ideals expressed in Tolstoy's artistic and ethical writings will surface one day in Russia and other countries as well, as guidance toward international brotherhood. Should this happen, mankind will be in Tolstoy's debt (Fodor, 147).

As Tolstoy praised and honored the Doukhobors, lifting them up to an international audience, so the Doukhobors have not failed to honor Tolstoy, both in maintaining their spiritual and humanistic ideals, as well as displaying their appreciation for his lingering influence on their communities. It is impossible to relate Doukhbor history without mentioning Tolstoy's involvement. Likewise, it is impossible to understand the final two decades of Tolstoy's life without a clear comprehension of the Doukhobor people.

Map C.1

DOUKHOBOR MIGRATION ROUTE IN CANADA - 1899



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