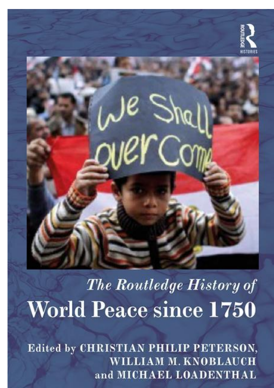
This article was downloaded by: *10.2.97.136*
On: 27 Sep 2023
Access details: *subscription number*
Publisher: *CRC Press*
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge History of World Peace Since 1750

Christian Philip Peterson, William M. Knoblauch, Michael Loadenthal

The Evolution of Tolstoyan Pacifism in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, 1900–1937

Publication details
https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315157344-7
Irina Gordeeva
Published online on: 04 Sep 2018

How to cite :- Irina Gordeeva. 04 Sep 2018, *The Evolution of Tolstoyan Pacifism in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, 1900–1937 from:* The Routledge History of World Peace Since 1750 CRC Press
Accessed on: 27 Sep 2023
https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315157344-7

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

6

THE EVOLUTION OF TOLSTOYAN PACIFISM IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND THE SOVIET UNION, 1900–1937

Irina Gordeeva

Leo Tolstoy and emergence of the pacifist movement in Russia

The Russian pacifist movement emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as an outgrowth of Tolstoyans' (the disciples of Russian writer Leo Tolstoy) socio-political self-determination.[1] This popular movement was well known among contemporaries because of its appealing religious and social ideas that followers believed could solve urgent social and political problems. At first, Tolstoyism appealed to that part of Russian populism (*narodnichestvo*) that sought a peaceful alternative to the ideas of violent revolutionaries. Even by the 1880–1890s the Tolstoyans supported communitarianism—the idea that society can be transformed not by social revolution, but through personal reflection and moral self-perfection by smaller communes of people.[2]

The Tolstoyans' idea of moral perfection came from Leo Tolstoy, who wrote works expressing that the main goal of life should be the fulfillment of Evangelical ideals.[3] Accordingly, if everybody followed the moral teachings of Christ, then the unfair social order would change for the better. Tolstoy believed that Christian teachings were teachings of love and non-violence as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount; that Jesus' life represented "a revolutionary and indeed wiser method for human beings to deal with evil, with fear, violence or insecurity." Put simply, "when treated unjustly, do not use force or retaliate, but respond with love, forgiveness and generosity."[4] Tolstoy's teachings were accompanied by a sharp critique of the modern state and the argument that the behavior of the Tsarist regime in Russia could not be reconciled with Jesus' principles. He believed that freedom from state power could only be reached by following God's voice in your conscience, rejecting any kind of violence, and resisting all institutions that contradicted the principles of love.[5]

From the mid-1880s to the late 1890s, communitarian ideas became central to Tolstoyan ideology. During this period, Tolstoyans focused on two goals: dissemination of Leo Tolstoy's prohibited works and the organization of agricultural communes. In essence, these were attempts to separate themselves from the "impure world," but soon the realities of Russian life intervened. The famine of 1891–1892 revealed Tsar Alexander III's inability to solve large-scale social problems; in response, Tolstoy and his disciples organized relief efforts. Also, Tolstoyans criticized the ills of Russia's economic and social systems, and clamored for social justice and peace. It was the tragedy of the Transcaucasian Doukhobors, however, that most greatly influenced Tolstoyan activism.[6] In June 1895, the Doukhobors

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

publicly burned their weapons in the now historic "Burning of Arms," an action that led local authorities to repress them. Tolstoyans managed not only to promote their case, but in collaborating with representatives of other public movements, at home and internationally, they organized the relocation of about 7000 Doukhobors to Canada. Finally, Tolstoyans provided legal help to a growing number of persecuted sectarians and conscientious objectors (COs) to military service.[7] Thus, by the late 1890s, Tolstoyans were peace advocates with a robust agenda.

This chapter argues that during this period, Tolstoyans shifted their goals from inconspicuous self-perfection to peace activism in the public sphere. This shift is notable because, while Tolstoy's theory of non-violence may have influenced Russian pacifists to act publicly, he never actually called for collective action; for him, individuals chose—through religious and ethical reasons—their own forms of non-violent and passive resistance. He urged that public figures not oppose the ruling classes by riots, revolutions, or socialist activities; instead, they should change themselves to have a better life. As Tolstoy remarked, "live a fraternal life in accordance with the law of God, doing to others what you want that they would do to you. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."[8] This was Tolstoy's favorite Bible quote and it became the main slogan of these Russian pacifists.

This evolution from self-perfection to public activism can be attributed to the fact that the Tolstoyan pacifist movement included moderate and radical wings. Moderate Tolstoyans were pacifist sectarians who applied pacifist values in their everyday lives; radically minded Tolstoyans, conversely, believed in social, non-violent activism. It was this faction that went beyond Leo Tolstoy's original ideas. They concluded that a better society required not just personal moral choices but political action. Not surprisingly for the time, this faction of Tolstoy's followers frequently self-identified as anarchists, which eventually brought them into direct conflict with the Russian state.[9]

Pacifism and the Tolstoyan movement prior to 1917

Most of the movement's original leaders came from wealthy, well-connected aristocratic families of means, which allowed them to publish ideas and build political action networks. They also came from various intellectual professions, including teachers, physicians, scholars, writers, and journalists. For these reasons, Tolstoyan leaders quickly earned enormous prestige among Russian sects and the peasantry.

An important step in developing the movement was the organization of the Tolstoyan press abroad. It began in 1897 just outside of London when Vladimir Chertkov (1854–1936), an intimate friend of Leo Tolstoy, and his wife Anna Chertkova (1859–1927), founded a publishing house "Svobodnoe Slovo" (Free Word). They published Tolstoy's works, outlawed in Russia, and issued the periodical bulletins *Listki "Svobodnogo Slova"* ("Free Word" Leaflets) from 1898–1902; later, between 1901 and 1905, they published the periodical *Svobodnoe Slovo* (Free Word). Another Tolstoyan, friend and biographer of Tolstoy, Pavel Biriukov (1860–1931) opened a branch of the publishing house in Onex (Switzerland), where he published the periodical *Svobodnaia Mysl* (Free Thought) from 1899–1901. These periodicals helped to develop the pacifist movement's ideology and served as a platform for criticizing the Tsarist government's police regime and militarization of society, as well as supporting the struggle for freedom of worship. The pages of these periodicals also speak of a larger effort to formulate a program for Christian anarchism.[10]

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

During this period, Russian pacifists interpreted Tolstoy's works and began developing the theory of "peaceful revolution" or "revolution of brotherhood." From 1900 to 1905, the Tolstoyan publicist Ivan Tregubov (1858–1931) expressed these principles in a series of articles that proposed a "universal peaceful strike."[11] He suggested that followers mark the 1900th anniversary of Christ's birth by carrying out a "unanimous and universal strike" in the name of the triumph of "the greatest idea of the world." In subsequent articles, Tregubov suggested that people adopt this method to fight against the Orthodox Church and autocracy.[12] It was a theme that continued in 1904 when Vladimir Chertkov published the brochure "About Revolution. Violent Revolution or Christian Liberation?" that rehashed Tolstoy's dispute with Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries, who supported the concept of violent revolution. He argued that being a Free Christian was "far more revolutionary" than any of the theories of the violent revolutionaries, as non-violent Free Christians aimed to improve internal human motives and to perfect interpersonal relations.[13] Chertkov believed that social change required addressing personal conscience.[14]

In 1904, Russian pacifists publicly protested the Russo-Japanese war and the "patriotic propaganda" of the government. During the Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, they continued to develop their ideology through polemics with the "violent" revolutionaries, looking for like-minded people and allies; they also worked on the methods of non-violent resistance and distributed leaflets that called for peaceful protest against the militarization of society.[15] After this revolution ended, Tolstoyans refocused their activities on defending freedom of conscience. For example, they attempted to lobby the Russian State Duma, which came into existence in 1906, on behalf of conscientious objectors' rights; they also called for an end to the death penalty.[16]

At the beginning of World War I (WWI) in 1914, representatives of the pacifist movement remained the only group that had not fallen victim to patriotic sentiments and who still openly objected to the war. Deeply disappointed by the "chauvinistic" reaction of European socialists and anarchists, Tolstoyans wrote a series of anti-war appeals. In these letters they expressed their conviction that "as long as people do not consider themselves brothers, but lieges or citizens of different states, there won't be peace among people!"[17] Russian authorities responded to these appeals by arresting some thirty Tolstoyans who were put on trial in 1916. Tolstoyans' motivations, along with their behavior in prison and during court procedures, won them broad public support. Thanks to their attorneys, who were able to argue convincingly that Tolstoyans were motivated by their religious beliefs, the court acquitted the pacifists' charges. The court did not find evidence that the appeal contained incitement to treason.[18] Tolstoyans considered this show of public support to be their first victory; a second came a year later, when General Sergei Abramovich-Baranovsky, the chief of the court, became a Free Christian.[19]

Also during WWI, Tolstoyans developed the idea of "universal brotherhood," a concept that they lauded as the main goal of human development. The words "all people are brothers" became a slogan of its adherents, each of whom considered the existence of borders (state, social, religious, and others) as one of the evils of modern society. They saw it as their task to fight "the international disconnection and militarism that turns people—free brothers—into hordes of slaves, into enemies, wolves that gnaw at each other's throats."[20] It was an idea that Tolstoyans partly shared with the Bolsheviks—that famous faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party who eventually created the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[21] Rejecting national divides, Tolstoyans sought universal brotherhood through an "inner," "spiritual," "peaceful revolution," or a "revolution of brotherhood." The pacifists

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

were convinced that such revolution had begun with Jesus Christ; now, during the war, it was continued by the common Russian people who refused military service.[22]

The rise of the pacifist movement in 1917 and the post-revolutionary Russia

Immediately after the February Revolution that toppled Tsar Nicholas II, a new stage of the Russian pacifist movement began. On June 2, 1917, Tolstoyans founded the Moscow Society of True Freedom in memory of Leo Tolstoy (MSTF). Their notion of "true freedom" refers to the following Bible quotation, "And you will have knowledge of what is true, and that will make you free" (John 8:32), which Tolstoy included in his 1907 article "True Freedom." In accordance with the Charter of the MSTF, the society's main purpose was "through moral improvement of people to achieve the transformation of human society based on state violence in the stateless community where complete freedom in all matters of faith and life . . . could be secured." Societies of True Freedom were consequently established in numerous cities and towns, including Petrograd, Novgorod, Kiev, Poltava, Tiflis, Vitebsk, Tula, Orekhovo-Zuevo, Sormov, Samara, Tsaritsyn, Omsk, Khabarovsk, and many others. Together they constituted an extensive network of the Russian pacifist movement.

Initially, the MSTF had more than 300 members who had access to several administrative units, including an information desk, a discussion club, a library, a children's shelter, a bureau for protecting opponents of violence, and several instructional courses—resources that helped members obtain information about Russian religious dissent. There was also an anti-militarist group, a group for studying the philosophy of Tolstoy, and a group for the studies of anarchism and cooperative ideas.[23] The program document "An essay on the foundations of true freedom" outlined their main principles, including the rejection of any kind of violence, a rejection of war, state borders ("our Motherland is the whole world, all people are our brothers"), and rejection of private land ownership.[24]

During the first post-revolutionary years, Tolstoyans managed to organize numerous practical actions to aid people living through the hardships of the revolution and the Civil War that followed. Primarily, Tolstoyans sought to educate citizens, especially about religious and moral ideas, and especially non-violence. Pacifists visited Moscow's military barracks and factories to give public lectures and introduce activities that introduced soldiers and workers to the ideas of "true freedom." Furthermore, the Tolstoyan periodical press became one of the most important distributors of pacifist ideas of its day. In 1916, the journal *Edinenie* (later retitled *Golos Tolstogo i Edinenie*, respectively: "Unity" and "Tolstoy's Voice and Unity") began to appear in the streets of Moscow and other cities and towns. Devoted to the "renewal of life in light of reason and love," it was distributed all over Russia among the followers of Tolstoy and the sympathizing sectarians.[25]

The Bolshevik's Decree of Peace (November 8, 1917) and Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March 3, 1918), as well as the "Decree on the exemption from military service on religious grounds" (January 4, 1919) became additional reasons for Tolstoyans to collaborate selectively with Bolsheviks in the early Soviet period.[26] They favored collaboration because, initially, some Tolstoyans considered both the February and October (Bolshevik) Revolutions of 1917 as the "peaceful revolution" that they had dreamed about. Later, they distinguished the two divergent currents within both revolutions: Peaceful and violent. Identifying themselves in the former category, they publicly shunned all forms of violence, and during the first years of the Soviet rule they organized a series of events aimed at "softening" the revolution and guiding it down a peaceful course.[27]

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

From the very beginning, Tolstoyans openly criticized the results of the October Revolution. They especially critiqued the lack of freedom in Soviet Russia and its repressive attitude towards any ideological opponents and all religious institutions. In their nuanced criticisms, they differentiated between the non-violent/religious and the violent/governmental versions of socialism. In this dichotomy, they regarded themselves as the genuine revolutionaries—the non-violent socialist revolutionaries of spirit.[28]

In October 1918, Tolstoyans established the inter-confessional United Council of the Religious Communities and Groups (UCRCG) for defense of COs.[29] It joined the non-denominational Christians, Mennonites, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Dobroliubovtsy, Seventh-day Adventists, Malevantsy, Molokans, Sabbatarians (Subbotniki), and the Teetotalers (Trezvenniki). The UCRCG aimed to represent interests of various religious groups in their communication with authorities, and promote cooperation between people of various confessions for the protection of freedom of conscience.[30] Perhaps the greatest success that Russian pacifists won came with the before-mentioned "Decree on the exemption from military service on religious grounds," a measure that Tolstoyans had initiated. In accordance with the decree, the UCRCG considered whether individuals' religious beliefs warranted giving them CO status, a necessity because there were people who cited religious beliefs to avoid military service even if they had not previously voiced such objections.[31]

In the summer of 1920, the UCRCG organized a Congress of nondenominational movements and groups; by March 1921 it also initiated the First Congress of sectarian agricultural and productive associations. Both endorsed resolutions committed to the principles of non-violence and anti-militarism, COs rights, and childhood education independent from state propaganda. At the same time, both congresses protested governmental persecution based on religious beliefs and worked to abolish both the death penalty and forced labor.[32] Because of these initiatives, the Bolsheviks began to recognize the growing popularity of pacifism as a serious threat to Soviet rule. The success of the UCRCG in mobilizing sectarian opposition, combined with an increasing number of refusals to accept military service, triggered conflicts with local and central authorities who saw the UCRCG as a threat to the Red Army. In response, on 14 December 1920, the Council could no longer express opinions to the courts. Unfazed, it continued as an independent human rights organization; by the end of 1923, the UCRCG activity had become practically impossible, and on January 12, 1924, the Anti-Religious Commission of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party adopted a resolution to terminate the group.[33]

Such specialists of anti-religious propaganda as Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich and Emelyian Yaroslavsky joined the rebellion against the Tolstoyans and other religious pacifists.[34] By 1928, yielding to official pressure, most of the sectarian-pacifists (Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Seventh-day Adventists) renounced their pacifist positions. Those few groups, those who did not agree, had to break with official organizations and go underground or risk persecution. As a result of these actions, by the end of the 1920s the right of exemption from military service was abolished.[35] The Tolstoyans now needed to reassess their activist position.

Tolstoyans under Stalin, 1925–1935: The decline of the Russian pacifist movement

During the mid-1920s, the Soviet regime closed all Tolstoyan societies and their publications, a course of action that in effect forced the Tolstoyan pacifist movement to exist illegally from

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

1925 to the end of the 1930s. Soon, pacifists consolidated around the Moscow Vegetarian Society (MVS). Founded in 1909, this society—one with a rather innocent title—became a center of government opposition for almost all adherents to non-violence.[36]

But even in 1919, Tolstoyans had already established a special bureau for international collaboration to spread information around the world, especially news reports on peace and pacifist movements, and which also collected data on citizens persecuted for peace activism. In the face of this Soviet crackdown, the Tolstoyans continued their efforts to achieve international solidarity mainly through correspondence, some of it private and some from (now-illegal) Tolstoyan circles. Tolstoyan samizdat—illegal materials published underground and abroad—contained news from world pacifist movements, reviews and reports of foreign pacifists groups, and addresses for correspondence. The result was a massive international network of groups and people that provided the base for trust and solidarity around the globe.[37] This was especially true regarding connections with the War Resisters International (WRI) and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), as well as the now-relocated Canadian Doukhobors.

Such oppression became common under Josef Stalin, but initially Tolstoyans still tried to participate in international anti-war and pacifist congresses. Soviet pacifists established unofficial branches of the WRI and the IFOR, and tried to keep contacts with European groups via correspondence—an increasingly difficult proposition in the quickly insulated Soviet Union. True, there were not many pacifists, but those who remained active included both intellectuals and ordinary peasants from the Tolstoyan communities. It was the Tolstoyans who led the struggle to keep pacifists informed of events within and outside of a repressive Soviet regime. For example, in 1925 the central bureau of the WRI received the following letter from Russia:

> But still it is a pity that a so-called Socialist Government does not recognize those who accordingly to their conviction cannot partake in any manslaughter and kill their brother men. I always thought that Socialism and brotherhood were the same thing, but I see that under our Socialist Government the position for war resisters is worse than in many capitalist countries. I can only hope that before the 9th anniversary of the October Revolution our Communist leaders will have recognized that the war resisters are not enemies of Communism, that their aims are the same—Universal Brotherhood—only the methods differ.[38]

Many Tolstoyans sent their accounts abroad to maintain connections and inform their foreign counterparts about the real situation in Soviet Russia, including repression of COs, sectarians, and other religious dissidents.[39] Records remain incomplete, but the IFOR's Russian section (Moscow Group of Friends of the IFOR) likely existed in secrecy until the beginning of the 1930s. These leaders managed to send abroad reports about the situation of COs, prisoners' lists, excerpts from their letters, and general reviews about censorship in the Soviet Union, all of which were published in the bulletin *The War Resister*. However, with the strengthening of Soviet censorship, less and less information was sent to the WRI; the exchange of information was finally terminated in the mid-1930s.[40]

The peak of Russian pacifists' international activity came with the organization of the International Movement for Christian Communism (IMCC). This group provided a religiously based alternative to the violent Bolshevik revolution. It began in August 1926 in Oberammergau (Bavaria) by religious activists under the leadership of two figures:

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

The Czech writer and leader of the religious commune "New Jerusalem" Premysl Pitter, and the Russian émigré Tolstoyan Valentin Bulgakov.[41] It was Bulgakov who further developed the idea of "peaceful revolution," which he believed had not been finalized in the early 1920s; however, like many other Tolstoyans, he believed that the real revolution could only be a spiritual, inner revolution. The organizers of the IMCC rejected violence's role in establishing communism and instead openly supported a "nonviolent, Christian revolution" that could expand non-violent methods in their own struggle against capitalism and militarism.[42] They outlined their objectives in a "Manifesto of International Movement for Christian Communism."[43]

Leaders such as Bulgakov wanted to initiate a new movement, particularly in Russia, but also in other Slavic countries and further abroad—any place where the traditions of Tolstoyism would live on. To this end, they held public lectures in regions not just within Russia, but also in Poland, West Belorussia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and the Baltics. Soon, pacifists in other European countries—not just from refined intellectuals, but commoners as well—started to read, discuss, copy, translate, and distribute Tolstoyan materials.[44] However, in Soviet Russia the possibilities for correspondence slowly became more and more limited. If in the early 1920s practically all Tolstoyans could correspond with their foreign counterparts, in the second half of the 1920s and later only a few privileged people—Chertkovs (father and son), Aron Grosbein, and Ukrainian Tolstoyan Mitrofan Dudchenko—had such opportunities.[45]

After the state outlawed the MVS in 1929, all Tolstoyans had to operate underground; after the death of Vladimir Chertkov in 1936, the situation worsened further. Stalin's purges made any contact with pacifist organizations abroad extremely dangerous.[46] By the mid-1930s, Soviet pacifists existed only as a network of befriended people secretly connected through correspondence and mutual support. The last nodes of this pacifist network in the Soviet Union were the Tolstoyan agricultural communes, which lived on until the Great Terror (1937–1938).[47]

Despite this crackdown, during the early 1930s, many Tolstoyan pacifists attempted to participate in several international anti-war and pacifist congresses, but the Soviet regime restricted their travels abroad. The last attempt at such overseas activism was undertaken in 1936, when the members of the commune "Bratskii Trud" (Fraternal Labor) from Western Siberia sent a letter to Stalin asking for permission to attend the international congress of the anti-military movement. Prior to this letter, Tolstoyans had sent a worldwide appeal addressed to workers of the world to speak up against the war and to start building a new system: non-violent communism.[48] Instead of answering the letter, Stalin launched severe repressions against the "free-religious" movement, and many Tolstoyans, pacifists, and anti-militarists were sent to, and died in, the Gulag.[49]

Conclusion

In Soviet-era Russia, Leo Tolstoy was widely acknowledged as a great writer, but after Lenin, Soviet ideologues heavily criticized Tolstoy's religious ideas. For example, in September 1928 (the anniversary of Tolstoy's birthday, which was still widely celebrated in the Soviet Union), alongside the official Soviet-sanctioned celebration, numerous pacifists organized another unofficial event that attracted hundreds of participants. Among the many speeches made, perhaps the most memorable came from Ivan Gorbunov-Posadov, who passionately talked about abuses of power, the violence of dekulakization (the Soviet campaign of political

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

repression and expulsions of wealthy peasants, aka, kulaks), and the terrible situation of the peasantry. His call to end shootings was met with loud applause, but authorities used the meeting as a reason to arrest the Youth Circle of the MVS and to ban *Letters of the MVS*, the periodical samizdat leaflets of the pacifists. After experiencing such widespread repression, the MVS disbanded in June 1929.[50] Still, in the face of all this Soviet-era repression, some Tolstoyans fought on. When faced with arrest, they invented the tactics of passive resistance laying down on the ground, saying: "Dear brothers, we do not want to corrupt you by our obedience."[51] Once imprisoned, pacifists often refused to work, went on hunger strikes, declared their opposition to the Stalinist government, and espoused Christian anarchist and radical pacifist outlooks."[52]

The Russian pacifist movement of the late nineteenth to the early third of the twentieth century combined the features of a traditional social movement and a new social movement of a transnational nature. It was well organized (albeit informally) despite an original philosophy of not having formal leaders or strict organization. Its values (non-violence, freedom of conscience, tolerance, autonomy of an individual, universal brotherhood of people all over the world) and agenda (protection of COs, demilitarization of all spheres of life, cessation of international wars, abolition of national borders, education in the spirit of non-violence) together with protest methods (for example, civil disobedience) turned out to be totally forgotten in Russia.

Those few Tolstoyans who survived the repressions and World War II did not participate in any public events; still, they managed to collect and keep the archives and write memoirs. Thus the Russian pacifist movement ceased to exist at the end of the 1930s and was not able to achieve its goals. It was revived only in the late 1970s on the eve of a new, grassroots peace movement, one made of scientists, intelligentsia, Soviet hippies, and oppressed minorities. This movement emerged in the Soviet Union with an agenda similar to the agenda of the pacifists of the first third of the twentieth century.[53] Once again, the late Soviet pacifists began their fight against the state militarism, nationalism, and violence. They fought for freedom of conscience, alternatives to military service, and tolerance between people, thereby reinventing the Tolstoyan pacifist tradition. This legacy has largely been lost because of historians' lack of sources; still, these issues are still relevant today for Russia in light of its militarism and overall distrust of citizen activism that continues in Putin's Russia.

Currently, no significant pacifist movement exists in Russia. At least in part, this shortcoming reflects most Russians' ignorance of the Tolstoyan pacifist movement, a development that came about because of the Soviet government's repression of peace activism during the 1920s and 1930s, the closing of archives with records on peace activism, and the lack of attention that historians have paid to the subject. The history of Russian pacifism is also not taught in schools and, as of the writing of this essay, no national university has made the study of peace a part of its curriculum. Authors need to tell the history of the Tolstoyan pacifist movement in detail so people can learn more about how Russia has its own tradition of grassroots pacifist activism; this movement actively promoted non-violence, freedom of conscience, and a radical change of the whole social and political order by means of non-violent revolution of brotherhood. This aim united representatives of different social groups, whereupon pacifists from the intelligentsia developed a movement focused on workfolk, particularly religious sectarians; this Tolstoyan pacifist movement inspired ordinary people. All told, this movement established wide transnational connections and collaborated with foreign pacifist-minded peoples—practices that should, and could, be followed in today's social movements.

Notes

1 Peter Brock, *Freedom from War: Nonsectarian Pacifism (1814–1914)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 185–220; Charlotte Alston, *Tolstoy and His Disciples: The History of a Radical International Movement* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 11–47.

2 Irina Gordeeva, *"Zabytye Ludi": Istoriia Rossiiskogo Kommunitarnogo Dvizheniia (*Moscow, AIRO-XX, 2003), 122–132.

3 See, for example, "My religion," "The Kingdom of God is within You," "I Cannot Be Silent," "The Law of Love and the Law of Violence," "Thou Shalt Not Kill," "What's to Be Done?", and other publications. On Tolstoy teaching see William Edgerton, "The Artist Turned Prophet: Leo Tolstoj After 1880," in *American Contributions in the Sixth International Congress of Slavists 2* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), 61–85; on Tolstoy as a Christian anarchist see Alexandre J. M. E. Christoyannopoulos, "Leo Tolstoy on the State: A Detailed Picture of Tolstoy's Denunciation of State Violence and Deception," *Anarchist Studies* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 20–47; on the world influence of Tolstoy see: Steven G. Marks, "Tolstoy and the Non-Violent Imperative," in *How Russia Shaped the Modern World: From Art to Anti-Semitism, Ballet to Bolshevism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 102–139.

4 Alexandre J. M. E. Christoyannopoulos, "Christian Anarchism: A Revolutionary Reading of the Bible," in *New Perspectives on Anarchism*, part of the *Out Sources: Philosophy, Culture, Politics* series, edited by Nathan Jun and Shane Wahl (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), 151.

5 Leo Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is within You: Christianity not as a Mystic Religion, but as a New Theory of Life*, transl. Constance Garnett (New York: Cassel, 1894).

6 Doukhobors were a Russian sect that emerged in the eighteenth century among the spiritual Christians. Its adherents were prone to pacifism in their attitude towards the state and especially military service. On the Doukhobors see Joshua A. Sanborn, "Pacifist politics and peasant politics: Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, 1895–1899," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 27, no. 3 (1995): 52–71.

7 Peter Brock, *Against the Draft: Essays on Conscientious Objection from the Radical Reformation to the Second World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 155–171.

8 Leo Tolstoy, "K Rabochemu Narodu," in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 35 (Moscow, 1950), 147, 150.

9 On this theme, see: Antonella Salomoni, "Emigranty-tolstovtsy: Mezhdu Khristianstvom i Anarkhismom (1898–1905 gg.)" in *Russkaia Emigratsiia do 1917 Goda—Laboratoriia Liberal'noii Revolutsionnoi Mysli.* (St. Petersburg, 1997), 112.

10 Svetlana Gladysheva, "Periodicheskie Izdaniia 'Svobodnogo Slova' (1898–1905): Istoriia, osobennosti Funktsionirovaniia" (Ph.D. diss., Rostov-na-Donu, 1999), 117–176.

11 Ivan M. Tregubov, "O Vseobschei Mirnoi Stachke," *Svobodnoe Slovo / Parole Livre (Christchurch)* 7 (1903), 25–26; Idem, "Georgii Gapon i Vseobschaia Stachka." *Osvobozhdenie* 66 (1905), 264–265; Ivan Tregouboff, "La Greve Generate Pacifique," *L'Ere Nouvelle* 29 (1904), 253–256; Idem, "Assez de Sang: Appel aux Travailleurs du Monde Entire," *L'Ere Nouvelle* 31 (1904), 354–355. About Tregubov see: Alexander Etkind, *Khlyst: (Sekty, Literatura, Revolutsia)* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 1998), 653–663.

12 Tregubov, "O Vseobschei Mirnoi Stachke," 26.

13 Vladimir Chertkov, *O Revolutsii: Nasil'stvennaia Revolutsiia ili Khristianskoe Osvobozhdenie?* (Christchurch, 1904), 2.

14 Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich, "Sredi Sektantov," in *Izbrannye Ateisticheskie Proizvedeniia* (Moscow: Mysl', 1973), 150–213.

15 "The only possible way to abolish autocracy is peaceful disobedience to oppressors, while violent struggle against government could only intensify authority and atrocity" (Vladimir Chertkov, Nasha *Revolutsia: Nasil'svennoe Vosstanie ili Khristianskoe Osvobozhdenie?* intr. by Leo Tolstoy (Moscow: Tip. A. P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 92–93. More about the participation of Tolstoyans in the Revolution 1905–1907 see Alexander Klibanov, Istoriia Religioznogo Sektantstva v Rossii (60-e gody XIX v.–1917 g.) (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 6–9, 255–269.

16 See further on the history of these events in: Valentin Bulgakov,*"Opomnites', Ludi-brat'ia!" Istoriia Vozzvaniia Edinomyshlennikov L. N. Tolstogo protiv Mirovoi Voiny 1914–1918 gg.* (Moscow, 1922), Vol. 1.

17 Ibid., 192.

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

18 Yuri Varfolomeev, ed. "'Vozzvanie Imelo Tsel'u Uspokoit' Vstrevozhennu'u Voinoi Sovest' Tolstovtsev-Antimilitaristov': Dokumenty Gosudarstvennogo Muzeia L. N. Tolstogo o Sudebnom Protsesse 21–30 Marta 1916 g." *Otechestvennye Arkhivy* 3 (2006), 80–98.
19 Manuscripts Department of the Russian State Library (OR RGB), fonds 345, karton 61, file 26, pp. 17–19.
20 Russian Archives for Literature and Arts (RGALI), fonds 122, op. 1, file 19.
21 Peter Brock and Nigel Young, *Pacifism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 19.
22 Irina Gordeeva, "'Vse L'udi – Brat'ia': Rossiiskie Radikal'nye Patsifisty vo Vremia Pervoi Mirovoi Voiny," in *Materialy Tolstovskikh Chtenii 2014 g. v Gosudarstvennom Muzee L. N. Tolstogo* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi Muzei Tolstogo, 2015), 227–235.
23 Mikhail Krapivin and Arkadii Leikin and Artur Dalgatov. *Sud'by Khristianskogo Sektantstva v Sovetskoi Rossii (1917–Konetz 1930–kh Godov)* (Sankt-Petersburg, 2003), 171–172.
24 "Obschestvo Istinnoi Svobody v Pamiat' L. N. Tolstogo," in *Kalendar' dlia Kazhdogo na 1918 god* (Moscow: Posrednik, 1917), 75–78.
25 OR RGB, fonds 369, karton 65, files 11, 33.
26 The main areas in which Tolstoyans and Bolsheviks cooperated were: Supporting the rights of the religious pacifists to refuse military conscription; creating agricultural communes; and providing humanitarian aid to those who suffered from war and hunger. This cooperation was possible only until 1922. More details see: Alexander Etkind, "Russkie Sekty i Sovetskii Kommunizm: Proekt Vladimira Bonch-Bruevicha," *Minuvshee* 19 (Moscow, Saint-Petersburg: Athenium, Feniks, 1986), 275–319; Elena Getel', "Ob'edinennyi Sovet Religioznykh Obschin i Grupp kak Odno iz Proiavlenii Russkogo Religioznogo Patsifizma," in *Dolgii Put' Rossiiskogo Patsifizma: Ideal Mezhdunarodnogo i Vnutrennego Mira v Religiozno-filosofskoii Obschestvenno-politicheskoi Mysli Rossii* (Moscow: IVI RAN, 1997), 301–317.
27 OR RGB, fonds 435, karton 56, file 27, 1–3.
28 Ivan Gorbunov-Posadov, "Tolstoi I Sud'by Chelovechestva," in Mikhail Gorbunov-Posadov, *Vospominaniia*, part 1 (Moscow: Gosudartvennyi Literarurnyi Muzei, 1995), 248–264.
29 Peter Brock, *Soviet Conscientious Objectors, 1917–1939: A Chapter in the History of Twentieth-Century Pacifism* (Toronto, Author, 1999).
30 Elena Getel', op. cit., 301–317.
31 Bruno Koppiters, "Patsifistskie Sekty, Bol'sheviki i Pravo na Otkaz ot Voinskoi Sluzhby," in *Almanakh po Istorii Russkogo Baptizma*, vol. 2 (St. Petersburg: Bibliia dlia Vsekh, 2001), 408–409.
32 OR RGB, fonds 648, karton 18, files 15, 14–20.
33 Mikail Krapivin and Arkadii Leikin and Artur Dalgatov. *Sud'by Khristianskogo Sektantstva v Sovetskoi Rossii (1917–Konets 1930–kh Godov)* (St. Petersburg, 2003), 283–284.
34 Yaroslavsky in the articles "About L. N. Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans", "L. N. Tolstoy and Bolshevism", published in 1928, declared Tolstoy an ideological adversary, with whom the Bolsheviks should wage a relentless struggle, preventing penetration of Tolstoy's "backward, reactionary philosophy into the masses of working people." (Bruno Koppiters, op. cit., 408–409).
35 Elena Getel', op.cit., 317.
36 Irina A. Gordeeva, "'Tolstovtsy' v Sovetskoi Rossii Serediny 1920-kh–1930-kh Godov," in *Rabochee Dvizhenie i Levye Sily Protiv Avtoritarizma i Totalitarizma. Istoriia i Sovremennost'* (Moscow, 2013), 75–88.
37 Irina A. Gordeeva, "Samizdat 'Tolstovtsev' 1920–kh–Nachala 1930–kh Godov," *Acta Samizdatica/Zapiski o Samizdate 1 (2)* (Moscow: GPIB Rossii; Memorial; Zven'ia, 2013), 199–209.
38 "An S.O.S. Cry from Russia," *War Resister's International Bulletin 10* (1925, Christmas), 6.
39 Peter Brock, *Testimonies of Conscience Sent from the Soviet Union to the War Resisters' International 1923–1929* (Toronto: P. Brock, 1997), 5–29.
40 International Institute of Social History (IISH), WRI Archives, file 497.
41 The Soviet authorities pushed Bulgakov (1886–1966) into exile in 1923 for his active part in *Pomgol* (Russian abbreviation for the organization created in June 1921 by the Soviet authorities under the title "Relief for Starving" and dissolved soon, fearing the growing influence of its members)—and settled in Prague, where he became a founder and director of the Russian Cultural–Historical Museum, and worked as an activist and writer.

Downloaded By: 10.2.97.136 At: 18:56 27 Sep 2023; For: 9781315157344, chapter6, 10.4324/9781315157344-7

42 Valerii Cherepitsa, *Schast'e Zhit' dlia Drugikh: Zapadno-Belorusskie Posledovateli Religiousno-filosofskogo Ucheniia L. N. Tolstogo, 1921–1939 gg.* (Grodno, 2007), 149–150, accessed September 28, 2016, www.elib.grsu.by/doc/567
43 Valentin Bulgakov, *Leon Tolstoy et Notre Temps: Discours Publics en Russia Soveétique Suivis du Manifeste du Mouvement International vers le Communism Chrétien* ([Paris], [Librairie des amis], 1928).
44 Valerii Cherepitsa, op. cit., 144–292.
45 IISH, WRI Archives, file 114.
46 Stalin's purges, or Great Terror, marks a period of extreme persecution and oppression against the members of administrative apparatus as well as ordinary people in the Soviet Union during the late 1930s.
47 William Edgerton, ed. *Memoirs of Peasant Tolstoyans in Soviet Russia* (Bloomington, IN and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 5–26, 27–108, 109–180.
48 Andrei Datsenko, ed., "'V Postroenii Svoei Zhizni ni v Chem ne Opirat'sia na Gosudarstvo . . .': (Tolstovskaia Obschina "Bratskii Trud" v 30-e Gody)," *Otechestvennye Arkhivy* 2 (1993), 78–81.
49 William Edgerton, Op. cit., 181–246 and other.
50 Mikhail I. Gorbunov-Posadov, *Vospominaniia: V 3-kh chastiakh.* Part 1 (Moscow, 1995), 224.
51 Mark Popovskii, op. cit., *Russkie Muzhiki Rasskazyvaiut: Posledovateli L. N. Tolstogo v Sovetskom Soiuse, 1918–1977* (London, Overseas Publications Interchange (OPI)), 1983, accessed June 1, 2017, http://krotov.info/libr_min/16_p/op/ovsky_02.htm#10. By the end of the XIX century the Tolstoyans worked out the recommendations on how to behave with police, in cases of arrests, in prison and so on. They based them on a principle of non-violence, on one hand, and on the other they considered that they should resist violators passively. These tactics they learned from the Russian sectarians and Old Believers, using them both before and after the Revolution of 1917. Moreover, this practice was in use during the twentieth century by non-violent protests worldwide.
52 OR RGB, fonds 435, karton 94, file 31, 13–14.
53 Irina Gordeeva, "The Spirit of Pacifism: Social and Cultural Origins of the Grassroots Peace Movement in the Late Soviet Period," in *Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc*, ed. Juliane Furst and Josie McLellan (London: Lexington Books, 2017), 129–156.