“A terrible cruelty is being perpetrated in the Caucasus. More than four thousand people are suffering and dying from hunger, disease, exhaustion, blows, tortures, and other persecutions at the hands of the Russian authorities.”¹ These were the opening words of an appeal which Pavel Biriukov, Ivan Tregubov and Vladimir Chertkov drafted in 1896 to support the non-resistant Doukhobor sect.² The Doukhobors’ opposition to violence in all its forms and their steadfast refusal to bear arms had resulted in the exile of many families, the seizure of their property and the imprisonment of men who refused to take part in active service. Polemics highlighting the persecution of religious or political dissenters in Russia were not uncommon in the late nineteenth century. But Biriukov, Tregubov and Chertkov were Tolstoyan Christian anarchists, and they sought not only to raise awareness of the Doukhobors’ plight as a humanitarian concern and to put pressure on the Russian government to moderate its actions, but also to promote the Doukhobors as an example of primitive Christianity in practice. Their appeal was just one part of the international publicity and fundraising campaign that led to the emigration of 7500 Doukhobors from Russia to Canada between September 1898 and July 1899. Between 1900 and 1912, almost 900 further Doukhobors made the journey to Canada to join the settlements.³ This was the largest mass immigration in Canadian history.

This article is not concerned with the Doukhobor emigration itself, as the logistical details and the role of the most prominent organisers are well established.⁴ Instead, it examines the wider networks from which logistical, financial and moral support for the emigration were drawn. The two non-conformist movements that

1 V. Chertkov (ed.), *Christian Martyrdom in Russia: Persecution of the Spirit-Wrestlers (or Doukhobortsi) in the Caucasus*, London 1897, 1.
2 The correct transliteration of the sect’s Russian name is «Dukhobor». This article uses «Doukhobor» as this form is more familiar outside Russia and the name adopted by the Canadian members of the sect.
4 Some of those involved in the emigration wrote about these events, e.g. Joseph Elkington, Aylmer Maude and Leopold Sulerzhitsky. The emigration has, for instance, been discussed in G. Woodcock / I. Avakumovic, *The Doukhobors*, London 1968, and in the work of Peter Brock and Andrew Donskov.
were most prominent in this campaign were the Society of Friends and the Christian anarchist Tolstoyan movement. A third source of support came from émigré opponents of the Tsarist regime and their supporters overseas, who publicised the persecution of sectarians as well as political offenders. These groups internationalised the Doukhobors’ cause and used their own information networks to make it public and raise funds for the emigration. This article considers the efforts, aims and impact of this activism, as well as the attempt to engage external audiences. It also explores the complex relationship between humanitarianism, solidarity and self-interest, and asks how the Doukhobor campaign was understood by its protagonists.

1. Discovering the Doukhobors

The Doukhobors are first recorded in the late eighteenth century as free peasants, concentrated in the provinces of Tambov and Ekaterinoslav. They called themselves «People of God», or simply Christians. The name «Doukhobor» («Spirit-Wrestler») was coined by the sect’s detractors to indicate a wrestling against the Holy Spirit. Members of the sect adopted the term in the alternate sense that they were fighting for the Holy Spirit within them.\(^5\) Like other Russian non-resistant sects, the Doukhobors rejected a mediatory priesthood, believing that the divine spark in man acted as a guiding voice. This was the root of their pacifism: as every man contains this spark, killing a man is sinful. It was also the basis for their opposition to any form of external government. Doukhobor beliefs were not only anti-Orthodox, they were inherently opposed to the state.

The Doukhobors’ presence in the Caucasus was a result of repeated attempts to break up the sect or move them out of harm’s way. In the early nineteenth century, Alexander I settled them en masse on the Molochnaia river in the Crimea; after 1830, Nicholas I relocated them in the Caucasus along with other »pernicious« sectarians.\(^6\) A period of mid-century prosperity saw Doukhobors carrying weapons for defence, supplying produce to the imperial army and transporting equipment, supplies and ammunition for the war against Turkey as a compromise means of resisting conscription. In 1887 the Tsarist government’s law on universal military conscription was extended to the Caucasus, and in the 1890s a revival of non-resistance took place amongst the «large party» of Doukhobors. This group – a faction headed by Peter Verigin – included Doukhobor conscripts who, in the spring of 1895, handed back their weapons to the military authorities. Their insubordination was punished by hard labour in penal battalions. In July 1895, mass burnings of privately held arms took place in Doukhobor villages.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) N. Breyfogle, «Rethinking the Origins of the Doukhobor Armes Burning 1887–1893», in: Donskov et
Few of the individuals outside Russia who would become involved in the campaign for the Doukhobors’ emigration knew much of Doukhobor history or beliefs. They might, like James Mavor, have read Baron Haxthausen’s exhaustive *The Russian Empire*, which devoted a chapter to the sect. Members of the Society of Friends might have been aware of the myth (repeated in some of the campaign literature) of the sect’s foundation by an English Quaker travelling in Russia. Although British and American Quakers had visited the Doukhobor settlements during the reign of Alexander I, collective memory of these contacts was dim by the 1890s. Even Tolstoy, the Doukhobors’ most high-profile advocate, had developed his philosophy of Christian anarchism in relative ignorance of the beliefs of this likeminded sect. In fact, the relationship between his beliefs and theirs was circular and mutually validating. When the events of 1895 brought the Doukhobors to Tolstoy’s attention, he made «the error of believing that he had discovered a group of peasants who, without the advantages of book learning, had evolved a system of thought very similar to his own». In fact Verigin had occupied himself in exile by reading a range of religious works, including Tolstoy’s, and the return to strictly non-resistant practices amongst the Doukhobors in the 1890s was influenced heavily by Tolstoy’s writings.

Tolstoy was alerted to the plight of the Doukhobors by Dmitri Khilkov, a nobleman and former army officer whose estate at Pavlovka was a centre for Tolstoyans and other sectarians. In July 1895 Khilkov urged Tolstoy to attract Russian and international attention to the persecution of the sect. In August Pavel Biriukov, another leading Tolstoyan, went to the Caucasus to investigate and report on the repression, beatings, expulsion and destitution. In his effort to publicise the cause, Tolstoy drew on a growing international network of supporters. By the mid-1890s there were centres of Tolstoyan Christian anarchism not only in Russia but in Britain, Hungary, the Netherlands, and the USA. These centres throve on the exchange of correspondence and literature and the promotion of common causes: they were well-placed to participate in a campaign on behalf of a kindred movement. In

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September 1895, Tolstoy wrote a preface to Biriukov’s report and sent it to John Kenworthy, the pastor of the Tolstoyan «Brotherhood Church» in Croydon. He also sent the article and preface to Jenö Henrik Schmitt, the central figure amongst a group of Christian anarchists in Budapest, for use in Schmitt’s paper *Ohne Staat* and publication in the Austro-Hungarian and German press. In his preface, which appeared with Biriukov’s report in *The Times*, Tolstoy set out his aims:

There is only one way to help the persecuted, and above all, the persecutors, who do not know what they are doing – namely, publicity, presentation of the matter before the court of public opinion, which in expressing its disapproval of the persecutors and sympathy with the persecuted, will restrain the former from their cruelties, which are often committed only through blindness and ignorance, and will encourage the latter, giving them consolation under their sufferings.

This was an example of the «boomerang» strategy, where the target is a state’s domestic policy or behaviour and the international arena is the only means domestic activists have to draw attention to their cause. It was a familiar strategy for opponents of Russia’s autocratic regime, who sought to bring international public opinion to bear on their government. In 1895, the British Society of Friends of Russian Freedom (a lobby group formed in 1890 to offer public support to the Russian opposition) noted that reports of the mistreatment of the Doukhobors had recently appeared in the English, German and American press. They reprinted an account from the *Daily Chronicle*, detailing a mock execution of Doukhobor soldiers, but added «even more ghastly details».

The Quakers also responded to the *Daily Chronicle* report. Their humanitarianism spanned the nineteenth century and included work in Greece, Finland, Bulgaria and France. The Quaker Meeting for Sufferings, which supported victims of religious intolerance, set up a committee to investigate the Doukhobors’ situation. Drawing on the reports of autumn 1895 as well as information from «private sources», the committee concluded that the Society of Friends were bound to help these people, who «on conscientious grounds, have declined to bear arms». Their role was to draw the authorities’ attention to «the position of these poor sufferers for consciences’ sake […] [and] the wisdom as well as the expediency of tempering their policy with mercy». The Quaker newspaper *The Friend* reproduced material from

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\[\text{The Quaker newspaper *The Friend* reproduced material from}

[18] *Free Russia* 6 (October 1895) 10, 82.
the British press, and commented that the worldwide publicity attracted by coverage in *The Times* was a «most important gain» in the struggle to maintain the Christian principle of opposition to war. *The Friend* was particularly interested in the assertion that «the first seeds of the teaching called afterwards «Duchoborcheskaya» were sown by a foreigner, a Quaker, who came to Russia».21

While the Society of Friends identified with the Doukhobors’ absolute pacifism and their undogmatic Christianity, they did not condone their rejection of legally constituted authority. The Christian anarchist Tolstoyans, on the other hand, admired the Doukhobors’ non-resistant worldview in its entirety: their pacifism, their emphasis on brotherhood and bread-labour, and their rejection of all external authority. The similarities and differences in outlook of Quakers and Tolstoyans were reflected in their interactions beyond the Doukhobor campaign. Some individuals moved easily between the two movements, finding their attitudes and practices complementary. Nevertheless, there was always a sharp divide on attitudes to government.

Émigré revolutionaries publicised the persecution of the Doukhobors, but their interest was in the oppressive nature of the Russian government, and they had little sympathy with the Doukhobors’ advocacy of non-resistance to evil. The way to deal with a monstrous government, they argued, was to crush or overthrow it.22 Each of the groups in question had their own reasons for promoting the Doukhobors and would present their cause in their own ways.

2. Publicising and Organising the Emigration

From the autumn of 1895 until the end of 1897, the campaign focused on raising awareness of the Doukhobors’ predicament. Sympathetic periodicals reprinted the appeals of Tolstoy, Russian Tolstoyans and other observers. Biriukov, Tregubov and Chertkov’s *Pomogite!* (Help!) for example appeared in several installments in *Ohne Staat* from March 1897 onwards.23 Tolstoy sent an article suggesting the Doukhobors as candidates for the Nobel peace prize to Louis Bahler, one of the editors of the Dutch Tolstoyan periodical *Vrede*.24 Efforts were also made to raise money to support the Doukhobors in situ. Kenworthy appealed in *The British Friend* for contributions to the relief effort in August 1897: he made the first appeal to Quakers, as they stood for «the very principle for which these people suffer and die».25 The Friends’ Doukhobor committee, reconstituted in the autumn of 1897, extended this appeal to

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22 *Free Russia* 8 (March 1897) 3, 18; *Free Russia* 9 (November 1898) 11, 64–66.
23 *Ohne Staat* 11 (12 March 1897) 11, 4; 1 (19 March 1897) 12, 3–4; 1 (May 1897) 14, 4.
24 Tolstoy to Louis Bahler, 7 November 1897 *PSS* 70, 181–184. The article was published in *Vrede* 1 (1 December 1897) 4, 3–4.
Quakers across the country. Arthur St. John, a member of the Croydon Brotherhood Church, delivered the funds collected to the Caucasus in December 1897, along with «epistles of sympathy» from Tolstoyans and Friends in England and America.

In 1898, the international campaign was invigorated by the Tsarist authorities’ decision to allow the Doukhobors to emigrate, premised on their ability to pay for this themselves. The government’s announcement was made in February 1898, only shortly after St. John had been expelled from Russia for his pro-Doukhobor activities. In a new appeal «To Foreign Newspapers», Tolstoy asked for help of two kinds: «firstly with money, of which a great deal is needed for the transport alone of 10,000 people over a great distance, and secondly, with simple and direct guidance in the difficulties presented by the forthcoming resettlement of people who know no foreign languages and who have never been outside Russia.»

The Tolstoyans became actively involved in the question of where the Doukhobors might settle. Christian anarchist newspapers canvassed for likely locations. Tolstoy received suggestions from Hawaii, to Manchuria, to Brazil. The first references to the emigration in the Tolstoyan press and in Tolstoy’s personal correspondence, suggested England or America. The cost of land in England had to be weighed against the cost of transportation if they were to be taken further afield. In March 1898 Tolstoy questioned George Gibson, a founder of the Christian Commonwealth settlement near Columbus, Georgia, on emigration to America. He estimated that around 10,000 would emigrate in total, and told Gibson of his plans to publish an appeal in the international press. The editors of the Social Gospel, the Commonwealth’s newspaper, circulated «questions as to the advisability of attempting to move them to America» to around 100 individuals. Nearly all respondents favoured the enterprise, and the paper reported that «the question of getting land for them will not be an over serious one». Vladimir Chertkov appealed specifically to American sympathisers in the paper’s pages. He asked for recommendations of localities with, ideally, a dry climate and cold winters, the loan or hire of vessels for transportation, general help through subscriptions, and «the spreading of information by distribution of leaflets, letters in newspapers, sale of books etc.». Anyone willing to give themselves to this work, he stressed, would «become sharers together in a movement which directly tends to the coming and establishment of the kingdom of God amongst men». A suggestion by Commonwealth member C. F. Willard that

29 Arthur Fifield to Vladimir Chertkov, 1 June 1898, RGALI f. 552 op. 2 ed. khr. 967.
30 Tolstoy to George Gibson, 11 March 1898 PSS 71, 29–30.
32 The Social Gospel 8 (September 1898), 29–30.
the Doukhobors be settled in Texas gained currency around this time. Tolstoy forwarded the suggestion to Chertkov in England, and asked Ernest Crosby, the foremost American Tolstoyan, to let Kenworthy or Chertkov know «how much acres they could have in Texas at what price [...], at what price the ships could take the men for the passage and [...] [that they should raise] in America a subscription for the Doukhobors».  

In England a committee consisting of Chertkov, Aylmer Maude and Eliza Pickard (a member of the Leeds Brotherhood Church) weighed up the possibilities. From the summer of 1898 two Doukhobor families, the Ivins and the Makhortovs, joined them. They came to favour Canada, where there was already a colony of Mennonites who had been given financial assistance by the Canadian Government. The anarchist Prince Kropotkin, who had visited the country in 1897 and advocated this option, put them in touch with James Mavor who provided local information and costings. Ivin, Makhortov, Khilkov and Aylmer Maude set off on a scouting mission to Canada in the autumn of 1898. However, the eventual decision was dictated not only by the location’s suitability but by the increasing urgency of the situation: the Doukhobors feared that the option to leave might be withdrawn. On arrival in London, the Doukhobor representatives stressed the importance of a fast departure from Russia; the choice of location was a secondary concern. The committee in England wrote to the Doukhobors that they had considered whether it might be viable for «as many as possible of you to come here at once, as no permission is needed to land in England, as there are many in this country who sympathise with you and might help to maintain you, and as the fare to England is only about £2». The cost of land and living in England, however, ruled this out. The Society of Friends’ Doukhobor committee had begun negotiations with the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner for Cyprus to move Doukhobors to the island. This culminated in the ill-fated transportation of 1126 Doukhobors to Cyprus in the summer and autumn of 1898.

Tolstoyan publishing houses spread literature and information about the campaign. One of the most important examples was Vladimir Chertkov’s *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, first published by the Brotherhood Publishing Company at Croydon. This small book brought together material on Doukhobor history and beliefs, as well as eye-witness accounts regarding their treatment. It contained a reprint of *Pomogite!* and a supporting statement from Tolstoy who emphasised the accuracy of the material and exhorted readers to help «those through whom the work of God is being done».

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33 Tolstoy to Ernest Crosby, 30 June 1898 *PSS* 71, 397–8; Tolstoy to C. F. Willard, 30 June 1898 *PSS* 71, 396–397.
34 *The New Order* 4 (September 1898) 8, 80–81.
35 Tolstoy to James Mavor, 16 August 1898 *PSS* 71.
37 *The New Order* 4, 80.
38 Chertkov, *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, 92, 100.
Russian preface by Chertkov and an English one by Kenworthy. The latter stressed the humanitarian grounds for helping suffering brothers and sisters, but also drew attention to the Doukhobors’ significance as «martyrs in the cause»: «a light shining in darkness». 39 The Canadian version contained an additional preface by James Ma-
vor, directed to Canadian and American readers, which emphasised the prosperity and industry of the Doukhobors. 40 Christian Martyrdom in Russia became a hand-
book for the campaign. It appealed for contributions to Chertkov in Croydon, and promised that profits from the sale of the book would be added to the fund. The subsequent pamphlet News of the Doukhobortsi kept sympathisers up to date with the progress of the emigration, and went into at least a seventh issue. Johannes Van der Veer, editor of the Tolstoyan journal Vrede, published his own account of the history of the Doukhobors, Lijdelijk Verzet in Theorie en Praktijk (Passive Resistance in The-
ory and Practice), which was issued by the Vrede publishing house – although they also marketed Christian Martyrdom in Russia.

3. Fundraising Successes and Failures
Through their newspapers, Tolstoyans set up subscriptions both for humanitarian relief and for the emigration. Kenworthy had first mentioned fundraising for the emigration in the summer of 1897 – at that time, he envisaged that «a few hundred pounds would set such a plan on foot». 41 While contributions came in steadily, the sums raised in this manner were paltry. Jeno Henrik Schmitt’s paper Ohne Staat collected 56 florins in a couple of months up to May 1897. The Dutch Tolstoyan newspaper Vrede promised to collect and send on to Chertkov any donations. They reported contributions to their Doukhobor Support Fund totalling 65 guilders between December 1897 and January 1899 – this also included proceeds from the sale of brochures. 42 Ernest Crosby started a subscription in the pages of the Social Gospel, but was disappointed with the results; he mentioned having raised «$ 600, or $ 700» by the beginning of 1899. 43 Some small contributions were raised from readers of the British Tolstoyan newspaper The New Order, but the most significant sum came from the Tolstoyan colony at Purleigh – initially £ 500, which they could «easily spare», and later a further £ 800, which left them with «only enough money to carry on the work of the Colony for about six months». 44

Other sympathetic periodicals also advertised the collection for the Doukhobor cause. Free Russia published the addresses of Chertkov, Biriukov and Tregubov in

39 Chertkov (ed.), Christian Martyrdom in Russia, vii–viii.
40 V. Chertkov (ed.), Christian Martyrdom in Russia. An account of the members of the Universal Brother-
hood or Doukhoborts, now migrating from the Cau-
casus to Canada, new edn., Toronto 1899, 3–16.
41 Brotherhood (June 1898), 227.
42 Vrede 1 (1 December 1897) 4, 8; 1 (15 December
1897) 5, 8; 1 (1 February 1898) 8, 8; 1 (1 March
1898) 10, 8; 1 (1 May 1898) 12, 8; 1 (1 June 1898)
14, 8; 1 (15 September 1898) 21, 8; 2 (1 January
1899) 5, 9.
43 Crosby to Tolstoy, 23 January 1899, GMT, TS 211/27.
44 The New Order 4, 80.
Russia in the spring of 1897, and praised their courage in marshalling aid for the persecuted.\(^{45}\) In the autumn of 1898 they gave contact details for both Chertkov’s committee and the Friends’ committee alongside an appeal for funds for the emigration. They reserved their own energies in this period for a cause closer to their heart: a fund for the defence in the court case of Russian political émigré Vladimir Burtsev.\(^{46}\) The periodical *The Christian World* collected £10 19s 6d for Doukhobor relief: this sum was included in the funds passed on to the Doukhobors by Arthur St. John in late 1897.\(^{47}\) These sums may have been small but they represented heartfelt contributions from many individual sympathisers. Tolstoyan Arthur Fifield sent Vladimir Chertkov a postal order for £1 whenever he could spare the money, but regretted that this was «a poor little amount; a drop, when you want an ocean».\(^{48}\)

By far the most effective network for fundraising was that of the Quakers’ Doukhobor committee. Nearly 8000 copies of its appeal were dispatched in Britain, and additional copies were sent to leading Friends and Mennonites in America. The appeal raised a total of £7,019 15s 9d.\(^{49}\) Quaker fundraising abilities proved even more impressive in the face of impending disaster. When a group of 1000 Doukhobors in Batumi used their remaining money to charter a ship to Cyprus before landing permission had been arranged, negotiations with the Colonial Office were almost derailed. Officials demanded £22,000 – eventually beaten down to £16,500 – as security before allowing the passengers to disembark. The Friends’ committee raised the total sum in guarantees in the space of two days, using local contacts in Birmingham, Norfolk and Bristol.\(^{50}\) There were several single guarantees of £1,000 or even £2,000, but also a large number of much smaller amounts: one pound, two pounds, or five pounds.\(^{51}\) American Friends also raised money independently – the Society of Friends in Philadelphia maintained a committee for the Doukhobors and sent out appeals based on information provided by James Mavor. They forwarded their contributions to the English committee.\(^{52}\)

Tolstoy was well equipped to exploit networks of wealthy Russians. In August and September 1898 he wrote a series of personal appeals to leading industrialists.\(^{53}\) His most important financial contribution to the emigration was the donation of all

\(^{45}\) *Free Russia* 8 (March 1897) 3, 17.

\(^{46}\) *Free Russia* 9 (October 1898) 10, 57.

\(^{47}\) Fifield to Chertkov, 1 June 1898 and 1 September 1898, RGALI f. 552 op. 2 ed. khr. 967.

\(^{48}\) Minutes of Meeting of the Doukhobor Committee, 9 August 1898, MS 02/4/1, Friends House Library, in: *Minutes and Proceedings* (1898), 35.

\(^{49}\) Report of the Committee appointed by the Meeting for Sufferings to Aid the Emigration of the Doukhoborts from Russia, in: *Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends*, London 1899, 110.


\(^{51}\) Minutes of Meeting of the Doukhobor Committee, 9 August 1898, MS 02/4/1, Friends House Library.

\(^{52}\) Jonathan Rhoads to Aylmer Maude, 28 October 1898; Samuel Biddle to James Mavor, 20 October 1898 and 29 October 1898, Doukhobor Collection of James Mavor, http://multiculturalcanada.ca/node/1523.

proceeds from his last novel, *Resurrection*, which was literally resurrected for this purpose as he had begun work on it in the 1880s but abandoned it. Its serialisation in Russia provided substantial sums. But Tolstoy’s international contacts handled its translation and publication abroad. In America, Ernest Crosby negotiated a deal for the novel’s serialisation in *Cosmopolitan*. This initially netted $2000, but the money had to be returned after a controversy over the editing of the text held up the delivery of instalments. Crosby did secure *Resurrection*’s publication in book form with Dodd, Mead and Co.; due to its promising sales, this had brought in £977 by the autumn of 1900.54

*Resurrection* continued to generate funds long after the Doukhobors were settled in Canada. In 1901 Tolstoy instructed Aylmer Maude, who handled the proceeds of his wife’s translation, to «dispose of the money as God puts into your heart», as some of the allocated sums had not yet been required.55 Maude set up the «Resurrection Fund», which was administered by a committee until 1913 when the remainder was handed back to Maude. The fund was intended to «aid the publication of any writing of Tolstoy which […] cannot otherwise find a publisher […] To assist people in distress who have suffered loss by taking part in what has been called the ‘Tolstoy movement’ […] To assist the movements in favour of peace, law reform, and pension reform, or other movements making in the direction of brotherhood among men.»56 Some funds were given to two Doukhobors released from Yakutsk in 1903 who wished to re-join their families in Canada. In 1906 some money was sent to the region where Chertkov’s relatives lived, providing aid after a failed harvest.57 The fund also sponsored such diverse enterprises as a lectureship in Fossil Botany at University College London and the Tolstoy Settlement, a holiday home for disabled children, which opened in 1905. It gave donations to the International Arbitration and Peace Association and to the Hull House settlement in Chicago.58

4. Appealing beyond Established Networks

When Kenworthy appealed to the Society of Friends for help in 1897, he expressed the belief that «the world at large will be the less disposed to help, because of the very principle which gives the Doukhobortsi their special appeal to Friends».59 He

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54 Crosby to Chertkov, 23 April 1899, Chertkov to Crosby, 7 May 1899, Crosby to Tolstoy, 8 June 1899 and Crosby to Tolstoy 17 October 1899, GMT TS 211/27.
55 Tolstoy to Maude, 23 March 1901, MS Coll / Tolstoy, Butler Library, Columbia University.
57 Tolstoy to Maude, 24 October 1903, Alexandra Tolstoy to Maude, 12 November 1903 and 16 February 1904, Tolstoy to Maude 22 January 1905 and December 1909, MS Coll / Tolstoy, Butler Library, Columbia University.
58 Aylmer Maude Papers, MS1580/8, 28–32, 34, 37, 156, Leeds Russian Archive, Brotherton Library, Leeds.
59 *Brotherhood* (June 1898), 227.
told Tolstoy that the mainstream press took little interest either in conscientious objection or in «the Christ ideal», unless with «someone like yourself, who must be listened to», or «when a serious movement of the people towards truth threatens their own authority and position». Extending the appeal beyond the networks described so far was necessary in fundraising terms, but it proved difficult. The Society of Friends took the step of issuing an appeal to all «those who unite with them in believing war to be incompatible with the teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ» and «particularly the Mennonite colony in America». Other Christian socialist publications (Brotherhood and The New Age, for example) drew on the material provided by the Tolstoyans and asked for donations to be sent to Chertkov. Jane Holah reported in the spring of 1899 that the Labour Church wanted to «get up a concert» on behalf of the Doukhobors, both to raise money and to make their beliefs and circumstances known. They wanted Chertkov to give a short speech on the Doukhobors in the interval. Chertkov used an invitation to address the Vegetarian Society to talk almost exclusively about the Doukhobors, relating their refusal to kill animals for food to their wider commitment to peace, brotherhood and non-resistance. He also strove to involve international peace organisations, but was dismayed at their lack of sympathy. When he sent copies of Christian Martyrdom in Russia to leading peace activists, they informed him that they did not advocate the refusal of military service. Ernest Crosby too was disappointed with his attempts to raise money by subscription for the Doukhobors in America. He had tried every method, he told Tolstoy.

The truth is that no one sympathises with their refusal to serve as soldiers, especially in time of peace, except the Quakers and Moravians, who had their own committees. It is as if they were told that there was a famine among the Jews, because they would not eat leavened bread, which was furnished in quantities. They would say «It is their own fault, we can spend our money in better ways than on fools». Especially this year the feeling in favour of peace is feeble.

When The Times published Tolstoy’s 1895 appeal, its accompanying editorial intimated that they had featured Biriukov’s account because of its interesting portrayal of Russian sectarian life, rather than any sympathy with the cause. Tolstoy’s representation of the case, in their view, betrayed «a complete misapprehension of the rightful limits of religious freedom». While travelling in Canada and making

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60 Kenworthy to Tolstoy, 5 January 1897, GMT, TS 288/79.
62 Brotherhood (June 1898), 29; The New Age (30 September 1897), 424; ibid. (21 July 1898), 238–239.
63 Jane Holah to Chertkov, 10 February 1899, RGALI f. 552 op. 2 ed. khr. 1065.
64 The New Order 4 (December 1898) 11, 118–119.
65 Ibid. (February 1898) 1, 1.
66 Crosby to Tolstoy, 23 January 1899, GMT, TS 211/27.
67 The Times, 23 October 1895, 9.
arrangements for the emigration, Aylmer Maude encountered the journalist Flora Shaw, who was writing a series of articles about Canada for The Times. She was not interested in reporting on the Doukhobors and told Maude that if he wanted «to get the British public to care about them, one would have to find them a handier name».

68 The ideals that inspired sympathy for the Doukhobors amongst Tolstoyans and Quakers had limited public appeal. The Doukhobors’ advocates sought to help them through a broad humanitarian appeal. Yet there was an inherent tension between this objective and their instinctive desire to promote those aspects of the Doukhobors that they most admired: their absolute pacifism and (in the case of Tolstoyans) their rejection of government. They were not content to confine the Doukhobor campaign to the paradigm provided by the Russian revolutionary émigrés. Chertkov stressed that he did not intend to discredit the Russian government in the eyes of foreigners. While he condemned its actions, he was primarily concerned with sharing knowledge about the Doukhobors and their practical Christianity. Arthur Fifield urged Chertkov to tone down some of his polemics and make them shorter, sweeter and «less defiantly hostile» to the broader public.69 But the uncompromising presentation of the Doukhobors’ ideal was as important, if not more so, as raising funds for the emigration. It was necessary to «speak out, and go the whole length» in the face of public antagonism, Kenworthy concluded, «whatever the result».70

5. Rationalising the Doukhobor Emigration

The significance of the Doukhobor emigration for both Quakers and Tolstoyans lay, at least in part, in the meaning that the Doukhobors’ non-resistant pacifism held for them. Despite converging in support of this cause, their differing understandings of Doukhobor beliefs caused friction. The Society of Friends, for example, could not embrace the anti-authoritarian nature of the Doukhobors’ protest, or the stridently anarchic tone of some of the campaign literature. When they tried to explain the Doukhobors’ «unwise rejection of lawfully constituted authority» as a reaction to their persecution, their Doukhobor correspondents put them right, insisting that it was simply a result of their interpretation of Christ’s teachings, which «direct us to reject all authority that is founded on violence».72 The use of Resurrection as a major source of funds was also problematic for them, as they frowned upon its open discussion of sex and prostitution.73 Tolstoyan opposition to handling money made the

69 Chertkov, Christian Martyrdom in Russia, ix.
70 Fifield to Chertkov, 2 July 1899, RGALI f. 552 op. 2 ed. khr. 967.
71 Kenworthy to Chertkov, 8 January 1897, RGALI f. 552, op. 2 ed. khr. 415.
72 The Friend 36 (1 May 1896) 18, 277–278.
73 Minutes of Meeting of the Doukhobor Committee, 5 December 1901, MS 2/4/1, Friends House Library.
acquisition and transmission of funds an unhappy task. Kenworthy believed that wherever «the getting of money» was a motive in one’s mind, one’s work was distorted.\textsuperscript{74} His preface to \textit{Christian Martyrdom in Russia} emphasised that despite its appeal for money, the book’s first object was «to let the world know how the life of truth is growing by suffering in its midst». The Doukhobors made no appeal for aid themselves, he said – they trusted in God to send whatever they would need.\textsuperscript{75}

The scruples of some Tolstoyans lost money for the Doukhobor cause. Attempts to tamper with the purity of the Tolstoyan message offended them. Aylmer Maude asserted that \textit{Cosmopolitan}’s editor had toned down their version of \textit{Resurrection} to such a degree that it was unrecognisable – «even the Russian Censor has hardly perverted and spoilt the story or taken such unwarranted liberties with it as the \textit{Cosmopolitan} Censor».\textsuperscript{76} Vladimir Chertkov was so appalled by the resulting version that he refused to send further instalments to the magazine. This antagonised the editor and eventually resulted in the advance being returned. Crosby struggled to understand Chertkov’s scruples on this issue. «If we are to give our coats and cloaks to the first asker», he wrote to Tolstoy, «why not our manuscripts too?».\textsuperscript{77}

The Tolstoyan insistence that constitutional government was no better than autocratic government also made it difficult to rationalise the emigration. A narrative that explained the emigration as an escape from oppressive autocratic rule was not sufficient. While the Quakers ran educational programmes in the Doukhobor settlements to increase «appreciation of the difference between the Government under which they now live and that from which they have been delivered»,\textsuperscript{78} the Tolstoyans could not acknowledge that democratic government offered any real improvement. In 1897, the Tolstoyan Frank Henderson told Chertkov of his «deep feeling of shame» because of his failure to extract himself from the state system in Britain. According to Henderson, he thus implicitly backed «the very power» that had made the Doukhobors suffer: state authority. He found, on reflection, that the Doukhobors were not his co-workers, but his victims.\textsuperscript{79}

Maude, Khilkov, Ivin and Makhortov secured three plots of land in Canada: the «North Colony» totalling 216 square miles, and the «South Colony» totalling 540 square miles, both to the north of Yorkton in Assiniboia and a third reserve near Prince Albert in Saskatchewan in which Doukhobor and non-Doukhobor settlements would be mixed. They negotiated a deal with the Canadian Pacific Railway to transport the Doukhobors from the point of entry to their land for less than half the normal price of passage.\textsuperscript{80} The first two ships sailed for Canada from Batum in De-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{74} Kenworthy to Chertkov, 10 July 1896, RGALI f. 552 op. 2 ed. khr. 415.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Chertkov, \textit{Christian Martyrdom in Russia}, viii.
\item \textsuperscript{76} Maude to William Dean Howells, 21 May 1899, bMS Am 1784 (639), Houghton Library, Harvard.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Crosby to Tolstoy, 28 May 1899, GMT, TS 211/27.
\item \textsuperscript{78} Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, London 1902, 156.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Frank Henderson to Chertkov, 6 June 1897, RGALI f. 552, op. 2, ed. khr. 256.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Report of the Committee appointed by the Meeting of Sufferers to Aid the Emigration of the
\end{itemize}
December 1898 and January 1899: the first, SS Lake Huron, carried 2140 Tiflis Doukhobors and was accompanied by Russian Tolstoyan Leopold Sulerzhitsky; the second, SS Lake Superior, carried 1997 Doukhobors, mainly from Elizavetpol, some from Kars and Tiflis, and was accompanied by Tolstoy’s son Sergei. James Mavor was anxious that more Doukhobors should not arrive in Canada before spring. However desperate the situation was in the Caucasus, he could not believe that it would be worse than arriving in Canada in winter without food or shelter. He was also concerned that this would shift the burden for supporting the immigrants onto the Canadian government, when these people «really have a claim upon every opponent of militarism». The SS Lake Superior therefore made its next trip from Larnaca to Quebec in April 1899, carrying the 1036 remaining Cyprus Doukhobors, accompanied by Sulerzhitsky and Arthur St. John. The SS Lake Huron made a second trip from Batumi in May 1899, carrying 2286 Kars Doukhobors (who fi-nanced their own emigration) and Russian ethnographer Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich. The «forgotten fifth ship», again the Lake Superior, brought 56 Kars Doukhobors, families of military personnel who had been detained until their period of service expired, to Canada in July 1899.

The completion of the emigration did not signal the end of the connection between the Doukhobors and their international supporters. Some of those involved were disappointed in the realities of the Doukhobor settlement in Canada, and regretted the eulogistic presentations characteristic of the campaign literature. Nevertheless, many members of the Society of Friends went to work in an educational capacity in the Canadian settlements. The settlements were also a magnet for Christian anarchists and conscientious objectors: Herbert Archer, Edouard Sinet and Leopold Sulerzhitsky all spent time living with the Doukhobors. The Russian-language arm of the Chertkovs’ publishing house supplied the Doukhobors with Tolstoyan publications. When Peter Verigin was released from exile in 1902, the Tsarist authorities ordered him to join the emigration in Canada. Stopping in London en route, he commanded an audience of sympathisers at a meeting organised so that he might «show [himself] to the English community».

Although it had all the trappings of a humanitarian campaign – a focus on the plight of the victims, on raising funds for relief and emigration – at heart, the Doukhobor campaign was as much about solidarity as compassion. Each group invested their acts of solidarity with the meanings they attached to the cause. The campaign

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82 Lapshinoff / Kalmakoff, Doukhobor Ship Passenger Lists.
83 Maude, A Peculiar People, 59–60, 239–240.
thus offered something to each of the participants. It gave them a useable, concrete example of the principle their movement was based on: whether absolute pacifism, Christian anarchism, or opposition to the Tsarist regime. It provided a means of shoring up their beliefs, and a forum in which they could voice these beliefs and put them into action. In a letter of 1897 the Croydon Tolstoyans thanked the Doukhobors for the example they had set, which was helping them to hold fast to the ideals they held in common. They asked the Doukhobors to think of them as a «great host of present and future sympathisers».

The mechanics of the campaign also had their uses: they strengthened networks, providing a reason for visits, exchanges and correspondence. During his trip to the North America on behalf of the Doukhobors, Aylmer Maude met leading American Tolstoyans William Dean Howells, Ernest Howard Crosby and George Gibson. As England became the centre of operations for the emigration campaign, Tolstoyans not only from Russia (Chertkov, Biriukov, Khilkov) but also from Austria-Hungary (Albert Škarvan) and the Netherlands (Johannes Van der Veer) gravitated there in order to assist the cause.

At the same time, the practical dimensions of the campaign illustrated the different skills, priorities and objectives of the campaigners. The Russian revolutionary émigrés were masters at publicising a cause, but preferred their causes to be overtly political. The Society of Friends were experienced humanitarians, capable of mustering support, raising money and organising logistics. They provided, Aylmer Maude believed, «what the movement most needed: men accustomed to the transaction of business, inspiring confidence in others, and able and ready to raise considerable sums when necessary».

Tolstoy’s international followers did not approve of canvassing for funds, and neither were they very adept at it. Their efforts to reach a broad audience were frustrated by the greater imperative to promote their ardently held beliefs. The campaign was by no means a triumph of cooperation. The inability of the organisers to get on with one another stretched the Tolstoyan concept of brotherly love to its limits. The Doukhobor emigration is just one example of a campaign in which diverse interest groups strove to publicise domestic oppression in the international arena, but it amply demonstrates the tensions that could be involved. The campaigning groups had complex and sometimes competing motivations and each had their own rationale for the emigration. In these ways, the cause was both the Doukhobors’, and their own.

86 Maude, *A Peculiar People*, 76.
Between September 1898 and July 1899, 7500 members of the non-resistant Doukhobor sect emigrated from Russia to Canada. This article investigates the networks of moral, logistical and financial support that made this emigration possible. Members of the Society of Friends in England and America, Tolstoyan Christian anarchists and opponents of the Tsarist regime worked, through their own networks and together, to raise funds and raise the Doukhobors’ profile. Their relationships with each other, with the Doukhobors and with external audiences were complicated by their own very different investments in the cause. This article explores the aims, activities and impact of this campaign, along with its value for the campaigners. It offers a case study of the complex relationships in such a campaign between humanitarianism, solidarity and self-interest.

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