

Measuring Tolstoy's Peasants:
Old Believer Settlement in Oregon through the 1960's and 1970's

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Abstract

As ethnic Russian Old Believers began to immigrate into the area around Woodburn, Oregon in the 1960s, their presence became a fixation for American interlocutors who viewed the new arrivals as traditional peasant figures on the path towards becoming modern citizens. Because this Russian religious group possessed little to no context for American administrators, academics, and citizens alike, attempts to build knowledge networks around the Old Believers became paramount in the first decade of their settlement in the United States. Initially assisted by the Tolstoy Foundation and, later, the Valley Migrant League, the Oregon Old Believers often became targets of character rhetoric that sought to measure the distance between the traditional lifestyle of the Russian religious group and the modern milieu amongst which they lived. Various academics, reporters, and lay observers alike built knowledge networks around the Russian religious group through reports, articles, and direct interactions that could qualify and define the distance between Old Belief and American modernity. Yet as the Old Believers took on recognized standards of American modernity- home ownership, gainful employment, and consumer consumption- they did so without wholesale abandonment of their religious culture, prompting anxiety amongst American observers who questioned the power of modernity to fully assimilate traditional subjects. Beyond being another example of the trials faced by immigrants in a new land, this examination of Old Believer settlement in Oregon asks why American interlocutors became fascinated with the Russian religious group and how this fascination led to investigation and self-affirmation of American modernity.

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Almost the entire work presented below was drafted using Apple Pages iOS software on an iPad Mini 2 with a Logitech USB keyboard. I used Microsoft Word for all final edits.

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Introduction

As ethnic Russian Old Believers from Brazil and Turkey arrived and began to settle in the area around Woodburn, Oregon in the early 1960s, their oft-colorful clothing and peculiar religious habits promoted interesting depictions made by lay and expert observers alike. One vignette comes from a report made in May of 1965 by Don Wilcox, editor of the *Opportunity News* and one of the executive members of the Valley Migrant League. Wilcox was at the Portland, Oregon airport to witness the arrival of Old Believers who wanted to settle with their other relatives in the predominantly agricultural area of Woodburn. Even though the Valley Migrant League, a federal program installed to combat poverty in the Willamette Valley, was supposed to be focused on assisting the predominantly Hispanic migrant stream that flowed from Texas through Oregon, the arrival of increasing numbers of Old Believers with their traditional lifestyle and agricultural background proved too enticing for the federally funded organization to ignore.

As the Old Believers exited from the airplane, Wilcox captured this observation of an Oregonian reporter who was also in attendance:

It was right out of a Tolstoy novel, the reporter said, in spite of the fact that the immigrants had arrived by jet. ...There they were, huddled together, the father, the mother, the children, the aunt, the grandmother- with satchels and bundles- a forlorn looking group, waiting. The father wore a black beard; the women wore babushkas around their faces; all were dressed in typical Russian clothing, including black boots for both men and women. And penniless? Well, perhaps the reporter was relying upon Tolstoy for this detail.¹

¹ Dick Fullmer to Edgar May, Appendix A, 4; Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1965 Feb. thru July; Inspection Division, Inspection Reports 1964-67; Office of Economic Opportunity; Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services, Record Group 381; NARA II Building, College Park, MA.

Looking closer at the above statement, several themes immediately surface: the dichotomy between traditional ("right out of a Tolstoy novel") and modern (arrived by jet); the meta-critique of a journalist commenting on another journalist's narrative frame; the articulation of a clearly defined Russian 'other', just to name a few. Further on in Wilcox's report, there is another interesting tidbit describing the entrance of relatives to pick up the newly arrived Old Believers:

Finally the group from Woodburn arrived, and there was a scene of joyous reunion that was right out of a play. How did these people find their way here? And what would become of them, in the United States?²

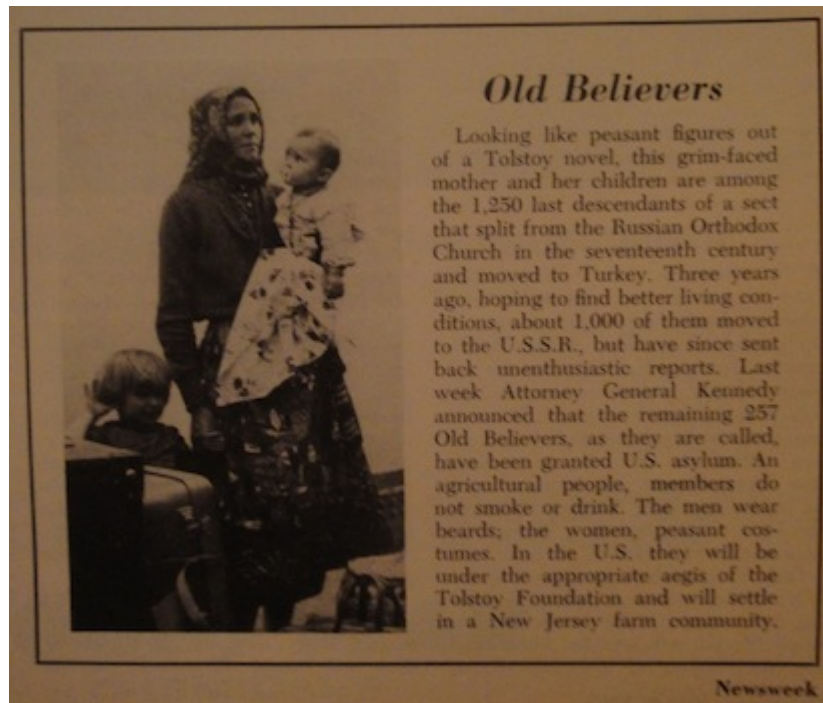
Wilcox compared the reunion of family members to a scene from a play, as if the Old Believers mentioned above were little more than actors performing for a modern audience in a terminal of the Portland Airport. Indeed, this trope of the Old Believer as a reenactor of the traditional occurs frequently in reports and articles produced by media outlets and experts alike, even up to the present day. This is especially true for those Old Believers who arrived in Oregon during the early 1960s, as their concentrated emergence on the American scene during this period placed them in the crux of debates, both among the larger populace and government officials, related to the cultural, economic, and societal aspirations of the United States at the height of the Cold War. Two additional examples regarding the arrival and presence of Old Believers in America, each only a few years removed from the Wilcox observation, reinforce this modern ideal of Old Belief as traditional.

The first example comes from the 6 May 1963 edition of *Newsweek* that discussed the arrival of Old Believers from Turkey only a few weeks previous. This was among the

² Ibid.

earliest examples of American media covering the immigration of some 250+ Old Believers from Turkey, and the picture it uses- alongside a single paragraph of commentary- shares several themes with the Wilcox report made almost two years later. A reader flipping pages through this edition of *Newsweek* would come across a forlorn looking picture of what could only be described as a peasant woman, baby in her arms and toddler by her side, standing by some luggage and staring outward. To the future? To the past? The visual tableau produced leaves the reader in doubt.

"Looking like a peasant figures out of a Tolstoy novel," the text accompanying the image begins, "this grim-faced mother and her children are among the last 1,250 descendants of a sect that split from the Russian Orthodox Church in the seventeenth century and moved to Turkey." It goes on to mention that these Old Believers are agricultural people who neither drink nor smoke, with the men identified by their signature beards and the women their "peasant costumes." Despite being new transplants, the article closes with the note that the Old Believers will be under the "appropriate aegis of the Tolstoy Foundation" at a New Jersey farm serving as their initial settlement in America.



Notably, both Wilcox and the anonymous author of the Newsweek article chose the same simile to describe the Old Believers- characters out of a “Tolstoy novel.” It is telling that in these two examples fictional characters, and specifically fictional peasants, constitute the most applicable reference for a modern audience unfamiliar with Old Belief. Depiction of women's clothing as 'costumes' and the *mis-en-scene* created by the selected photo accompaniment suggest to the modern reader that these Old Believers are living reenactors of a traditional lifestyle then quickly fading into the American past. Interestingly, the new arrivals and their agricultural lifestyles are shaded in harmless hues, or at least more muted tones, with the suggestion that they will be "under the appropriate aegis of the Tolstoy Foundation" and settled in a New Jersey farming community. The new immigrants possessed an anachronistic, traditional lifestyle, but the very qualities that marked them as downtrodden and even exotic also pointed towards a hard-working culture uncorrupted by the modern world. Under appropriate guidance,

such as that provided by the Tolstoy Foundation, these immigrants could transition from their traditional lifestyle to a more modern one found at the heart of the American cultural scene.



An article in the New York Times, published three years later, revealed a dramatic change in the representation of immigrant Old Believers. Instead of a diminutive corner shot, the Old Believers in this story fill the front page, above the fold, in an evocative two-panel presentation stylized in the manner of a 'before and after' shot. In the left panel Savin Kamis stands next to his wife and son, Anna and Vasily, beaming with a smile that finds some correlation to the grin also worn by his wife. Savin and his family are foregrounded against what looks like a typical, middle-class 1960s American home, while a woman, also holding a child, standing on the steps of said house in the background affirms the familial nature of the composition. The caption interestingly notes that while Savin works for a soft-drink company in Lakewood, N.J, he

also "wears a beard in accordance with Old Believers' tradition." Given the social and cultural context of beards being associated with the counter-culture movement in mid-to-late 1960s America, such a comment most likely sought to further differentiate Old Believers from the modern scene in which they inhabited.

In the right panel we see a markedly different scene of Old Believers, clad in flannel shirts and mesh-style baseball hats, assembling furniture for the Excelwood Products Company located near Lakewood. It is a thoroughly modern tableau, the use of power tools and assembly line organization exhibiting a powerful contrast to the bearded workers whose 'tradition' identified in the previous caption calls for such a conspicuous display of facial hair. "Jack Landman, the concern's president, praised their behavior," reads the caption underneath this photograph, the unseen, authoritative voice of the Excelwood Products Company's president underscoring the suitability of the workers for their modern occupation. No longer referenced as 'Tolstoy's Peasants', these Old Believers stand as an example of the pervasive influence of American culture. If there was any doubt as to the ability of this traditional group to assimilate, it is expressed in the distance-laden copy used for article; "Members of Russian Religious Group Who Came to U.S. After a Stay in Turkey Thrive in New Jersey" declares the headline. That the following qualifier, "Old Believers Leaning to New Ways," accentuated the distance still left to be covered by the Old Believers in their transition to modernity.

In particular the phrase "leaning to new ways" suggested that some residual dissonance still existed between the traditional composition of Old Believer lives and the values/mores of the modern as grounded in the juxtaposed domestic and factory settings. The author depicts the Old Believers as only partially assimilated into modern

life; they may work and live in modern settings, but they still retain their traditional identities, as manifested most overtly by the men's beards. These Old Believers are beginning to show signs of being fundamentally changed by the American milieu, but their 'leaning' style suggests that they are between worlds, one foot in the traditional past and one foot in the modern present.

The various vignettes described above- Wilcox's picaresque-like narrative account, the Newsweek blurb, and the New York Times article- are just a few examples of narratives shaped around Old Believers as they became visible to and interacted with modern American observers. There emerged familiar tropes of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the new world, yet the Old Believers were unlike any immigrants seen in America since the influx of Europeans during the second-half of the nineteenth century. These immigrants exemplified, *par excellence*, the figure of traditional peasants, 'Tolstoy's Peasants', oft-cast in a stasis-like existence that marked them as both outside of American modernity and the perfect subjects upon which American modernity could assert its assimilative power. Their clothes, facial hair, tight sense of community, and omnipresent religious belief all collided to make these new arrivals intriguing targets of cultural conversation among American interlocutors. Analyzing how and why Old Believers captivated Wilcox, *Newsweek*, and the *New York Times* is to understand how and why American modernity utilized this group for its own investigative and self-affirming ends.

Intrusion of traditional subjects fascinates modern audiences because they routinely utilize these traditional subjects as a measurement of their own modernity. Viewed as reenactors of a lifestyle lost (or at least fast receding) when set

against 1960s America, Old Believers became a focal point for agents of the modern-journalists, academics, and bureaucrats, to name a few. Through their depiction of the Old Believers, the authors of these modern accounts created a space where they could claim specialized knowledge of what constituted modernity, and then apply it to their interpretation of Old Belief. These accounts constituted a lens through which the modernity of both Old Belief and the creators of such accounts themselves were measured. Old Belief became that distant mirror through which modern Americans could see their own past reflections and in doing so evaluate their own measure and self-worth.

Meili Steele, in his work *Theorizing Textual Subjects: Agency and Oppression*, highlighted the measured tension found among specialized knowledge works produced by agents of modernity. The relationship between language and subjectivity in these specialized knowledge works hinged on the dichotomy between understanding someone as an agent and understanding someone as a constructed subject. In the first instance of understanding someone as an agent, identified by Steele as a first-/second-person account, language is used to “articulate the subject’s intentions, background assumptions, and the vocabularies used to constitute personal or community identities.”³ Language in first-/second-person accounts comes from personal, internal observations that affirm the subject as an active agent in their own community. Contrast this to the second instance of understanding someone as a constructed subject, identified by Steele as third-person account. Third-person accounts redescribe “the subject’s language or action in terms that do not respect the integrity of the subject’s self-constitution.”⁴ These accounts allow observers to, in effect, place themselves (as well as those they observe) in the category of

³ Meili Steele, *Theorizing Textual Subjects: Agency and Oppression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 8.

⁴ Ibid.

an ‘other’ and redescribe their actions “with terms that cut across the action vocabulary of the agent so that the agent’s vocabulary is determined by forces of which he/she is unaware.” Direct agency, found in first-/second-person accounts, is absent in third-person accounts as the constructed subject finds themselves at the whims of outside forces and robbed of any ability to use internal observations, their own ‘vocabulary’, to validate identity.

Reports, news articles, and personal correspondence written by American observers and surveyed in this analysis often cast Old Believers in the type of third-person accounts described by Steele above. Implied contrast between Old Belief’s traditional background and the modern American scene of their settlement provided a narrative framing that prompted American readers of these reports, news articles, and personal correspondence to see Old Believers as constructed subjects and not agents in their own right. Furthermore, third-person accounts created and relied on a conduit between Old Belief, modernity, and the readers asked to evaluate the distance between the two:

The interpreter cannot simply explain in a positivist way without appealing to meanings and ideals that are shared with the reader/listener. The explainer may use a third-person vocabulary to account for views he/she wants to discredit, but implicitly, if not explicitly, use a first-/second-person vocabulary in directing this account to an audience.⁵

Whether it the calling out of the fact that ‘men wear beards; the women, peasant costumes’, as described in *Newsweek*, or the frequent reference of ‘Tolstoy’s Peasants’, a metaphor used by Wilcox, or even the tension of the unsure declaration that ‘Old Believers are leaning to new ways’, as seen on the front page of the *New York Times*,

⁵ Ibid 24.

narrative constructions around Old Belief used measurements or distance-invoking language to judge the group's transition from traditional to modern citizens. But in doing so third-person accounts called into question the validity and applicability of the modern project itself. Steele noted as much when he wrote, "third-person accounts often make unflattering redescriptions of our ethical self-understandings; however, these accounts are not views from nowhere; they ultimately appeal to a revised ethical self-understanding in which we can live." Even as American observers sought to implicitly and explicitly measure distance between Old Belief and modernity, their inquiries could not help but turn such measurements back in on themselves. A more in-depth description of the narrative evolution undergone by the Old Believer population that settled in Woodburn, Oregon in the early to mid-1960s vis-a-vis their relation to modernity is the focus of this work.

Who are the Old Believers?

Before engaging with both the theoretical approaches used in this analysis and the historiographical tradition underlying scholarly works produced on Old Belief, it is necessary to spend a brief amount of time surveying the origins of the Russian Orthodox sect and the influence this group historically wielded in Russian culture. Old Belief as a distinct offshoot of Russian Orthodoxy coalesced between 1654 and 1666 as church authorities engaged in ecclesiastical reform. Over the course of the 17th century the two pillars of the Russian state, the Orthodox Church and the Tsar, sought greater centralization and consolidation of power over subjects under their purview. Patriarch Nikon introduced changes to the texts and religious traditions surrounding the practice of Russian Orthodoxy, reforms sourced from the Greek Orthodox Church that Nikon

believed, erroneously, to be more authentic than those practiced by the average Russian believer. These changes included, but were not limited to, new spellings of Jesus' name and altered number of fingers used in the sign of the cross, thus altering at fundamental levels daily rituals practiced by Russian believers. Nikon's religious authority allowed him to propose the reforms in the first place, but it was the political support provided by Tsar Alexis that allowed the Patriarch's vision of Russian Orthodoxy to endure even after Nikon abandoned the position of Patriarch in 1658. After his removal, church leaders approved Nikon's liturgical reforms and set in motion what became known as the *raskol*, or schism, of Russian Orthodoxy after they declared those who maintained the pre-reform liturgy and texts to be schismatics in 1666.

While the exact origin of Old Belief as a distinct movement is difficult to pinpoint, thanks largely to the dispersed and fragmented nature of the sect in its nascent form, early ideological leaders such as Archpriest Avvakum and remote monastic communities of Vyg and Solovki provided intellectual and phenomenological support though their written communication with other dissident religionists and physical obstinacy to the Russian church and state. Rejection of church reforms by Old Believers, however, carried with it a corresponding rejection of the sacramental authority held by Russian Orthodox priests. After 1666, Russian Orthodox bishops no longer consecrated new priests using old rituals, thus posing to Old Believer communities the very real dilemma of how to maintain the sacrament once the current generation of priests died. Ways in which Old Believer communities dealt with this dilemma largely spurred the diversity of beliefs exercised by the group as a whole. Some groups rejected the authority of all Orthodox priests consecrated after 1666 and came to be known as

bezpopovtsy, or priestless Old Believers. This group believed Russian Orthodox Church leaders to be so corrupt that not only was their spiritual authority void but also that their corruption forever put the sacrament out of reach by those living on earth. Some Priestless Old Believers even put forth the idea that the Tsar was actually the Antichrist, thus explaining the denial of apostolic succession and the need to remain true to the old rituals that remained untainted. But not all of those who rejected ecclesiastical reforms believed the sacrament to be out of reach. Others that accepted at least some nominal role of priests consecrated after the Nikonian-reforms became known as *popovtsy*, or priestly Old Believers. Still others accepted even greater degrees of priestly intervention in sacramental practice and became known as the *polu-raskol'niki*, or half-schismatics. Even though the Old Believers as a whole share a common link through preservation and practice of pre-Nikonian Russian Orthodox rituals and rites, articulation of those practices create palpable differences between them.

Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers who settled in Woodburn, Oregon and form the heart of this analysis classified themselves as priestless, even though records indicate that at least some priestly Old Believers also came with the Turkish group initially resettled in New Jersey by the Tolstoy Foundation. As will be discussed in Chapter Two below, Tolstoy Foundation executives determined that the Turkish Old Believers descended from a Cossack band that settled in Turkish lands during the 18th century. The Brazilian group initially hailed from the Imperial Russian city of Alma Ata, now known as Almaty in present-day Kazakhstan, but fled to the city of Harbin, in Manchuria, and also dispersed in the Xinjiang province of China after the Bolshevik Revolution. Subsequent pressure by Chinese Communists pressured the Old Believers to move again,

and with the assistance of the World Council of Churches, discussed in Chapter Two below, they immigrated to Brazil. It was from here that the Old Believers made their final journey to Woodburn, Oregon in the early 1960s with assistance from the Tolstoy Foundation.

Explanation of Methodology

Some of the terms used in describing the introductory vignettes above correspond to ideas of thinkers whose work bears particular importance for the investigation underway. Perhaps the most important concept is that of *reenactment* as utilized by Katie King in her work, *Networked Reenactments: Stories Transdisciplinary Knowledges Tell*.⁶ Analyzing, in part, situations where experts from diverse disciplinary fields come together to either interpret or recreate situations or objects from the past, such as the recreation of colonial life on a secluded farm or reconstruction of DaVinci's prototypical machines, King suggests that these expositions reveal deeply interconnected knowledge transfers that utilize elements of reenactment in order to give their narrative framings a coherent structure able to be discerned and dissected by viewing audiences.

Reenactment as a term is not strictly limited to what many would assume to be the work of medieval/renaissance fairs or civil war buffs; for King's work, reenactment encompasses the multitude of other layers that not only overtly bring about notions of reenactment (such as period clothing, or outward mannerisms) but also underlie them, in an infrastructural manner, to a large extent:

Some of these other layers, more inclusive and perhaps less obvious, connect additional activities, venues, objects, skills, people, and circumstances together with such living history reenactments... Infrastructures are piled-upon assemblages

⁶ Katie King, *Networked Reenactments: Stories Transdisciplinary Knowledges Tell* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

within which there are many discontinuities but also connections, some deliberative, some inadvertent. These infrastructural connections or flexible knowledges make up a networked and emergent reorganization of knowledge making and using that those of us linked together by the publication apparatus of this book are likely a part of, probably even agents within. Investigating reenactments helps us to perceive together many of these transdisciplinary connections and helps us to contemplate and participate in what something perhaps called a "posthumanities" will become.⁷

It is important to note that this wide-ranging definition of reenactment does not overlook how specific disciplines tend to define, or own, the concept of reenactment. Thus, King notes the need to look at reenactments as 'extensive' investigations:

Investigating communities of practice and their various definitions and commitments, "extensive" investigations work perpendicularly to analyze the relative and relational shifts across authoritative and alternative knowledges that processes of definition entail. ...Movement among knowledge worlds requires understanding authorships, audiences, and agencies in ways that keep redrawing forms of inclusion and exclusion, virtually moment to moment.⁸

Movement in reenactments between knowledge worlds, understood here to mean disciplinary specialties such as History or Biology, involves three distinct domains; knowledge work, or "work cultures centering knowledge and information systems and technologies as economies themselves and as forces in various economies," culture crafts "sewn up with economic development amid shifts in cultural value," and academic capitalism that "display[s] recombinations of national interests, global economies, and ideological shifts."⁹

⁷ Ibid, 2.

⁸ Ibid, 3.

⁹ Ibid, 4.

Simply put, sites of reenactment bring forth distinct viewpoints, each with their own rules of knowledge production and certification (Historians using the documentary record to investigate the past or Biologists using microscopes to analyze blood samples), and asks these viewpoints to communicate with each other in order to better understand the reenactment taking place. Interplay between experts representing their own distinct disciplines redraws boundaries of what counts as certified knowledge at the site of reenactment, promoting or excluding elements as they become useful or discredited, and this process can take place at a rapid pace especially for those who must transverse such knowledge worlds as a participant or observer of the reenactment in question.

How does this relate to my study of Old Belief? King's analysis specifically starts with the 90's, but I argue in the work below that all elements described as part of reenactment are in effect with the arrival and pursuant study of the Old Believers in Oregon. Each of the three domains listed by King above have direct correlation to either narratives spun, newspaper articles written, or academic careers certified vis-a-vis the 'reenactment' put on display (from the perspective of outside observers) by Old Believers. Furthermore, Old Believers used their status as reenactors to challenge outside perspectives because the logic inherent in using Old Belief as a measurement of the modern meant that their development into modern subjects, albeit ones with a more pure past, required acknowledgment of their cultural specificity. Set against the liberal drive to both accommodate and assimilate, Old Believers challenged ingrained power structures by asserting their unique status as reenactors. If America wanted loyal, tax-paying citizens, the Old Believers were more than happy to comply- provided, of course,

that they could do so in a manner that made their transition into such citizens as inclusive of their 'tradition' as possible.

Beyond the label of reenactors, Old Believers also embodied King's notion of 'pastpresents'. Using the example of *Leonardo's Dream Machines*, a NOVA-style documentary that attempts to understand Leonardo by reconstructing a piece of his work using the combined knowledge of several participants (architects, historians, etc.), King notes how the conflation of Leonardo's past with our modern present is a mutually reinforcing process:

The epistemological or knowledge maker melodrama enacted in this series emphasizes what we could call pastpresents, run together all in one word, in which pasts and presents very literally mutually construct each other. They do so before our eyes in multiple and concrete forms of reenactment, forms in which it is impossible-and undesirable-to keep some singular and differential past and present apart. Nor is it just new (and old) knowledge about Leonardo that is displayed in the documentary but also scientific and technical knowledges coming into being today as part of interactive relationships with Leonardo objects crossing time.¹⁰

Sites of reenactment, offering the potential to have various disciplines interact with each other in order to create flexible knowledge worlds, also allow interaction between the past and the present. Reenactments, and by extension reenactors, lose much of their appeal when considered only through the lens of a singular timeframe. Focusing exclusively on the past discounts the perspective offered by the present and eliminates any potential for modern disciplines to create knowledge worlds around the site of reenactment. Likewise, focusing exclusively on the present at the expense of the past reduces reenactment to the role of thought experiment; contemplative, but intangible.

¹⁰ Ibid, 12.

Through consideration of both past and present at the site of reenactment, participant and observer alike create a mutually reinforcing conduit in which both the past and the present inform each other and draw together all involved in the act of knowledge creation.

Again, as will be argued below, the arrival of Old Believers in Oregon triggered creation of various disciplinary knowledge worlds by authoritative experts all of which hinged on viewing Old Belief as the site of reenactment for a more traditional, and thus more pure, past. Old Believers became living embodiments of what King calls pastpresents, the vignettes described above a testament to the straddling of both the modern and the past that Old Belief came to embody in modern settings. It proved to be undesirable to separate Old Belief into distinct forms of past and present and observers of Old Belief make a convincing case that this traditional group is less about rigidly preserving the past and more about evolving as a living community. At all levels of knowledge production surrounding Old Belief, from the initial narrative spinning of Old Believers provided by the Tolstoy Foundation to the thesis and dissertations produced by graduate students, elements of what King identified as a pastpresent framework can be found. This framework proved to be a coherent thread giving these knowledge productions both relevancy and clear direction.

Another key concept for my investigation of Old Belief in Oregon is that of *mimesis*. Specifically, mimesis as exemplified in the act of copying, something Marcus Boon explores in depth in his work, *In Praise of Copying*. When Boon writes, "we are always entangled in the dynamics of mimesis," what he means is that the copy act itself is an ingrained part of all cultures, an ingrained part of our daily comprehension of

life.¹¹ So deep does the primal urge to understand copies go that there are few- if any- spheres of life untouched by its concern. The examination of Old Belief is no exception and several of the concerns identified both within and without the Old Believer community in Woodburn are best understood through the concept of mimesis.

Boon suggests that the real question at the crux of mimetic concerns stems from an inability to articulate what Plato called the ideal state, or true essence. Mahayana Buddhism concerns itself, in part, with question of essencelessness or emptiness, noting that if objects did possess an 'essence' the notion of copying could not exist:

For if objects really did have essences, there could be no copying of them, since that which one would make the copy out of would continue to have its own essence, and could have only this essence, rather than that essence which is implied by the transformed outward appearance that would make it a copy. Similarly, if the essence of a thing were truly fixed, it could not be transported to the copy, and imitation, even as a degradation of the original, would not be possible.¹²

Taking this Buddhist thought to its conclusion, Boon hits upon a crucial aspect of the mimetic conflict Western traditions have yet to fully acknowledge, namely that "it is the emptiness of all phenomena, their lack of essence, which makes copying possible."¹³

Returning to the vignettes summarized above, one could reinterpret the imagery and verbiage used to describe the Old Believers through the concept of 'essenceslessness'. Media observations of Old Belief turn to metaphors of 'Tolstoy's Peasants' in order to give what would otherwise be a completely foreign group to American audiences much needed context. Without this narrative prompting, readers

¹¹ Marcus Boon, *In Praise of Copying* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 6.

¹² *Ibid*, 27.

¹³ *Ibid*, 29.

coming across articles about Old Believers in *Newsweek* or *The New York Times* would, essentially, draw upon a blank slate in trying to understand the group in question.

Attaching the label of 'Tolstoy's Peasants' to Old Believers allows American readers to fill what would otherwise be an 'essenceslessness' subject with meaning and begin the rhetorical process by which that subject can be transformed into a modern citizen. Yet the uncertainty involved in this assignment of meaning comes to the fore in juxtaposing the supposedly traditional group to objects and spaces of modern life; the 'peasants' arrive by jet, the men work in factories yet also maintain their traditional beards, and the aimlessness of the agricultural group will be rooted thanks to the efforts of the western-infused guidance of the Tolstoy Foundation. Outside observers seek to fill the Old Believers with meaning, but the process of assimilating them into the American landscape, the process of turning Old Belief into copies of the American ideal, cannot escape the fear that even as Old Believers make progress towards this ideal they might never completely reach it and become imperfect copies of the modern original.

The Old Believers' arrival in Oregon in the early 60's coincided with a cultural explosion in America fueled by mimetic processes; the post-war industrial-economic boom spurred the production and replication of highways, supermarkets, suburbia, integrated circuits, etc. - all of which embodied mimesis in action. Many bureaucratic, academic, and media reports on the Old Believers, at least regarding their initial years of arrival, either danced around or focused on the singular question: to what degree could the newcomers be assimilated? Or, put another way, to what degree could the Old Believer be made into a reasonable facsimile of the supposed American modern ideal?

Hillel Schwartz suggests in his work, *The Culture of the Copy*, that the “most perplexing moral dilemmas of this era are posed by our skill at the creation of likenesses of ourselves, our world, our times,” and this has, essentially, been the larger problem posed to modern societies since the turn of the 20th century.¹⁴ Indeed, the Old Believers were highly conspicuous for citizens of Woodburn, Oregon and it was this conspicuousness that made them especially envious targets for transformation into model American citizens. The ability of American modernity to foster Old Believer assimilation was an early fixation for American observers and for due cause; traditionally, the power to transform another into a facsimile of a desired model through assimilation proved to be a key source of strength for political and cultural regimes. This is certainly true for American modernity projects that, due to the nature of colonist/immigrant origins, relied on mimetic principles in order to create new types of citizens.

Here the work of another scholar, James Salazar and his *Bodies of Reform*, allows us to better understand how mimetic principles worked themselves into American character building projects of the Gilded Age. What makes *Bodies of Reform* intriguing, at least from the perspective of the project below, is that Salazar outlines what he calls a rhetoric of character and then proceeds to investigate this rhetoric as it appears in gilded age American literature, like Mark Twain's writing, and public journals/venues, such as the *National Police Gazette* or noted activist Jane Addams' Hull House. What is the rhetoric of character? Salazar notes that while notions of character are central to our understanding of how late 19th century politics of morality worked, most assumed this

¹⁴ Hillel Schwartz, *The Culture of the Copy: Striking Likenesses, Unreasonable Facsimiles* (New York: Zone Books, 2014), 10.

centrality of the character question faded by the turn of the century. By “resituating the study of character within a broader cultural politics of embodiment,” Salazar hopes to,

make visible the critical role the rhetoric of character played in redefining the legal and cultural meanings of citizenship and personhood in the shifting economic order and expanding imperial enterprises of the United States as it expanded the domestic and international reach of state power in the first decades of the twentieth century.¹⁵

By making visible this “centrality of the rhetoric of character to the disciplinary forms and regimes of cultural representation,” Salazar casts light on not just those characters who came to embody the ideal but also those who flitted on the margins of the liberal democratic imagination. A two-way street, the rhetoric of character allowed both the extension of disciplinary regimes into larger and more diverse populations and the means to fight this extension by those populations whose very existence prompted the forceful articulation of this rhetoric in the first place. Facilitating this extension was the ability of the rhetoric of character to provide an “expanded and more flexible hermeneutics of the body, gesture and visage” used by “racial scientists, cultural nationalists, educators, and policymakers.”¹⁶

Rhetoric of character, however, promoted a deep anxiety tied to what one could call the mimetic act, or mimetic desire, involved in recreating in a population the desired mode of character as viewed through the visual- the only mode of perception available to evaluate character for the outside observer and judge. Thus Salazar notes,

Because character was ultimately knowable only through the manners, behaviors, and bodily indicators through which it appeared, it was vulnerable not only to errors of interpretation but also to the misrepresentations of the

¹⁵ James B. Salazar, *Bodies of Reform: The Rhetoric of Character in Gilded Age America* (New York: NYU Press, 2010), 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

skilled manipulator of signs, making character into the site of a profound hermeneutic anxiety.¹⁷

As seen in the varied documents examined below, questions of character abounded with regards to the arrival of the Old Believers on American soil. At the heart of any evaluation based on rhetoric of character is a notion that character is an *essence* that can be inscribed and, thus, replicated within the bodies and habits of those populations weighed and found wanting.

For a more concrete example of how rhetoric of character operated with regards to marginalized populations, we now turn to Philip Deloria and those *Indians in Unexpected Places*. Deloria's work focuses on analyzing the anomalous or unexpected categorization of Native Americans in narrative depictions, such as a photograph of a woman in traditional clothing receiving a manicure or Geronimo driving a Cadillac. Deloria noted how these narrative depictions photo created an "aura of unexpectedness" that projects both expectations and shared ideologies sourced from power-relations laden in the American milieu.¹⁸ Because these depictions often juxtapose Native Americans with sites or symbols of American modernity, such as a beauty parlor or the inside of an automobile, expectations of what these sites or symbols mean refuse to mesh with the preconceived notions held by modern observer. Thus the Native American becomes at once knowable and yet also strange, unfamiliar.

Indeed, the essays found in *Indians in Unexpected Places* engage in the varied repositioning of expectations as viewed through various lenses; violence, athletics, technology- in each instance the 'unexpected' appearance of Native Americans suggests

¹⁷ Ibid, 18.

¹⁸ Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 3.

that these peoples, oppressed through myriad means, nonetheless became active participants in the reshaping of the discourse and ideology espoused by whites. In relation to the vignettes of Old Belief examined above, there is much to be compared. The best corollary, that being the photograph of the Old Believers working in the furniture factory, indulges in similar notions of expectation and anomaly. We have supposedly traditional peoples, donned in the ubiquitous American plaid shirts and baseball caps, made conspicuous with their long-black beards and affirmation by their boss that they are, indeed, good workers.

If the photo does not immediately produce a chuckle, or, perhaps, the brief nod of the head indicating that, yes, these Old Believers are becoming model Americans, it is due less to the presence of discourse and ideology, two inescapable factors involved with any narrative, and more to the fact that the Old Believers, being relatively few in number and new to the American scene, are still in the rather novel category of being simply traditional people. Unlike the generations of experience inculcated in the white 'experience' with Native Americans, white Americans possessed little to no knowledge of Old Belief prior to the gathered arrival of the sacred practitioners in the early 1960s. Deloria's observations provide a backdrop for use in evaluating the Old Believer experience of being subjected to the same narrative process.

Articulating this different approach for the Old Believers who settled in Oregon requires blending all three perspectives of the authors- King, Boon, Salazar, and Deloria- surveyed above. If we take Deloria's cue and begin to investigate anomalies found in the narratives surrounding Old Belief in the American milieu, then we immediately run into the issue of mapping the dichotomy of both expectation and anomaly in such

narratives. Yet the novel nature of Old Belief meant that such narratives, beyond the very basic sense of timelessness associated with the outward projection of their traditional beliefs (designated by such visible signifiers as clothing or personal grooming), grasped for contextuality upon which modern audiences could base their sense of anomalous and expected behavior. That's why the reference to 'Tolstoy's Peasants' so readily emerged in early accounts describing Old Believers. Instead of possessing an accumulated contextuality built up over several decades or centuries, as was the case for whites and their relationship with Native Americans, Old Believers had to contend with the associative process of creating that contextuality through narrative creation sourced in reports, news media, and presentations by experts already established in the American cultural scene. These varied sources established contextuality through their presentation of Old Belief to a skeptical, but inquisitive, modern audience.

But how did these sources frame Old Belief? Here is where the work of Salazar and his rhetoric of character aids our inquiry. From the earliest reports of the Tolstoy Foundation, who played a major role in the settlement of Old Believers in America during the 1950's and 1960s, as well as the pursuant studies performed by the Valley Migrant League, of which Don Wilcox (who wrote the first vignette explored at the beginning of this chapter) was a part, and later observations of graduate students looking to certify their academic status through observations on Old Believer life, the pervasive concept of developing character intersected all inquiries. As will be explained in the historiographical review below, this is the key difference between Old Belief in Russia and Old Belief in America; whereas Russian, and later Soviet, authorities possessed a deep contextuality when dealing with Old Believers, American authorities relied upon

professionals who often possessed little contextuality outside of traditional motifs in order to understand how Old Belief could fit within the larger aims and goals of Cold War liberalism. The rhetoric of character provided a time-tested approach, at least from the American perspective, upon which to build a contextualization of Old Belief. This approach yielded several authoritative avenues through which American modernity could operate and incorporate with regards to the Old Believers.

Yet it would be a grave mistake to ignore the vestiges, or shadows, cast upon this rhetoric of character by the notion of Russianness Old Believers historically embodied. In an era deeply paranoid about and concerned with various Communist plots, the fact that the Old Believers spoke Russian and represented a type of living reenactors centered on Russian culture meant that questions related to the potential for total assimilation were always at the forefront of American concerns, both from a lay and professional viewpoint. The processes by which this assimilation could be carried out, as envisioned by American bureaucrats and professionals alike, involved integrating Old Believers in spaces that were central to questions of character; spaces such as schools, factories, and courtrooms all sought to utilize various 'mimetic' pressures in order to reshape the Old Believers into a more acceptable, and by extension loyal, mold.

However, these mimetic desires encountered powerful and reaffirming forces of identity embodied in the practice and culture of Old Belief. Over the course of their first fifteen years of settlement in America, the Old Believer community utilized the underlying values of the various rhetorics of character placed upon them to turn those values inside-out; they held tight to their community, moving and gathering as a collected group, while also participating in the local economic and educational institutions on

terms acceptable to their held beliefs. While this strict collectivist identity waned over time during the initial period investigated by this dissertation, due in large part to the process of assimilation produced by American culture, it nonetheless presented a wall that observers found difficult to pierce, much less break through reform.

Therefore the investigation of narrative construction around Old Believers in Oregon involves more than just a 'top-down' approach, even though this perspective is what most readily surfaces in the documents surveyed, it also requires measuring how the Old Believers themselves used their culture and specific community needs to challenge the mimetic pressures brought to bear through the rhetoric of culture espoused by American authorities. Indeed, the relative speed with which they acquired land, purchased homes, and became integral parts of the local economy belied the great unease expressed by outside authorities that, in the early years, rarely escaped seeing Old Believers as some form of 'Tolstoy's Peasants'. That is why this analysis serves a useful purpose beyond historical documentation; it explores a phenomenon at once classic and yet novel in the larger experience of Old Belief in the modern world.

With methodology outlined above, the next focus is to situate this work amongst the larger historiographical tradition exploring Old Belief. Historical explorations into the experience of Old Believers in America are still relatively scant, especially in comparison to the number of works produced on the experience of Old Believers in Russia. Russian works of scholarship, however, dealt with cultural and ideological constraints imposed by Orthodox, Imperial and Soviet authorities. The first works produced on Old Belief originated from ecclesiastical writers in the Russian Orthodox

Church. Because of the doctrinal issues involved, many church writers viewed the sectarian group as heretics and their published essays took on polemical airs. Attempts to discredit Old Belief, however, meant that polemics needed to review and reproduce heretical source material in order to fully debunk sectarian positions. In doing so, ecclesiastical polemicists inadvertently began the process of collecting Old Believer texts and testimonies; a process that ensured at least some preservation of the culture they sought to remove.

Around the middle of the 19th century, populist writers outside of the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy began to tackle the subject of Old Belief with fresh perspectives. These individuals, free from the need to defend Orthodoxy from heretical thought, saw in Old Belief a movement concerned less about doctrinal dispute with the Russian Orthodox Church than social dispute with the growing power of an increasingly centralized Russian bureaucratic state. This point of view neatly aligned with liberal political ideas circulating among the Russian intelligentsia of the period that questioned the nature of autocratic government and sought to uncover authentic Russian examples of alternative social organization. One prominent secular, liberal writer of this period was A.P. Shchapov. His collected work of essays established the, then, novel idea that Old Belief was primarily a social movement defending the ancient Russian traditions of autonomy and preference for local governance over central control in matters both secular and sacred.¹⁹ This populist understanding of Old Belief proved to have sustained longevity and, as will be discussed below, continued to influence Russian scholarship up to the present day.

¹⁹ A.P. Shchapov, *Sochineniia*, 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1906-1908). For specific examples see “Russkii raskol” and “Zemstvo i raskol”.

Edicts of religious toleration, issued by Nicholas II in 1904 and 1905, allowed Old Believers to publish their own journals and religious materials, further expanding the primary source base for the sectarian group. Official toleration also spurred others to more extensively study Old Belief; V.D. Bonch-Bruevich, future secretary of Lenin and Bolshevik leader, released his six-volume work between 1908 and 1916 on the Russian schism and the various sects it spawned.²⁰ This more tolerant period was short lived, however, as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 inaugurated the era of Soviet rule and subsequent reconfiguration of scholarly pursuits along ideological lines. The study of Old Belief didn't receive sustained attention again until the 1960s when Soviet scholars began conducting ethnographic surveys of, often, remote Old Believer populations and collecting even more Old Believer texts. N.N. Pokrovskii, based in Novosibirsk, began his groundbreaking surveys of Old Belief in the Urals during this period, publishing *Antifeodal'nyi protest* (Antifeudal Protest) in 1974.²¹ Pokrovskii's work followed in the same vein as the 19th century populist writer Shchapov, highlighting the socio-economic aspects of protest in Old Belief rather than its religious composition through analysis of Old Believer books and gathered texts. This approach, utilizing documented sources to discuss how religious issues acted as a front for larger economic or social concerns, naturally complimented ideological underpinnings of Soviet thought which sought to uncover materialistic origins of historical developments. V.G. Kartsov's two-volume textbook, *Religioznyi rakol kak forma antifeodal'nogo protesta v istorii Rossii* (The Religious Schism and Development of Antifeudal Protest in Russian History), codified

²⁰ V.D. Bonch-Bruevich, ed., *Materialy k istorii i izucheniiu russkogo sektanstva i raskola* (St. Petersburg, 1908-1916).

²¹ N.N. Pokrovskii, *Antifeodal'nyi protest uralo-sibirskikh krest'ian-starobriadtsev v vosemnadtsatom v.* (Novosibirsk, 1974).

this approach and introduced an entire generation of students to the historiographical tradition of viewing Old Belief as rooted in socioeconomic concerns.²²

Influence of this Soviet historiographical tradition can be seen in Russian language scholarship dealing specifically with Old Belief in Oregon, even though these accounts focus more on the degree of transformation Old Believer traditions faced over the decades of settlement in America. D.E. Raskov analyzed the economic culture of the Brazilian Old Believers, charting their history of immigration and adaptation to economic opportunities/restrictions found in China, Brazil, and America.²³ U.V. Argudiaeva conducted an ethnographic survey of the Brazilian and Turkish Old Believers in Oregon and focused on the degree to which both groups managed to keep their traditions intact. Not only does Argudyaeva's article analyze traditional religious ceremonies related to weddings and funerals but it also touches upon topics such as the integration of material culture, exemplified for Argudyaeva in the clothes and technology used by Old Believers. As will be explored below, Russian scholastic focus on change and adaptability of Old Belief in Oregon echoed similar concerns held by American observers during the 1960s and 1970s as they attempted to construct their own networks of knowledge around the immigrant religious group.²⁴

In terms of English scholarship, analysis of Old Belief shifted over the past fifty years from a perspective informed by questions over dogmatic cohesion and textual exchange to those of community, gender, and the accommodations of an evolving lived

²² V.G. Kartsov, *Religiozniy rakol kak forma antifeodal'nogo protesta v istorii Rossii*, 2 vol. (Kalinin, 1971).

²³ D.E. Raskov, "Ob Ekonomicheskoi Kul'ture Staroverov Brazilii" http://artesliberales.spbu.ru/contacts-ru/raskov/copy_of_2013.pdf. Accessed 8 July 2014.

²⁴ U.V. Argudiaeva, "Russian Old Believers in the USA," *Ojkumena* 4 (2010): 17-23. See also: "Russkie Staroobriadtsy v Shtate Oregon SSHA" http://www.borovskold.ru/content.php?page=lonuemcd_rus&id=84. Accessed 15 October 2015.

belief. If this relative short period appears diminutive in comparison to other, less-aged topics of Russian history (such as the Bolshevik Revolution or ascension of Peter I), consider that Russian scholars only began their own studies some 250 years ago when those in the Orthodox Church began collecting source materials related to the *raskol* period.²⁵ Considering that the *raskol* proved to be a watershed cultural moment for not only Russian Orthodoxy but also the Russian state itself, understanding the relationship between that event and the subsequent development of what would become the spectrum of Old Belief is paramount. Below is an attempt to reckon with that scholarship and draw from it the various strands of thought that have waxed and waned over the past half century.

One of the foundational English language investigations into Old Belief was Cherniavsky's 1966 *Slavic Review* article, "The Old Believers and the New Religion." Asking important historiographical questions of how religious conservatives, liberals, and finally, up to that point, Soviet scholars gathered and interpreted materials related to both the practice of Old Belief and the period of the *raskol* itself, Cherniavsky set the tone that future interpretative efforts of the *staroversti* (the plural Russian term for Old Believers) would follow. Clearly influenced by the same populist interpretations of Old Belief that impacted Pokrovskii's work, Cherniavsky argued that analysis of Old Believer intentions have always been difficult to parse, especially during the formative period of the late 17th century, because Old Believer claims of rejection sourced themselves in a religious framework. From elaborate articulations of theories on the appearance of the antichrist to more simple rejections of new liturgical words or

²⁵ Michael Cherniavsky, "The Old Believers and the New Religion" *Slavic Review* 25(1), 1966: 1-39.

ritualistic changes, early proponents of what would later be called Old Belief, Cherniavsky argued, used their deeply held religious beliefs as a means by which to reject the growing 'new' religion based on the growth and power of the emerging secular state. Although his analysis was limited in terms of chronological scope, Cherniavsky's argument nevertheless impacted subsequent, larger examinations.

The first monographic work in English on Old Belief, Robert Crummey's *Old Believers and the World of Antichrist*, came just four years later and focused on the same questions addressed by Cherniavsky.²⁶ Selecting as his topic the monastic community at Vyg, an early focal point for the intellectual formulation and cultural defense of Old Belief, Crummey adopts a top-down approach through his analysis of the textual community developed by the monastic leaders at Vyg as they made contact with like-minded believers scattered around their locale. Parallel to this development of a textual community, Crummey also examined Vyg's up-and-down relationship with the growing power of the Tsarist government. While an important work of English scholarship, *Old Believers and the World of Antichrist* possesses some issues that limit its usefulness for the larger project considered here. For one thing, Crummey's specific focus on a single community, Vyg, elided the vast spectrum of community and practices that came to encompass the grossly singular descriptor of Old Belief due, mostly, to the availability of published documents and inability to survey unpublished material in, then, Soviet archives.²⁷ For another, Crummey's work is largely concerned with the textual presence

²⁶ This was due, most likely, to the fact that Cherniavsky served as dissertation director for Crummey. Robert Crummey, *Old Believers and the World of the Antichrist: Vyg Community and the Russian State, 1694-1855* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), xvii.

²⁷ Douglas Rogers notes as much in his work, *The Old Faith and the Russian Land: A Historical Ethnography of Ethics in the Urals* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 30. Specifically he calls out

of Old Belief which focused on changes between or among the books and missives used and read by the faithful. Given the lack of access to primary materials or, rather, the fact that most of the available primary sources collected by Russian clergy and scholars alike focused on doctrinal disputes as made visible in books and other ephemera of Old Belief it's understandable why Crummey focused on outlining the nascent origins of an Old Believer textual community. Regardless, the textual-cultural drive in the study of Old Belief, pioneered by Cherniavsky and Crummey remained a central focus of English-language historical scholarship up until the 1990's.

Seven years after the publication of Crummey's book, Anton Beliajeff wrote a small article about "The Old Believers in the United States."²⁸ While Cherniavsky and Crummey examined Old Belief in the Imperial Russian context, Anton Beliajeff was the first historian to address, in English, the presence of Old Belief in America. More a summary of secondary materials than examination of primary sources, Beliajeff's article drew heavily upon the much earlier account of Alexis Sokoloff,²⁹ a Russian-born engineer who lived and worked around Pittsburgh and wrote in 1914 about colonies of Old Believers also living there, in addition to (then) more recent articles from the *New York Times* (1966) and *National Geographic Magazine* (1975). In fact, the *New York Times* article used by Beliajeff is the very same one examined at the beginning of this chapter. "The Old Believers in the United States" is notable less for its scholastic import and more for its role in highlighting both the contemporary, popular accounts of Old

Crummey, and also Roy Robson, for their "flat and homogenized views of how symbols and meanings operate."

²⁸ Anton S. Beliajeff, "The Old Believers in the United States" *Russian Review* 36(1), 1977: 76-80.

²⁹ Alexis Sokoloff, "Mediaeval Russia in the Pittsburgh District" *The Pittsburgh Survey: Wage-Earning Pittsburgh*, Paul Underwood Kellogg, Ed. (Pittsburgh: Russell Sage Foundation, 1914), 78-96.

Belief, accounts this work will also examine, and the dearth of other historical materials/analyses related to the arrival of Old Belief in Oregon.

The 1990's and beyond saw the study of Old Belief begin to broach new topics with intriguing works released by Roy Robson, Georg Michels, Irina Paert, and Douglas Rogers. Even Crummey sensed the impending change in Old Belief scholarship when he penned "Old Belief as Popular Religion" in 1993.³⁰ Yet while Crummey maintained the centrality of textual analysis in Old Belief scholarship, the new scholarship of Robson, Paert, and Rogers demonstrated that concerns over the Old Believer textual community was far from the only path available. Robson in particular pointed out Old Belief is less about the static text than it is about the living community using those texts as a guide on how to adapt to their contemporary situation. Issues of ritual, liturgy, gender, power, and ethics came to the fore in the scholarship of the past twenty years and highlighted the ways in which the study of Old Belief began to expand outside of textual or dogmatic concerns and into the cultural sphere.

Roy Robson's work in the early to mid 90's kicked off this new trend, with his *Old Believers in Modern Russia* leading the way.³¹ Although still driven by textual concerns, Robson's approach sought to ground studies of Old Belief in terms of community. This approach differed from the efforts of Crummey and Cherniavsky in that it utilized a 'bottom-up' topology of power instead of trying to articulate a 'top-down' approach that

³⁰ Robert Crummey, "Old Belief as Popular Religion: New Approaches," *Slavic Review* 52, no. 4 (1993): 700-712. Crummey also wrote several articles, of which only a select few appear here: see Robert Crummey, "The Silence of Muscovy," *Russian Review* 46, no. 2 (1987): 157-164. "Muscovy and the 'General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century,'" *Journal of Early Modern History* 2, no. 2 (1998): 156-180. "Peter and Boiar Aristocracy, 1689-1700," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 8, no. 2 (1974): 274-287. "New Wine in Old Bottles? Ivan IV and Novgorod," *Russian History* 14 (1987): 61-76.

³¹ Robson wrote an article two years before the arrival of his monograph that anticipated his following work. See Roy Robson, "Liturgy and Community among Old Believers, 1905-1917" *Slavic Review*, 52(4) Winter 1993: 713-724 and *Old Believers in Modern Russia* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995).

tended to view Old Belief as a more centralized and singular experience. When Robson notes that "we can understand the Old Belief as an ongoing relationship between the symbols of pre-Nikonian Orthodoxy and the lives of the old ritualist faithful," what he means is that the symbols of Old Belief, long scrutinized by scholars, actualize rather than simply represent the belief these practitioners hold most dear.³² The difference is subtle but meaningful. If symbols *represent* belief, then the study of the symbol itself becomes fetishized. But if symbols *realize* belief, then the study of the community that utilizes those symbols, not to mention all the assemblages of power attached to their use, becomes paramount.

Following in the footsteps of Robson's focus on the analysis of symbols as realized belief, Irina Paert's work explored imperial-era gender issues within the Pomorian and Theodosian communities of Old Belief.³³ For these 'priestless' groups of Old Believers the implications of the *raskol*, which in their mind severed the sacramental link between Orthodox clergy and God, meant that a congregation derived entirely of the laity could no longer carry out certain rituals central to communal life, such as marriage or the eucharist. Only baptism and confession remained of the original sacraments, because the laity could perform these functions in the absence of ordained clergy. This sacramental breakdown led to a reexamination of gender issues once held at the center of such sacraments; with no priests, traditional patriarchal control of the faith came into question and marriage had to be adjusted to work within a community no longer led by an ordained priest. Paert's work tied gender questions to the sort of fundamental religious

³² Robson, 9.

³³ Irina Paert, *Old Believers: Religious Dissent and Gender in Russia, 1760-1850* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2003)

ideals and perceptions mentioned above, revealing the interplay between realized faith and the texts that informed that faith.

While Robson and Paert both focused on the role of symbols in Old Belief, Georg Michels' scholarship questioned the coherence and overall character of Old Belief in its nascent form in the initial decades of the post-Nikonian period. His monograph, *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth-Century Russia*, put forth a counter-narrative of Old Belief that suggested early practitioners were much more scattered and less centralized than once thought. Instead of being guided by a centralized belief structure, many Old Believer groups arose spontaneously and often out of a perceived form of necessity spurred by changing local conditions. Michels analyzes responses to the ecclesiastical reforms of 1666 by examining dissenters at the local level; individual stories of monks, parish priests, and various members of lay society help create a "mosaic reflecting individual social realities and nuances." Supposedly recognized leaders of Old Belief, such as the Archpriest Avvakum, became so only after the fact, according to Michels, as many early dissenters were illiterate and thus could not participate in the textual community analyzed by Crummey and Cherniavsky. Indeed, Michels questions how much our understanding of Old Belief as a coherent movement is influenced by the Russian Orthodox Church's attempt to codify schismatic behavior in monolithic terms in the post-Nikonian period. He suggests, instead, that religious dissenters in the second-half of the 17th century used the *raskol* more to protest social and political developments related to the growing centralized power of both church and state in Russia and less to uphold some sense of religious purity in old rituals.³⁴

³⁴ Georg Michels, *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). Michels also published several relevant articles; see Georg Michels,

Michels' work touches on a broad variety of issues related to what Douglas Rogers calls the 'ethical repertoire' infused within the diverse spectrum of Old Belief. Unlike Robson, Paert, or Michels, Rogers utilizes an anthropological framework to examine the historical and contemporary life of a village, Sepych, located in the Ural Mountains. Rejecting a strict textual analysis, Rogers instead examines the Old Believers of Sepych through an ethical lens, elaborating how the townspeople adopted "widely circulating Russian discourses and practices and (infused) them with their own sensibilities and modes of historical consciousness."³⁵ In dealing with the moralizing discourses espoused by varied regimes, both in the Imperial and Soviet periods, the Old Believers of Sepych developed an ethical repertoire, which Rogers defines as "a protean set of sensibilities, dispositions, and expectations often overlooked or grasped only fleetingly and obliquely by outsiders," that allowed them to adapt the parameters of their faith in accordance with the larger societal demands placed upon them. However, in adopting an ethical framework, Rogers rejects the work of Robson and Crummeys for focusing too exclusively on culture and all the inherent baggage that term implies. Indeed, Rogers notes how the Soviet fixation on measuring the remaining 'culture' of the Sepych Old Believer through evaluations of the books they used meant that scholars overlooked the lived practice of this community.

There is much to appreciate in Rogers' work. His focus on the ethical dimension of Old Belief gives his analysis, which is grounded in historical and personal observation,

"The Violent Old Belief: An Examination of Religious Dissent of the Karelian Frontier" *Russian History* 19, no. 1-4 (1992): 203-229. "The First Old Believers in Ukraine: Observations about Their Social Profile and Behavior" *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 16, no. 3-4 (1992): 289-313. "The Place of Nikita Konstantinovič Dobrynin in the History of Early Old Belief" *Revue des études slaves* 69, no. 1-2 (1997): 21-31.

³⁵ Rogers, 6.

a more comprehensive approach. Yet Rogers' anthropological focus and concerns, especially with regards to viewing Old Belief as 'popular culture' or a 'subculture', are not shared in my work here. During the initial period of Old Believer settlement in Oregon the idea of culture, be it sourced in Old Believer traditions or American cultural mores of the 1960s, held preeminent value for all parties involved. It is understandable that Rogers seeks to avoid the romanticism and sense of timelessness traditionally associated with the culture of Old Belief, yet these concepts go the heart of how modern American observers, lay and professional alike, came to see the Old Believers as 'reenactors' of a traditional lifestyle during their initial years of settlement in the United States.³⁶

While several works on Old Belief tend to examine specific Russian-historical examples, a much smaller subset dedicated their narratives towards Old Believers in America. While the work of Belajeff briefly discussed this topic in general, a handful of other scholars produced works directly dealing with the Old Believer colony in Oregon. A. Michael Colfer's *Morality, Kindred and Ethnic Boundary* used first-hand observations and fieldwork carried out for six months in 1966 and eight months in 1971 to document Old Believer kindred patterns and the effects of increasing acculturation of American values on the formation of those kindred patterns. Colfer discovered that questions of morality, rather than strict blood relations, often dictated exact relations of an individual to the Old Believer group as a whole.³⁷ Richard Morris' *Old Russian Ways: Cultural Variations Among Three Russian Groups in Oregon* also utilized an ethnographic approach but focused on more than just the Old Believers; his work investigated the

³⁶ For a more detailed example of how Old Belief is narratively framed by modern audiences in 2013, see my blog Peasant Muse, "Pinning the Modern on Old Belief." <http://www.peasantmuse.blogspot.com/2013/02/pin-modern-on-old-belief.html> Accessed 8 July 2014.

³⁷ A. Michael Colfer, *Morality, Kindred, and Ethnic Boundary: A Study of the Oregon Old Believers* (New York: AMS Press, 1985).

Molokan and Pentecostal denominations also living in Oregon. Much like Colfer's work, Morris' approach focused on documenting the religious life of the Old Believers and then charted the degree to which their accommodation to living in the American cultural scene altered their traditional behavior.³⁸

Indeed, the degree to which Old Believers in Oregon retained, or failed to retain, elements of their traditional culture became a fixture for scholars studying the religious group. This is certainly true for Elena Razumovskaya's article on the "Traditional Customs of Old Believers in Woodburn" which focuses on the musical traditions and changes to that tradition among the Brazilian and Turkish Old Believers.³⁹ Just as it was with Colfer, Razumovskaya spends a good portion of her analysis analyzing the wedding customs of the Oregon Old Believers. Indeed, the Old Believer wedding became an oft-used custom for deeper examination by Western observers in order to investigate the degree of change, or accommodation, made by the Old Believers in their new American settings. Margaret Hixon's film, *Old Believers*, documented an Old Believer couple in the midst of preparing and going through a typical wedding ceremony in Woodburn, Oregon. As will be explored in the conclusion, Hixon's cinematography and narrative focus investigated the juxtaposition of traditional Old Believers set against the bucolic, but still very modern, American setting of Woodburn, Oregon.⁴⁰

To summarize the works touched upon above one could point out the trend by which the study of Old Belief began with the most available source base, that being the actual texts and liturgies used by Old Believers, and slowly began to branch out from this

³⁸ Richard Morris, *Old Russian Ways: Cultural Variations Among Three Russian Groups* (New York: AMS Press, 1991).

³⁹ Elena Razumovskaya, "Traditional Customs of Russian Old Believers in Woodburn, Oregon" *Folklorica*, vol. 13 (2008): 97-113.

⁴⁰ Margaret Hixon, *Old Believers* (film) 1981.

source base in order to engage with the larger issues of lived belief surrounding those texts. It is not so much that examinations of Old Belief texts are limited, as they surely are not and have shed descriptive light upon the varied configurations of Old Belief, but that the more encompassing understanding of how Old Belief continues to endure and evolve cannot be found in texts alone.

Organization of this Work

Having surveyed the historiographic tradition surrounding Old Belief and, more importantly, pointing out the coverage and gaps of historical scholarship related to the Old Believer experience in Oregon, it seems appropriate to both stake out the terms of my argument and explain how this work differs from those mentioned above. What is most intriguing about the Oregon Old Believers is that this relatively small group, numbering just over three thousand in 1964, managed to capture the devoted attention of federal, local, and scholastic interests alike. Reason for this intense and sustained attention relate directly to narratives spun around the arrival of this traditional group and the role they would continue to play as subjects under scrutiny by modern American observers. The first section, Foundation and Believer, will address the primary group responsible for initially articulating a narrative around Old Belief to an American audience: the Tolstoy Foundation. Founded by Alexandra Tolstoy, daughter of the famed Russian writer, the rabidly anti-communist Tolstoy Foundation assisted, primarily, with the immigration and settlement of the Turkish Old Believer population to America and even played a small part in the settlement of the Brazilian Old Believers, known also as the Harbintsy due to their even older immigration from Harbin, China in the 1950's. The foundation's primary goal was to prevent repatriation of Old Believers back into the Soviet Union. Framing

the Old Believers as akin to the hard working pioneers, as well as exemplars of authentic Russians (as compared to the inauthentic, and dangerous, Communists), the Tolstoy Foundation appealed to an inherent rhetoric of character that made the traditional group seem like model candidates for American settlement and assimilation. Understanding the motivation and nature of the Tolstoy Foundation, as well as how it handled the process of arranging for the immigration of the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers, provides the perfect starting point for this work.

The second section, *League and Believer*, deals with the initial period of Old Believer settlement in New Jersey and subsequent move to Oregon before diving into the interactions between the Old Believers and the Valley Migrant League (VML) in the 1960s and early 70's. This federally funded group possessed a mandate to help settle the Hispanic stream of seasonal farm workers then flowing in and out of the Willamette Valley in northwest Oregon, yet the arrival of colorfully costumed Old Believers proved too enticing for this migrant-focused group to ignore. As one of the initial, premier programs of President Johnson's 'War on Poverty', the VML provided the Old Believers with various services, such as English language instruction and on-the-job training, and also integrated the new arrivals into their governing structure. As a federal go-between, the VML proved to be the first major government organization to interact with the Old Believers and their fascination with the traditional group played a crucial part in the development of narrative related to the presence of Old Belief in Oregon.

Local and Believer, the final section, looks at the period between the late 1960s and early-to-mid 1970s when VML support for the Old Believers waned due to budget cuts and ascension of Hispanic workers to key leadership positions. Here the Tolstoy

Foundation resumed a more active presence in the lives of the Old Believers as executives attempted to both provide leadership from afar and act as an official go-between for Oregon administrators dealing with the Russian group. Earlier hopes for a speedy assimilation gave way to fears espoused by American authorities that the Old Believers might take on only the least desirable aspects of American modernity or, far worse, fail to assimilate at all. Local efforts to understand, represent, and interact with Old Believers began to take shape and supplant the authority once held by outsiders such as the Tolstoy Foundation or visiting academics gathering data for their written reports. Questions over Old Believer participation in public education became the defining conflict of this period and proved to be one of the catalysts spurring the growth and development of localized knowledge networks. Third parties such as Brother Ambrose, a Catholic monk who specialized in the study of Orthodox ritual, and John Hudanish, a schoolteacher who later became the chief municipal officer appointed by the Woodburn city council to directly interact with the Old Believers, took charge in building these knowledge networks through lectures, intercession on behalf of Old Believers in judicial and civil matters, and creation of materials or reports circulated amongst American authorities who also interacted with Old Believers.

It is at this point that the analysis ends, as localized knowledge networks began to take hold and questions by American authorities over Old Believer assimilation largely faded into the background. The conclusion briefly touches upon two bookends of Old Believer involvement in Oregon during the 70's and early 80's; the standoff between the Egoroff family and the Clackamas County Schoolboard over perceived truancy of the Egoroff children and the release of Margaret Hixon's 1981 documentary about an Old

Believer wedding in Woodburn titled, simply, *Old Believers*. Cultural understanding and gains made by the Old Believers settled in Marion County, which included Woodburn, stood in stark contrast to the situation facing Old Believers living in surrounding counties, such as Clackamas. The Egoroff case demonstrated not only how far the Old Believers had come in the dozen or so years of their settlement, as Old Believer leaders were able to eventually reach an accommodation with the school board, but also how far they had yet to go, as the more tolerant and understanding attitudes developed in Marion county turned out to not be shared by neighboring authorities in Clackamas. Hixon's documentary celebrated the culture and tradition of Old Belief, even as it used its cinematographic narrative framing to contrast the traditional nature of the Old Believers against the modern background of their Woodburn home. Even though the group is shown to be well adjusted and integrated into the local community, narrative themes relying upon the invocation of Old Belief as distanced from the modern continue to dominate the subtext of the film itself suggesting that such themes possess a timeless quality that no amount of perceived assimilation on behalf of the American modern observer will dispel.

Foundation and Believer: Journey from Turkey to the United States

During the summer of 1962, in the western edge of Turkey, Yavorhi Cam contemplated a difficult situation. He and his fellow Old Believers had lived in Turkey since the emigration of their Cossack ancestors from Russian imperial lands 300 years previous. Now they faced the dual pressures of trying to find eligible marriage partners amongst a shrinking population and refusing constant overtures made by Soviet representatives to repatriate to their traditional homeland, now located in the USSR. Earlier in that same year, another group of Russian Orthodox 'schismatics' (a term used to denote various denominations that broke away from the formal Russian Orthodox Church) that lived in nearby Koca-Gol, the Molokans, accepted Soviet offers of resettlement. Letters from Old Believer relatives who resettled in the Soviet Union in 1926 suggested, in coded responses, that promises made by Communist authorities regarding the freedom to practice the Old Believer faith were simply ruses meant to lure back those populations outside the Soviet fold. Unsure of what to do, Cam sent letters to a colony of Old Believers, then living in Brazil, asking for advice. They suggested that the Turkish Old Believers seek aid, as the Brazilian Old Believers did, from an international group willing to help with immigration to the West.

This was not the first time such an idea floated among the Turkish Old Believers. Throughout the 1950's the group tried, unsuccessfully, to petition for assistance with immigration out of Turkey, seeking help, first, from the World Council of Churches (WCC), an association of Christian denominations and volunteer organizations that sought, among other things, to provide assistance to religious populations in need. As will be explained below, the legal position of the Turkish Old Believers as Turkish citizens created some difficulty with regards to meeting very strict yearly quota of

permissible immigrants of Turkish origin. Immigration of the Turkish Old Believers eventually required the special intervention of the Attorney General and highlighted the difficulty faced by any organization in attempting to provide resettlement assistance to the Turkish Old Believers.

When WCC representatives failed to provide anything more than vague promises of help, the Turkish Old Believers turned to another organization known specifically for their efforts in assisting Russian populations located outside of Russia: the Tolstoy Foundation. Founded by Alexandra Tolstoy, the youngest daughter of the famed Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, the Tolstoy Foundation proved to be of invaluable help to the Turkish Old Believers—and their coreligionists in Brazil—in their quest to emigrate the United States. The foundation not only helped Old Believers fill out paperwork and navigate international migration protocols, but also played an instrumental role in convincing American authorities to let the Turkish group enter the USA under ‘parole’ status, a legal designation that allowed those who didn’t qualify for a visa entry into the country for humanitarian reasons. When the Turkish Old Believers decided to move from New Jersey to Oregon, in part to be closer to their Brazilian counterparts who immigrated there in 1963, Alexandra and her coterie of assistants assisted them with this task as well, acting as a sort of liaison between the religious group and the Oregon authorities.

Tolstoy’s interest in assisting the Old Believers arose from two concerns: preservation of what she deemed authentic Russian culture and ensuring that Russian refugees could find resettlement opportunities in the West and avoid repatriation into Soviet controlled lands. Alexandra honed her anti-communist ideals and rhetoric while touring American cities on the lecture circuit. Contacts established during her travels

proved of great aid later when she used the Foundation to combat Soviet influence in her adopted home of America, as well as to assist those populations abroad resisting Soviet repatriation. The distilled knowledge of what appealed to American audiences, rhetorical argumentation, and influential networking Tolstoy derived from this early period can clearly be seen in the case of the Turkish Old Believers. In presenting this group as uniquely Russian, Tolstoy concocted a narrative in which America could play spoiler to the Soviet Union's self-proclaimed role as advocate of the people by demonstrating Democracy's superior capacity to lure living examples of Russian heritage and culture- the Old Believers- to its shores.

Throughout the entire resettlement process of the Turkish Old Believers to the United States the Tolstoy Foundation played a pivotal role. It not only raised a call for alarm with various US government agencies and organizations, but also organized and facilitated the immigration process for both the Brazilian and Turkish Old Believer populations. Their involvement spanned three periods. The initial, and perhaps most intense, period took place between October of 1961 and up through the arrival the Turkish Old Believers in April of 1963. During this sometimes hectic, sometimes inactive span of time the Foundation utilized the full extent of its influence and expertise in putting together support on political and financial levels both in America and internationally. Marshaling such support involved convincing various international agencies, but mostly American authorities in the State department, that the Turkish Old Believers and, by extension, the Brazilian Old Believers, were good candidates for assimilation and integration into a modern America. It is during this period that we see the Foundation carefully crafting a narrative of character around the suitability of Old

Believer settlement. Intertwined within this narrative lay mimetic elements: the Foundation made a case for the highly probable and speedy integration of Old Believers into society by noting their similarity in value systems to American ideals, as well as the guarantee that this Russo-centric culture group would be unsympathetic or even hostile to Communist infiltration. While this narrative would undergo change once the Old Believers arrived in America, it nonetheless played a central role in establishing notions of expectation and anomaly that were picked up and repeated, with some evolution, by others over time who came to study or write about the new immigrants.

The second period of Tolstoy Foundation involvement lasted for roughly two years between 1963 and 1965. It was during this two-year stretch that the Foundation, seeking to gradually withdraw from direct administration of the new immigrants, attempted to disperse and settle the Turkish Old Believers in communities centered around Lakewood, New Jersey. While some ended up taking residence in New Jersey, a majority of those who emigrated from Turkey desired to remain together as a community and used this interregnum period to scout out other potential sites of resettlement before ultimately deciding to move to Oregon. Here we can see what roles American observers projected on the Old Believers as they began to adjust and interact with their new, modern environment. It is during this period when newspapers and other media accounts began to characterize in prose and pictures the Old Believers as reenactors of a bygone era, the long beards and colorful clothing displayed lending itself more towards recollections of 'Tolstoy's Peasants' than any sort of modern comparison.

After the Turkish Old Believers joined up with their Brazilian brethren in Oregon, the Tolstoy Foundation began to seek out local partners in the Willamette Valley to act as

liaisons between the sectarian group and local authorities. This period, which lasted from 1966 until 1975, marked the slow decline of direct Foundation involvement in Old Believer life even as the organizations they allied with- first the Valley Migrant League and then, later, the city of Woodburn- fell victim to funding cuts and shifting priorities that made them unable to directly assist the members of Old Belief. Even though the Tolstoy Foundation maintained contact with the Old Believers, organizing survey trips to Oregon and answering concerns from local and federal authorities regarding the now much larger concentration of Old Belief in the Willamette Valley, they began to take a distant approach as the more serious problems of assimilation came to the fore. What was once proclaimed to be a group tailor-made for American assimilation became, in Oregon, an obstinate force in the eyes of educators, medical professionals, and government officials alike. This period also marked the splitting-off of another group of Old Believers who moved from Oregon to Alaska in the mid to late 1960s due, mainly, to their desire for a more isolated settlement outside the polluting reach of modern America. In short, the initial assimilationist enthusiasm the Foundation effused for the Old Believers in the early 1960s quickly waned in the decade following their settlement in Oregon as seemingly intractable cultural issues came to clash with American institutions of disciplinary character reform.

Even though the Foundation took on a decreasing role with the Old Believers during the fifteen year span covered by this dissertation, their initial narrative framing of Old Belief as an authentic and acceptable transplant into American culture, alongside the clout wielded in getting American authorities to accept this narrative, made them a lasting

influence on how others would view, study, and categorize the religious immigrants for years to come.

The early history of the Tolstoy Foundation was typical of any modern day charitable organization, where wealthy or influential benefactors gathered together to pool a portion of their collected resources towards (at least in their minds) a worthy effort. What set the Tolstoy Foundation apart from other relief organizations of its kind was a singular focus on assisting Russian émigrés seeking refuge from the Soviet regime that came to power towards the conclusion of the First World War. Formed by two women who hailed from the lands of the former Romanov dynasty, Alexandra Tolstoy and Tatiana Schaufuss, the Foundation's mission of assistance drew inspiration from the experiences of its founders. They first met in 1918 when Schaufuss, then a nurse, visited Alexandra, who was also a nurse, in order to discuss plans for the formation of nursing unions. Hoping to draw on the clout Tolstoy possessed thanks to her famous father, Schaufuss desired to find a way to help her fellow professional nurses who were then pressed into gruesome service caring for increasingly weary and disillusioned soldiers returning from the front-lines of battle.

Their cooperative efforts were short lived, however, as both Schaufuss and Tolstoy were imprisoned for the illegal activity of organizing labor without official Soviet permission. Schaufuss received a sentence of five years in a prison camp, while Tolstoy, thanks to an intercession by Trotsky on her behalf, received a reduced sentence from three years to eight months. At this point the women lost contact with each other. After the conclusion of the Russian Civil War, Schaufuss was released from prison and moved to the newly established nation of Czechoslovakia to run the 'Committee for Aid

to Refugees' that assisted Russian refugees in their quest for immigration abroad.

Tolstoy continued to live in the Soviet Union until her departure in 1931.⁴¹ Yet their initial experiences together, along with a firm resolution that Soviet governance was a potentially world-threatening force that had to be stopped, shaped the content and drive of the Foundation they later formed. "When I was leaving forever my country," Tolstoy wrote later in a 1961 letter to President Kennedy, "peasants came to see me off. 'Tell the people and the governments abroad,' they naively pleaded, 'how we are suffering, ask them to help us to liberate ourselves from Soviet tyranny.'"⁴² While almost certainly allegorical, Tolstoy's recollection of peasants pleading for liberation from Soviet rule neatly summarized the sort of guiding vision she associated with the Foundation's larger mission.

Alexandra Tolstoy left the Soviet Union, arriving in San Francisco, via Japan, in 1931. Infused with a furious condemnation against what she perceived as excesses of the Bolshevik political order, Tolstoy used her celebrity status as the daughter of the famed Russian writer to capture attention for her various lectures delivered across the country. From San Francisco to Chicago, where she was a guest of Jane Addams' famous Hull House, Tolstoy railed against the evils of Communism and the need to differentiate between what she deemed authentic Russians and deceptive Soviet copies. "I took it into

⁴¹ Alexandra Tolstoy performed many charitable roles while living in the Soviet Union, including serving on the All-Russian Committee to Aid the Starving (VKPG) formed in 1921 under the supervision and considerable unease by the Bolshevik government. The eventual dissolution of this Committee in less than a year began what Stuart Finkel identified as the solidification of Bolshevik dominance over the formation of a centrally directed 'Soviet Public Sphere' and no doubt played a role in the shaping of Tolstoy's often vitriolic stance against Communist leadership. See Stuart Finkel, *On the Ideological Front: The Russian Intelligentsia and the Making of the Soviet Public Sphere* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 2007).

⁴² Alexandra Tolstoy to President John Kennedy, drafted 10 November 1961. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5395-5397)

my head that my life's aim was to tell the Western world everything I knew about the Soviets and to warn them against the deadly danger of Bolshevism," Tolstoy wrote in her autobiography. "I knew much that the free world did not know. The problem was how to get that information across."⁴³

Her task, especially during the Great Depression, proved to be daunting. Liberal thinkers and writers in America were slow to castigate the Bolshevik regime in its nascent days and many expressed their opinion to Tolstoy that the USSR deserved, at least, official recognition by the United States. Deterred but never defeated, she spent the remainder of the 1930's writing letters to US presidents and influential private citizens alike, urging that more be done to combat Soviet influence. Even though her efforts, in personal evaluation, yielded less than satisfactory results, Tolstoy nonetheless used these lecture years to hone her message and sound out American opinions across the country. In doing so she managed to put together a network of influential contacts that would serve her well during her tenure as chief executive of the future Tolstoy Foundation. Yet Tolstoy showed no desire to continue her activist lifestyle when she decided to retire from the lecture circuit and settle down on a farm near Philadelphia in 1938. Only a cable announcing the arrival of an old friend, Tatiana Schaufuss, managed to stir her from the pastoral setting.

Schaufuss sought her friend's help in forming an American organization devoted to promoting Russian culture in the States and dedicated towards assisting those Russian émigrés still seeking help abroad. After consulting with several prominent Russian emigrants then settled in America, Schaufuss and Tolstoy came together to form the

⁴³ Alexandra Tolstoy, *Out of the Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981) 349.

Tolstoy Foundation in 1939.⁴⁴ Its initial charter stipulated two central points: the Foundation would respond to the needs of Russian refugees as well as provide a cultural center for those of Russian descent born in America. Herbert Hoover, himself familiar with the needs of Russian émigrés due, in part, to his work with the American Relief Administration, was appointed honorary chairman of the Foundation, a role he served until his death in 1964.

Underneath the broadly proclaimed goals of culture promotion and relief assistance lay a deeper, transformative purpose guiding the Foundation's efforts. The Foundation's charter enunciated its larger mission:

The basic approach to any Tolstoy Foundation sponsored activity is governed by the awareness that assistance should recognize human dignity and a desire for independence in every individual, his freedom of choice of the best type of integration and assimilation into a foreign community; to build a sense of self-reliance as opposed to charitable support, and to assist him towards becoming an asset to his new environment, contributing culturally and economically to the development of the society in which he dwells, *producing people with a job, an education, a home, and a future for themselves and their children.*⁴⁵ (Emphasis mine)

Initial statements pertaining to human dignity and desire for independence aligned with developments in liberal rhetoric birthed out of Allied victory in the First World War and reared according to the guiding principles of Woodrow Wilson's grandiose 'Fourteen Points.' Wilson's language, best remembered for its advocacy of self-determination regarding the formation of new nation states in Eastern Europe, naturally suited activities the Tolstoy Foundation sought to undertake. Its mission statement painted the intended

⁴⁴ The list of those consulted included Boris Bakhmetev, Boris Sergievsky, Sergei Rachmaninov, Countess Sophie Panin, Dr. Ethan Colton, Mikhail Rostovtsev, Igor Sikorsky, and Alexis Wiren. Listed in Tolstoy, 397.

⁴⁵ This statement is reproduced in Tolstoy, 398.

recipients of the Foundation's efforts in hues aligned to liberalism's color palate, and justified the work of the Foundation by ensconcing its efforts in the noble cloth of character building. Essentially, the first portion of the Foundation's mission statement staked a rhetorical claim closely aligned with American liberal ideas of the period.

The second, and far more interesting, portion of the mission statement connected liberal rhetoric to a definition of character reform through which a refugee could be transformed into a liberal conception of a productive citizen. Both the terms and standards of this transformation combined to form an encompassing rhetoric of character that not only promoted an ideal state but also provided standards of measurement against which success of transformation could be evaluated. Holding steady employment, obtaining an education, and owning a home became guarantors, in the words of the Foundation mission statement, of a “future for [transformed refugees] and their children.” The degree to which refugees achieved these benchmarks of model citizenry thus became the threshold for measuring Foundation success.

The Foundation mission statement affirmed the individuality of every person, but only insofar as that individual can become self-reliant and is open to assimilation. In order to be valuable to a liberal society, refugees need to submit to transformation, to adopt the society’s rhetoric of character in order to become an “asset” to that society. Furthermore, the Foundation itself became the locus of this transformation of the refugee. Combined with Alexandra Tolstoy's increased devotion from the 1930's onward towards delineating Russian culture from Soviet culture, the Foundation's stated mission of reform provided the perfect inroads for refugee transformation to become a means by which American modern liberalism could be both verified and extended. Russian

refugees would become, under the guidance of the Foundation, perfectly suitable subjects upon which American methods of assimilation and character building could be easily deployed.

A brief examination of the Tolstoy Foundation's record of activity up to and through the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believer immigration of the early 1960s demonstrates how the organization took its program of transformation and refined it through experience in dealing with refugee issues. Early episodes taught Foundation members how to best work with the local and global bureaucratic apparatuses set in place to deal with the stream of refugees originating from the aftermath of the First World War and subsequent conflicts. Cumulative knowledge derived from these initial forays into global refugee work can be seen in the tactics used and narratives spun by the Tolstoy Foundation during their campaign to settle the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers in the United States.

Soon after being formed, the Tolstoy Foundation found itself presented with its first assistance opportunity during the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939. Alerted by letter to the abysmal situation faced by Soviet soldiers captured and held in Finnish prison camps, the Foundation coordinated a fundraising campaign and raised \$34,000 worth of food parcels distributed by the International Red Cross.⁴⁶ At this point the Foundation was housed in a rented room at the Episcopalian Committee office building on Fourth Avenue in New York. By 1941, thanks to a generous gift, the Foundation moved its headquarters

⁴⁶ Tolstoy, 399-400.

to seventy-acre farmstead located outside New York City in nearby Valley Cottage.⁴⁷ Here, with ample space and ability to cultivate food and livestock, more ambitious resettlement projects utilizing the farmland as temporary shelter could be undertaken and, indeed, the Tolstoy Foundation began to ramp up efforts to accommodate the flood of refugees produced by the Second World War. By the late 1940's the Foundation established a European headquarters in Munich and expanded branch offices to seventeen other cities on the European continent by 1954.

During this post-war period of growth for the Tolstoy Foundation, three events worthy of discussion occurred. The first involved the resettlement of the Kalmyks to Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 1951. Due to the imposition of racial quotas in the 1951 Immigration Act, the Kalmyks, legally considered 'Asiatic' thanks to their physical characteristics and location of their homeland in Siberia, faced serious hurdles in their quest to immigrate to the United States. In an apocryphal tale recounted in the so-called 'History of the Tolstoy Foundation', Alexandra Tolstoy supposedly found an encyclopedic entry that proclaimed the Kalmyks to be Caucasians and thus members of the East European community.⁴⁸ With this interpretation of the Kalmyks' origins the Attorney General granted the group of over five hundred entry into the United States in November 1951.

The second notable event also occurred in 1951: the testimony of Alexandra Tolstoy before a joint hearing of the subcommittees of the judiciary regarding reform of

⁴⁷ Ibid, 401.

⁴⁸ Scott Moss, "A History of the Tolstoy Foundation 1939-1989" 23 May 1989. Accessed 12 October 2014. http://www.tolstoyfoundation.org/pdfs/tf_history_s-moss_.pdf Although the essay is far from academically rigorous, it does provide a general timeline of early Foundation events and background on the general scope of operations undertaken during the period examined. Furthermore, that the Tolstoy Foundation's own website directs visitors to this document as a historical primer suggests that current executives at least tacitly endorse its message.

American immigration policy.⁴⁹ One of many invited guests brought in front of the subcommittees, Tolstoy spoke on the need to differentiate between potentially loyal, freedom loving immigrants from Soviet Russia and others, Communists, who sought immigration for subversive purposes. Having been a displaced person herself, Tolstoy told the subcommittees, she not only knew the psychology of such displaced people but that she also desired to speak as an American advocating reform and not a former Russian seeking clemency for fellow countrymen.

After giving her statement, Tolstoy engaged with Representative Francis E. Walter, of Pennsylvania, on the topic of how to ensure proper screening of incoming immigrants from Soviet Russia. Specifically, Walter wanted to know how the United States could establish who was a true communist and who was not, if all potential immigrants with a professional background belong to one trade union or another; trade unions, Walter noted, were under control of the Communist party. Tolstoy demurred in her answer, suggesting that those not forced to join the unions (which included herself some thirty years previous) were probably dead. Yet the threat of subversion, Tolstoy warned, should not be the sole reason for barring entry to those seeking freedom. By rejecting these types of people, "we are breaking the link between the Russian people and the United States" and forfeiting a potential "psychological weapon" against Communism.⁵⁰ In a curious conclusion, Walter asked Tolstoy about the possibility of using White Russians for infiltration and subversive activity in the Soviet Union.

Tolstoy, seeking to evade Walter's question, answered that the displaced persons of today

⁴⁹ *Joint Hearings before the Subcommittees of the Committees on the Judiciary Congress of the United States Eighty-Second Congress First Session on S. 716, H.R. 2379, and H.R. 2816 Bills to Revise the Laws Relating to Immigration, Naturalization, and Nationality* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), 195-202.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

were more valuable than the Whites of yesterday; while the former had Soviet injustice fresh in their minds, the latter, thanks to time, had let their hatred quell a bit.

The third notable event occurred in 1953; it decisively altered the destiny of the Tolstoy Foundation. According to the official history of the Foundation, passage of the Refugee Relief Act that year allowed the organization to break away from the World Council of Churches (hereafter WCC). Up to 1953, the Tolstoy Foundation worked in tandem, yet under, the authority of more established programs such as the WCC. With passage of the act, the Foundation could seek financial loans directly from the US Government to aid the resettlement of those admitted to America but lacking resources to complete their journey.⁵¹ Such ready access to financial liquidity allowed the Tolstoy Foundation to work independently of larger organizations and, as we shall see below in the more detailed examination of Turkish and Brazilian Old Believer immigration to the United States, this gave the Foundation considerable leeway in terms of articulating and implementing a 'rhetoric of character' tailor-made for the sort of authentic Russian refugees in which they specialized.

As will be explored below, the Tolstoy Foundation specifically sought to keep the WCC out of the Turkish Old Believer resettlement project. While the reasons for such behavior on behalf of Foundation executives are not fully explained in the documentary record, it is possible that the decision by the WCC in 1961 to admit the Russian Orthodox Church, then under Communist oversight, as a member played into Foundation thinking on the topic. This move was largely seen by anti-communist groups as an attempt by Communist powers to infiltrate the WCC. “To bring the Russian Orthodox Church into

⁵¹ Refugee Relief Act of 1953, 122.

the World Council of Churches will give the Communists their greatest triumph in the use of religion,” wrote Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, in an issued statement.⁵² Yet the official history of the Tolstoy Foundation makes no mention of the WCC decision impacting policy. Furthermore, the only specific mention of protest on the subject of recognizing the Russian Orthodox Church stemmed from the decision by the Orthodox Church of America in 1969 to accept that the true center of Orthodoxy resided in Russia. “Both Miss Tolstoy and Mrs. Schaufuss decided that they did not want anything to do with Communism and thus joined the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia,” noted the official account.⁵³ While it is reasonable to assume that Alexandra Tolstoy, with her noted objection to Communism, would oppose working with the WCC based upon its decision to admit the Moscow-based Russian Orthodox Church, such specific objections are never articulated in the written records surveyed.

While other organizations cloaked their causes around ideas of 'religious freedom' or 'migratory aid', the Tolstoy Foundation, by the fact that it claimed specialized knowledge of the Russian subject, could go beyond these more narrowly focused interests and, instead, indulge in a transformative rhetoric of character that both assuaged fears of US authorities regarding the potential of Communist infiltration through immigration and created a justification for compatibility between Russian refugees and American citizens. Indeed, in linking the three events described above- the settlement of the Kalmyks, Tolstoy's testimony to congressional subcommittees, and the passage of the

⁵² “Russian Church Opposed,” *The Spokesman-Review* (Spokane, WA), 6 May 1961.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=DTVWAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=8-cDAAAAIIBAJ&pg=5164%2C1577729> Accessed 10 September 2016.

⁵³ Moss, 28-29.

Refugee Relief Act in 1953- what forms is the nucleus of an approach later used to full effect with the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers. Definition of these Old Believers as authentic Russians, as opposed to Turkish citizens or recent Brazilian transplants, who professed no love for Communist powers in the Kremlin, became the cornerstone of the Tolstoy Foundation's pitch for American government intervention on their behalf in order to settle in the United States. Much of this argument hinged on statements and assurances on the character of the Old Believers in question, with the implicit assumption being that their innate character could be shaped and molded according to American values.

Thus events in the early 1950's marked the capstone of the Tolstoy Foundation's initial period of operation. Together, Alexandra Tolstoy and Tatiana Schaufuss greatly enhanced their organization from its initial offerings of food and religious items to foreign prisoners in Finland to that of full-scale resettlement for those deemed worthy of aid. After the Tolstoy Foundation's involvement in the aftermath of the Hungarian Crisis of 1956, which provoked a flood of refugees to stream into Europe and America, a decision was made at the executive level to shift away from prioritizing only 'Russian' refugees towards assisting both Russians and those perceived to be victims of Communism. This widened mandate not only fell in sync with the anti-communist proclivities and beliefs expressed by Alexandra Tolstoy since her arrival in San Francisco 1931, but also proved useful in the case of the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers whose situation could be only loosely defined in terms of displacement or refugee. Yet as the Cold War grew increasingly hot over the 1950's and early 1960s, there arose a perfect cauldron of forces giving the Tolstoy Foundation, with its time-tested rhetorical

techniques centered on character and experience with handling large groups seeking resettlement, a perfect opportunity to demonstrate that the 'traditional' Old Believers belonged in modern America.

When a short letter for Alexander Kolchak arrived at the American Committee for Liberation office in Munich on Christmas of 1961, there was much surprise and also a little concern on behalf of the recipient. Kolchak did not work for the American Committee for Liberation; he was, instead, a Senior Counselor for the Tolstoy Foundation that also housed its European headquarters in Munich. The author of the brief missive was Aysche Adlan, a Muslim woman who lived in Koca Gol and claimed to represent a group of Old Believers living in Turkey facing constant Soviet propaganda to return to Russia. “Although I am a Moslem, I am awfully sorry for them,” wrote Adlan, “and I hope that you will help. Many of them weep and say: ‘How are we to go to a godless country after having lived here for 300 years and not have lost our faith, our traditions and kept our national clothing.’”⁵⁴ This group, who later defined themselves as Nekrasovitsy (Cossacks that descended from the band led by 18th century leader, Ignat Nekrasov), would come to be known by the more familiar term, at least to American ears, of Turkish Old Believers. Adlan's letter triggered a rapid escalation of Foundation interest and, in a memo from 1962, Alexandra Tolstoy claimed that the Muslim woman’s appeal on behalf of the Old Believers, “brought this whole matter to our attention.”⁵⁵ Foundation executives sent representatives to conduct surveys of the Old Believers, negotiated with international organizations to secure movement of the Russian group, and

⁵⁴ Aysche Adlan to Alexander Kolchak, December 1961. (TF-5387)

⁵⁵ Alexandra Tolstoy to Abba Schwartz, 31 January 1962. (TF-5380)

sent numerous letters and memos to American authorities in an attempt to secure their support for Old Believer settlement in the United States. Just over two and a half years later, on 23 April 1963, Attorney General Robert Kennedy announced that the 250 Turkish Old Believers would be granted parole status and would be allowed to immigrate to the United States. Yet arrival of the Turkish Old Believers two months after Kennedy's announcement was hardly the end of the story.

Aysche Adlan's letter was not the first to bring the plight of the Turkish Old Believers to the attention of the Tolstoy Foundation, even if it ultimately spurred action on behalf of the Foundation. That honor belonged to Pimen Sofronov, a famous émigré Orthodox icon painter whose works are considered masterpieces of the genre. Born of parents who were Old Believers themselves, Sofronov was one of the more famous personalities the Turkish Old Believers first reached out to in seeking assistance to immigrate out of Turkey. On 3 September 1959, he addressed a letter to Tatiana Alexeevna (the formal Russian name of Tatiana Schaufuss) that made the case for Tolstoy Foundation involvement in this "small island of ancient Russia." After acknowledging the recognized efforts of the Tolstoy Foundation, Sofronov dived straight into the issue at hand:

But there is still a group of Russian people abroad about whom very little is known and who due to remoteness of events are nearly forgotten. The people I have in mind are the "Old Believers- Nekrasovtzy" - a group of Russians who came to Turkey about two and a half centuries ago. They are the oldest emigrants. During all these years in Turkey they were able to retain their ancestors [sic] faith, their language and the old customs...Nothing similar to this group of people can be found anywhere else, neither in Russia, nor abroad.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Pimen Sofronov to Tatiana Alexeevna [Schaufuss], 3 September 1959. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5385-5386)

The problem facing the Turkish Old Believers, Sofronov stated, was two-fold. Propaganda from Soviet authorities to return to the homeland slowly siphoned families away from the village of Kocagul Kevketiye near Lake Manyas, where the majority of Old Believers lived in Turkey. Targeting Russian populations settled outside of the Soviet Union, the 'Return to the Homeland' campaigns of the post-war period used direct appeals and offers of assistance to lure émigré populations back into the Soviet fold. Whereas Soviet authorities previously pressured governments directly to have former Soviet nationals repatriated, souring of relations between the Soviets and the West in the aftermath of the immediate post-war period made such tactics far less effective. By sending representatives directly to specific communities, Soviet authorities hoped to circumvent national governments and, hopefully, convince émigrés (along with their hard cash and, sometimes, technical expertise) to repatriate without coercion. There was a cultural superiority component to program as well; convincing groups such as the Old Believers, who clearly did not share the same ideological viewpoint, to repatriate demonstrated the viability of the Soviet state over its Western contemporaries.

This, in turn, reduced the availability of permissible marriage partners that could pass the rather stringent bloodline prohibitions practiced in the Old Believer settlement. Attempts by the Old Believers themselves to immigrate to America in 1948 met with equal measures of apathy and rejection. American law at that time placed strict quotas on the number of Turkish citizens allowed to immigrate, quotas that were far lower than the total number of Old Believers living in Turkey. When the Old Believers reached out to the WCC for assistance in 1959, the organization helped the Turkish population fill out paperwork for resettlement in Brazil, most likely to join their fellow co-religionists

already settled there, but then appeared to drop the matter entirely without informing the Old Believer leaders why.⁵⁷

At the time of his letter in 1959, Sofronov estimated that only 150 families remained in Kocagul Kevketiye, although the actual veracity of this number is somewhat doubtful given that Sofronov possessed no personal knowledge of the settlement and depended entirely upon the information supplied by the leader, or Ataman, of the Old Believer settlement, Tarass Agafonoff. Yet more than anything, Sofronov warned Schaufuss that, "These Old Believers are completely unaware of the Soviet reality and therefore can be deceived more easily than others." Pleading an inability to directly help the Old Believers himself, Sofronov asked that the Tolstoy Foundation, with its wealth of experience and host of connections, look into the possibility of resettling the population somewhere in America or, perhaps, Canada.

Foundation records surveyed produced no response to Sofronov, nor do they explain why the Tolstoy Foundation failed to take a more sustained interest in the Turkish Old Believers at that time.⁵⁸ However, several themes touched upon in Sofronov's letter became the foundation for later efforts by the Tolstoy Foundation in convincing American authorities to accept the Turkish Old Believers for immigration. These Old Believers, being an "island of ancient Russia," were exemplars of a culture that faced

⁵⁷ This vignette of interaction between the Turkish Old Believers and the WCC comes from Vera Samsonoff, "Old Believers Called Nekrasovtzky" 17 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5381-5383)

⁵⁸ Foundation records surveyed provide no clear answer as to why the Foundation seemingly ignored the Turkish Old Believers' pleas for assistance. An aside found in an Appendix of a memo sent to Senator Edward Kennedy in 1965 noted that while the Foundation knew of the troubles faced by the Turkish Old Believers, "for reasons beyond [the Foundation's] control, the appeal was not given concrete consideration." Conjecture points to two likely causes: financial and/or jurisdictional. See Alexandra Tolstoy and Tatiana Schaufuss Memorandum to Senator Edward Kennedy, 13 August 1965, Tolstoy Foundation Archives. (TF-5418-5432, specifically 5421 for the quote mentioned above)

severe repression under the current Soviet regime. Declared to be the 'oldest emigrants,' their ability to resist change or degradation of faith in an adopted homeland marked them as not only unique but also a living embodiment of the past located in the present. It also marked them as susceptible to powerful modern forces bent on their integration, such as the Soviet Union. Sofronov thus provided, in just two pages, powerful notions of expectation and anomaly that members of the Tolstoy Foundation later seized upon in their push for Old Believer immigration.

Yet Sofronov's letter was not the only one received by the Foundation to ask for help with the increasingly dire situation of the Turkish Old Believers. Before the arrival of Adlan's letter at the American Committee for Liberation's building in Munich another, separate letter from Ataman Taras, the same as mentioned in Sofronov's 1959 plea for help, arrived two months before on 27 October 1961. Why this letter, as with the Sofronov letter that preceded it, failed to draw any timely response from either the Foundation or the American Committee for Liberation is also a mystery. Perhaps it arrived in tandem with Adlan's letter, an unlikely situation given the chronological gap between them, or maybe the plea for help fell through the cracks due to perceived lack of importance. Again, surveyed records are silent as to why no immediate response followed its reception. This seems all the more strange given that Taras' letter reads as a far more passionate account of the tribulations faced by the Turkish Old Believers around Lake Manyas.

The handwritten contents, untranslatable in parts due to illegibility, described with some detail the situation faced by the Old Believers, in addition to the futile steps taken by them to remedy their problem. "I am writing this letter to you, wishing to describe my

life, how we live in Turkey," Taras wrote before describing how the Old Believers under his leadership came to emigrate to a Muslim land. Ignat Nekrasov, whom Taras called his 'great grandfather', brought 5,000 families out of Russia sometime in the early 18th century to settle around Lake Manyas. The reasons for this move became clouded by history and even Taras professed no knowledge of what spurred this southern migration. Over time the community dwindled in size, with an apparently large migration occurring in 1913. Now, in 1961, the Old Believers numbered around 200 families and two priests. This last mention of two priests is of particular interest because Taras essentially admits to being a Priestly Old Believer. As the Tolstoy Foundation would later discover, the Turkish Old Believers comprised a mix of Priestly Old Believers, like Taras, and Priestless Old Believers, like Yavorhi Cam, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. This factional distinction did not play out in any meaningful fashion within Foundation correspondence or efforts to persuade State Department authorities to let the Turkish Old Believers into America. The fact that the Old Believers, in total, represented a seemingly pristine and untouched source of ancient Russian culture was a far more attractive characteristic for modern representatives of the Tolstoy Foundation to peddle.

A Foundation translated letter from 1959 by one of the Brazilian Old Believers, Feodosiy Reutov, told the story of how his group, who emigrated from Russia to China in 1935 and from China to Brazil once Mao and his supporters established Communist rule, was aided by an un-named international organization (revealed in later investigations to be the World Council of Churches). Reutov suggested Taras seek out a similar organization to help them with their immigration plight. This led Taras to seek out assistance in 'Tsargrad' (the Old Slavic name for Istanbul) where he approached various

organizations for help. Receiving only kind words and vague assurances of assistance, the Old Believer *nastavnik* headed back to Koca Gol convinced that no help would ever arrive for his beleaguered community. By this time the Molokan settlement neighboring Koca Gol was only a fraction of its former size, the majority of them having already departed for Russia, and the likelihood of being stranded in Turkey made the already despondent Old Believers even more convinced that their future lay in Russia and not the West. As a last resort, Taras took the advice of a trusted confidant, Apahe Kurbanova, and wrote one final letter to the American Committee for Liberation in Geneva pleading for help.⁵⁹

Regardless of the inactivity perceived by Turkish Old Believers regarding the reception of letters by Sofronov and Ataman Taras, Adlan's letter spurred the highest levels of the Tolstoy Foundation into action. From acknowledgment of Adlan's letter on Christmas of 1961, it took only 37 days for the Tolstoy Foundation to send Tatiana Schaufuss and Vera Samsonoff to conduct a personal survey of the Turkish Old Believer population, secure preliminary assurances from the International Committee for European Migration (hereafter ICEM) for assistance with immigration travel, and put together a comprehensive dossier for high-ranking executives at the State Department. During this period the Foundation sought to, first, establish the size and needs of the Turkish Old Believers and, second, put together a reasonable case for why this group should receive special treatment. Despite the passage of thirteen years, Turkish immigration quotas remained just as restrictive in 1961 as they were in 1948. If the Tolstoy Foundation hoped to move an estimated 150 families through the US immigration system, they

⁵⁹ Taras Agafonovich to Alexander Kolchak, 27 October 1961. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5388-5390)

needed to find an exception to the regular quota. They also needed to sell officials at the State Department on the necessity of admitting the Old Believers in the first place. That all of this was largely accomplished in such a short span of time deserves further examination.

The primary actors in this process came from the Foundation's highest executive levels. While Alexandra Tolstoy remained in New York, attending to various Congressional meetings in Washington D.C. and dealing with needed personas in the State Department, her long-time friend and Executive Director of the Foundation, Tatiana Schaufuss, became the primary point woman in charge of putting together a plan for the immigration of the Old Believers. Schaufuss, in turn, relied upon Vera Samsonoff, the Deputy Overseas Director who ran the Foundation's European headquarters in Munich, as the primary executive in charge of all the bureaucratic leg-work in Europe necessary for a possible movement of Old Believer immigrants. Schaufuss and Samsonoff remained in almost constant contact during the frantic 37-day period, and together they marshaled all the resources and contacts at the Foundation's disposal for the Turkish settlement project.

One of the first contacts brought into the process was the Chief of Refugee and Migration Affairs for the State Department at the U.S. Mission in Geneva, Edward (Ted) W. Lawrence. On 9 January 1962, Samsonoff sent Lawrence a memo with a copy of the Adlan letter, addressed to the American Committee for Liberation, attached. Titled 'Soviet Propaganda in Turkey and eventual mass repatriation', Samsonoff begins, ever so slightly, to make the case for direct Tolstoy involvement with the Turkish Old Believers:

This letter confirms Mrs. Schaufuss' and our Agency's point of view that a survey is urgently needed in that part of the world...The Committee got very alarmed about the possible mass repatriation, but unfortunately their work does not

cover Turkey. I really believe that it is only the Tolstoy Foundation who can be of use in this matter.⁶⁰

Lawrence proved to be a key first step in securing further assistance from the State Department. Apprised of the situation, Lawrence could pass on Foundation concerns to higher-ups in Washington, higher-ups who held ultimate control over who could or could not be admitted into the United States or North America in general. Further correspondence between Samsonoff and Lawrence indicated that the two shared a cordial relationship, evidenced by the personal visit of Lawrence to Samsonoff's home in Munich on 17 January 1962.

They discussed, over coffee, both Adlan's letter and a translated copy of Taras's plea for help received in October. Samsonoff provided Lawrence with the few bits of information the Foundation possessed regarding the Old Believers in Turkey. Lawrence, in turn, revealed that after receiving Samsonoff's memo on the 9th of January he relayed the information to Washington along with his strong recommendation that the requested survey of the Turkish Old Believers be conducted immediately.⁶¹ A few days later Lawrence traveled to Istanbul to begin such survey work, a process Samsonoff noted with some dismay that was "unfortunately not [taken] by TF [Tolstoy Foundation]," and there he sought out representatives from the World Council of Churches to discover what they knew about the Old Believers in Koca Gol and around Lake Manyas. Their lack of concern and less than satisfactory knowledge about the Old Believers left Lawrence

⁶⁰ Vera Samsonoff to Edward W. Lawrence, 9 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5414)

⁶¹ In Samsonoff's written account of the Lawrence conversation she states that the memo was sent on the 5th of January, however I believe this to be a typo as no letter from the 5th of January was found in the Foundation records surveyed.

unimpressed, and he pressed Samsonoff at their personal meeting on what steps she and the Tolstoy Foundation would take if they were to spearhead the Turkish project.

Samsonoff responded with a plan that included seeking permission from Turkish authorities to conduct a survey of the Old Believer population, arranging for the security and protection of Samsonoff and any of her compatriots who desired to travel into the hinterlands of Turkey, as well as visiting with Ataman Taras and the other Old Believer leaders so that an accurate registration of all families desiring to resettle could be conducted. Naturally the conversation turned next to the greater expectations of such a survey, that being the eventual settlement of the Turkish Old Believers in the Western Hemisphere:

Ted is very worried about what emigration possibilities you (Tatiana Schaufuss) see for these people. In his opinion they should join either the group of Old Believers in Brazil- the Brazilian government apparently looking very favourably on the Old Believers' community- or go to Argentina, the US putting big stress on development of agriculture in that country. Ted, who has visited the Old Believers' settlement in Brazil, is quite impressed with the quality of these people and their ability to create a strong and healthy agriculture settlement.⁶²

What Lawrence did not know, but Samsonoff did, was that the Tolstoy Foundation held in their possession a petition from the Old Believer settlement in Brazil, received roughly two weeks before the Samsonoff meeting, asking for help in emigrating out of Brazil. Complaining of the climate and, in particular, the aridity of the earth, the Brazilian Old Believers implored the Tolstoy Foundation, described as possessing "kind and noble, traditionally-old Russian, feelings," to help them, promising to repay the organization in

⁶² Vera Samsonoff to Tatiana Schaufuss, 18 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5412-5413)

full for any costs incurred on their behalf.⁶³ That Lawrence would suggest Brazil as a suitable destination for the Old Believers in Turkey only reinforced the dominant foreign policy position advocated by the United States in the early 1960s; in the battle for economic and ideological control of the globe, the United States not only prioritized their diplomatic focus on Central and South America but also poured significant development resources into these same areas.

Yet settlement for the Old Believers in Central or South America was never the goal, at least as far as the Tolstoy Foundation was considered. Fear of communist influence spurred by the recent successes of Castro's insurgency in taking over US-backed Cuba made top members of the Tolstoy Foundation reluctant to support any plan that considered Latin America the terminus for Old Believer emigration. However, as Lawrence explained to Samsonoff at the end of their meeting in Munich, if the Foundation desired to settle the Turkish Old Believers in the United States then the terms of an existing, yet soon to be expired, bill covering displaced persons, PL 86-648, would need to be adjusted to cover the traditional Russian group. Thus the main problem facing Turkish Old Believer immigration took distinct form: in order to immigrate to the United States, the Old Believers would need to be transformed from Turkish citizens into another, more acceptable status, at least as far as the law was concerned.

⁶³ Petition from '26 Families of Russian emigrants from Tientain' to the Tolstoy Foundation, 4 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5392) This is the only reference I found in my, admittedly, limited time and access in the Tolstoy Foundation archives. The Old Believers eventually received some form of Foundation assistance and secured Pan-Am tickets to Oregon of which they promised to repay. Why these Old Believers faced what amounted to fewer legal obstacles for gaining entry into the United States, in comparison to their Turkish brethren, is unknown. Given that the Old Believers in Brazil were considered Brazilian citizens, just as the Old Believers in Turkey were considered Turkish in the eyes of American Immigration law, it is entirely possible that Brazilian immigration quotas made it far easier for this group to emigrate en masse without special intervention on behalf of American authorities.

Samsonoff took all of the information from her meeting with Ted Lawrence and put together a succinct, but comprehensive, report summarizing the Foundation position regarding the Old Believers in Turkey. Titled "Old Believers Called Nekrasovtzky", the report contained seven sections including history, population, economics, and, of course, the larger problems and potential solutions facing this distinct group.⁶⁴ Despite its brevity, Samsonoff's report is interesting for a few reasons. First, the report became, in effect, the initial consolidated position of the Tolstoy Foundation regarding how to deal with the problem of assisting the Turkish Old Believers. Second, contained within the report are several nuanced positions regarding the nature of the Turkish Old Believers that the Tolstoy Foundation would later further develop and utilize in the quest to have the Russian traditionalists accepted in America.

Samsonoff's report began with a brief background on the history of the Turkish Old Believers, claiming that their movement from Russia to Turkey occurred either during the reign of Peter I or Catherine the Great. In actuality, the exact details of why the Old Believers came to reside in Turkey was difficult for Samsonoff to ascertain due, mainly, to the paucity of sources available on their resettlement outside of the community itself. Regardless, the accuracy of the historical claims made were of dubious value anyway given that the report was meant more as a primer than detailed dossier for those authorities involved in immigration matters but ignorant to the peculiarities of this specific group. That the Old Believers in Turkey originated from early modern Russia was sufficient enough for the rhetorical purposes of the report.

⁶⁴ Vera Samsonoff, "Old Believers Called Nekrasovtzky" 17 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5381-5383)

At the heart of the Turkish Old Believer problem, Samsonoff declared, was the lack of viable marriage partners for the remaining community members. While their initial numbers supposedly totaled over 5,000 families in the 18th century, by the 1960s this figure dwindled to just over 150 families of about 1,200 to 1,500 people total. Thanks to a combination of strict prohibitions on marrying within eight degrees of blood relation (whether by marriage or baptism is not noted) and accepting non-Orthodox Christians as suitable marriage partners, sufficient prospects for the continuation of the community seemed in grave doubt. Parallel to this marriage issue was the linked problem of assimilation. "In spite the fact that this group is residing in Turkey since 250 to 300 years," wrote Samsonoff, "they never assimilated and always kept their own religion, traditions and language."⁶⁵ After futilely seeking help in 1948 and 1959 for assistance in emigrating out of Turkey, the Old Believers put their faith once more in the West for deliverance by reaching out to Alexander Kolchak.⁶⁶

While the above demonstrates why the Old Believers wanted to emigrate out of Turkey, it does little to explain why the Tolstoy Foundation took such sudden interest in their plight. However, towards the end of the report, Samsonoff hit upon the conflict that specifically piqued the Foundation's interest. "At present there is a very strong Communist propaganda among this group," Samsonoff wrote, adding that the temptation from Soviet authorities since 1959 to have the Old Believers return to the homeland took a heavy toll on their morale, especially after news that a group Molokans living in Kars,

⁶⁵ Ibid, 2.

⁶⁶ According to the report, the 1948 attempt to emigrate failed due to the strict imposition of Turkish quotas in US Immigration Law. The 1959 attempt, at first, achieved more progress as representatives from the WCC assisted the Turkish Old Believers in filing for emigration to Brazil, perhaps to join their fellow co-religionists, but no answer ever arrived and the WCC appeared to let the matter go without further intervention.

Turkey resettled in the Soviet Union. At the time of the report, only Taras Agafonoff and the families under his leadership remained in Turkey.

Samsonoff proposed sending a Tolstoy representative to the Turkish Old Believers in order to "investigate on the spot the needs and desires of this group."⁶⁷ Any migration assistance the Foundation could provide would need to be first preceded by a full survey and registration of each Old Believer family, and if the Russian group desired to settle in the United States then an extension of PL 86-648, one of the many temporary 'displaced person' laws enacted by Congress during the post-war period, would be needed to include the Old Believers. Should an extension prove difficult or impossible to obtain, the Turkish Old Believers could, instead, be settled in Brazil near the Old Believer settlement already there.

The Tolstoy Foundation strongly preferred to have the Turkish Old Believers settled in America and not Latin America, however, making this last suggestion an interesting, if not somewhat misleading, proposition. Unable to dictate American immigration policy, Samsonoff's report instead utilized contextual clues that spoke to a rhetoric of character around the Old Believers, a rhetoric envisioned as compatible with American values. Not only were the Nekrasovtzy noted as being hard working, they also demonstrated a dedication towards maintaining their Christian beliefs. Working primarily as agricultural laborers on self-owned plots of land, the Turkish Old Believers held little experience with mechanized industry or manufacturing. This agricultural background, combined with Christian belief, marked the decidedly pre-modern lifestyle of the Russian traditionalists as potentially ripe for transformation into the modern

⁶⁷ Samsonoff, 2.

American ideal. On top of this, the Old Believers also held a deep distrust of Communism and its advocates. In short, the Old Believers possessed foundational character traits that made them ideal candidates for integration into American society.

Another important theme interwoven in Samsonoff's report dealt with the concept of authenticity. The Turkish Old Believers, despite being embedded in a culture foreign to their own deeply held sensibilities, contained all the hallmarks of being authentically Russian. This meant that the Nekrasovtzy became especially potent exemplars of a mimetic ideal centered on maintaining their Russian identity. By highlighting this mimetic dedication, the Tolstoy Foundation specifically claimed to be the organization best suited to evaluate this distinctly Russian group's needs. This discernment would later prove to be vital when professionals and lay people alike questioned whether the Old Believers were secretly Communists in sacred clothing. Foundation attempts to portray the Turkish Old Believers as not only authentic but also possessing character traits compatible to the American ideal reinforced the idea that this traditional group could successfully transition into the modern American scene and become model citizens. That Samsonoff's report later became a part of a larger memo group circulated to American bureaucratic officials in both Congress and the State Department only emphasized how important these rhetorical positions proved to be in the minds of Tolstoy Foundation staff.

The sequence of events following the debut of Samsonoff's report proceeded rapidly and involved consolidation of both clout and financial assistance needed for the Foundation to take the lead role in assisting the Turkish Old Believers. In a span of ten days, between the 19th and 29th of January 1962, several cables moved between Vera

Samsonoff and Tatiana Schaufuss providing details on how the Foundation's executives began to draw up their larger plans for resettlement of the Old Believer population. For one thing they sought to cut out other resettlement organizations, such as the World Council of Churches, from getting in on the project. For another they began to lobby, quietly and with discretion, members of the ICEM for possible monetary and logistical support in physically moving the Old Believers. In a cable dated 19 January 1962, Schaufuss provided Samsonoff with specific instructions to maintain secrecy when sharing potential Foundation resettlement plans to ICEM representatives:

The only people I suggest you discuss this outline with are John Thomas and Cordt Muller in ICEM...Please tell the 'boys' to handle this as confidentially as possible so that we would be given the first chance as an American Agency to do the job and that all the money would not flow again into the pockets of the WCC. You see that I am not too Christian-minded.⁶⁸

Coordination with the ICEM required some amount of bureaucratic juggling. While their mandate stipulated that only European populations could be aided by their efforts, the Tolstoy Foundation sought to expand the ICEM's mission to include those areas just outside of Europe proper, such as Turkey or North Africa. When Samsonoff met with John Thomas of the ICEM, he expressed concern that the Old Believers in Turkey would be considered 'Asiatic' and not 'Russian', thus placing them outside the organization's mandate to help resettle European populations. Samsonoff hoped that by proving the Old

⁶⁸ Tatiana Schaufuss to Vera Samsonoff, 19 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5411) The last line only underscores the sort of soured relationship that existed between the Tolstoy Foundation and their former partners, the World Council of Churches. There appears to either be great apprehension or outright hostility towards including the WCC on any possible resettlement plans, a factor brought up again and again by Schaufuss in her correspondence with Samsonoff. See also Tatiana Schaufuss to Vera Samsonoff, 23 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives. (TF-5404-5405)

Believers to be, “of another race, creed and traditions they could be considered European without having a special legislation waiving their Turkish citizenship.”⁶⁹

The Foundation also worked hard during this period to discredit, in the eyes of American authorities, any possible resettlement plans involving Latin America. In a letter sent on 19 January 1962 to Richard Brown, Director of the Office for Refugee and Migration Affairs at the State Department in Washington, Schaufuss presented the Brazilian petition for resettlement received by the Tolstoy Foundation. Stressing that the Brazilian petition represented only one source “of the problems that we are facing weekly in appeals from Latin American countries where Russians have been resettled,” Schaufuss once again reiterated the Foundation’s belief that the dual factors of political instability and expansion of Communist influence in Latin America made it a less than desirable terminus for emigration efforts.⁷⁰ Brown responded on the 26 January, thanking Schaufuss for sending the petition and asking her to keep him informed on any further developments with the Brazilian Old Believer settlement.⁷¹

Meanwhile in Munich, Vera Samsonoff was busy arranging monetary and logistical details for her impending survey trip to Turkey. She met with Peter von Wahlde of the American Committee for Liberation (an anti-communist organization formed in 1950 under the secret aegis of the Central Intelligence Agency, who assured her that the Committee would pay for her airfare to and from Turkey so long as

⁶⁹ Vera Samsonoff to Tatiana Schaufuss, 23 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5406-5407)

⁷⁰ Tatiana Schaufuss to Richard Brown, 19 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5410)

⁷¹ Richard R. Brown to Tatiana Schaufuss, 26 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5403) That the Tolstoy Foundation and Brown shared a close working relationship is all the more evident by the additional aside made by Brown in his letter referring to correspondence between Vera Samsonoff and Ted Lawrence on matters pertaining to Russian refugees in Algeria and Soviet propaganda in Lebanon. It also suggest that the State Department held the Tolstoy Foundation in high regard when it came to matters pertaining to, specifically, Russian refugees.

Samsonoff gathered specific information during her trip). The Committee wanted a survey of the Old Believer settlement, a count on the number of refugees from Russia living in Turkey divided by nationality, as well as the names and addresses for leaders of such refugee groups. Considering that the Committee for Liberation possessed clandestine goals of utilizing Russian émigrés “as a vehicle for reaching the people inside [the Soviet Union],” it was little wonder that Peter von Wahlde requested such demographic and personnel information on the Old Believers in exchange for monetary compensation.⁷² Samsonoff also met with Gazi Khan, a personage who was only briefly mentioned in the documents yet, obviously, acted as a liaison between the Foundation and authorities in Turkey. Khan told Samsonoff he would send letters of introduction ahead of her arrival in Istanbul and also advised her on the proper protocol to be used with local authorities as she traveled to the Old Believer settlement around Lake Manyas, some 450 km west from the city of Ankara.⁷³

These details did little to please Schaufuss, who admonished her colleague for the seemingly plodding pace in carrying out the Turkish survey. Securing funding, for Schaufuss, should have been the second step as “the most important [step] for us is to have first hand information on the actual situation in those villages.”⁷⁴ Schaufuss no doubt wished to secure more concrete information on the Turkish settlement so that she could better inform, and persuade, American authorities in both Congress and the State Department as to the necessity of action. Already Schaufuss was in contact with

⁷² “Office of Policy Coordination History of American Committee for Liberation,” August 21, 1951, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114354> Accessed 15 September 2016.

⁷³ Vera Samsonoff to Tatiana Schaufuss, 22 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5408)

⁷⁴ Tatiana Schaufuss to Vera Samsonoff, 23 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5404-5405)

Representative Walter, who had invited Alexandra Tolstoy to testify before the Subcommittees of the Judiciary on Immigration Reform in 1951, about the Old Believer settlements in Turkey and Brazil. Her goal was to secure support for a plan to resettle the Old Believers in the United States, rather than in Latin America. For this reason especially, Schaufuss implored Samsonoff to “step on the gas immediately.”⁷⁵

Samsonoff, for her part, took the admonishment to heart and quickly finalized the details for her trip to Turkey. She arrived and stayed at the Park Hotel in Istanbul on the 29th and 30th of January before renting a car and traveling to the Lake Manyas region. Her further consultations with Gazi Khan revealed more of the official Turkish attitude towards the Old Believers. While happy to deal with Foundation representatives, Khan noted, the Turkish authorities refused to discuss any plan for the Old Believers that did not include “concrete and clear resettlement possibilities.”⁷⁶ This led Samsonoff to discuss the feasibility of possible resettlement locations. She mentioned that Ted Lawrence once again reiterated his belief that settling the Old Believers in Latin America, and specifically Argentina, would bolster American support for resettlement:

Ted believes that you will gain US support if you establish a clear program of resettlement of the “Old Believers” to Argentina, as it would fit in the present US agricultural aid program for Argentina. Better than anybody else you know that the US Government is wanting to strengthen the Latin America countries and is pouring aid into them. Therefore Lawrence believes that you will gain more comprehensive support if the program of “Old Believers” fits into the general US aid to Latin America.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Tatiana Schaufuss to Vera Samsonoff, 23 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5404-5405)

⁷⁶ Vera Samsonoff to Tatiana Schaufuss, 23 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5406-5407)

⁷⁷ Ibid. Of course, desire to foist the Old Believers onto Argentina, and indeed the general expansion of American interests in Latin America in general, only fit into the redefined role America would play as a Liberal power in the post-war environment. American leaders saw in Latin America a place to begin the

Canada, a possible resettlement destination only briefly discussed, also seemed unsuitable due to the Canadian government's desire to settle, for unstated reasons, only individuals or couples-- not families and certainly not a collected group of up to 1,200 potential immigrants. And because settlement in America required the Attorney General to admit Old Believers under 'parole' status, Samsonoff could do little more than offer Taras Agafonoff non-committal assurances of help when she wrote the Old Believer leader apprising him of the Foundation's efforts.

Regardless of the shifting question on where exactly the Turkish Old Believers would end up, both Vera Samsonoff and Tatiana Schaufuss ventured out from Istanbul in late January and headed to Lake Manyas in order to gather, first hand, information on the composition and specific needs of the traditional religious community. Undertaking the survey was a promising first step, yet more work was needed to convince American authorities that the Old Believers deserved settlement in the United States. Having successfully excluded the WCC from getting in on the Old Believer resettlement project, Alexandra Tolstoy, hereto a less involved participant in the larger Foundation discussions, raised the possibility with Tatiana Schaufuss on gathering what materials the Foundation possessed and sending a comprehensive memo to one particular and powerful political ally- Abba Schwartz. Friend and political confidant of the Kennedy family, Schwartz was the Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs in Washington. A proponent of immigration reform, Schwartz and the Tolstoy Foundation were on exceedingly good terms as evidenced by the casual tone and

work of ideological development and cultivation of future partners in the Western Hemisphere aligned to common values. See G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the Liberal Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

familiarity expressed in correspondence between the two parties. Securing his support proved to be one of the more crucial moves made by the Tolstoy Foundation, as his ability to bend the ear of President John F. Kennedy and his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy (the sole authority who could authorize the granting of parolee status), proved to be the key in securing for the Old Believers permission to settle in the United States.

On 31 January 1962, Schwartz received from Alexandra Tolstoy a collection of documents related to the Turkish Old Believer effort then being undertaken by the Foundation. Comprised of selections that represented the Foundation's involvement with the resettlement question, the collected documents comprising the Schwartz memo came to represent an outwardly projecting moment of clarity for its intended recipients. It presented, in a succinct and persuasive manner, the case for intervening on behalf of the beleaguered Turkish Old Believer population. As a testament to its designed purpose, the vast majority of the Schwarz memo contents found its way into the mailboxes of various American officials such as Richard Brown, the aforementioned Director of the Office for Refugee and Migration Affairs at the State Department in Washington, and John Morris, who worked the Turkish Desk at the State Department.⁷⁸ While survey trips carried out by the Foundation, and Vera Samsonoff in particular, provided much more detailed information about the Turkish Old Believer population, it was this file that provided all

⁷⁸ The cover letter to the Schwartz memo mentions that a copy of the materials would also be sent to a personage labeled only as A.S.F. There is no mention in the documents surveyed as to the identity of A.S.F., although it can reasonably be guessed that this person held a position related to the affairs of immigrants or displaced persons. It should also be noted that the copies sent to Richard Brown, John Morris, and A.S.F. did not contain two items, a proposed letter to President Kennedy and a letter from Vera Samsonoff detailing the Foundation's efforts in coordinating both domestic and international agencies to help with the possible resettlement of the Turkish Old Believers.

the essential rhetoric and framing of the Old Believers as pre-modern candidates perfectly suited for integration and emulation of modern American values.

The file contained a total of seven items, two of which were intended only for Schwartz himself to read. One of those items was a proposed letter to President Kennedy from Alexandra Tolstoy, which did not address the plight of the Turkish Old Believers directly but, rather, extended a general theme Tolstoy honed and perfected from her days on the lecture circuit in the 1930's and 40's. She spoke of her "experience and knowledge of communist aims and methods," and the stark differences between "the psychology of the communists as well as the psychology of the Russian people." Indeed, the entire letter took as its central mission to make evident to President Kennedy that there were communists and there were Russians, and that the ability to differentiate between the two, a task for which the Tolstoy Foundation held valuable expertise, was the difference between advocating a sane policy to fight the forces of international communism and committing what Tolstoy termed "political suicide." It was an argument of mimetics, of the need to accept the genuine and utterly reject the imposter, and the extension of that ideal naturally suited the larger mission of bringing the Turkish Old Believers to American shores before they succumbed to Soviet pressure. "Acquiring the sympathy, the friendship and the effective support of those millions behind the Iron Curtain seems to me no less important than relying only upon military preparedness," Tolstoy concluded.⁷⁹

The second item specified to be read only by Schwartz, an excerpt from the 23 January 1962 correspondence between Vera Samsonoff and Tatiana Schaufuss, revealed

⁷⁹ Alexandra Tolstoy to President John Kennedy, drafted 10 November 1961. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5395-5397)

both the inner workings of agency connections and the shape of the larger plan of action the Tolstoy Foundation wished to take with regards to settling the Turkish Old Believers.⁸⁰ It was, in effect, an attempt to demonstrate to Schwartz the various steps taken behind the scenes that would allow the Assistant Secretary of State to better lobby the proper parties as to the efficacy of the Tolstoy Foundation in carrying out the task at hand. Schwartz's excerpt contained details about Samsonoff's conversations with Ted Lawrence about the amenability of selecting for the Old Believers a settlement in Argentina, with John Thomas of the ICEM on expanding the jurisdiction of the organization to include Turkey, and the ultimate necessity of enacting special legislation in order to have the Turkish Old Believers qualify for US entry.

Five other items comprised the rest of the Schwartz file. This included letters sent to the Tolstoy Foundation by Taras Agafonoff, Aysche Adlan, and the icon painter Pimen Sofronov, regarding the plight of the Turkish Old Believers, as well as the memo written by Vera Samsonoff summarizing what the Foundation knew about the 'Nekrasovtzky'. Rounding out the collection was the petition for resettlement submitted by the Brazilian Old Believers. Together, the Schwartz file represented the first and most important collection of knowledge assembled by an American agency regarding the existence and problems of the Turkish Old Believers. Although the file was an admittedly early effort towards classifying the Turkish Old Believers as a population eminently suitable for transplantation into American culture, it nonetheless outlined several key positions that would later be reinforced with information gathered during two survey trips into Turkey over the course of 1962. The first position centered on where the Turkish Old Believers

⁸⁰ Vera Samsonoff, "Old Believers Called Nekrasovtzky" 17 January 1962. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5381-5383) The excerpted letter, part of the larger Abba Schwartz Memo Group, can be found in TF-5393-5394.

would be settled, either in the United States or South America. The second position centered on the means, both legally and logistically, such a settlement would require. The third position centered on the agency chosen to carry out this resettlement project: the Tolstoy Foundation or a joint effort between Foundation staff and other, larger organizations such as the WCC. Finally, the fourth position centered on using the petition of the Brazilian Old Believers as a spoiler for any plans involving resettlement in Latin America. In all of the positions enumerated above, the Tolstoy Foundation presented a clear answer for each that reflected their own preferred thinking on the subject. Yet the memo was far from the end point of that thinking and, in reality, represented only the beginning of the rhetorical crafting the Foundation engaged in with the Old Believers.

Presentation of the Schwartz file represented a milestone for the Foundation's larger project of resettling the Turkish Old Believers. The fact-finding survey carried out by Vera Samsonoff and Tatiana Schaufuss during the end of January and beginning of February 1962 represented another. The first of two total trips to the Old Believer settlement around Lake Manyas taken in 1962, Samsonoff and Schaufuss' journey produced a far more detailed assessment of the Old Believer population and the problems they faced regarding both Soviet pressure to repatriate as well as dwindling availability of suitable marriage partners. While the exact report written about this trip is absent from the Foundation's fragmentary documentary record, a summary of that trip and what was discovered is found in a report written three years later in 1965.⁸¹ To begin, the visiting Foundation executives estimated that the total population of Turkish Old Believers

⁸¹ This summary report was part of a memo group sent to Senator Edward Kennedy on 13 August 1965, roughly two years after the Turkish Old Believers gained entry into the United States as parolees. See TF-5421-5423 for the selection discussed here.

numbered around 1,250 people. While some maintained residence in Istanbul, the remainder engaged in a largely agricultural lifestyle that involved growing wheat, barley, sugar beets, beans, cucumbers, and melons, with some commercial fishing on the side provided by the bounty of Lake Manyas. Their quest to resettle came shortly after the Soviet government began to court Old Believers to 'Return to the Homeland' in 1949, and having been disappointed by the mostly indifferent response received by international agencies they began to feel disheartened and that assistance from Western governments might never be extended.

More detailed information can be gleaned from the second survey trip, this time led solely by Samsonoff, carried out between 18 August and 5 September 1962.⁸² Samsonoff described the province of Konya, where the villages of Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol were located, as being very rich but also possessing poor soil for agricultural use. As for the reason why the Old Believers came to settle in this region, Samsonoff could only discover vague clues and second-hand stories about the Cossack origins of the dwindling population. Older residents claimed to be part of a Cossack group that came from Romania sometime around the 1880's or 1890's, with some even able to produce documentation stating Romania as their birthplace. The only written source of history Samsonoff could find was a book in Slavonic, and it appears that she either did not have the training to read the book or was denied more detailed examination of its text because she suggests more could be understood about the Old Believers' history with careful study of longhand script. Samsonoff nevertheless ascertained from interviews and reading of documents kept by the community that the Turkish Old Believers were in fact

⁸² Vera Samsonoff, "Report on Duty Trip to Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol" 3 September 1962. (TF-5317, 5319-5323)

part of a larger Cossack group known as the Nekrasovtsy. Those who eventually settled around Lake Manyas in the 19th century began their migration out of Russia after being harassed by soldiers of Catherine's 18th century Imperial Russian regime. Although it is difficult to confirm the veracity of Samsonoff's account of the Turkish Old Believers' history, there are records of a Cossack band, practicing Old Belief and led by an Ignat Nekrasov, that settled in the Kuban district of Imperial Russia- now a part of present day Crimea. Expanding Imperial Russian presence and centralization of Ukrainian provincial governance during the 18th century most likely spurred the Cossack migration to Romania and then, later, Lake Manyas.

Samsonoff went on to describe the demographic makeup of the Old Believer population in Kazak-Koyu. Her observations go a long way towards explaining why the Old Believers felt the need to seek resettlement. Whereas the 'Cossacks' once formed the vast majority of those living in Kazak-Koyu, immigration by Turkish settlers began to tip the balance; as of the time of Samsonoff's report she estimated the population to be 60% Turks and 40% Cossacks, with the total number of Old Believers amounting to around 50 families or 229 people. Of those 229, few could be counted among the elderly, which Samsonoff identified as those over the age of 60. The average age of married couples hovered around 30, and most families contained five to six children.

Samsonoff identified the Cossack descendants of Kazak-Koyu as being *bezpopovtsy*, priestless Old Believers. Instead of priests, the *bezpopovtsy* in Kazak-Koyu elected a deacon who, with the assistance of various church elders, took the lead in religious services, reading the Gospel as well as reciting the necessary prayers.

Samsonoff went on to provide a more detailed description of the various proscriptions and practices the *bezpopovtsy* in Kazak-Koyu practiced:

The ‘Bespopovtsy’ strictly observe all Orthodox church rules and traditions as regards religious holidays, fasts, etc. In fact they observe the fast days as they are observed in monasteries, not eating on Wednesdays and Fridays anything which is provided by an animal or fish, such as eggs, butter, milk, etc. During the fasts they are not authorized to drink wine and in general they drink wine only on important holidays and even then they are not permitted to drink more than two glasses. Hard liquor is absolutely forbidden. The majority in Kazak-Koyu adhere to these rules. The men are forbidden to shave and if they do so, they are not allowed to enter the church. The young men, when called for military service, have to shave and cut their hair; they can enter the church only after completion of military service and this only after the beard has started growing and after a special prayer is said for them.⁸³

While the dietary restrictions largely fell into line with other, documented priestless communities that maintained the rather strict guidelines of pre-Nikonian Orthodox faith, the latter part of the description, which dealt with the shaving of beards and the rules governing those who entered into military service, demonstrated how this particular community came to adjust their beliefs to accommodate the social requirements of their adopted Turkish home. While no doubt an interesting detail for Samsonoff, the presence of this particular behavior indicated that the Old Believers of Kazak-Koyu possessed the capability to adjust their own faith in response to local expectations. Allowing young men selected for military service, who were forced to shave their beards, a defined, even ritualized, method of reintegration into the community was only one of the characteristics that would come to define the oft-ignored flexibility of Old Belief.

⁸³ Vera Samsonoff, “Report on Duty Trip to Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol”. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5319)

Some disparity of wealth existed among the Old Believers of Kazak-Koyu. Samsonoff notes that only a few families owned the land they used for agriculture, the rest leasing plots from the Turkish government (which they referred to as the ‘Crown’) that essentially made them into sharecroppers. In fact, those with smaller plots of land supplemented their meager incomes by working on the larger plots owned by more wealthy families. As described in the first survey report conducted by Samsonoff and Schaufuss, the Old Believers engaged in fishing once the harvest season ended. One Turkish citizen, who bought fishing rights to Lake Manyas from the Turkish government, told Samsonoff that he was horrified to see the Old Believers go, as that would deprive him of his main source of labor.⁸⁴ Some Old Believer women also managed to find employment in a nearby health resort that utilized mineral waters for their palliative effects. All of this, according to Samsonoff, meant that, “one can definitely state that the entire Old Believer population...is a hard working one, accepting any job in order to make their living.”⁸⁵

Although the villages of Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol afforded scarce opportunities to acquire a formal education, the Turkish primary school, set up in 1957, allowed Old Believer children between the ages of seven and twelve a chance to advance their learning beyond that offered by their family or community. Praised by the schoolmaster, the Old Believer children “attend classes regularly and count among the best and gifted pupils.”⁸⁶ Yet despite the absence of educational institutions, Samsonoff noted that all the

⁸⁴ The Turkish man went on to say that he offered to pay 5,000 Liras (then equivalent to around \$500 dollars) to any Old Believer fisherman who desired to stay in Kazak-Koyu. “He admitted straightforward that he will never be able to find again such skilled and honest fisherman,” noted Samsonoff.

⁸⁵ Samsonoff, “Report on Duty Trip to Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol”. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5320)

⁸⁶ Ibid, 3-4. (TF-5320-5321)

Old Believer males were literate; most learned from their parents how to read and write in Slavonic, and many learned to communicate in Turkish through their own self-taught methods. This is hardly surprising, given that priestless Old Believer use of pre-Nikonian texts and liturgies demanded a modest level of literacy and that long-term settlement in Turkey yielded some degree of fluency in the Turkish language. As if to emphasize the Old Believers' penchant for knowledge, Samsonoff made a point of noting the Turkish Old Believers' affinity for those who shared their reverence of the word: "We have noticed a great respect for books and when they saw us reading in their religious books, one could hear a whisper of admiration among them: "Look, they can read in the big book..."⁸⁷

Rounding off her report with a section on the 'Aims and Wishes' of the Turkish Old Believers, Samsonoff discussed how the Soviet approach in luring the Old Believers back to the homeland relied less upon political propaganda and more on the very basic reality that the Old Believer faith prohibited marriage between blood relatives. A dispensation, given by the Patriarch of Istanbul, allowing marriages within seven degrees of blood relations carried little weight with the *bezpovtsy* who, of course, did not recognize the authority of the Orthodox religious leader. Gender imbalance in the villages, in which the females outnumbered the males, only exacerbated the situation. Given that few local Muslims desired to convert to the Orthodoxy practiced by the Old Believers, the pressure to find eligible marriage partners weighed heavily on many families; hence the desire to be settled amongst those who would likely share the Orthodox faith. Only Yavorhi Cam, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and the

⁸⁷ Ibid, 4. (TF-5321)

families he represented “remained firm in their conviction that the Soviet Union was a godless evil country.”⁸⁸ Yavorhi developed his negative view of the Soviet Union through correspondence with other Old Believer communities. He wrote the Old Believers living in Brazil in order to ask for their advice regarding the Soviet offer of repatriation. They confirmed his misgivings about the Soviet promises on freedom to worship and maintain the Turkish Old Believer way of life. Cam also contacted the few Old Believers from Lake Manyas who departed for the Soviet Union in 1926. Their response, that “you probably all are crazy from the good life you are having,” was yet another ominous sign to Cam and the roughly 30 families that followed his leadership. These correspondences proved that although the Turkish Old Believers in Turkey appeared isolated by distance from their fellow brethren, in actuality they maintained connection to at least some of the larger *starovery* communities existing abroad.⁸⁹

Cam and his followers remained resolute in their conviction, even after a representative from the Soviet consulate arrived in Kazak-Koyu, only a few days before Samsonoff, handing out entry visas to thirteen families and trying to convince holdouts to join their brethren who volunteered to leave on the 15 September 1962.⁹⁰ The representative stayed for three hours but failed to convince anyone opposed to repatriation to discuss any offers of Soviet resettlement. That around 1,000 Old Believers in both Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol ultimately decided to take up the repatriation offer, departing on the Soviet transport ship ‘Gruzia’ from Istanbul on the 15 September 1962, testified to the relative success of repeated Soviet overtures. Given that Tolstoy Foundation estimates in early 1962 placed the total Old Believer population in Kazak-

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Koyu and Kocagol to be around 1,250 total people, this significant number of emigrants placed real pressure on those who wished to remain or hold out for some sort of settlement deal from the West.

The impending departure of one thousand Turkish Old Believers naturally influenced the tone and structure of Samsonoff's report. That Kocagol, where the majority of those leaving resided, is only briefly mentioned in the report is somewhat surprising given that Samsonoff desired to frame American intervention in the Turkish Old Believer's lives as a necessary act of the Cold War. Instead of dwelling on those who already departed, Samsonoff decided to focus on those Turkish Old Believers that could still be helped. Knowing that American officials such as Abba Schwartz would read this report, or at least a summary of its details, she shrewdly focused on the village of Kazak-Koyu where the holdouts remained. Her descriptions, likewise, emphasized a strong rhetoric of character among this select group. That they possessed a respect, even thirst, for knowledge came out in Samsonoff's descriptions of Old Believer education discussed above. Old Believers, according to Samsonoff, "[are] happy to know that education [in America] is compulsory and that their children will profit by it. They asked us whether it would be possible for them to attend evening classes so as to rapidly learn to read and write English."⁹¹ Their desire to settle in a "Christian agricultural country", where they could "worship God and hold their religious services the way their ancestors and fathers did," drew specific parallels to similar historical values found at the core of American identity. Furthermore their sense of realism, at least as described by

⁹¹ Samsonoff, later in the report, goes on to state that the Old Believers are, "happy to know that education [in America] is compulsory and that their children will profit by it. They asked us whether it would be possible for them to attend evening classes so as to rapidly learn to read and write English." Ibid, 5. (TF-5322)

Samsonoff, marked them as particularly adaptable to the terms of settlement that might be offered by Western nations:

The Old Believers in Kazak-Koyu do not expect wonders. They know that if they resettle in a new country they will have to work hard, which they are prepared to do. They also know that the land will not be donated to them, [sic] they hope that later, when they will have saved some money, they will be permitted to buy some land which they could pay off in several years.⁹²

The Turkish holdouts also recognized that group resettlement in a country other than the Soviet Union, something they sought for the past few decades, would be difficult to achieve. They desired only to be settled as close as possible to each other, so that they could build their church and create a focal point for gathering on holidays and engaging in communal prayer. But perhaps most importantly, at least for American administrators concerned with questions of infiltration, the 250 holdouts clearly held no sympathies for Communism. Samsonoff noted in her report that when Yavorhi Cam shared the letter received from the Old Believers living in the Soviet Union, it “reversed the minds of the majority and even those who had registered with the Soviet Consulate wrote to the latter to withdraw their registrations.” Those that now advocated staying in Turkey and waiting for a possible response from the West dismissed a deacon advocating migration to the USSR and elected a new deacon, who presumably shared the mindset of the majority, to take his place. The fact that Cam took his time to learn more about the veracity of Soviet promises tied to resettlement demonstrated that he and his group could not be fooled by Communist propaganda.⁹³

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Vera Samsonoff, “Report on Duty Trip to Kazak-Koyu and Kocagol” 5. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5322)

Clearly, the Foundation still desired to assist the remaining Turkish Old Believers in their quest for resettlement in the West. Yet the Foundation's involvement, as evidenced by the documentary record, became sporadic after the reception of Samsonoff's report and did not pick up again until six months later in March of 1962. While Foundation records do not speak to reasons for this hiatus, I can infer the reasons.

One month after the *Gruzia* set sail in September, Americans found themselves embroiled in the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962. Attention at the highest levels, which included the only person with the power to admit the Old Believers into the United States as parolees, the Attorney General, naturally focused on the possible nuclear threat at hand. Fanning the flames of latent fears about the growing presence and possible communist infiltration in the Western hemisphere, the Cuban Missile Crisis no doubt left a sour aftertaste in the mouths of many American officials regarding the possibility of resettling a group of up to 250 distinctly Russian immigrants.

There was also the question of whether or not it was too late to provide any meaningful assistance to the remaining Turkish Old Believers. The departure of over 1,000 on the *Gruzia* meant that the Old Believer holdouts in Turkey faced even more pressure with regards to finding eligible marriage partners. Already in the midst of increasing numbers of resettled Turkish citizens, the significant drop in population only cemented the minority status of Old Believers in Kazak-Koyu. Observers in the West could point to these facts and reasonably guess that the remaining population would sooner, rather than later, consent to Soviet overtures to be resettled in Russia. It is possible that Foundation executives felt that providing assistance, which would involve

both legal and financial wrangling, would prove to difficult to offer the shrinking Turkish Old Believer population.

Yet even though the Foundation appeared to have backed off from courting American support for resettlement for the Turkish Old Believers, a memo sent to Abba Schwartz on 21 March 1963 indicated that some hope still existed for intervention on behalf of the remaining Turkish Old Believers. While essentially a summary of the information covered in both the much larger Schwartz file and the second report filed by Vera Samsonoff, this new memo contained more impassioned pleas for assistance. “Time is of the essence,” the cover letter stated, adding that the admission of Old Believers as parolees “is in the interest of the United States.”⁹⁴ The Foundation expressed particular concern that the Soviets planned to return to Kazak-Koyu around Easter to make a final push for Old Believer repatriation. Tolstoy and Schaufuss, who drafted the memo, linked American assistance to the larger efforts of fighting the Cold War:

It seems in the U.S. interest- if only in counteracting Soviet propaganda and one of USSR strong cold war weapons that “the West does nothing to help effectively human beings in distress” – to authorize the admission of this group of 250 persons to USA under parole – which action is under direct discretion of the U.S. Attorney General.⁹⁵

Once again, at the end of the memo, the Foundation executives promised to handle “immediate processing of the people in Turkey” as well as “undertake necessary measures for permanent re-establishment in this country.” A telegram sent thirteen days later reiterated the time-sensitive nature of any impending decision. “Implore your and Attorney General’s decision fate 250 Old Believers in Turkey STOP Final Soviet

⁹⁴ Memorandum from Alexandra Tolstoy and Tatiana Schaufuss to Abba Schwartz, 21 March 1963. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5545-5547)

⁹⁵ Ibid. 2. (TF-5547)

approach for Easter repatriation scheduled in village Manyas for Holy Week.”⁹⁶ With Orthodox Easter falling on 14 April 1963, this gave the Attorney General precious few days to act before the potential arrival of Soviet agents.

The March memo and April telegram sent by the Foundation combine to paint a bleak picture of the cultural/propagandistic implications of Soviet success in repatriating Old Believers to the USSR. In referencing the one thousand Turkish Old Believers who repatriated on 15 September 1962, the memo states,

[the] USSR provided free transport, lavish reception, land and new housing on the shores of the Azov sea and exploited this one more factor of the cold war for winning over the hearts and minds and souls of men to the Communist cause by numerous headlines and articles in the Soviet press, eulogizing the “Return to the Homeland” of this essentially Russian group and promising them full freedom in the practice of their religious beliefs.

The implications of this logic, that the repatriation of the ‘essentially Russian group’ would bolster Communist standing, neatly delineated not only the long standing ideal espoused by Alexandra Tolstoy that authentic Russians highlight, in comparison, the mimetic deception of Communism, but also that despite being ‘essentially Russian’ the Old Believers are viable candidates for transplantation into American culture. Their character and their ability to unmask Communists for what they truly are mark the Old Believers as a potentially useful weapon in the ideological battle for hearts and minds.

Apparently the Foundation proved persuasive in their pleas, although they didn’t receive the prompt reply desired. On 21 April 1963, a full week after Orthodox Easter, Attorney General Robert Kennedy announced that the remaining Turkish Old Believers would be granted parolee status and allowed to immigrate to the United States. Although

⁹⁶ Telegram from Alexandra Tolstoy and Tatiana Schaufuss to Abba Schwartz, sent 3 April 1963. Tolstoy Foundation Archives, New York. (TF-5544)

diminished in size, the admission of the remaining Turkish Old Believers proved to be a victory for the Foundation that petitioned for their resettlement. Their arrival at Idlewild (now Kennedy) Airport a few weeks later signified the start of a new chapter in the lives of the Turkish Old Believers. It also signified the beginning of a new, more direct relationship between the Foundation and the ‘essentially Russian’ group. It is to that new relationship we now turn.

League and Believer: Settlement in Oregon through the 1960s

On 27 April 1963, after reading a press account detailing the impending arrival to America of Russian Old Believers from Turkey, Brigadier General Milton Medenbach, Commandant of Cadets at the Wayne, PA, Valley Forge Military Academy, sent a letter to Alexandra Tolstoy announcing his intent to offer immigrant Old Believers who met his qualifications employment. "We have vacancies for single men and women and married couples without small children in our various service departments." The work envisioned read like a laundry list of unskilled labor positions. "As we have had many excellent workers in our kitchens, dining rooms, grounds, and housekeeping departments from the Tolstoy Foundation over the years," remarked the general, "we want you to know that we would be happy to assist you in the resettling some of these people upon their arrival in the United States."⁹⁷ In return for their work, any potential Old Believer who took the General up on his offer would receive room, board, medical care, and a monthly salary of \$100.

While only one of several offers sent to the Tolstoy Foundation on behalf of the Old Believers, General Medenbach's letter exemplified the challenges the organization faced as it shifted from facilitating relocation towards facilitating assimilation. Qualities that made the Turkish Old Believers an exemplary group worthy for relocation, namely their cohesiveness and strong desire to avoid Soviet influence in their daily lives, were the very same that made them resistant in accepting the initial terms of dispersed settlement that the Foundation offered. General Medenbach's offer of employment and housing provided a relatively safe path towards assimilation in American culture, but it did so at the cost of asking potential recruits to give up cornerstones of their identity.

⁹⁷ General Milton Medenbach to Alexandra Tolstoy, 27 April 1963. (TF-5539)

Singles or couples without children, separated from the community that raised them, could more easily be prompted into shedding past associations and adopting new ones. Larger groups would no doubt better resist assimilation efforts and maintain traditions that marked them as distinctively pre-modern. Ironically, Medenbach's employment opportunities and the Foundation's resettlement plans for the Turkish Old Believers, both offered with sincere desire to help, threatened to disrupt the religious group's community and sense of identity. Tensions between wanting to help Old Believers maintain their identity and desiring to see Old Believers transform into modern, American citizens increasingly surfaced during the period surveyed in this chapter. Medenbach's letter, from the perspective of the Old Believers, represented the promise and peril of building a new life in the United States.

Alexandra Tolstoy indirectly acknowledged such tensions in her response to the general. Beyond stating that she did not know when the Turkish Old Believers would be arriving in America, Tolstoy noted that many of the couples possessed young children of their own thus making them ineligible for the offer.⁹⁸ While the General and the Foundation possessed a historic and cordial relationship, with the Foundation having clearly sent displaced persons they previously assisted to the Valley Forge Military Academy, the resettlement case involving the Turkish Old Believers could not be so easily finalized by shipping them off, piecemeal, to various American locales. Yet their arrival meant it was time for the Tolstoy Foundation to make good on promises made to American authorities regarding the malleability and assimilatory potential of Old Believer character. The Foundation's initial efforts in this regard, as well as the responses

⁹⁸ Alexandra Tolstoy to General Milton Medenbach, 30 April 1963. (TF-5537)

and challenges to this process put forth by the Old Believers themselves, form the first portion of this chapter.

The second portion will discuss the aftermath of the Foundation's initial efforts to settle the Old Believers in various New Jersey towns and the subsequent migration throughout 1964-65 of the Turkish group to the area around Woodburn, Oregon in order to join their Brazilian co-religionists already settling there. This move necessitated a shift in both how the Foundation planned to make good on its promise of responsible stewardship of the Old Believers as well as establishing who it would work with in order to address the religious community's needs. The Foundation ultimately reached out to two entities; the municipality of Woodburn and the federally funded Valley Migrant League (VML), a program tied to President Johnson's 'Great Society' initiative. While the Tolstoy Foundation never completely disengaged from the lives of the Turkish and, later, Brazilian Old Believer populations, their physical distance and increasing reluctance over the years to invest significant monetary resources made them an ancillary, rather than primary, agent of accountability for the group as a whole.

Underlying both parts of this chapter are questions, increasingly asked, about the scope and nature of American modernity as it related to yardsticks, both anecdotal and scientific, used to measure Old Believer assimilation. These questions were, of course, not wholly separated from the larger issues gripping American culture during the decade of the 1960s. Indeed, the intersection between Old Believers in Woodburn and the newly established VML provided a crosscurrent of needs and desires related to the transformational goals that formed the backbone of the migrant program's guiding philosophy. The VML's charter tasked it with pulling migrants out of the transitory labor

stream that stretched from Oregon to Texas and transforming them into stable, traceable, and taxable individual units through a combination of educational instruction and assistance with negotiating local, state, and federal bureaucracies. When the Old Believers arrived their presence and outward perception of being distinctly traditional made them attractive targets for VML efforts despite the fact that the Old Believers were not migrants and faced problems that were different from those encountered by the Hispanic-dominated migrant stream. Even though the VML achieved some measure of success in their interaction with the Old Believer population, their efforts were largely ineffectual and demonstrated the gap between the sort of modernity envisioned by the VML and the actual terms of modernity negotiated by the Old Believers through their use of the migrant program's resources.

This negotiation continued with the City of Woodburn when round after round of federal budget cuts presaged diminution of VML services in the late 1960s. Yet the traditional Russian group was always on the radar of municipal authorities. With their arrival the Turkish Old Believers added to the already significant numbers of the Brazilian community settled in and around Woodburn, their combined totals almost doubling the city's permanent population in the span of a few years. City leaders found themselves interacting with a populace that presented challenges far different from that of the typical rural or migrant resident. Unlike the migrants that came and went with the seasons, the Old Believers intended from the start on rooting themselves in and around the local Woodburn community, using their collective finances and labor to help fund land purchases or construction of houses. This put them in contact with local financial institutions with regards to loans and mortgages, as well as members of the medical and

educational communities, who sought to classify and categorize the Old Believers for incorporation into their own disciplinary nets of assimilation. Just as with the VML, the Old Believers put forth their own negotiated version of modernity when pressed with counter-claims presented by various municipal organizations. Outlining the terms of this negotiation, of the modernity American society wanted to impose and the modernity actually embraced by the Old Believers, forms the analytical core of this chapter and the next.

The Old Believers Arrive in America

After the announcement on 12 April 1963 by Attorney General Robert Kennedy that the Turkish Old Believers would be admitted into the United States as parolees, the Tolstoy Foundation sprang into action. Vera Samsonoff headed off to Turkey to coordinate the emigration process with Turkish authorities and Old Believers alike, while Tatiana Schaufuss flew to Geneva to begin making transportation plans with the Foundation's international partners, the ICEM chief among them. The ICEM arranged for the Old Believers to be transported to America on two planes, both of which arrived at Idlewild Airport (now known as JFK Airport) in New York City on 5 June 1963. Of the 250 remaining Old Believers still living in Turkey when Attorney General Kennedy made his announcement, only 226 decided to commit to the far-from guaranteed immigration process offered by the United States.⁹⁹ Even though this number paled when compared to the initial 1,500 Old Believers who asked for Western assistance in 1961, it was, no doubt, heartening for Tolstoy Foundation representatives to finally make good for those stalwart holdouts that refused Soviet repatriation.

⁹⁹ DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Russian Old Believers from Turkey- through September 15, 1963" (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5421-5428)

Not everyone was heartened by the Attorney General's announcement. Congressional hearings related to reforming immigration law, chaired by Congressman Michael Feighen of Ohio, summoned Cyril Galitzen of the Tolstoy Foundation to answer questions related to the extraordinary measures invoked allowing the Turkish Old Believers to settle in the USA. Preparation for the congressional questioning involved Galitzen meeting with the Director of the Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs, Elmer M. Falk, as well as another associate, Mr. Warren, in Washington the day before the scheduled hearing. Together, they went over the details of the Turkish Old Believer immigration process and the involvement of the Tolstoy Foundation in this affair, with careful consideration on how such answers aligned themselves with a questionnaire submitted by Congressman Feighen to Galitzen beforehand.¹⁰⁰ Galitzen also enlisted the efforts of a State Department stenographer in order to transcribe Russian letters from the Old Believers into English, in case the committee requested such materials.

"The hearing was a nasty and stupid farce," Galitzen wrote afterwards, noting that Abba Schwartz, who played an instrumental role in securing American bureaucratic support for Turkish Old Believer immigration, was also questioned.¹⁰¹ In his recollection to Tatiana Schaufuss, Galitzen noted that Feighen asked Schwartz about the possible connection between the 'Cuban situation' and the Old Believers, considering that those who repatriated to the Soviet Union did so on the transport ship Gruzia which was also used to transport the Soviet Army from Cuba at the conclusion of the Cuban Missile Crisis, as well as the similarity between the Old Believers and the Doukhobors (spelled 'duhobors' in Galitzen's letter) in Canada, which Feighen implied might want to take

¹⁰⁰ Cyril Galitzen to Tatiana Schaufuss, 23 May 1963. (TF-5448-5451) In his letter, Galitzen equates this effort as trying "to give reasonable answers to a great number of very stupid questions."

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

advantage of the parole status offered to the Turkish Old Believers. Several times Congressmen Feighen used the terms 'Russian tyrants', 'Russian murderers', and 'Russian Communism' and just as many times Abba Schwartz corrected him with 'Soviet Russia', 'International Communism', and 'the Reds', respectively. Just as it was in 1951 when Alexandra Tolstoy testified before a joint-congressional committee on Immigration Reform, the question of communist infiltration through deception in the guise of Old Belief became one of the central themes of the 1963 hearing described above.¹⁰²

The hearing lasted around five hours and Galitzen, despite being summoned by the committee, ultimately submitted a prepared written statement in lieu of oral testimony; the committee refused to hear him speak. Despite Feighen's combative intent in grilling Schwartz, little consequence came out of hearing with regards to the impending arrival of the Turkish Old Believers. Yet the affair underscored the sort of challenges faced by the Tolstoy Foundation on making good of its promise to deliver immigrants that could easily be transformed into modern, loyal citizens. The initial period of their arrival into the United States became key as a perceived successful transition into the modern American setting would impede or greatly disrupt rhetorical attacks like those leveled by Feighen against the Old Believers. It was to this task that the Tolstoy Foundation increasingly turned its attention to in the second-half of 1963 and the entirety of 1964.

1963-1964: Initial Settlement and Ensuing Wanderlust

Even as Congressman Feighen grilled Abba Schwartz and called into question the true motives of Turkish Old Believers seeking United States settlement, the Tolstoy

¹⁰² See Chapter Two, Footnote 11.

Foundation busied itself with details related to the impending arrival of the new parolees. Beyond the final surveys of Turkish villages conducted by Vera Samsonoff and the coordination of international partners in Geneva by Tatiana Schaufuss, arrangements for temporary housing stateside took shape when the Seabrook Farms Company agreed to loan the Foundation one of its camps located in the company namesake Seabrook, New Jersey. Drawing on their religious community connections, the Foundation managed to persuade the Mennonite Central Committee of Akron, Pennsylvania to donate workers and materials sufficient to repurpose the loaned farm complex initially built to house livestock into a form more suitable for human habitation. The Foundation also arranged for the Old Believers to be greeted with various resettlement services upon their arrival in the United States. Food, medical supplies, nurses, interpreters, and even a school for the basic instruction of English would all be present when the Turkish Old Believers entered the Seabrook camp.¹⁰³

Up to this point, the Foundation approached and even packaged the Turkish Old Believers as a more-or-less cohesive, homogenous group. While previous reports by Vera Samsonoff hinted at a more granular composition, it wasn't until the 224 Turkish Old Believers arrived at Idlewild Airport that more marked differences appeared. To begin, 19 of the 224 individuals opted to head to the Tolstoy Foundation Farm at Valley Cottage, New York instead of the Seabrook Camp. Four days later, 30 more individuals left Seabrook for Valley Cottage. In a report written in 1965, the Foundation offered two reasons for this cleavage in the community. The first centered on the fact that the 49 preferring Valley Cottage over Seabrook were from a strain of Old Belief that recognized

¹⁰³ DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Russian Old Believers from Turkey- through September 15, 1963" (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5421-5428)

Orthodox clergy and participated in the liturgical services of the Church. The rest of the group, who mainly lived in the village of Kazak-Koyu in Turkey, were *bezpopovtsy*, or 'priestless' Old Believers who rejected the authority and divine sanction of Russian Orthodox clergy in the 17th century and thus refused to participate in the liturgical services offered by them. Given that acceptance or rejection of clerical authority was a keystone of Old Believer identity, it made sense that the two groups sought living situations that aligned with their beliefs. Valley Cottage contained an Orthodox Church and attendant priest; Seabrook did not.¹⁰⁴

The second reason noted in the Foundation report for the community split centered on the differentiated labor skills possessed by the two distinct Old Believer groups. The 49 'priestly' Old Believers mostly lived in either Istanbul or Lake Manyas and took up occupations involving construction, painting, carpentry, tanning, and various other skilled labor positions. The 'priestless' Old Believers, in contrast, engaged in mostly fishing or farming and possessed little knowledge of other skilled labor occupations. The differentiation seems minor at first glance but the report indirectly hints at why this division mattered to Foundation authorities. Commenting on why the 'priestly' Old Believers preferred Valley Cottage the report notes, "the summer renovation program at the Tolstoy Center offered the most immediate opportunity of satisfactory

¹⁰⁴ Scott Moss, in his history of the Tolstoy Foundation, noted that the church found at the Valley Cottage Farm belonged to the Orthodox Churches of America (OCA) organization until 1969, when the OCA decided to recognize the true center of Orthodoxy as residing in the Soviet Union. Both Tolstoy and Schaufuss rejected this decision and decided to, instead, join the Orthodox Churches Outside of Russia organization and receive ordained priests from them for assignment in the Valley Cottage church. See Scott Moss, *A History of the Tolstoy Foundation, 1939-1989*. http://www.tolstoyfoundation.org/pdfs/tf_history_s-moss_.pdf Accessed: 15 September 2016.

employment with all attendant protection...of group insurance coverage and hospitalization."¹⁰⁵

Essentially, compatible labor skills of the 'priestly' Old Believers made them amenable to transformation into modern subjects more so than the farmers and fisherman that comprised the population of the 'priestless' group. With little effort the 'priestly' Old Believers could plug themselves into modern American infrastructure, however imperfectly, and become taxable wage-earners readymade for integration into one of the primary sites of disciplinary action; the healthcare system. The 'priestless' Old Believers, in contrast, required more effort to reach this 'readymade' threshold. Even though the Foundation provided nurses, medical care, and rudimentary English education for those at the Seabrook camp, they did so on a temporary basis and with the over-arching idea that such services would only 'jump-start' the 'priestless' group's integration into modern society. As will be made more explicit below, the Foundation clearly sought to quickly disperse the Seabrook population into the surrounding New Jersey and New York communities after their arrival because it was assumed that fragmentation of the less-skilled group would speed the assimilation process.

Almost immediately the Seabrook camp was overrun with visitors intent on meeting with the Old Believers. Levering noted in his report that 75 to 100 guests registered each week to gain entry into the Seabrook camp, with interests and occupations spanning from federal and regulatory, as was the case with visiting officials from INS and the local health department, to the personal and persuasive, as was the case with

¹⁰⁵ DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Russian Old Believers from Turkey- through September 15, 1963" (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5421-5428)

visiting Old Believers from nearby Connecticut and New Jersey.¹⁰⁶ The first group of visitors wanted to begin processing the Old Believers into the bureaucratic machinery and disciplinary gaze associated with being potential American citizens. At the Seabrook camp, the Old Believers underwent thorough health examinations, received treatments or vaccines for known ailments, and answered detailed surveys regarding their familial background. The second group sought to persuade members of the Russian religious group to either accept employment opportunities, relocate their families to nearby communities, or both.

From the perspective of the Foundation this second group, established Old Believers that were American citizens, offered the best opportunity to disperse and settle the collected group of Turkish Old Believers and make good on the promise of quick assimilation put forth to American authorities. When some Old Believers from Millville, New Jersey donated the use of truck to transport the Turkish Old Believers to various odd jobs offered them in their initial weeks of arrival, the Foundation was more than happy to oblige. Over time, other gifts or opportunities made their way to Seabrook. "Tolstoy Foundation employees were hard pressed, channeling and screening the flood of offers of work, aid, relocation," Levering wrote about the first few weeks at the Seabrook Camp.

The Old Believers took a variety of occupations in early June 1963. Job offers arrived via mail at the Tolstoy Foundation headquarters soon after Attorney General Robert Kennedy made his announcement regarding the entry of the Turkish Old Believers into the United States that previous April.¹⁰⁷ Among the first received was the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Once they arrived, offers of employment, housing, or both were recorded on special worksheets designated 'Tolstoy Foundation Old Believers Program - Employment and Resettlement'. Included among the various blank fields were categories such as the type of work offered, number of workers needed, a

offer from General Medenbach of the Valley Forge Military Academy, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. His was typical of the sort of employment offers American outsiders, with little knowledge of the group, believed Old Believers capable of performing; namely, non-skilled labor positions. Janitorial, maintenance, or kitchen work awaited those single or childless couples willing to take Medenbach up on his offer. Nate Speracio, from Bridgeton, New Jersey, offered little more than an offer to pick strawberries and included no information as to salary, potential housing, or even the number of workers desired.¹⁰⁸ Julia Szurin wrote the Foundation on 28 May 1963 looking for a middle-aged Old Believer woman to perform housekeeping duties in St. Louis. There also seemed to be an implied necessity for adult care on top of the housekeeping duties, as Szurin wrote that one adult will be in the home full-time.¹⁰⁹ Yet not all letters sought the use of non-skilled Old Believer labor. One request in particular, made by Sylvester Garrett of Philadelphia, looked to tap specialized agricultural knowledge rooted in the Old Believers long settlement in Turkey. "As I understand these refugees lived in Turkish farming country for generations (and) they should be familiar with Eucalyptus trees and their great value in eradicating insect pests and retarding soil erosion," wrote Garrett, who also happened to be blind, before adding, "Do any members of your refugee group know how to plant and care for a hardy variety of Eucalyptus trees?"¹¹⁰

description of the workplace conditions, housing facilities available, and even a large blank area where interviewer comments could be written. Of the handful of offers surveyed, none utilized the space afforded for interviewer comments nor did they include any details about the workplace or housing conditions. While this is hardly a conclusive sample size, it is entirely possible that the relative speed with which the Foundation wished to process and disperse the Turkish Old Believers led them to look over or omit this portion of the screening process.

¹⁰⁸ Tolstoy Foundation Old Believer Program Employment and Resettlement Form, 14 May 1963. (TF-5540)

¹⁰⁹ Tolstoy Foundation Old Believer Program Employment and Resettlement Form, 28 May 1963. (TF-5541)

¹¹⁰ Sylvester S. Garrett to the Tolstoy Foundation, 11 June 1963. (TF-5543)

Beyond the fact that almost all of the offers received by the Foundation called for non-skilled labor, they also tended to favor small groups or individuals- not an entire community. Atomization of the Turkish Old Believer community in the name of settlement and future assimilation became a fixture of Foundation policy during the Seabrook period. Foundation members pushed Old Believer men to accept job offers, even if just on a trial-basis, and secured for some of the women employment in housework or as sales clerks.¹¹¹ Amidst the flurried employment activity described by Foundation authorities, however, a sense of apprehension emerged among the Old Believer community housed at Seabrook. While the Turkish Old Believers never rejected help offered by the Tolstoy Foundation, some clearly desired to heed their own council rather than that offered by their American friends. Levering describes the emergence of this independent streak in his report:

Quite understandably, the new arrivals were torn this way and that by the suddenness and quantity of these employment and settlement suggestions. Our counseling of caution and deliberation was largely negated by the pressure of these local visitors, and the Old Believers began making independent plans.¹¹²

Even though the Tolstoy Foundation praised the Turkish Old Believers for their stubborn resistance in the face of Soviet pressure to relocate, when faced with the same stubbornness with regards to their own relocation plans the Tolstoy Foundation could do little but attempt to guide the Old Believers towards the outcome desired. Even though

¹¹¹ While the Levering Report makes this claim regarding the jobs acquired by Old Believer women, it appears dubious that a group lacking even basic English language skills would be up to the task of facilitating consumer sales. As will be elaborated below, the far more reasonable explanation for this curious statement is to plant in the mind of the reader the idea that the Turkish Old Believers were ready and willing to shed their traditional ways and enter the modern American lifestyle.

¹¹² DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Russian Old Believers from Turkey- through September 15, 1963" (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5421-5428)

they possessed little direct knowledge of their new country, the Turkish Old Believers wasted no time in actively engaging with their surroundings and shaping them towards their own uses. An illustrative example of this behavior came about almost immediately after the Old Believers arrived in the United States. Within days of moving into the Seabrook Camp they repurposed the already repurposed structure serving as the mess hall into a church, "thereby providing almost from the first day this most essential factor of the Old Believer's life."¹¹³ Considering that the initial priorities of the Foundation vis-a-vis the Turkish Old Believers centered on integration into the medical disciplinary apparatus, providing basic instruction in English, and then quick settlement into various communities so as to promote assimilation, it is no wonder the religious group took it upon themselves to provide something the Foundation seemingly forgot- a worship space. While hardly a troubling sign of willfulness, it nonetheless highlighted the distinct difference between what future the Foundation envisioned for the Old Believers and what future the Old Believers envisioned for themselves. One future, advocated by the Foundation, sought to transform the traditional subjects into modern citizens. The other future, advocated by the Old Believers, sought to carve out traditional space in the modern setting. And while the creation of a church out of a mess hall caused little conflict, the question over settlement of the Old Believer community was far more contentious.

Once Foundation members realized that the Old Believers were "making independent plans" they quickly sought a settlement option that would both assuage fears of community disintegration and keep the Russian religious group within close proximity

¹¹³ Ibid. Where the Old Believers proceeded to eat, after repurposing the mess hall into a church, is not mentioned in the Foundation report.

for evaluation and/or intervention. The proposed solution, explained below, appeared the most reasonable course of action for Foundation executives:

Tolstoy Foundation staff, realizing the advisability of as wide a dispersal as possible initially, turned again to the Mennonites of Pennsylvania...and the American Friends Service Committee of Philadelphia, requesting advice and assistance, regarding the possibility of relocating various Old Believer families in their respective areas.-¹¹⁴

The leaders of the Old Believer community at Seabrook, initially amenable to the idea, sent five representatives to visit with Mennonite leaders and tour several farmsteads. Levering wrote that because the Turkish Old Believers "were, and still are, anxious to build their future on the land," they found potential settlement with the Mennonites to have "struck a responsive chord in their hearts." The visit, however, was ultimately for naught. Lack of communication, due to a dearth of English skills, made settlement with the Mennonites less than ideal from the Turkish Old Believers perspective. Yet similarity in lifestyles, customs, and traditions between the two groups left an impression upon the Old Believers and they stressed to Tolstoy Foundation members that they would keep the future possibility of resettlement in Pennsylvania "constantly in their minds."

Rejection of the proposed settlement plan with the Pennsylvania Mennonites by the Turkish Old Believers meant that the Foundation needed to quickly come up with an alternative option. The Seabrook Camp, meant only as a temporary shelter, would not be suitable for habitation in the cooler fall and winter temperatures. Fortunately for the Foundation, offers of various trial jobs led many Old Believer men to acquire wage-earning occupations which, in turn, allowed those with families to move out of the Seabrook Camp and settle amongst the various communities in New Jersey where

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

established Old Believer families already lived. By 25 July 1963, roughly seven weeks after their arrival, the Seabrook Camp no longer housed any Turkish Old Believers. They scattered amongst several towns over the next year; Millville and Lakewood took the lion's share with 174 persons, while much smaller groups numbering in the single digits settled in Paterson, Camden, Peabody, Brooklyn, and Yonkers.

It appeared, at first glance, that the Foundation's concerns over settlement and desire to spread the Old Believers in "as wide a dispersal as possible initially" found satisfying resolution. Settlement among several American towns prompted atomization of the Old Believer community and promoted, at least from the Foundation's observation, speedier assimilation into American culture. "Local communities were, at all times, very helpful in conditioning these people to the American pattern," Levering wrote in his report detailing the initial settlement period of the Turkish Old Believers.¹¹⁵ A subsequent Foundation assessment of Old Believer settlement in New Jersey painted a rosy picture with regards to the progress of such 'conditioning':

They are industrious, and they have prospered - and they are happy. Most are living in rented homes and apartments, which they have equipped in the American manner with television sets, refrigerators and washing machines. Some have constructed their own homes, one, in Lakewood, of special merit, patterned on the accepted middle-income \$15,000 category. Automobiles are owned by most families.¹¹⁶

This same assessment took great pains to stress that occasional run-ins with law enforcement stemmed from "unfamiliarity with American customs and regulations," and

¹¹⁵ DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Russian Old Believers from Turkey- through September 15, 1963" (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5421-5428)

¹¹⁶ DeCourrey W. Levering, "Tolstoy Foundation 1963 Resettlement of Lake Manyas Old Believers: Appendix II - September, 1963 - July, 1965." (Unpublished Tolstoy Foundation Report, 16 August 65). (TF-5429)

that among being considered good workers, the Old Believers were also known to be "excellent credit risks" due to "no known case of payment delinquency."

Indeed, the whole situation appeared to be a ringing endorsement of both the malleability of Old Believer character, whose adjustment to televisions and automobiles marked them as conspicuous consumers of modernity, and the power of American culture, whose assimilatory pressure managed to transform decidedly traditional subjects into modern citizens. That the Foundation measured Old Believer acclimatization and assimilation to American culture in materialistic terms is hardly surprising. Not only was their initial pitch for Old Believer settlement in America predicated on the sort of transformative potential as expressed by the ownership of refrigerators, but there also followed after settlement strong pressure from American authorities to ensure such a materialistic measuring stick be bandied about to congressmen and reporters alike. Elmer Falk, Director for the Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs in the State Department, wrote Tatiana Schaufuss on 8 August 1963, just a few weeks after the Old Believers abandoned the Seabrook Camp for settlement in New Jersey, to confirm a statement he was submitting to a congressional committee meeting about the Turkish Old Believers. Specifically, Falk wanted Schaufuss to confirm that as of the 8 August "all of the Old Believers have been resettled individually, are fully employed, and are self-supporting." He added at the end of his letter a desire to have this fact communicated to all who inquired about the Old Believers. "It is important in connection with all future publicity concerning the Old Believers that the substance of the above quoted sentence be emphasized."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Elmer Falk to Tatiana Schaufuss, 8 August 1963. (TF-5351)

Yet even the rosier of statements did little more than paper over the actual sentiment expressed by the Old Believers regarding their settlement in New Jersey. Many felt that the scattering of their numbers across New Jersey and New York presaged the disintegration of their community and way of life, especially with regards to raising their children in a 'modern' American cultural scene. "The one and only concern," noted by Levering, "was their fear that the children and youth would be too quickly assimilated into, to them, the unattractive juvenile pattern of American life." Other tensions surfaced regarding the employment of Turkish Old Believers in industrial jobs. Levering documented at least one case of two brothers, the Goktas, torn over the opportunity to work in a factory as opposed to the more traditional occupation held by the Old Believer community of working the land. This familial disagreement "understandably caused some discontent."

Reports compiled by Levering and submitted for review to Senator Edward Kennedy deliberately portrayed the Turkish Old Believer settlement as speedy and successful. Almost 80% of the compiled reports focus on the backstory and initial settlement of the Turkish Old Believers in New Jersey and New York, while only a few pages tacked on as an appendix even touch upon the relocation to Oregon that occurred over the course of 1964 and early 1965. The reason for such a focus on the early period is no surprise; given that the Tolstoy Foundation predicated immigration of the Old Believers on their speedy settlement and assimilation, it made little sense to highlight what could appear to some as a loss of control over a group of aliens seeking to preserve their 'traditional', or even 'anti-modern', lifestyle. Examples discussed above, however, demonstrated that Foundation members possessed at least a basic understanding that

many Turkish Old Believers desired different settlement options than those offered initially upon their arrival. Beneath the materialistic facade of refrigerator and house ownership lay a desire by the Turkish Old Believers to dictate integration and assimilation into the American cultural landscape on their own terms.

This process began in earnest in late fall of 1964 when a representative delegation of Old Believers from Millville visited the small, but growing, settlement of Brazilian Old Believers then settling around Gervais, Oregon. Having remained in contact with the Brazilian colony by mail since their arrival in America, the Turkish Old Believers became more and more intrigued with descriptions of abundant, fertile farmland and opportunities for greater isolation from the encroaching forces of American culture in the rural Oregon countryside not available in their, then, current settlement in the Northeast. At first the move west came in sporadic starts, with individuals or single families making the trek to join their Brazilian brethren. Yet as word came back of the opportunities afforded by relocation in Oregon, most important of which was the possibility of land ownership, increasing numbers of Turkish Old Believers made the trip. While Tolstoy Foundation reports are curiously (or, perhaps, cautiously given the potential reading audience) vague as to the actual numbers of those moving to Oregon, one report does note that "increasing impatience among various families of both Millville and Lakewood to move west" led to seven families, totaling around 42 persons, to relocate in the middle of May 1965. While certainly appreciative of the Tolstoy Foundation's assistance, this move marked the first instance in which the Old Believers actively pushed back against the vision of modernity offered by their anointed stewards and, instead, sought their own path.

1964-1968: The Valley Migrant League Years

The move to Oregon marked a new chapter in the lives of Turkish Old Believers who found themselves both surrounded by a much larger group of co-religionists and increasingly distant from the one organization that shepherded them through the difficult immigration from Turkey to the United States. This presented challenges for the smaller group from Turkey as they faced potential relegation, in cultural terms, to minority status amongst the more numerous Brazilian population even as the larger group provided the long sought after source of additional marriage partners. Distance from the Tolstoy Foundation also meant that the Turkish Old Believers had far fewer 'indigenous' liaisons to rely upon when navigating local, state, and federal bureaucracies. It is important to remember that at the time of their relocation to Oregon, many of the Turkish Old Believers still possessed the parolee status granted to them by Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1963. While the move to Oregon provided additional ability for the Turkish Old Believers to dictate their own entry, integration, and assimilation into American culture, it also placed them into the distinct category of being, yet again, strangers in a strange land. The few gains made in the northeast with regards to employment and house ownership would have to be repeated again in Oregon.

In what can be regarded as one of the more happy coincidences of the move west, the Turkish Old Believers arrived in the Willamette Valley area just as a new federal migrant assistance program came into existence- the Valley Migrant League. Conceived of in 1964, the VML was the brainchild of local religious leaders in the Willamette Valley whose own patchwork efforts at tackling migrant problems suggested that a well-funded, large-scale organization could have a greater impact upon what was then one of

the larger summer destination spots for the migrant labor stream that stretched from Texas to Washington. While the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believer populations qualified as migrants only in the most extreme definition of the word, they nonetheless became curious objects of interest to idealistic VML administrators. Beset with financial and personnel issues right from the start, the VML, despite its deficiencies, offered the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers opportunities to enroll in English-speaking classes, secure job training, and navigate interactions with local officials in the medical and juridical fields. The VML funded the first academic studies of the Old Believers, kick starting a process of academic observation followed by several others over the following decades. They also took pains to integrate Old Believers into the administrative structure of the VML itself, giving one particular member of the community, Vasily Bodunov, a seat on the Board of Directors. While internal problems and transition to a Hispanic-dominated leadership ultimately reduced the VML's effectiveness for the Old Believers by 1970, it nonetheless acted as a prominent force that helped solidify the Russian community in their new Oregon home.

In order to understand how and why the VML came to involve itself with the Old Believers, a summary of its origins and guiding principles is first required. As noted above, the nucleus of the VML's founding members came from religious organizations with a focus on social justice work. While this meant that the original planners possessed firsthand knowledge of problems the VML would likely tackle in serving the migrant population of the lower Willamette Valley, it also meant that they conceived of their grandiose program as essentially transformational in nature. It was not enough to mollify the migrants' often-squalid housing conditions or assist them in securing their legal

rights. The VML would do more than *assist* migrants; it would *transform* them into productive, settled citizens of the community.

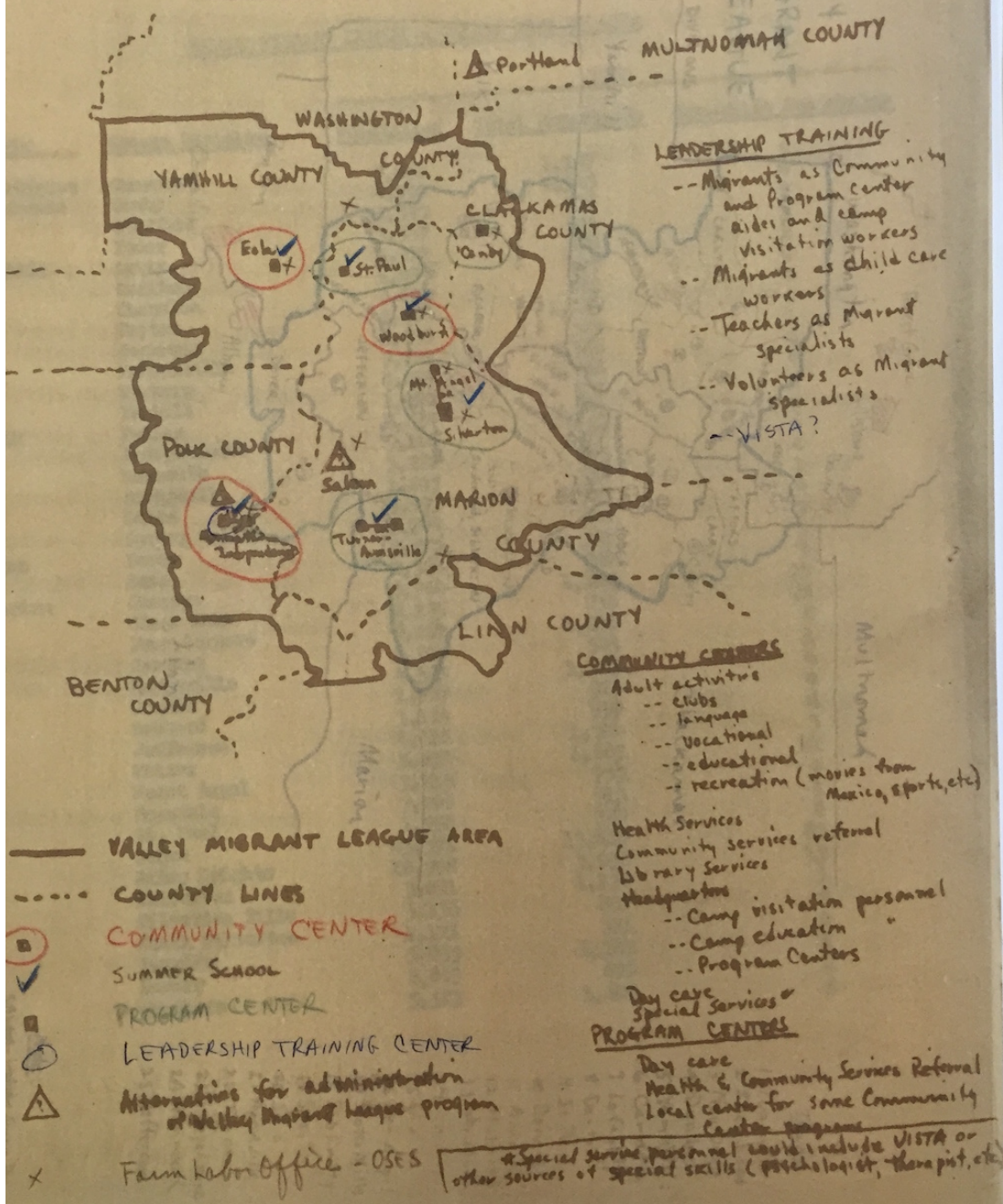
Evidence of this can be seen in a 1964 draft proposal drawn up to outline possible components and preliminary budgets.¹¹⁸ Nurses, Child Care Specialists, Physical Therapists, Recreation Directors, and even a Dietician comprised a small selection of specialists the proposal envisioned to work with VML staff spread across several administrative centers, day care facilities, and adult education sites. Migrants would be tapped to work various non-skilled labor positions such as janitorial duty and bus driving, a proposed role that hinted at underlying tension between ideals of what VML authorities wanted migrants to become, those being empowered and settled members of the community in which they worked, versus the reality of roles the VML envisioned them to serve, those being various low-skill jobs that provided little room for advancement. The draft proposal also envisioned extensive use of VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) labor to supplement administrative efforts and provide a visible presence in the rather large geographical footprint that made up the VML's proposed jurisdiction. A conceptual sketch of the VML's proposed organizational network, stretching over five counties, reveals the extensive scope of the project.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ "Sample Proposal to Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington D.C., from Valley Migrant League" Date Unknown, 1964. OHS-Mss 1585 Box19/F2 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - background, 1964-1965.

¹¹⁹ Conceptual Sketch of Integrated Program Valley Migrant League. OHS-Mss 1585 Box19/F2.

CONCEPTUAL SKETCH OF INTEGRATED PROGRAM

VALLEY MIGRANT LEAGUE



A second, more refined draft proposal further elaborated the transformational scope of the VML's activities. "Not every migrant user area in the country can mount a major program...because an essential program ingredient is a knowledgeable and experienced nucleus of dedicated people," the draft posited before adding, "Such people have for some time been at work in the lower Willamette Valley and already have considerable experience." Conceiving of themselves as an "operational complex with qualified staff, adequate funds, research and other supporting functions and a full kit of techniques," the founders of the VML saw the project as "a real responsibility...for us to do our best."¹²⁰ Their physical locus of activities would be found at the various 'Migrant Opportunity Centers' located in each county. These centers would coordinate various educational programs for children and adults, as well as operate a child day-care facility, in addition to serving as a shared space for community development. VML founders speculated that the Opportunity Centers would become spaces where migrants could transform themselves, be it through citizenship classes, family management, utilization of the reading room, or even participation in intramural sports leagues. They would remain open year-round, not just during the busy summer season, thus allowing migrants the potential to develop "into participating members of society, escape poverty levels of income and living standards and work with project leaders to in turn assist other migrants to follow suit."¹²¹

Getting migrants to not only visit the Opportunity Centers but also become active participants depended heavily upon 'migrant contact' efforts. Chief among those efforts outlined by the VML founders was the publishing of an organizational newspaper.

¹²⁰ Valley Migrant League OEO Prospectus. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box19/F2 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - background, 1964-1965.

¹²¹ Ibid.

Containing bilingual Spanish-English content, the newspaper served as both a conduit of information deemed important for escaping the migrant stream and a means by which personal contact with the target population could be made. Handing out the newspaper (a task carried out by VML staff and, occasionally, migrant volunteers) would go hand-in-hand with recruiting migrants to enlist in the various programs offered by the VML. Furthermore, VML founders saw the use of part-time reporters among the migrant population as key to the success of the enterprise. Much like the function of the Opportunity Centers described above, the newspaper would become a means by which migrants could transform themselves and serve as a model to others. That such a plan envisioned the unrealistic presence of an established, highly motivated, and highly trained cadre of 'transformed migrants' with developed literacy skills, already in short supply according to their own estimates, seems to have escaped the minds of VML planners. As shall be explored below, the idealistic vision of the VML often clashed with the actual reality of the migrant situation on the ground. The newspaper component, which was to play an active role in documenting and interpreting the Russian Old Believer population, was no different.

Migrants contacted and brought into the fold of services offered by VML filled out questionnaires and answered verbal surveys, with details culled from these sources sent to the specially designated 'Research Section' for evaluation and reflection. Special research personnel would be employed to "record experience gained in the many phases of the program, to probe the attitudes and reactions of the migrants...and to report to other areas the experiences useful in similar migrant assembly areas."¹²² More than any other

¹²² Ibid.

component outlined in the prospectus, the 'Research Section' embodied the transformational ideal embedded in the VML's stated mission. It not only allowed specialized researchers the ability to cast their net of expertise across ostensibly invisible populations but also create a feedback loop of evaluation that would transform efforts as such a target population transitioned into established, tax-paying members of society.

With regards to the Russian Old Believers, the Research Section was second only to the newspaper in terms of fascination with the religious community. Though the Research Section was short-lived and suffered from the same budgetary ailments that plagued and doomed the newspaper, it nonetheless became one of the primary means by which the VML identified and constructed knowledge around the Old Believers. That both components of the larger VML structure were concerned with transformation is no coincidence with regards to their curiosity surrounding the distinct cultural group. The Old Believers, with their traditional dress and air of the exotic, could do little to escape the planned and purposeful wide scope of VML transformational activities.

When VML founders submitted their finalized proposal to the Community Action Program (CAP) in early 1965, their guiding philosophy and praxis surrounding migrant transformation took definitive form. While previous drafts called for funding levels of \$125,000 to \$200,000 the finalized proposal reached for the brass ring with a request of over \$850,000. Accompanying this rather elevated funding request was an accordingly elevated increase in the language used to describe both the migrant problem and its solution.

How can we break through cycles of poverty which are permitted and encouraged by the inability of existing agencies to adequately educate the children of migrant farm workers, thus failing to prepare these children to rise above

the poverty-level existence of their parents? How can we break through the language barrier, the inexperience barrier, the ignorance barrier and the cultural barrier to reach the adult seasonal farm worker to enable him to improve his level of existence? New techniques? Yes, innovation is necessary...(yet) the most dramatic change over past practice must be in the *scope* of programing.¹²³
(Emphasis in original)

While the CAP proposal called for the usual involvement of migrants in non-skilled labor positions, such as janitorial or personal assistance to white administrators, it also made overtures to include migrants in the administration of the program on the Board of Directors.¹²⁴ The overreaching goal of migrant involvement was summed up in the following statement found in the CAP proposal: "In all cases, emphasis will be placed on giving them [migrants] training for these jobs that will be useful to them in finding employment opportunities afterwards."¹²⁵ The founders envisioned that, with help from specialists and administrators alike, the migrants would be able to continue the work begun by the VML through the formation of migrant councils. Thus, through internalization of the transformative philosophy championed by the VML, future migrants could, in turn, widen the scope of action and further carry out the work begun by the often white idealists. While this appears, on face, to be quite the opportunity for inclusion of migrant viewpoints and concerns at the highest levels of VML administration, in reality the Board of Directors often played second fiddle to the whims of the Executive Committee comprised solely of members from major private organizations that possessed interest in the migrant question. The CAP proposal even went so far as to admit "only minimum participation in the planning of broad outlines of

¹²³ CAP Application Form - Valley Migrant League. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box21/F5 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - OEO Proposal Components, 1965-1966.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

the project has been available from the migrant and ex-migrant group" because the migrant group "has not arrived in the area at this time." Yet this reality did little to dampen planners' enthusiasm for the project. A proposed organization chart, more elaborate than the 1964 example shown above, makes clear just how wide of a scope the VML planned to take; 611 staff and volunteers stretched over a wide geographical area containing five 'operations centers' and fifteen Child Care Centers/Summer School programs.

On 19 March 1965, the Office of Economic Opportunity awarded the VML a grant totaling \$681,000 bringing to life one of the largest federally funded migrant programs of its time in the country. It was this program, with all of the transformative hopes and desires envisioned by its founders, which the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believers found themselves confronted with upon their arrival and settlement in the Lower Willamette Valley. The qualities that made the Willamette Valley such a hotbed for seasonal migrant labor were the same that drew the Old Believers to Oregon in the first place; there was ample land and agricultural opportunity, not to mention relative isolation from the sort of population concentration (and perceived cultural contamination these concentrations brought) encountered in the initial settlements offered by the Tolstoy Foundation in New York and New Jersey. Thus the stage was set for another interesting encounter between the 'traditional' Old Believers and American modernity, represented this time by the agents of the VML.

Settlement in Oregon and Interaction with the VML

Supplemental arrivals of Turkish Old Believers from the East Coast over the course of the summer of 1965, together with the already established presence of Old

Believers once settled in Brazil, coalesced with the emergence of the VML as an active administrative presence in the Lower Willamette Valley. The newly funded federal program wasted little time planning for the upcoming summer season when migrant demand for day care and other medical/judicial needs reached their peak. Around a dozen day care centers, along with the centralized administrative hubs known as Opportunity Centers, needed to be set up in a matter of weeks. Adult Education programs also took shape during this initial period with the VML's own Sarah Hall Goodwin taking over Sunday afternoon English classes being offered to Spanish-speaking migrants in Mt. Angel. Yet one of the critical components of the VML, the planned newspaper, failed to materialize in time for the busy summer season due mainly to the inability of the Foundation executives to hire a qualified editor.

This situation rectified itself with the hiring of Don Wilcox in June 1965. A graduate of the University of Kansas, Wilcox arrived at the VML from far-away Guatemala where he spent the previous few years teaching at the American School and editing *Camino*, a Spanish-English magazine. With a background in education and first-hand experience in editing a dual-language newspaper, Wilcox made an ideal candidate for the like-minded Valley Migrant League. Katie Bartels, a consultant from Lauback Literacy who worked as an assistant editor for their 'News for You' publication, later joined Wilcox's staff. Her primary job was to assist Wilcox in designing and implementing a newspaper suited for migrants who possessed little to no literacy skills. Together they immediately set to work, publishing the first edition of the, then, nameless migrant newspaper in the same month they arrived in the Lower Willamette Valley. Later renamed 'Opportunity News', the VML's migrant weekly, along with its editor, took

a keen interest in the Old Believers over the next two years, running several articles on the 'colorful peasants' whose conspicuous presence stood out against the largely Hispanic migrant population normally covered in its pages.

That the Old Believers so easily became the repeated subject of a newspaper meant to target the migrant population will be discussed in greater detail below. It is mentioned here only as a means of outlining the institutions and processes by which the Old Believers became integrated into the VML's larger transformative project originally meant to assist a largely Hispanic population. Being one component, the newspaper was only part of the larger interaction between the Russian religious group and the VML. Other components, such as the Adult Education program and, especially, the Research and Evaluation section, also widened their pedagogical and investigative scope to include the Old Believers. As the summer swell of migrants receded the increasingly sustained presence of the Old Believers became ever more present in VML records.

It was among reports delivered by Sarah Goodwin of the Adult Education section that picked up on the Old Believer presence first. Night classes in Spoken English, created to give migrant workers who labored during the day an opportunity to improve their language skills during their only source of free-time, noted increasing numbers of mostly Russian teenagers attending throughout August. Requests from "Russian farm workers" necessitated the creation of a special language program for Russian speaking children in Woodburn and St. Paul that following August; enrollment topped 39, but only a dozen or so attended regularly. While the numbers listed above potentially represented only a fraction of the total possible Old Believer population that lived in the Lower Willamette Valley at that time, it is telling that one of the most important demographic

groups, teenagers, comprised the majority of those seeking English language skills. Creating strategic intermediaries that could transverse both cultural and linguistic boundaries was a time-honored tactic for cultural groups thrust into a new homeland, and it could easily be suggested that the 'Russian teenagers' mentioned above played such a role for their own families.

Regardless of their ultimate motivations, the Old Believers proved to the VML that initial plans would have to be adjusted if the federally funded project wanted to truly be a transformational presence in the area. Programs would need to be expanded and adjusted to incorporate a cultural group that, at the time, the VML personal did not fully understand. English speaking classes dedicated specifically for the Russian speaking population became a necessity, with Mt. Angel and Woodburn becoming the educational epicenters for such efforts.¹²⁶ One board report even stated that the Woodburn Opportunity Center would begin offering spoken-Russian classes for VML staff, although the documentary record is curiously silent as to the efficacy or even existence of this effort beyond this initial note.

Beyond the interactions occurring at the Spoken-English classes, the most important effort made by the VML to understand the Old Believers in the waning days of 1965 originated from the incessantly curious Don Wilcox. Now assisted by Priscilla Carrasco with the departure of Ellie Bartels back to Lauback Literacy, Wilcox undertook what is the first analytical report, outside of those produced by the Tolstoy Foundation, produced about the Old Believers since their arrival from Brazil and Turkey alike. The report contained fifteen sections, such as 'The Family' or 'Cultural Heritage', that were

¹²⁶ VML Board Report, September 1965 and November 1965. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box19/F3 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - board reports, 1965.

meant to give the reader a surface level account of the Old Believers background.

Wilcox utilized personal observations, interviews, informal visits, and newspaper articles as a source base for much of his analysis. Part historical primer and part sociological observation, Wilcox's report provided for members of the Valley Migrant League a summary of the habits and customs, both secular and sacred, that this distinctly conspicuous group performed in their daily lives.

Beginning with a vignette depicting the arrival at Portland Airport of Old Believers from Brazil on 2 December 1964, Wilcox highlighted themes that became constants throughout all of the early reports centered on investigating the Russian religious group. "It was right out of a Tolstoy novel," Wilcox began, pegging the group as emerging from a bygone era even as they "arrived by jet" and leafed through magazines that featured advertisements for 1965 automobiles. The deliberate juxtaposition of modern accouterments against the 'traditional' aura the Old Believers projected through their physical presence established for the reader a dichotomy comprehensible primarily through the metaphor of distance, both temporal and behavioral. When Wilcox transitioned from the introduction of his report into the substantive prose it is no coincidence that he selected "The New Arrival Goes to Work" as his first analytical waypoint. As befitting their Tolstoy-esque peasant appearance, Wilcox noted that several Old Believers worked in the rich agricultural holdings of the Lower Willamette Valley although one example, Paul Kasachev, held employment at a furniture store in Portland. Old Believer females are praised for their strength and ability to handle labor-intensive

agricultural work, with "kerchiefs and ankle length skirts" acting as distinct markers of their presence.¹²⁷

The following section, labeled 'His Appearance,' further elucidates this conspicuous perspective. "The Russian immigrant's appearance is distinctly different from that of the non-Russian of Woodburn," observes the report before adding that "the Russian is bearded, rosy-cheeked, black-booted, and his hair has a definitely 'Russian' look, not with the usual close-trimmed appearance of the American haircut." School age girls are noted as sometimes possessing "cheeks as pink as ripening peach," while at other times they exude "a rather pasty white look, as though the soups, breads and spaghetti of their diets are not a well balanced fare."¹²⁸ Families, in general, are described as clothing themselves in "simple peasant-type costumes" with some sprinkling in of items purchased from Goodwill into their daily attire. The descriptions as a whole paint a picture of a population in transition, straddling the line between traditional and contemporary values. As transitory figures they could not be categorized into neatly defined roles. Buying items from Goodwill that, in part, helped replace the dependence upon 'peasant-type costumes' could be seen as a step towards cultural assimilation or it could also be seen as a step towards the much less desired status of cultural accommodation. Determining the degree to which Old Believer behavior was either one

¹²⁷ Don Wilcox & Priscilla Carrasco, 'The Russians at Woodburn, 13 October 1965'. Found as Appendix A in Memo to Edgar May from Dick Fullmer re: VISTA Evaluation - Valley Migrant League, Woodburn, Oregon. 8 December 1965. RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services, Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division, Inspection Reports 1964-67. CAP, Oregon, Compilation- Philadelphia, PA NC3-381-85-8 Box 67: Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1965 November thru December. Quote comes from page six of Wilcox's report.

¹²⁸ Why Wilcox associated spaghetti with traditional Russian cuisine is unknown, although it probably spoke more to the fact that spaghetti, along with bread and soup, was a cheap food staple readily available.

or the other became a primary focus for many of the reports written in the following decade.

Wilcox's report goes on to outline the basic history of Old Belief and the migratory path taken by the population of Brazilian and Turkish Old Believers then settling in the area around Woodburn. There is little distinction between the Brazilian and Turkish populations of Old Believers in the report, although this omission is due most likely to the significant number of Brazilian Old Believers as compared to the Turkish contingent as well as the significant use of the Kasachev family, themselves members of the Brazilian group, as cultural informants. Anecdotes recalled throughout the report demonstrate the influence the Brazilian point of view held upon Wilcox. In the section on languages much is made of the polyglot nature of the Brazilian Old Believers, whose migratory path included extended stays in China and Brazil. When listing the labor skills possessed by the Old Believers, only the agricultural experiences of the Brazilian contingent are noted. In fact, the only reference in the report to make mention of the Turkish Old Believers is a brief acknowledgement revealed through conversation that "twenty families came through Turkey. The Tolstoy Foundation helped to bring them here. They lived in New Jersey before they came here."¹²⁹

What makes the report interesting for this analysis is its focus on the transformative, assimilative capacity of the Old Believers and the role the VML plays in this process. "Every cashier, store clerk, banker, and filling station attendant becomes an informal teacher, to yield a few new words to those who thirst to learn," the report states at one point, adding that when the Valley Migrant League surveyed Old Believer young

¹²⁹ Ibid, 10.

adults as to which nights they wished to have English classes their reply was that "they wanted them every night."¹³⁰ With regards to employment the report notes:

...there is a trend for the Russians to move rapidly from the role of employed farm worker to the level of farm owner. They find that their excellent banking habits have opened the way to credit, and so they are buying their own farms, or saving with the vision of buying as soon as possible.¹³¹

Others are noted for transitioning from stoop labor to 'car pools', meaning they shifted from working in the agricultural fields to working in the furniture factories located in Portland. Wilcox even states that some families purchased "adequate, moderately priced automobiles," to go along with their increasing rates of home ownership. Their superb credit-worthiness, a byproduct of the traditional Old Believer habit of collective saving and reinvesting in their own tight-knit community, comes across as something atypical of their assumed traditional nature. In the section on 'Social Classes,' the report speculates on the degree to which the new arrivals will become an isolated entity, "not easily to be integrated into the main stream." Interestingly, the report turns to their credit habits as one of the "certain factors (that) favor their adjustment," adding,

...we are told by the merchants that they are good to do business with. Mr. Piper, a business pillar of the community, is eloquent in his praise of the Russians. They buy good quality watches at his jewelry store, and they pay-- now when they promise to, but before. This characteristic is echoed over and over; they are good credit risks. The bankers like them.¹³²

Is there any more effusive praise for the potential of traditional peoples to adjust to a modern, capitalist environment than the comment that 'bankers like them'? For Wilcox the answer was an overwhelming yes; however, as the years passed and increasing

¹³⁰ Ibid, 13-14.

¹³¹ Ibid, 15.

¹³² Ibid, 16.

cultural tensions arose between the Old Believers and their Oregon neighbors this early optimistic statement would stand out for its simplistic naiveté.

Yet for all of its optimism the report contained interspersed moments documenting the difficulties faced by Old Believers as they learned to acclimate to their new surroundings. Older male members of the group would be less likely to significantly alter their behaviors, the report speculates, abandoning their regular work to go on hunting trips or play games of golf.¹³³ Older women faced potential isolation because, "the wives of the present generation will not, of course, be invited to join bridge clubs." Against this backdrop stood the shining example of the youth, already noted for their role as interpreter, both linguistically and culturally, for the Old Believer family. In stark contrast to their parents who will, supposedly, never come to inhabit the traditional sexually-defined spaces that demarcated the American modern, the "youngsters are ready to gather at the library on Saturday afternoons for story hours" while "a dozen teen-age [sic] girls can enjoy dropping in at the VML newspaper office to sing songs from a Russian background that they have never known first hand," providing entertainment for their "new friends at Woodburn."¹³⁴

The report ultimately concludes that despite their close knit community, "the Russians themselves...are willing to reach out to friendships with the new people around them." These friendships took on heightened importance, of course, when built in the

¹³³ Beyond this reference made by Wilcox, I was not able to find any other source that corroborated this statement that Old Believer's played golf. It is entirely possible that Wilcox derived this knowledge second-hand and thus misinterpreted what he heard.

¹³⁴ Don Wilcox & Priscilla Carrasco, 'The Russians at Woodburn, 13 October 1965'. Found as Appendix A in Memo to Edgar May from Dick Fullmer re: VISTA Evaluation - Valley Migrant League, Woodburn, Oregon. 8 December 1965. RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services, Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division, Inspection Reports 1964-67. CAP, Oregon, Compilation- Philadelphia, PA NC3-381-85-8 Box 67: Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1965 November thru December.

surroundings that made up the American modern scene. In particular the VML Newspaper is described as being an agent of transformation and integration.

The VML newspaper has helped in a small way to dissolve barriers between the Russian language group and the surrounding community by presenting a few photographs of Russians in the paper. Now there is a proposal to print small items of world news not only in English and Spanish, but also in Russian in the VML newspaper.¹³⁵

Perhaps most interesting is the insinuation that the Old Believers will inject into the local community and, by extension, America at large a hardy dose of pioneer spirit long since felt lacking by some observers. Rattling off the qualities of "the hero of the western movie" who "shoots straight" and "drives the long hard trail with never a thought of turning back," the report suggests that the Old Believers, who have "endured untold hardships" and possesses "an iron will to find an opportunity that will match his courage and his energies," are exemplars of these "reverenced pioneering qualities." Alexandra Tolstoy summoned forth much of the same imagery in her own exhortations to American authorities fourteen years previous and its rhetorical flourish served much the same function for Wilcox in his report here. Assimilation of this conspicuous and traditional group was a reasonable, and also desirable, goal of American authorities because in doing so the Old Believers could make America stronger and truer to itself.¹³⁶

Throughout the entire report one argumentative aspect is made clear: the Old Believer body as situated in the space of the American modern. This emphasis on describing the Old Believer body, through its habits and customs, was essential in framing and evaluating the assimilative capacity of the religious group. So long as the Old Believers displayed conspicuous signs that marked them as traditional their

¹³⁵ Ibid, 14.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 18.

acceptance and integration within the modern disciplinary structure would always be questioned. Perusing advertisements for automobiles, working on the factory floor, and being a good credit risk were encouraging signs for those who desired the wholesale reformation of the Old Believers into thoroughly modern American citizens.

Yet the hermeneutical anxiety these behaviors produced among American observers and evaluators during the first decade of Old Believer settlement in America demonstrated that such markers, ostensibly seen as indicative of modern life, provoked questions of mimicry and deception amongst those observers and evaluators who viewed Old Belief as irreparably traditional. At the heart of these concerns lay an existential questioning of the modern project itself; if the American milieu could do little to sway the Old Believers away from their 'antiquated' lifestyle, what does that say about the validity and sustainability of the modern project itself? Wilcox's report, with its limited source base and primer-like construction, only hinted at this anxiety. Successive reports written by academics and city bureaucrats, each with their respective interests and goals, explored this anxiety in greater detail as the question of assimilation repeatedly came to the fore in the ensuing decade.

Given the optimistic tone cast throughout Wilcox's report it is little wonder that the newspaperman found the Russian Old Believers to be a fascinating subject of study. His curiosity and desire to know the group better led him to integrate more and more content about the Old Believers into the weekly copies of the VML's own Opportunity News. A summary of the newspaper's activities over the second-half of 1965 appears in the VML Board of Directors Report for November 1965. For a newspaper dedicated to covering "stories of interest about the migrants and ex-migrants," the Old Believers, who

could only broadly be defined as a migrant population, became a consistent fixture in the news and photos offered. In a survey of twelve issues, Wilcox noted that the Woodburn district of the VML produced twenty-three articles for print. A little over half of those twenty-three articles dealt directly with the Russian community.¹³⁷ Wilcox explained that the discrepancy was due, in part, to the lack of a centralized staff that failed to cover the numerous migrant stories in the area served by the VML. As a direct consequence stories from Woodburn, the location of the newspaper headquarters, took the lion's share of available wordage and that "this matter of convenience show even more prominently in the disproportionate amount of space given to the Russian settlement in Woodburn."

Wilcox's statement above hinted at an interesting problem regarding the Valley Migrant League and their interaction with the Old Believers: the Russian group did not fit into the migrant archetype the VML purported to serve. Further explanation by Wilcox as to why the Opportunity News spent so much of its coverage on the Old Believers directly tackled this issue:

As of today, discussions are taking place concerning the role of the Valley Migrant League in the problems of the Russians. Since some of the Russians are seasonal farm workers and some are not -- and since the Russians, as a novelty, have somehow captured more than their share of our newspaper space with no thought of asking for it-- we may guess that a reduction in their share of columns will be noted in future issues. This, however, will depend upon the degree of work which the Valley Migrant League finds to do with this group as time goes on.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ For comparison the other four VML districts (Hillsboro, Dayton, West Stayton, and Independence) produced, on average, seventeen articles over the period surveyed and none of them covered the Old Believers. See OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Maris House Collection, Box 19/Folder 13 - Migrants - Valley Migrant League - board reports, 1965. VML Board of Directors Report, 29 November 1965.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 12.

Given the emphasis of the Valley Migrant League on engaging the migrant stream and bringing about personal transformation of the migrants who made the Willamette Valley their seasonal home, the desire to interact with the 'novel' Old Believers, painted in Wilcox's report as figures transitioning into modernity, proved irresistible. The only question lay in articulating *why* the VML should become involved with the Old Believers. By September of 1966 the federally funded migrant program had its answer.

Laying the Foundation for VML Involvement

One of the stipulations of accepting Office of Economic Opportunity funding required the VML to submit yearly reassessments of their program efforts and to outline any additional components requiring supplemental funding. In their 1966 proposal, the VML desired to fund an evaluation of potential 'Russian programs' by research anthropologists "to analyze the peculiar characteristics of the local Russian migrant community with special reference to their rapid ability to economically adapt to community environment." While this proposal came about before the introduction of the Wilcox report discussed above, its prescient phrasing regarding economic adaptability and desire to integrate the Old Believer population into the larger umbrella of migrant assistance took on heightened purpose once the editor's observations came to light in the October VML Executive meeting.

In many ways the desire by the VML to lay theoretical and sociological foundations for intervention into the lives of Old Believers was understandable. The group appeared to embody many of the stalwart characteristics that the mostly white administrative staff of the VML saw as essential for the molding of productive citizens. Unlike efforts to improve working conditions of the largely Hispanic migrant labor pool,

which often involved confronting white farm owners over very politically and socially sensitive issues of housing and pay, the Old Believers presented ostensibly less difficult problems to solve. They already engaged in desirable practices that rooted them in the local community, such as home ownership and utilization of banking services, and the problems they did face, such as English language acquisition and assumption of American consumer habits, fell right into the transformative wheelhouse that was VML adult education and on-the-job training programs. Given that the VML's efficacy predicated itself on the notion of utilizing expert knowledge on a grand scale, commissioning a report on the Old Believers from research anthropologists was an essential first step in the transformational process.

Financial records show that the VML commissioned Dr. Paul Griffin and Dr. Ronald Chatham, noted Geography scholars whose previous work focused on agricultural land use in California, to conduct research and write a report on the Hispanic and Russian 'migrant' populations in the Willamette Valley.¹³⁹ Along with their research assistants, the two PhD's carried out the assigned task over 37 days between June and September of 1966. For this work they received a handsome sum of \$3,000 making them the highest paid consultants contracted by the VML up to that point. Together they produced a 216 page report, of which roughly a third devoted itself to a "rather recent newcomer to the Valley...the Russian peasant."¹⁴⁰ As seen in the documents discussed above, framing the Old Believers in traditional terms presented a ready-made dichotomy between them and

¹³⁹ See Paul Griffin and Ronald Chatham, "Urban Impact on Agriculture in Santa Clara County, California" *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, Vol. 48, Iss. 3, (1958), 195-208. Also, Paul Griffin and Ronald Chatham, "Population: A Challenge to California's Citrus Industry" *Economic Geography*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (July 1958), 272-276.

¹⁴⁰ "Comparative Analysis of the Mexican-American and Russo-American Migrant in the Willamette Valley, Oregon" Dr. Paul Griffin and Dr. Ronald Chatham. 1 September 1966. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box 22/Folder 7, VML Survey - 1966.

the, assumed, modern reader. Griffin and Chatham's organizational style reinforced this trend as their anthropological analysis of specific migrant populations found counterpoint in the recorded observations of "Anglo-Americans in the nearest trade centers, i.e., bankers, merchants, law enforcement agencies, etc.," presented at the end of their report. The effect of this rhetorical gambit was clear. Relativism rendered social, economic, and familial analyses presented by Griffin and Chatham as arguments without any specific anchor. Cataloging and observing outward behaviors of Old Believers, without a context to foreground such observations, did little more than provide a foundation for the building of knowledge networks centered on Old Belief. But when these observations intersected evaluations sourced from the *vox populi* of Americans operating at the centers of "Anglo-power" around Woodburn, Griffin and Chatham's arguments become not only anchored but, more importantly, actionable. Implied distance between observed, outward behaviors of Old Believers and evaluations of American citizens regarding Old Belief provided rhetorical weight to the hired PhD's report and established an implied need for intervention in the religious community.

Beginning with a historical overview of Old Belief common to all early reports written by American experts, the section on 'The Russian Community' (referred throughout the report with the acronym RC) reflected demographical reality in the Willamette Valley by focusing almost exclusively on the history of Brazilian Old Believers. There is a small mention of the Turkish Old Believers, namely that they actively began the process of intermarrying within the Brazilian cohort upon arrival in the Willamette Valley. Beyond this initial reckoning, however, the report fails to maintain such granularity between the Brazilian and Turkish groups in its subsequent analysis.

Instead it utilized the catchall term 'Russian community', a moniker that while far from specific to the group analyzed was nevertheless generic enough to allow for wide applicability of the research presented. Chunking the distinct groups together may have been a necessity given the numerical discrepancy. But it also allowed for the group to become a homogenous entity that played well into the transformational rhetoric espoused by the VML.

Almost immediately the report elucidates the sort of cultural camouflage Old Believers wear as they interact with two of the nerve centers comprising American modernity: capitalist consumption and status projection.

It seems evident that the cultural bases for accepting American life-ways were already existing in the RC culture before their entrance into the U.S. The RC is money and status conscious. Material wealth is a measuring stick for prestige among Russians as among Americans. It is primarily for this reason that the RC manipulates American money systems so well. There has been no need for radical changes in the RC life-way in order to cope with American culture, and, indeed, there has been none.

Compatibility between the Old Believers and the American modern, much like the comparative linking of the religious group to American pioneers evoked by Wilcox and Tolstoy alike, sets up the rest of Griffin and Chatham's analysis nicely. First, it suggests that the transformation of Old Believers into model American citizens is a worthy project. Second, it points out that the Old Believers are capable of accommodating key components of American culture without noticeably altering their established traditions and routines. Third, accepting that the first two points are correct hints at the difficulties faced by potential reformers in that outward perception of Old Believer behavior is not sufficient in judging their inner acceptance of American modern values. This logical

premise endowed Griffin and Chatham's observations with increased importance as successful evaluation of any Old Believer reformation project required clearly established guidelines and markers to be measured, both of which the report provided.

This three-point logic is exemplified in the report's early analysis on Old Believer interaction with technological items common to the American household. Noting that the "Russians' first introduction to machinery was in Brazil," (an observation that only reinforces the predominance of the Brazilian group's historical narrative in the report) Griffin and Chatham suggest that while items such as cars, washing machines, and hot water tanks are wholly new to the Russian community's experience, their innate "psychoethnological niche for these artifacts was already in existence, allowing them to be assimilated into the cultural milieu with no appreciable changes." That the Old Believers possessed a 'psychoethnological niche' for modern technology meant that they were preconditioned to overcome their traditional roots, yet their inability to be radically altered by the presence of a hot water heater created noticeable unease. "The standard of living for the Russians is high," the report explains even as it noted, "for an American it is low- or at least upper low."

Comparisons between American and Old Believer standards of living became one of the primary methods by which the commissioned report demonstrated the distance (or, more rarely, the lack thereof) to be covered, regarding assimilation, by the Russian community. Lawns at Old Believer homes "are not trimmed and maintained in the manner that most Americans are accustomed to seeing," while the interior of such homes, despite being labeled as clean, are "not in the spotless tradition that many Americans

would like to present to their neighbors."¹⁴¹ Old Believer women have more ability to freely choose their fiancé than they did in their previous settlements, a quality the report identifies as being "an example of...Western society (that) is already visible."¹⁴² That such a change in marriage patterns appeared to Griffin and Chatham as evidence of accepting modernization and not, as was probably the case, the assumption of previous habits due to an increase in available partners speaks to the ethnocentric viewpoint espoused by the researchers. The measurement analogy comes to full fruition when Griffin and Chatham suggest that, in the eyes of most American observers, the Russian community earns a barely passing grade for their assimilation and accommodation efforts. "What most Americans judge with [a report-card] D," the report states, "is the outlook of the Russo-Americans, their homes, dress, smell, hair-do, and drinking and driving habits."

Teenage youth are seen as the harbingers of reform and assimilation of the Russian Community, with the girls noted as being "not backward" and possessing the beneficial traits of cleanliness and use of deodorants as well as being self-supporting and known for "often helping the family." Teenage boys from the Russian community "are almost unrecognizable from Anglo-American youth of the same age."¹⁴³ Unlike the girls, however, the young men described in the report are cast in relation to the model US male, with all of the attendant civic duties:

They wear modern clothing, are hard working, and law-abiding. They are not surpassed by any other American citizen in their loyalty to the United States, in military service, tax-paying, or economic independence. The Russo-American teen-agers, then, are the most adaptable

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 149-150.

¹⁴² Ibid, 160.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 160.

and in the long run the most important to the United States.¹⁴⁴

It is interesting the lengths to which the report goes to create a distance between the Old Believer youth and their parents. A particular sore point that would rear its head in subsequent discussions on Old Believer assimilation, sanitation, found use by Griffin and Chatham as a means to create a bright line between the youth and their elders. "At home the children are the apple of their parents' eyes, but the latter know little about the sophisticated customs, sanitary habits, cleanliness, and other modes of American culture." Only as the new generation comes into their own, bringing "better sanitation habits into the home," will the parents' perceived recalcitrant behaviors change.¹⁴⁵

The report concludes with a checklist of various criteria to be used in evaluating the Russian community's assimilation to American culture. Grouped into four categories centered on the concepts of self-sufficiency, acceptance, contribution, and learning, the criteria listed span the cultural gamut from sending children to American schools to avoiding use of social or welfare benefits. While the Old Believers received high praise for dedication in building up their own community through home/farm ownership and employment in factory or agricultural work, their perceived lack of interaction with American political institutions remained an area of concern. Few families owned a television and those that owned a radio often listened to musical programs as opposed to those dedicated to political topics or even soap operas. While Russian language newspapers from the United States, Canada, and Brazil were found in the hands of the older Old Believers, nary a subscription to American newspapers or magazines turned up in Griffin and Chatham's investigation. Yet enough encouraging signs existed among the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 164.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 165.

youth that the report declared, "it is only a question of time until they will participate fully in the American way of life."¹⁴⁶

Attached as separate appendices to the report are case histories of two Old Believer families, a listing of all known Russian families and their composition, and interviews conducted with 25 members of the local population regarding their attitudes towards the Russian community. The latter is interesting because it reveals an uncensored view from white locals that served as both backdrop and justification for the observations made in the report. There are the expected statements of discontent, such as when a 28-year old housewife, who occasionally employed Old Believers as farmhands, stated, "they're good workers, but are very independent and unreliable." She further added, "they need help on sanitation and manners," and ultimately concluded, "the younger ones I think will gradually adapt to our ways but the older ones will stay their own way of life." A 46-year old grocery clerk who interacted with the Russian community on a daily basis displayed utter contempt in their remarks. When prompted on their feelings the clerk responded, "hard to deal with" and their "language (and) excessive bargaining" made them bothersome customers. Infrequently a respondent showed more compassion in their views. "We've had some for neighbors and they were number one people," replied a 32-year old farmer. When asked about their feelings about the Russian community the farmer responded, "they are equal to U.S. and maybe more than some of us," before ruminating that "we would maybe look bad in Russia."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 169.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 180-181, 190. There are dozens of other examples that could have been mentioned; yet many commenters gravitated around the statements made by the detractors noted above. Sanitation and body odor rank among the top of complaints registered, with inability or unwillingness to adopt American customs also among the most verbalized observations. A few respondents linked the presence of the Russian community to the work carried out by the Valley Migrant League and suggested that federal funds

Augmenting recorded views from local white citizens are the two case histories of Old Believer family men living in the Lower Willamette Valley. The shorter of the two histories centered on Vladimir Kasacheff and his family, the same family that became cultural informants for Wilcox and his preceding report delivered to the VML Board of Directors at the end of 1965.¹⁴⁸ Born in China, in the city of Harbin, Vladimir never knew the Russian homeland of his heritage. Hunting with his father and working on the farm proved to be Vladimir's main occupations during his stay in China, having never attended formal schooling of any sort, and his only notable accomplishment outside of the agrarian life was killing a bear that left scars on his neck and chest. "He has never had a major illness or mental disorder," the report summarily notes at one point, and special mention is made of both his employment at a Portland furniture builder and ability to pay credit notes for his home, car, and travel fare fronted him through a TWA program so that his family could resettle from Brazil to America.

The second case history, centered on Vasily Bodunov, provided a far more complete profile compared to that of Vladimir. He was 25 years old and also born in China. Vasily found work as a mechanic upon settling in the Gervais area and stated his future plans involved building a house amongst the Russian colony settled around Woodburn. Whereas Kasacheff's profile contained few recorded answers to interviewer's questions, Vasily's profile provided a range of answers pertaining to subjects such as education, family interaction, and law enforcement. Most of Vasily's responses fell into the single word category and there are instances in which clear communication issues

shouldn't be spent on a group that isn't American. For the sake of brevity I pulled only the selected quotes above but needless to say much more could be written about the responses printed in the Griffin and Chatham report.

¹⁴⁸ Since the report is typed, the likely misspelling of 'Vladimir' can be attributed to a simple typo or failure to transliterate the original Russian name properly.

existed between the interviewer and the head of the Bodunov family, such as when he responded "No" to the question of "What is the role of school in your family life?" Yet it is clear that Vasily, at least from the point of view of the interviewer, showed promise in becoming a model American citizen even as some of responses revealed his more 'traditional' background.

"What type of education do you desire for your family?" asked the interviewer, to which Vasily responded, "College if possible." Regarding how he choose welding for an occupation, Vasily said that the Adult Education program offered by the Valley Migrant League provided him with the training and education required for the job. When asked how he felt about the local justice system, Vasily said that he was willing to go to the police for assistance and that he received fair treatment in the courts. While there is the strong possibility that Vasily provided answers he knew the interviewers desired to hear, the responses catalogued above played into the notion that the Old Believers were, indeed, able to be transformed into 'modern' American citizens. Even when Vasily provided answers that demonstrated his 'traditional' mindset, such as when he failed to grasp the point of a question regarding how children are praised for good behavior (he "appeared to have no concept of rewarding a child- only punishing," the interviewer noted), it did little more than establish him as a transitory figure on the path towards modernity.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ 'Comparative Analysis of the Mexican-American and Russo-American Migrant in the Willamette Valley, Oregon" Dr. Paul Griffin and Dr. Ronald Chatham. 1 September 1966. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box 22/Folder 7, VML Survey - 1966. 174-178. There is an indication that the interviewer wished to probe Vasily on the depths of his more 'traditional' character traits using examples that any modern reader would immediately code as problematic and endemic to cultures deemed lacking modern mindsets. One of the more pointed questions posed to Vasily inquired if he carried a knife (he didn't) and if he would use a knife if winning a fight (he wouldn't).

What is striking about the profiles of both Kasacheff and Bodunov is that they appear to be tailor-made exemplars of the Russian community whose attitudes and behaviors marked them as striving to become model American citizens. That the Kasacheff family was personally known by Don Wilcox and, by extension, the rest of the VML administrative staff has already been established. Griffin and Chatam's profile of Vasily revealed that he received job training from adult education classes offered by the VML, meaning that Bodunov was also known by at least some of the VML staff. Upon further digging, however, the connections between Vasily and the Valley Migrant League proved to be much deeper and more involved than a simple instructor-pupil relationship. While the commissioned report discussed above laid the theoretical foundation for involvement in the Old Believer community, the story of how Vasily Bodunov came to involve himself with the VML exposed not only the lengths to which the migrant program went to cement their curious interest in the religious group but also the inherent faults the federally-funded program possessed within that would ultimately bring it down.

Vasily Meets the VML

While the VML administration placed enormous faith in their ability to utilize expert advice and transformational institutions, such as day-care and adult education, on a wide enough scale necessary to address the migrant problems of the Lower Willamette Valley, there were enough problems from the outset to prompt doubt in the minds of supporters and detractors alike. Almost immediately the program ran afoul of Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) regulations governing their hiring and spending activity. The first candidate selected by the VML Board of Directors to become the Executive Director of the migrant program, Tom Current, abdicated his position after it came to

light that he was a consultant for the OEO at the same time he was negotiating his salary for the VML job. While a subsequent OEO investigation revealed no intentional wrongdoing in the hiring of Current it did admonish the VML Board for its failure in oversight.¹⁵⁰ In the spring of 1967 a local newspaper, the Oregon Journal, uncovered alleged excessive spending by the VML on items ranging from office furniture to automobiles.¹⁵¹ After auditing VML expenses OEO investigators concluded that VML administrators failed to utilize government surplus programs for their office and transportation needs turning, instead, to local private business' that supplied the same goods at considerable markup. The spending scandal became a major public relations disaster for the VML and contributed to the later decision by OEO officials to curtail subsequent grants allocated to the migrant program.¹⁵²

Another constant source of irritation for OEO administrators was the lack of diversity among the VML's Board of Directors. Not one member of the "recipient class", meaning members of the migrant community the VML served, held a position on the governing board as of April 1965. When OEO officials telephoned to inquire as to the progress of the VML in finding suitable candidates later that summer, only three members out of thirty met the "recipient class" qualification. Identities of the three members, or what community they hailed from, was not mentioned. A report on the matter concluded that the Board of Directors was moving much too slowly in recruiting

¹⁵⁰ C.W. Peasinger Jr to William F. Haddad, 26 April 1965. RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services, Office of Economic Opportunity - Inspection Division; Inspection Reports, 1964-67. Box 66 NC3-381-85-8.

¹⁵¹ James Long and Marge Davenport, "VML Bought Many Items For Above Retail Prices," *Oregon Journal*, 1 March 1967.

¹⁵² Ray Reusche, Eric Biddle to Edgar May, 8 May 1967. RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services. Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division. Inspection Reports, 1964-67. CAP, Oklahoma, Compilation - Oregon, Compilation Box 66 NC3-381-85-8 Folder: Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1967 March thru May.

suitable members despite having promised to do so that previous February. Publicly the OEO still provided support for what was the largest federally funded migrant program at the time. Privately members of its investigative unit held serious reservations regarding the competency of VML administrators and their dedication to serving the migrant population.¹⁵³

It was, perhaps, a combination of pressure by OEO overseers to include additional members of the "recipient class" combined with a growing fascination regarding the Old Believer population that led Kent Lawrence to nominate Vasily Bodunov for a position on the VML Board of Directors in January 1966.¹⁵⁴ Why Bodunov's name came to the attention of Lawrence and the rest of the VML Board of Directors is unknown. The only relevant detail from the list of nominees is that Prohor Martushev's name is crossed out and Vasily's name is listed as an alternative. Martushev is noted as being a local farm owner and leader amongst the growing Russian community in and around Woodburn. It was this latter role that made Martushev especially helpful to the VML as he introduced many in the Russian community to the programs and personnel of the migrant program. VML documents are silent as to why Bodunov, and not Martushev, managed to secure the nomination for an open seat on the Board of Directors. Regardless of the ultimate reason, Bodunov proved his worth to the organization over time spending almost three years in volunteer service for various VML administrative committees.

¹⁵³ Haig Ellian to Bill Haddad and Bob Clampitt, 30 July 1965. RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services. Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division, Inspection Reports 1964-67. CAP, Oregon, Compilation- Philadelphia, PA NC3-381-85-8 Box 67. Folder: Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1965 Feb. thru July.

¹⁵⁴ Nominations for Board of Directors of Valley Migrant League, 6. January 1966. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box 21/3 VML Nominating Committee, '65-'70.

Over the course of the first year Vasily demonstrated a less than stellar track record for attendance; while he is counted as present in four Board of Directors' meetings, his absence is equally noted on four other occasions. Again, the documents are silent as to why Vasily missed so many meetings. But a cursory glance at the months missed reveals a cluster around the spring and summer months; prime working time for those engaged in agricultural work, Vasily's occupation of record. Kent Lawrence did not seem to mind the string of absences as VML records indicate he nominated Bodunov for the Personnel Policy Committee on 29 September 1966. This direct involvement with some of the highest levels of VML administrative staff explains why Bodunov was one of the two members of the Old Believer community selected for case history treatment in Griffin and Chattam's commissioned report.

That Vasily gained as much from his relationship with the VML as they gained from him is clear in the opportunities seized by the newly minted board member. Griffin and Chattam stated that Vasily availed himself of the adult education classes offered by the VML and records of On-the-Job Training Courses facilitated by the migrant program noted that Bodunov received training for around seven months, from April to October of 1967, at Jerry's Automotive.¹⁵⁵ He also took time to meet with OEO staff reviewing the use of VISTA volunteers by the VML, relaying thanks by the Old Believer community for the services of one Bernie Sullivan. Sullivan was one of the few VISTA volunteers who took on the monumental task of advocating for the Old Believer community despite having no ability to communicate in Russian. Bodunov's presence in the OEO report comes across as that of an intermediary, someone who straddled the cultural and

¹⁵⁵ List of OTJ Contracts, 3 December 1967. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box 21/6, VML-OEO Proposals 1967.

linguistic divide between the Old Believers and the various experts, administrators, and volunteers who staffed the VML and other state/local institutions.

Vasily continued to serve in various functions for the VML after his first year, becoming a member at large for the Board of Directors in 1967 while also participating in the New Programs Committee. Elected to the Board of Directors again in 1968, Vasily seemed destined to become a permanent fixture of the VML governing apparatus. But then, during a contentious meeting of the VML Board on 18 December 1968, Bodunov's membership was revoked and his seat given to Epifanio Collazo, a representative from the local population of Hispanic agrarian workers. That Bodunov lost his seat was hardly the contentious part; during the meeting a measure, aimed at requiring Russian participants of Adult Education programs to furnish health certificates proving they were parasite free, underwent debate. Collazo, now a full member of the Board of Directors, argued in favor of the measure suggesting that the health certificates were a prudent measure meant to protect the other Adult Education students and the churches where classes were held. Rumors about the Russians and their alleged parasites circulated in the days before the meeting, adding fuel to the fire, and the minutes of the Board meeting noted that talk of possible discrimination followed introduction of the measure.¹⁵⁶

Records indicate that Bodunov did not attend this meeting and his absence is hardly surprising. By the beginning of 1969 the VML Vasily knew and worked with for the past three years underwent significant change. The process was not sudden, to be sure, but was largely complete by the time Collazo assumed Bodunov's seat. While many issues contributed to the VML's transformation from 1965 to the scene described above

¹⁵⁶ VML Board of Directors Meeting, 18 December 1968. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box 20/F9, VML Minutes 1968.

in 1969, the general trend can be attributed to three factors: continued reductions in federal funding levels, disaffection among internal and external observers as to the core mission of the VML, and the rise of Spanish-American clubs in the Willamette Valley. While it is not the case that each factor subsequently created the conditions for the next, as the rise of Spanish-American clubs found inspiration more in the politics of the day than the failures of the VML, it is worth noting that the reduction in funding and questioning of the migrant program's core mission led the VML to become subsumed to the machinations of such clubs. Collazo's ascension at the expense of Bodunov became, in hindsight, a watershed moment between the Old Believer community and the migrant program, making each factor listed worthy of brief examination.

Federal funding for the migrant program became a constant source of irritation between VML administrators and their OEO overseers. Despite being a high profile program for the Johnson administration's 'War on Poverty,' the VML faced round after round of budget cuts. In the same 1965 Board of Directors meeting where Don Wilcox outlined his newspaper's engagement with and profile of the Woodburn Old Believers, Gary Lansing, VML assistant director, revealed that OEO capping of funds for 1966 required reduction of both Adult Education and Opportunity Center services as well as the elimination of various staff positions.¹⁵⁷ Adult Education services took a 31% funding cut while the Opportunity Centers faced a 19% reduction of funds. Perhaps more important was the loss of Housing Consultants in the Opportunity Centers and reduction of the hourly wage paid to part-time teachers from \$7.50 to \$5 per hour. The newspaper also faced cuts in funding and personnel, eliminating any hope for expansion of reporting

¹⁵⁷ VML Board of Directors Report, November 1965. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box19/F3 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - board reports, 1965.

coverage or increase in production values. The 1967 Oregon Journal investigative reports on VML spending, described above, prompted the OEO to conduct their own internal investigation that, in part, contributed to severe budgetary restrictions being imposed for the 1968 program year. Furthermore, VML administrators received notice from OEO in September 1967 that their program should begin seeking alternative sources of funding outside of those designated for migrant efforts in the coming years.

When OEO representatives announced at the Western Migrant Conference talks, held that following December, that federal support 'War on Poverty' was winding down, VML attendees could not help but read the writing on the wall. The September 1967 OEO letter which implored VML administrators to seek alternative funding also suggested that the number of Opportunity Centers be cut from seven to four due to their perceived inefficiency and duplication of services offered. This suggestion became reality at the start of 1968. A VML Executive Director's report for January noted the closure of the Sandy, Independence, and Hillsboro Opportunity Centers, as well as a 56% cut in the total funding offered by the OEO. The former was a blow to the transformative reach of VML efforts, reducing the scope once touted as key to the program's novel approach. The latter provoked a hollowing out of the transformative programs offered by the VML, reducing the number of job counseling staff positions available for Adult Education and eliminating outright the newspaper and day care components. The financial death knell for the VML came in October 1968 when the OEO notified the migrant program that "more established Title III-B agencies (should) begin to seek funding elsewhere for the continued operation of portions of their programs."¹⁵⁸ While

¹⁵⁸ Noel Klores to John Little, 4 October 1968. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box21/F4 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - OEO Correspondence, 1964-1970.

the VML did receive OEO funding for 1969, it was the lowest amount ever budgeted and marked the decline of the once model program to relative backwater status.¹⁵⁹

Disaffection among members of the migrant community the VML served as well as internal questioning and outright dissent among members of the VML staff became the second contributing factor of VML change in the period between 1965 and 1969.

Internal dissatisfaction with the migrant program took concrete shape in the spring and summer of 1966 when Ruby Ely, a one-time director of VML efforts in Washington County, split from the organization and helped form a new migrant assistance group known as VIVA, or Volunteers in Vanguard Action. Together with a few VISTA volunteers who also fled the VML and members of the local Hispanic agricultural worker community who found it difficult to break into leadership positions within the federally-funded organization, the Ely-led VIVA quickly put together a Spanish-English pamphlet roundly condemning the federally funded migrant program for its lackadaisical effort and collusion with local white landowners. While VIVA enjoyed only moderate success as an organization its blustery debut and insurrection-style formation by a former administrator of the VML served as prelude for future troubles to come.¹⁶⁰

That OEO observers also found the homogenous nature of the VML Board of Directors troubling was briefly discussed above, yet the record indicates that administrators were slow to enact change. Beyond the April 1965 internal OEO memo that observed "not one member of the 'recipient class' (held a position) on the board of 30

¹⁵⁹ Noel Klores to John Little, 9 January 1969. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box21/F4 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - OEO Correspondence, 1964-1970.

¹⁶⁰ Representative Wendell Wyatt to Sargent Shriver, 19 July 1966. NARA II Archives RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services, Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division: Inspection Reports, 1964-67. CAP, Oklahoma, Compilation - Oregon, Compilation Box 66 NC3-381-85-8.

members,"¹⁶¹ Noel Klores, Director of the Office of Special Field Programs for the Community Action Program (a subsidiary within the OEO), repeatedly sent rebukes to VML executives admonishing them for their glacial speed in filling leadership positions with candidates from the migrant population. Klores wrote in November 1966, "we should like to stress our concern and support for your efforts to get fuller and more meaningful participation of the farm worker." Going further, Klores pushed the VML to do more than install token representatives and work to have active participation by the migrant population in all levels of operation, from the Board of Directors to more grassroots work at the local area offices.¹⁶²

The emergence of VIVA in 1966 and the criticisms from OEO observers over the span of 1965-1966 paint a picture of an organization tone deaf to the larger issues behind assisting the migrant population. Yet tackling the complex issues surrounding migrant labor, which included contentious issues of pay, housing, and fair treatment, contributed to some of the friction noted by Ruby Ely and Noel Klores alike. A memo from Bob Wynia to Gene De La Torre noted that while directors of the program showed little involvement and demonstrated unfamiliarity with projects of that size, other, more intractable problems existed.

(The) amount of staff involvement in power structures struggles and in dealing with those persons interested in retaining status quo in relation to the conditions of the farm worker continues to cause great concern. Questions that simply cannot be answered but must rather be dealt with on an individual basis by using good judgement might be:

¹⁶¹ Haig Ellian to Bill Haddad, Bob Clampitt, 30 July 1965. NARA- RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services. Office of Economic Opportunity- Inspection Division, Inspection Reports 1964-67. CAP, Oregon, Compilation- Philadelphia, PA NC3-381-85-8 Box 67-Folder: Oregon OEO Programs (Compilation) 1965 February thru July.

¹⁶² Noel Klores to Kent Lawrence, 18 November 1966. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records, Box21/F4 Migrants - Valley Migrant League - OEO Correspondence, 1964-1970.

How involved do we get? How much direct pressure and confrontation can staff get involved with? How much pressure can be put on political representatives for changes?¹⁶³

This was the main problem the VML encountered in attempting to carry out its idealistic transformation of the migrant population. Transforming the migrant meant altering the conditions under which their existence depended; namely, the exploitative nature of landowners who utilized cheap labor to further their own ambitions. This tension observed by the 1967 Wynia memo dovetailed with the rise of Spanish-American clubs in the Willamette Valley, the third factor contributing to the transformation of the VML.

Under pressure from the OEO and internal elements alike, VML administrators made a more concerted effort to meaningfully incorporate members of the target population into their governing structure over the course of 1967. "Participation amongst the recipient groups has been developing this past year, with an increase in 'vocal' expression, [and] experimentation with translation at Board Meetings," noted a VML summary of activities for 1966-1967. This increased participation was due, in part, to the rise of several Spanish-American clubs in the Willamette Valley whose members became a fixture at VML Board Meetings. Their presence produced immediate changes. Meetings once held exclusively in English gave way to bilingual communication, even though translators "used too many big words, even in Spanish, for the average farm worker to understand!" Typed minutes of VML Board Meetings also became bilingual. "It has taken us three years to think of doing these things!" the summary noted with some

¹⁶³ Bob L. Wynia to Gene De La Torre, 9 May 1967. NARA-Box 217-Folder: Oregon CG-0755 36-22 with Sub Folder of VML Correspondence 1967.

chagrin.¹⁶⁴ Even though Old Believers utilized VML services, such as English language courses, and possessed representation on VML administrative boards, with Vasily Bodunov being a prime example, there were neither references to the use of an English-Russian translator at VML meetings nor evidence in the minutes of such meetings that attendance of Russian speaking individuals required translation services in the first place. Old Believers clearly engaged with the VML, but attendance at board meetings, at least in any noticeable numbers, was not a means by which the Russian speaking population made their presence felt.

Participation by Hispanic agricultural workers in the VML greatly increased with the bilingual measures adopted above. By the Board of Directors meeting in January 1968, the same meeting in which Vasily Bodunov was re-elected as a board member, Hispanic farm workers comprised the majority of the Executive Committee. They quickly took action to reform the VML by-laws to further solidify their presence and power in the migrant program.

A committee composed of both farm workers and other board members presented revised by-laws which gave representation on the Board to each of the recognized farm worker clubs and stated that the selection of delegates from the clubs was to be done by the clubs themselves. This changed radically the makeup of the Board, so that over half was comprised of farm workers or former farm workers.¹⁶⁵

Representatives from the Farm Worker Club Federation used the first meeting of this newly constructed board that following April to propose a measure for all VML field

¹⁶⁴ VML Summary, 1966-1967. 14 November 1967. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box 19/F2 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - background, 1964-1965.

¹⁶⁵ VML Summary, 13 August 1968. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box 19/F2 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - background, 1964-1965.

positions to be filled by former farm workers, a change that predominantly favored the much larger Hispanic population over the smaller Old Believer group.¹⁶⁶

While no event described above specifically sought to exclude Old Believers from participating in the VML, they nonetheless produced a chilling effect. When the Educational Systems Corporation conducted a survey in December 1968 it noted, among other things, that the migrant program needed to engage Russian farm workers who were otherwise ignored. One day after the report was filed Bodunov lost his board seat to Epifano Collazo and a proposal requiring Russians to provide health certificates to attend Adult Education classes underwent debate. Collazo became the co-chair of the VML Board of Directors in February 1969 and by September of that year VML Board meetings were conducted entirely in Spanish with incomplete English translation.¹⁶⁷ At this point it is clear that the VML's fascination with the Old Believers came to an end.

It is hard to judge the impact loss of VML services wrought upon the Old Believer community. There is no doubt that English and Adult Education classes offered by the VML provided opportunities to acquire language and employment skills needed by the recent transplants from Turkey and Brazil. Vasily Bodunov became an exemplar of the success Old Believers could achieve, receiving welding and mechanics training in an On-the-Job program offered through the VML. Even the Tolstoy Foundation turned to the VML for assistance in helping the Old Believers interact with the local community. A September 1966 Board meeting noted that a representative from the Tolstoy Foundation visited and requested that the VML cooperate with the "Russian speaking settlement." Will Pape, then Director of the VML, informed the Tolstoy Foundation the

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ VML Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes, 28 September 1969. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box 20/F10 VML Minutes, 1969.

following November that the VML would continue to act as liaison between the Old Believers and community representatives, most of which originated from Woodburn. Yet by 1970 the VML could no longer serve in this capacity for the Old Believers, its effectiveness diluted by continued budget cuts and purpose altered by the predominant influence of Hispanic farmers' clubs.

Distanced from the Tolstoy Foundation and receiving diminished assistance from the Hispanic-dominated VML, the Old Believers increasingly appeared on the radar of city authorities in Woodburn and other surrounding locales. The reason was simple: without Tolstoy Foundation/VML staff or VISTA volunteers to handle Old Believer educational, medical, or juridical queries the onus for such assistance fell almost entirely on city and state functionaries. VML administrators signaled their desire to have Woodburn play a more active role in the lives of Old Believers when they advocated for the establishment of a Human Relations Council in April 1970.¹⁶⁸ As will be discussed in the next chapter, the Human Relations Council played an important role for the Old Believers during the 70's, its directors often advocating personally for allocation of additional resources for the Russian religious community. That the VML petitioned for its creation provides a convenient bookend for the migrant program's involvement with the Old Believers. Although it continued to offer English classes in Hubbard and even selected Vasilie Simanovicki to the Board of Directors in 1970, the VML never again approached the level of involvement with the Old Believers that marked the first few years of operation.

Conclusion

¹⁶⁸ VML Executive Directors Report, 29 April 1970. OHS-Mss 1585 Stella Marris House Records Box19/F6 : Migrants - Valley Migrant League - board reports, 1969-1970.

Put into chronological perspective, the Old Believer groups from Turkey and Brazil accomplished quite a bit in the better part of the 1960s that constituted their introduction to American culture and life. For the Turkish Old Believers, settlement in America presented unique challenges and pressures by the Tolstoy Foundation to disperse into smaller groups and live in communities scattered across New Jersey and New York. That they were able to persevere in the face of such pressure and successfully orchestrate a move to Oregon in pursuit of the close-knit community situation they desired stands as a testament to their dedication and desire to negotiate the terms of their integration into the American cultural scene. The Brazilian Old Believers, likewise, took advantage of a WCC program to relocate to Oregon, fulfilling a long-standing wish to be settled in a Western nation free from the influences of Communism.

Upon arrival in the Pacific Northwest they not only began to build communities and secure employment in the sparsely-populated area of the Lower Willamette Valley but also took advantage of programs offered by the VML to improve language and labor skills. While the mostly white members of the surrounding communities held low opinions of the Old Believers, commenting on their smell or unsanitary habits, these views did little to stem Old Believer involvement in foundational elements of said communities. Old Believers utilized banking services, held steady employment, bought goods at the local market, financed the purchase of farms, sent their children to public schools, and even became employers in their own right through the hiring of Hispanic farmhands to work their fields. Community leaders, such as Vasily Bodunov, took time to integrate themselves into distinctly American programs, like that of the VML, in order to secure the resources and services they offered.

It was, perhaps, the speed in which the Old Believers, a novel presence for many Americans, began to integrate themselves into the community that prompted various authorities to construct networks of knowledge around the traditional group. Griffin and Chattam's report commissioned by the VML became the first academic attempt to categorize and define the terms through which the Old Believers could be judged as being modern. Don Wilcox's more amateurish report delivered to the VML Board in November 1965 indulged in much of the same rhetoric. Both sought to outline a path towards modernity that the VML, an organization whose existence was predicated on its transformational approach, could follow in leading the Old Believers. Filled with optimistic naiveté, both reports acknowledged that while older generations of Old Believers might never fully transition into model citizens the younger members would assuredly do so once American values inculcated themselves through participation in pedagogical and economic disciplinary systems.

But problems surfacing in the same youth hailed as harbingers of modernity in the 1960s suggested that transformation of Old Believers into modern Americans would not be as easy as first suggested by the Tolstoy Foundation and, later, VML authorities. Views by outside observers on the transformational power of materialistic consumption and Western educational norms on Old Believer youth, hailed as harbingers of modernity, began to show cracks in the late 60's and full-blown breaches in the 1970s. It is this realization, and all the consequences that followed in the intertwined storylines between Old Believers and Woodburn city officials, that is the focus of the next chapter.

Local and Believer: Development of Knowledge Networks in the 1970s

If you took a car from Woodburn and traveled seven miles southeast on Oregon Highway 214, you would run into the small town of Mt. Angel. A rather unremarkable place, Mt. Angel boasted few attractions for the wayward traveler of 1966 save for the nearby Catholic abbey that housed nuns and monks alike. As Old Believers from Turkey and Brazil began settling around Woodburn, wearing their colorful outfits and speaking Russian, curious citizens turned to a specific member of the Mt. Angel Abbey known for his interest in Russian culture; Brother Ambrose Morman. A Catholic monk who specialized in study of the Russian Orthodox Church, Brother Ambrose found that even his extensive studies could do little to enlighten those who posed questions regarding the newcomers.

A little bit of detective work by Ambrose revealed that at least some of the Old Believers received assistance from the Tolstoy Foundation and on 11 June 1966 he sent a letter to the New York operation:

In general I am interested in knowing more about these Old Ritualist, both those with priests and those without...I do know some Russian and am well versed in the services of the Russian Orthodox Church, but I know that my Russian is not adequate to communicate with any of these people at the present time. I understand that you give aid to this community and perhaps a little information regarding there [sic] history would be useful to me, since several questions about them has been asked of me.¹⁶⁹

Over the course of the next fifteen years, Brother Ambrose became quite a presence in the lives of both Old Believers and those from nearby communities who dealt with them. Self described as a monk who studied the old rituals associated with Russian Orthodox belief, Ambrose first came in contact with the Old Believers of Oregon not long after

¹⁶⁹ Brother Ambrose Morman to Tolstoy Foundation, 11 June 1966. (TF-5551)

they first arrived in the Woodburn area in 1966. At the time he was partnered with a Catholic Priest, Father Theodore, and the two became common fixtures among the Old Believer population, especially after Ambroses' superiors at the Mt. Angel abbey appointed the monk to assist the Russian religious group "in any way possible."¹⁷⁰ While Father Theodore eventually left Mt. Abbey for a new assignment, Brother Ambrose remained and his fascination with the Old Believers, combined with his willingness to interact directly with the Russian population, made him an oft-consulted authority by local legal, pedagogical, and administrative authorities. He gave lectures in Woodburn and Mt. Abbey regarding the history and religion of the Old Believers, as well as providing for the religious group assistance in filling out paperwork or seeking access to public services. Old Believer elders debated whether or not to purchase icons made by Mormon and only after careful, personal examination were the icons approved by the elders for purchase by the Old Believer community as a whole. Brother Ambrose's efforts made him an exemplar of the new reality faced by Oregon Old Believers; bereft of extensive educational and vocational training provided by the Valley Migrant League (VML), Old Believers increasingly turned to state and local agencies for similar resources throughout the end of the 1960s and well into the 1970s. Local intermediaries, such as Brother Ambrose, advocated for Old Believers in securing such resources, often leaving behind vivid accounts of their efforts. These accounts provide valuable insight and thus form an important component of this chapter.

Academic reports, amateur essays, and educational materials investigating Oregon Old Believers, a nascent development of the 1960s, took on heightened importance in the

¹⁷⁰ Brother Ambrose Mormon to Tatiana Shaufuss, 22 May 1967. (TF-5549)

1970s and also form an important component of this chapter. As friction developed between state and local agencies and Old Believers who utilized their services, initial reports that expressed confidence in the assimilatory potential of the religious group no longer provided helpful insight. Perceived shortcomings by municipal and state officials of these early reports created space for new accounts to take hold and for localized knowledge networks to develop. For academics the opportunity allowed for construction of more specific and nuanced approaches, in topics such as biology and sociology, to understand Old Belief. Local intermediaries, described above, wrote informal essays and reports describing the history and cultural habits of the Old Believers that enjoyed greater circulation among local organizations over accounts offered by academics. These essays and reports, in turn, influenced content of Old Believer-specific educational manuals handed out to teachers and administrators in districts where children of the Russian religious group attended public school.

Against this backdrop of assistance by local intermediaries and the creation by academics and amateurs alike of new knowledge networks stood the Tolstoy Foundation. While initially taking a reduced role in the lives of the Turkish group upon their migration to Oregon, the combination of reduced VML services, a desire by some Old Believers to form a new colony in Alaska, and increased Old Believer interaction with city officials of Woodburn precipitated a resurgence of interest by the east coast organization. The Foundation's promise to the Federal government to act as stewards for the Turkish Old Believers, some of whom still possessed parole status granted by Attorney General Kennedy in 1963, partially necessitated this resurgence. Fear of punitive measures from state and federal authorities, rather than a sense of duty or

obligation, most likely motivated Tolstoy executives in this regard. But there is little doubt that desire for renewed intervention also stemmed from the Foundation's constant worry that the morale, culture, and community of Old Belief in Oregon faced permanent degradation at the dawn of the 1970s unless corrective action could be taken.

Representatives visited the Oregon colony several times over the decade and correspondence between Woodburn officials, local intermediaries, and the Old Believers themselves reveals the depth, and ultimate dissipation, of Foundation involvement in this period.

All three components outlined above describe an Old Believer population in flux. That the phrasing of outsider observations, in reports and memos, sounded notes of alarm or calamity was due less to any one singular issue and more to the simple fact that Old Believers continued to be successful in negotiating the terms of their involvement, or lack thereof from some perspectives, with modern American culture. This is not to suggest that successful negotiation correlated to an improved life for all Old Believers. Many faced internal struggles with their community and family while engaging in varied degrees of acculturation and it is no coincidence that academic reports from this period mentioned Old Believer practices related to shunning and reintegration of members considered outside the faith. Fighting for recognized equality of their religious beliefs put Old Believers in conflict with societal institutions such as public education. A truancy problem related to Old Believer children missing school for religious observance became a major issue in the 1970s centered around deep-set concerns over Old Believer acceptance of American modernity.

Yet each conflict described also revealed Old Believer adaptability. Despite the view by some that Old Believers sought isolation or retreat into traditional values, the Russian community demonstrated again and again willingness to participate in society, albeit on terms deemed compatible with their way of life. By the time Margaret Hixon debuted her documentary, *Old Believers in Oregon*, about a 1981 Old Believer wedding, larger questions surrounding assimilation began fading away from popular discourse. At the end of the decade Old Believers held positions in the Woodburn fire and police departments, served on school curriculum boards, and increasingly secured their position in the community through participation in local commerce. Thus the 1970s proved to be instrumental for the Oregon Old Believers even as it presented some of the biggest challenges faced by the Russian cultural group. Analyzing these challenges will be one focus of this chapter.

The second focus will be the narrative transition from Old Believers being seen by municipal, state, and even Foundation authorities as promising candidates for assimilation towards Old Believers being seen as contaminated by the very aspects of modernity they were supposed to emulate. Reports throughout the 1970s from the Tolstoy Foundation and Woodburn authorities alike often lamented that segments of the Old Believer population, most noticeably the youth, took up bad habits commonly associated with delinquent American teenagers. A collection of Old Believers, feeling that settlement in Oregon produced ill-effects on cohesion and faith of the religious community, resettled in Alaska over the course of the late 1960s and early 70's. Perhaps most pressing for the state of Oregon was the increase of Old Believers seeking welfare assistance during this period. In each case questions of whether or not Old Believers

would assimilate to American culture became replaced by fears that they would, instead, pick up on its least desirable elements. This rhetorical shift produced an interesting dichotomy in which increased integration of Old Believers into American culture brought with it an equal measure of increased anxiety. Tolstoy Foundation members, Woodburn officials, and local intermediaries put forth their own ideas on how to alleviate this anxiety and their efforts substantiate how the narrative evolved around Old Believers in Oregon during the 1970s.

Before diving into the decade that brought about significant change to the Oregon Old Believers we should revisit the periodic involvement of the Tolstoy Foundation in the late 1960s. Many of the points raised above began their nascent manifestation in this period and the Tolstoy Foundation, still charged as stewards of the Turkish contingent, once again found themselves placed between the Old Believers and the community in which they lived.

The Foundation Returns

On 9 November 1966, Tatiana Schaufuss sent a letter to Marguerite Wright, Community Organizer of the Mid-Willamette Valley CAP, addressing concerns raised by the organizer two months previous regarding Old Believer sanitation habits and absenteeism in work and school brought on by excessive church holidays. Schaufuss admitted that while some criticisms of Old Believers possessed reasonable justification, overall the "measure of adaptation to an entirely unknown community life, with a complete language barrier and with no historical, cultural or religious similarity" gave the Foundation executive a small measure of hope. Her optimism that Old Believers could successfully adapt to living in American society stemmed from a recent visit made by

Schaufuss and Vera Samsonoff to the Oregon colony and Schaufuss hoped to impart, in her response describing the trip, similar optimism for Wright. The purpose of their visit focused on "evaluation and review of existing labor conditions and possibilities of achieving practical solutions in...areas of immigration endeavors," but addressing concerns raised by local community members regarding Old Belief took on heightened importance.

"I profited understandably of this occasion to voice any criticisms of local behavior that was brought to our attention from various sources," wrote Schaufuss, adding that some criticisms originated from Old Believers themselves. Sanitation issues, both inside and outside personal dwellings, ranked at the top of the list. "Better assimilation in public school functions" came next, with a particular focus on "participation in school lunches, in social and recreational events, (and) in closer co-educational behaviors amongst the two sexes." Absenteeism at work rounded out the list. Employers complained that the religious community observed "too many church feasts during the hot harvesting or berry picking seasons," marring what was otherwise a stellar view regarding the Old Believer's work ethic.¹⁷¹

Schaufuss agreed that the first and third criticisms raised, sanitation and absenteeism, highlighted issues requiring immediate attention. "I endeavored to hammer out a firm set of rules and internal supervision for better cleanliness and for liberalizing their rules of 'church holidays'," wrote Schaufuss. Outlining new regulations or installing appointed representatives to regulate community behavior became a go-to tactic for the Tolstoy Foundation when addressing criticisms of Old Belief. These measures often

¹⁷¹ Ibid. (TF-5557)

possessed little efficacy in producing long-term solutions but did little to dampen Foundation enthusiasm in utilizing them again and again. But regarding criticism related to "better assimilation in public school functions," Schaufuss pushed back.

As for school integration, there remains a lot to be said and explained in favor of the attitude of the parents, who exercises a very strong influence within the total family clan and in strict adherence to century old traditions based on moral and spiritual beliefs.¹⁷²

No issue produced more contentious debate than Old Believer interaction with customs and mores associated with American public education. Some of the issues raised above, in particular the "participation in school lunches," stemmed from a misunderstanding of dogmatic practices inherent to the faith. Old Believers could not eat from the same crockery used by those marked as distinctly outside the religious community and easy adjustments, such as utilizing single-use plates and cutlery, helped bridge this cultural gap. Yet other issues raised, such as greater participation in school functions and closer co-educational behaviors between the sexes, required more than simple fixes. They required the Old Believer community to have frank discussions on how to reconcile new cultural expectations with traditional beliefs, just as Schaufuss hinted above.

To this end Schaufuss promised to send information and background facts about the Old Believers so that the various agencies and groups could "better understand the pros and cons in approaching these people and trying to integrate them too hastily into an entirely foreign and unknown form of society."¹⁷³ She also recommended continued involvement with Vasily Bodunoff, who worked with Wright on the Community Action Council, as a "candid interpreter to both you and other Public Services of the

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid. (TF-5559)

peculiarities" related to Old Belief. Attached at the end of the letter were copies of Vera Samsonoff's 1962 report on her visit to Turkey and the Foundation's summary of its 1963 'Resettlement of Old Believers' sent to Senator Kennedy in 1965.

Schaufuss' letter to Wright proved to be one of several correspondences during this period actively maintained by the Foundation's Executive Vice President regarding Old Believers in Oregon. Vera Samsonoff, in a letter dated 23 January 1967, acknowledged receiving copies of letters sent by Schaufuss to various Oregon officials, such as Marguerite Wright and Priscilla Carrasco, assistant to Don Wilcox, three days previous. That the Foundation's executive leadership found themselves in increased contact with Oregon officials likely stemmed from the trip taken by Schaufuss and Samsonoff to evaluate the Oregon Old Believers that previous October. In her January letter, Samsonoff noted the excellence of Schaufuss's Oregon report although she felt it painted the criticisms made of Old Believers in too harsh a light. Although no explanation is given, Samsonoff clearly desired to downplay the severity of problems outlined in the official report. This desire, coupled with the mollifying tone of Schaufuss' letter to Wright, suggested that Foundation members understood how important it was to manage public perception, especially when the issues involved called into question the ultimate compatibility of Old Belief with American modernity.

Totalling three pages, Schaufuss' report focused specifically on the Oregon portion of a three week trip which included stops in Tokyo and Alaska.¹⁷⁴ "The purpose of the trip was twofold," the report began, "to check on the adjustment made by the Old Believers in Oregon" and to aid the Brazilian and Turkish segments in settling their

¹⁷⁴ While the visit to Alaska can be explained by the presence of the Old Believer colony recently established there, the necessity of the visit to Tokyo was not divulged in the records made available for survey to the author.

respective immigration issues.¹⁷⁵ It became immediately clear which of the two carried more importance. Within the first few hours of arriving in Woodburn, Foundation executives realized that although "the Old Believers had well adjusted in their jobs," and were even appreciated by banks and shopkeepers for their prompt payments, this did little to hide the fact that "they had made a poor adjustment in the community." The report continued:

Strong criticism was heard about the lack of sanitation, in the Old Believers homes, lack of general cleanliness, body odor, ill kept outside premises, etc.; the behaviour [sic] of children using public places as a toilet; dropouts from school of the teenagers, the non-encouragement by the parents towards education, etc...¹⁷⁶

Juxtaposing two observations, that Old Believers were both economically viable and socially maladjusted members of the community, brought into contrast deeper issues involved with measuring Old Believer assimilation. Outward projections, such as employment and use of credit, did little to quell anxiety over inward composition of Old Believer character, which was seen as the root cause of issues pertaining to sanitation and school involvement.

As recognized stewards of the Old Believers, Foundation authorities felt compelled to come up with a plan to address these issues. To this end Schaufuss summoned the Old Believers to the house of Prohor Martushev, where around 250 to 300

¹⁷⁵ Tatiana Schaufuss, *Trip to Oregon-Tokyo-Alaska of Tatiana Schaufuss and Vera A. Samsonoff, 9/14 to 10/7/66*. (TF-5555, 5553, 5554) The Turkish and Brazilian immigration issues dealt with far different subjects; the Brazilian group desired to have family members still living in Brazil to be allowed to move to Oregon and members of the Turkish group still needed to file for permanent resident status. Although I found little direct evidence in the archives, it appears that the Tolstoy Foundation took on stewardship, in the eyes of various authorities, for the Brazilian Old Believers in addition to their already promised role regarding the Turkish Old Believers.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, (TF-5555)

members of the community gathered. They listened to Schaufuss as she delivered her "admonitions, advice, and instructions" with the report noting afterwards that "several constructive decisions were reached." First, elected members agreed to serve on an 'Old Believers Council' whose primary purpose was to police the community and improve living conditions in an effort to "improve the impression created within the American community." Second, other elected members agreed to act as sanitation officers with the power to inspect homes in the community and "demand from housewives that they keep their children clean, tend their homes, gardens, yards and take better care of their houses." Third, Old Believer parents promised to send their children to school and encourage participation in education.¹⁷⁷

Although the demographic composition of the meeting at Martushev's house isn't specified, one can reasonably assume that Old Believer men dominated. Patriarchal organization of the community meant that if Tolstoy representatives favored internal reform they would have to utilize the patriarchal leadership structure, and the biases it fostered, in order to achieve this goal. Use of invasive surveillance to promote sanitation and improve impressions of the American community neatly complimented internal power structures of the Old Believer community already in existence. Thus it is no surprise that Schaufuss possessed few qualms over the validity of this approach in her report. Yet internal supervision could do little to address criticisms associated with Old Believer youth and education. This particular issue touched on sensitive matters related to Old Believer accommodation of cultural norms into personal beliefs. Schaufuss noted as much in her report. Debate on the education issue among Old Believers in

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. (TF-5555, 5553)

attendance at Martushev's house led those gathered to once again emphasize the value of "maintaining [the] integrity of family life with its adherence to ancient traditions still fully alive in all matters" because such ancient traditions governed and regulated the spiritual, and thus physical, lives of the Old Believers. Frequent fasting periods and general food habits, such as the prohibition on using outsider crockery noted above, made Old Believer participation in school lunches problematic from the perspective of American observers, who generally viewed such behavior as indicative of the Russian population's failure to assimilate into American culture. As regarded greater co-educational participation between the sexes, the gathered Old Believers turned to a classic defense of wanting to protect their youth from corruptive forces of American teenage culture. "The present influence of teenagers, their clubs, dope and drup [sic] addicts is a source of gravest concern," wrote Schaufuss, adding that many desired to find a solution to the problem that wouldn't endanger their economic stability in the Woodburn community. While the report is rather brief in outlining these arguments, their abbreviated description nevertheless revealed the cultural tightrope Old Believers walked upon in their new Oregon home.¹⁷⁸

Upon closer inspection, however, Foundation efforts in facilitating real dialogue between the two communities focused, instead, on cementing the organization's own position of authority through circulation of self-aggrandizing cultural memoranda among American interlocutors and reinforcement of patriarchal hierarchies in the Old Believer community itself. When Schaufuss concluded in her report that, "in interpreting these factors to the American community...Tolstoy Foundation representatives endeavored to

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. (TF-5553)

create understanding on both sides of the bridge, taking into consideration that complete assimilation is a lengthy process," she both affirmed the Foundation's role as cultural intermediary and signaled to American administrators the necessity of the Foundation's presence in order to ensure that 'complete assimilation' of the Old Believers remained a possibility. Evidence of this position can be seen in Schaufuss' response to Marguerite Wright, examined above, as well as the decision to, once again, turn towards the patriarchal elders for assistance in regulating and promoting Old Believer behavior.

What are the ultimate takeaways from events described in Schaufuss' report? Beyond the the fact that it demonstrated continued presence of the Tolstoy Foundation in the lives of Old Believers, Schaufuss' report provided foreshadowing of future conflicts between the Russian religious community and American authorities. Once initial questions over participation in the economy settled themselves in the 1960s, debate over measuring Old Believer assimilation shifted to youth participation in education in the 1970s. Of the criticisms raised in the report, only those surrounding education produced some degree of pushback by the Old Believers assembled at Martushev's house. Their sophisticated rebuttal, centered on defense of youth from corruption by American teenagers, was a clever reversal of the type of rhetoric used by Congressman Feighan and others to invoke fear of communist infiltration via Old Believer immigration just a few years previous. It also took on elements of similar complaints raised by American conservatives of this period regarding the corruption of American youth by sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll, suggesting the Old Believers possessed a deeper understanding of the larger cultural debates then in circulation. Ultimately, however, the rebuttal acknowledged a need to find solutions that would accommodate both desires of

educational authorities and proscriptions of Old Belief. Negotiating these terms, as well as redefining what it meant to measure Old Believer assimilation from the modern perspective, is where this analysis now turns.

Old Belief in the Age of Aquarius

Two and a half years after the meeting at Prohor Martushev's house, between the months of June and September in 1969, the Old Believers found a newcomer circulating in their midst. Dressed in clothes similar to theirs, speaking poor Russian and understanding even less, the newcomer began showing up at Old Believer religious services and even offered rides into Woodburn for those who lived outside of town. She taught evening English classes over at Mt. Angel College and made it a point to always welcome Old Believers into her rented home during her short stay in the area. The newcomer's name was Martha Clymer and unbeknownst to the Old Believers she was on a research trip, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, to study the religious community. Her findings, published in January 1970 under the title 'Radical Acculturation Patterns In A Traditional Immigrant Group', became the first Federal study of the Old Believers and joined an emerging vanguard of academic works that found increasing curiosity, just as Don Wilcox did, with Old Belief.¹⁷⁹

Clymer, a graduate student who claimed Philadelphia's Temple University as her academic home base, began work on the research project in the Spring of 1969 with Dr.

¹⁷⁹ Martha Bahniuk Clymer. *Radical Acculturation Patterns In A Traditional Group*. John A. Hostetler, Project Director. Philadelphia: Temple University, 1970. Technically, A. Michael Colfer began his OEO sponsored field work among the migrants of the Willamette Valley for six months in 1966, predating Clymer's observations. Even though Colfer combined his 1966 fieldwork with eight months of supplementary study in 1971 to form his 1975 dissertation on the Old Believers, his work significantly differed from Clymer in that Colfer made open fact of his position as ethnographer as opposed to Clymer's more secretive approach. Colfer also made no attempt to understand the 'inner' character of Old Belief and, instead, focused on documenting outward behaviors, establishing kinship lines, or describing the cultural rituals surrounding marriage. See A. Michael Colfer, *Morality, Kindred, and Ethnic Boundary* (New York: AMS Press, 1985).

John Hostetler, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, acting as her supervisor. Her first task involved surveying unpublished reports and culling newspaper articles written about the Oregon Old Believers. This led her to the Tolstoy Foundation, identified by Clymer as "an agency which had assisted in the problems of immigration," who offered the researcher the same reports sent to Senator Kennedy in 1965 and Marguerite Wright in 1966. Afterwards she was joined by her husband, Wesley Clymer, and together they traveled across the country to set up temporary shop in Woodburn. "The purpose of the field work was to observe the acculturation patterns of the Old Believers first hand," wrote Clymer, although her selection of a "subjective, participant observer" methodology presented difficulty in that "the study had to be made without knowledge on the part of the people that they were being studied," limiting, in her mind, investigational options available to an otherwise self-identified objective observer.¹⁸⁰

Keeping Old Believers in the dark as to the ultimate purpose of inquiries and observations was of utmost importance for Clymer's research. The reason was twofold. First, concern with the "relation of acculturation to education" meant that observations and descriptions on "patterns of Old Believers in their attempt to make a rapid transition from a society rooted in seventeenth century traditions to the industrialized society of the modern world" depended upon Clymer's accurate, unclouded assessment of their authentic internal character.¹⁸¹ Second, authenticity was key for Clymer and she felt that disguising true motivations for her study of Old Belief promoted more authentic, and less performative, subject behavior. Thus, almost immediately, the stakes set out in Clymer's report became much higher and more involved than those of Griffin, Chattam, and

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 2.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, v.

Wilcox. Observation of outward behaviors, such as acquisition of material goods or employment in factories, sufficed as the threshold for rigorous inquiry in previous reports. But with questions over Old Believer assimilation and acculturation still at the forefront years later, relying upon observation of outward behaviors no longer proved sufficient in measuring progress. Investigation on the inner character of Old Believers, which Clymer's report attempted to accomplish, not only became the logical next step in this evaluative process but also reflected deeper anxieties involved in measuring Old Belief assimilation.

Spanning over seventy pages, Clymer's distilled observations fell along three main points. The first point, already mentioned above, focused on examining the inner character of Old Belief. Unlike previous efforts surveyed in this analysis, Clymer's report looked at religious issues at the heart of Old Belief and then proceeded to make the connection that lived ritual fed and sustained an Old Believer's connection to their tradition. "They have resisted change whether in religion or other areas as religion has sanctified their way of life," concluded Clymer, noting later that, "the dominant character of their religion is adherence to the old ritual, and even though these forms of worship are repeated time after time, the meaning still remains alive for them."¹⁸² While other observers noted the importance of religious beliefs in lives of Old Believers, Clymer took this idea a step further. "I slowly developed friendship and trust through attendance at religious observances, (expressing) sincere interest in their religion," wrote Clymer, although understanding deeper meanings of church attendance sometimes eluded her. On one specific visit, in which she came dressed as a field worker, Clymer described her

¹⁸² Ibid, 8, 18.

attempt to enter an Old Believer church and pray amongst gathered parishioners. Almost immediately "one man turned around and yelled right in the middle of the service," protesting Clymer's presence and directing her to stand in the vestibule, with arms crossed, as that was the sanctioned place for "outsiders, visitors and members of other religions who are considered heretics."¹⁸³

The second point revolved around Clymer's predilection for emphasizing negative aspects of Old Believer assimilation without giving due credit to adaptation mechanisms then being developed by the religious group. When describing the authority of elders within Turkish and Brazilian cohorts, Clymer's interest lingered on tactics used to admonish those deemed as 'sinners' in the community:

Sometimes one is publicly humiliated for his sins by having to pray in front of the congregation, thereby revealing his sinfulness to everyone. Also, one might have to stand in the vestibule of the church instead of inside, as punishment for working on a holiday or cutting the beard, not keeping fasts or not coming to church enough. They are considered "kicked out" of the church for several days, weeks or months, depending on the severity of the sin.¹⁸⁴

In another section Clymer presented an anecdote about a young Old Believer woman who worked for an American family in New Jersey for nine months. "She came home once a week, but was never allowed to eat from the family's dishes," wrote Clymer, who attributed the exclusionary behavior to the fact that "if an Old Believer stays away from the colony and eats with non-Old Believers, upon returning he is banned from sharing in the family's food...until the elder says special prayers over the person."¹⁸⁵ Elders called

¹⁸³ Ibid, 24.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 24.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 26.

out the names of the "most Americanized" girls before the service, admonishing those who had "cut their hair, worn short skirts and did not keep the holidays."¹⁸⁶

While the behavior described above came across as harsh to Clymer, it is perhaps most interesting that she gave such little credit to personally observed mechanisms utilized by Old Believers to accommodate their new ethical situation in Oregon. Chief among those mechanisms deployed was the time-honored group meeting known as a *sobor*. *Sobors* played a storied role in Russian medieval culture and were not a ritual tied specifically to the practice of Old Belief. For Old Believer communities, who often saw themselves as segmented from the larger society they coexisted within, *sobors* allowed for the debate of issues created via the friction of living within both the boundaries of Old Belief and the outside, non-believing world. Clymer wrote that the Oregon *sobors* decided "such matters as whether to allow attendance at movies, or have T.V.," adding that one particular meeting set standard rules for community behavior which declared it was sinful to "go to the movies, watch T.V., listen to the radio or records, or play a musical instrument or attend 'secular entertainment' as admonished in the Book of Laws of the Ecumenical Councils, seventy-first law of the Sixth Ecumenical Council."¹⁸⁷ It is unclear if Clymer understood the difference between the *sobors* of the Old Believers and the Sixth Ecumenical Council she quoted above, but given the paucity of her background knowledge it is safe to assume such granular distinctions eluded the outside observer.

Clymer's seeming ignorance as to the historical role of the *sobor* is further evidence that

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 24.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 25. While no other source surveyed corroborated this particular *sobor*, Clymer herself knew of Old Believer women who attended movies and acknowledged that many other Old Believer youth did the same. By 1970 the prohibition listed above on movies appeared to be all but defunct, as John Hudanish advocated educating Old Believers about local laws through small vignettes presented before popular Russian films shown at the local theatre. See footnote 67 for more information.

the researcher sent to observe and measure Old Believer acculturation possessed little more than a surface level understanding of the group being observed. It also made her comparison of Old Believer habits and beliefs to that of modern Americans even more striking, as Clymer clearly sought to foreground 'traditional' behavior against the modern backdrop without taking into account the fact that the two value systems could coexist within the Old Believer population; something the *sobors* examined above demonstrated even if their proscriptions are viewed as being distinctly anti-modern.

Clymer also knew and wrote about the adaptability of the Turkish Old Believers to accommodate changes in what was understood to be their traditionally patriarchal system. While living in Turkey, men who engaged in fishing departed from the Old Believer villages to engage in their trade and were often absent for several months at a time. "The culture was male dominated," wrote Clymer, "but the women assumed a more responsible role in the family while the men were away." To be clear, this was not a unique trait of the Turkish Old Believers but, rather, a common tactic utilized by Old Believer populations for centuries. Again, whether or not Clymer understood this distinction is unknown. While this anecdotal example failed to fully elaborate on what this 'more responsible role in the family' entailed, it did offer one interesting example; while the men were away fishing, "the old women taught the boys to read the church books."¹⁸⁸ Given that Clymer sought to evaluate (then) *current* day Old Believer acculturation patterns, it is hardly surprising that this *traditional* example failed to garner more than a few sentences in a multi-page report. But it is telling in that it suggested the

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 35.

Turkish group, at least, possessed institutional knowledge on how to adjust to real-life situations that demanded community flexibility.

This leads to the third point emphasized in Clymer's report; actual measurement of Old Believer acculturation to modernity. In this respect, Clymer's work differed little from that of her predecessors in that her central thesis outlined both need for such measurement and means by which this measurement could be achieved. Where Clymer's work diverged, and what made it far more relevant, was that it shifted the ground upon which the rhetoric of measurement built its foundation. Instead of writing about outward behaviors such as acquisition of employment and material goods, Clymer scoped her observations through the lens of familial acceptance of modern educational institutions that involved, by necessity, measurement of internal values. Her report is replete with specific invocations of measurement verbiage used to explore these internal values. American lives are more segmented, with "definite periods during which specific activities are followed," while Old Believer lives, in contrast, "have less variety to the activities associated with the different age groups."¹⁸⁹ Old Believer discipline of their children, which included "yelling, spanking...and rapping [children] on the head," was, for Clymer, "a great deal rougher than found in most American families."¹⁹⁰ Perhaps most telling is the way in which Clymer categorized the presence of Old Belief in Oregon. "American culture," wrote Clymer, "exemplifies the complicated industrialized society of the twentieth century while the Old Believers are rooted in seventeenth century

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 46. Clymer argued that modern American life makes room for youth and adolescence whereas traditional Old Believer life is far less granular and demands adult-behavior and responsibility at a far younger age and for a greater portion of an individual's lifespan.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 44.

traditions."¹⁹¹ At one point Clymer even compared the situation of Old Believers in Oregon to that of the "Winnebago, Fox and Shawnee" in 19th century America, establishing for readers unfamiliar with Old Belief a ready-made assimilation metaphor grounded in American historical experience.

All three points discussed above focus on the inner character of Old Belief, predilection for seeing only negative consequences of assimilation, and use of measurement rhetoric- combined to form a specific point of view with regards to Old Believer acculturation. For Clymer there appeared to be only two possible outcomes. Either the Old Believers would seek to further isolate themselves from American society, with the remote colony in Alaska cited as the prime example, or they would increasingly succumb to the pitfalls of Americanization without taking on prerequisite values of modernity associated with such Americanization. Given that the Department of Education sponsored Clymer's report, there is little surprise that the researcher laid the onus of this pitfall upon Old Believer rejection of American education. The following quote, found in the conclusion of Clymer's report, encapsulated this viewpoint:

The Old Believers may be acculturated externally and be able to take advantage of our high standard of living, but his group has not modified or permitted the integration of Old Believer educational values with the Americans, and thus, he cannot make the proper psychological adjustment to our culture.¹⁹²

Inability to 'psychologically adjust' to American culture, according to Clymer, fueled anxiety held by American observers regarding Old Believer assimilation. "The old values," wrote Clymer, "have not been replaced by substantial new values; instead, those

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 59.

¹⁹² Ibid, 61.

Old Believers who have acculturated the most have adopted a materialistic standard and an imitation of some of the worst of American culture."¹⁹³

Sustained engagement with public schools was the best method for moving these imitators into full-fledged modernity according to Clymer. "The education system is the most potent agent of change. It teaches the American way of life to the pliable young and conflicts with the religious holidays of the group," wrote the researcher, adding that any Old Believers who decided to remain in Oregon, instead of relocating to Alaska, "are unlikely to be able to hold out for another generation" due to acculturation pressures. Her basis for such a prediction stood upon the idea that Old Believer faith was both a central pillar of the community and a hindrance towards full acceptance of modernity. Noting that one contemporary author observed that, "religious beliefs in these families are maintained through compulsion and fear," Clymer, in total agreement, further added "it is also true for the Old Believers living in Oregon too."¹⁹⁴ When discussing the *sobors* held amongst the Old Believer community, Clymer equated their primary function as being "another way in which the community exercises control over the individual" and that the Old Believers "consider...religious education to be the only worthwhile education because they find little religious merit in the public school curriculum."¹⁹⁵ Thus when Clymer ended her report with the observation that "if the Old Believers are not able to retain their religion then the cohesiveness and group-identity of the people will collapse," it is not at all clear that this is an undesired outcome.

Clymer also noted that an Orthodox priest acting as official Tolstoy Foundation representative, Father Nicholas Sanin, preferred that the Old Believers assimilate and

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 19-20.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 25, 53.

become model American citizens. Based out of the nearby state capitol of Salem, Sanin would occasionally drive down to Woodburn and help the Old Believers fill out paperwork or act as their representative when dealing with city or state officials. Clymer specifically mentioned that Sanin was responsible for helping the Turkish Old Believers apply for citizenship and residence cards but rarely interacted with the community directly and even incorrectly filled out official forms leading to some Turkish Old Believers being denied permanent resident status. Foundation records surveyed did not mention recruitment of Sanin to act as representative, although it was not uncommon for Foundation executives to utilize connections in various religious denominations for assistance, as they did with the Mennonite community who helped convert Seabrook Farms in 1963 for initial Turkish Old Believer settlement in New Jersey. It seems unlikely Clymer misinterpreted this connection between Sanin and the Tolstoy Foundation in her report, and the brief passage concerned with Sanin appears to be utilized only for anecdotal reinforcement of Clymer's underlying goal of justifying Old Believer assimilation into modern American culture. "Although he is not interested in their conversion to Orthodoxy," wrote Clymer, "he does want them to conform to the American culture in as many ways as possible so that they will present fewer problems for him and the Foundation."¹⁹⁶

Put together, the whole of Clymer's report did as much for the Department of Education as Griffin and Chattam's report did for the Valley Migrant League four years previous in that it both laid the foundation for outside intervention of Old Believer habits in the arena of education and revealed new stakes involved in such a project vis-a-vis

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 30.

accurate measurement of internal thoughts and behaviors. In doing so, Clymer raised the stakes of American modernity's hermeneutical anxiety involved with Old Believer assimilation to new levels. Mimicry of the American modern ideal, which according to Clymer manifested itself in the Old Believer community as materialistic consumption uncoupled from desired normative behavior, was no longer seen by American administrators, academics, and casual observers as corrective because it could do little to guarantee internal transformation even as it provided one of the strongest forces in favor of assimilation. Thus when Clymer wrote that, "as long as the youth desire to be like their American peers and the adults are enticed by exposure to American goods, it seems likely they will continue to take advantage of more and more of the material wealth in America," she does so with the implication being that increased material wealth can only come at the expense of the long-cherished spiritual wealth of the community. But the lasting agent of change would come not from the supermarket or department store but rather from another source of American modernity. "The education system is the most potent agent of change," wrote Clymer, "it teaches the American way of life to the pliable young and conflicts with the religious holidays of the group."

As will be examined below, Clymer's report highlighted what became the central cultural conflict between the Old Believer community and their neighbors in and around Woodburn at the end of the 1960s through the first half of the 1970s. Too numerous to ignore and, as will be examined below, too uncouth in their perceived behavior by community organizers and local citizens alike to accept outright, the Old Believer community continued to provoke debate amongst local and state administrators as to which methods or interventions best promoted assimilation. At the dawn of the 1970s

one thing was increasingly certain: education would become one of the primary sites where these debates would play out.

'Our Man in Woodburn'- Foundation Influence in the 1970s

Though it appeared that the Tolstoy Foundation maintained little direct contact with the Oregon Old Believers after the 1967 meeting at Prohor Martushev's house, by August 1970 troubling signs brought to the attention of Foundation executives prompted a return. "This visit of both settlements of Old Believers was long due," began a Foundation report on the trip that lasted from 21 August to 27 August, "because of the persisting information from members of the groups of gradual disintegration of the moral, religious, family and civic standards..." Tatiana Schaufuss and Cyril Galitzine scheduled several meetings during their week-long visit, conferencing first with the Turkish and Brazilian Old Believer communities in two large meetings and, second, with officials in Woodburn, Marion County, and the State Welfare Office in Salem.

Almost immediately Foundation executives pinpointed what they believed to be the primary culprit promoting moral and cultural disintegration of Old Belief in Oregon. "The ills of the American community, generated within the P.school [sic] system, become logically the first channel of contamination of the growing young generation of O/Bs [sic]," the report stated, putting forth a rhetorical twist to the education question.¹⁹⁷ Whereas previous assessments lamented Old Believer religious culture as being the primary bulwark against assimilatory pressures of public education, with the idea being that abandonment of that culture or at least greater acceptance of public education in general was desired, the Tolstoy Foundation turned this notion on its head and suggested

¹⁹⁷ *Report on Duty-Trip to Portland, Oregon on Behalf of Settlement of Old Believers in the Woodburn and Gervais Areas, August 21st to August 27th*. 3 September 1970. (TF-5475-5477, 5479)

that the public school system was, instead, infecting the Old Believer population with the "ills of the American community." Then, in a curious move, the Foundation report suggested that "the dark intellectual background of the parents, their manner of dress, of hairy, unkempt beards, the traditional family life with its adherence to outward, physical peculiarities of their sectarian faith" rendered the majority of adult Old Believers powerless to stem or control "asocial and irresponsible behavior of its own youth" in the community. Given that the concerns over inability to suppress undesired behavior of youths echoed those spouted by other American families of this period, it is unclear if the Tolstoy Foundation hoped to draw favorable parallels between the struggles of Old Believer parents and their American counterparts or simply mentioned this fact to reinforce the traditional nature of Old Belief in general.

It is interesting that the Foundation report portrayed the Old Believers' traditional lifestyle as being both clearly distanced from the modern scene and incapable of resisting corruption from elements of American modernity introduced through the public school system. Such an argument played neatly into the hands of those who viewed Old Believers as traditionalists who, at best, could mimic the worst aspects of American culture, but Foundation executives possessed a larger purpose in utilizing measurement-based rhetoric condemning "ills of the American community." Their ultimate goal focused on condemning the growing use of welfare benefits by the Old Believer community, a symptom viewed as part of the larger pathology related to American counter-culture values then in circulation. Immediately after suggesting Old Believer adults were powerless to reform their children's behavior, the Foundation report put

together a list of traits commonly associated with hippie culture of the period making their presence felt in Old Believer families:

Hence - a few longhairs, drinking, lack of sense of true value of money earned and irresponsibly spent, abandonment of their own families, with withdrawal of a joint account with a wife, ransacking of houses in search of cash and - last, but not least - falling into the temptation of being 'assisted by Welfare', which seems so easy to obtain for the 'asking'!¹⁹⁸

By acknowledging the public school system created dysfunction in the Old Believer community, the report made it clear Foundation executives understood the primary driver of conflict for many in the Woodburn community. But what followed in the quote above, a litany of irresponsible behavior epitomized by acceptance of Welfare assistance, highlighted what the Foundation felt was the true threat, namely the possibility that Old Believers might never fully assimilate into American culture and, instead, take on only its most undesirable characteristics.

This perspective is made clear by the fact that the Foundation report focused the remainder of its prose on detailing attention paid by visiting executives to the welfare issue. Schaufuss and Galtizine spent the initial portion of their visit meeting with individual Old Believers and the community as a whole to discuss the problem. Of special concern was the behavior of Turkish Old Believers because of promises made by the Foundation to American authorities that the religious group would not solicit public assistance. Preliminary investigations and subsequent meetings with the Turkish group, primarily settled just south of Woodburn in the area around Gervais-Bethlehem, revealed four individuals receiving assistance, although "two resigned from Welfare" during the

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

Foundation executives' visit.¹⁹⁹ Just as they did some three years previous with the gathering of Old Believers at Prohor Martushev's house, Foundation executives pleaded with the community to police itself and even went so far as to insist on creation of a specific group, the Community of Old Believers Committee of Assistance in Woodburn.

Foundation archives contained copies of four certificates issued during Schaufuss and Galitzen's visit. Dated 1 September 1970, the certificates specified that their creation was a direct result of an election held amongst the Old Believer community on 23 August 1970 to determine who would serve on the newly created Committee of Assistance. Devoid of any adornment, the certificates signed by Tatiana Schaufuss wasted few words in elaborating the Committee's purpose. "This Committee was established at the initiative of Tolstoy Foundation, Inc.," began the statement, "to reflect in indicated Governmental and Civic channels the interests and problems of the Old Believer Community in the Woodburn area."²⁰⁰ Whereas the previous attempt by the Tolstoy Foundation to have Old Believers police themselves amounted to a campaign of self-regulation in order to appease surrounding members of the American community, this new effort went a step further and called for direct communication through "indicated Governmental and Civic channels." That Foundation executives believed open dialogue between Old Believers and civic and governmental officials was a better option than isolation and self-regulation, despite the claim that the Old Believer community was plagued by the "ills of the American community," hinged on two key factors.

The first was perceived interference in the Old Believer community by well-intentioned, but ultimately harmful, outside third parties that emerged from the local

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Certificate of Membership in Community of Old Believers Committee of Assistance in Woodburn, 1 September 1970. (TF-5484-5488)

community, such as the trio mentioned above in Clymer's report above. The second was a desire by the Foundation to increase their presence as an official liaison between Old Believers and administrators in various municipal and state governing bodies in Oregon. In a real sense both factors found common linkage in the forces of cause and effect. Bereft of resources once made available by the VML in the mid to late 1960s, Old Believers turned to sympathetic individuals in the Woodburn community for assistance in dealing with bureaucracy at all levels at the onset of the 1970s. This, in turn, produced a side effect in that sympathetic individuals became non-official representatives of Old Believers when helping them negotiate interactions with local police, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, or state welfare agencies. From the Foundation's perspective these third parties did more damage than good because they either didn't understand intricacies of Old Believer culture or they didn't know about promises made, in the case of the Turkish Old Believers, to American authorities regarding use of public assistance.

The Foundation report made this view on those they deemed "acting on behalf of the OBs as Uncle Sam or Santa Claus" clear and upfront.

We, as an Agency, cannot be but grateful to helpful Volunteers, but ... their lack of essential knowledge of Legislation, controlling emigration to this country or - current knowledge of Labor regulations for foreigners makes them morally responsible for 'mis-representation' of certain facts and situations in establishing Welfare eligibility.²⁰¹

Brother Ambrose received specific mention as one of the "helpful Volunteers" who possessed ignorance of the larger issues surrounding the Old Believer community, although the report hinted at nameless others who acted in much the same capacity. But

²⁰¹ Ibid. (TF-5476)

if Foundation executives were dismayed by interaction between individuals such as Brother Ambrose and the Old Believer community they could blame only themselves. Clymer's report, discussed above, mentioned the seeming ineptitude of appointed Tolstoy Foundation representative Father Nicholas Sanin, who either botched immigration paperwork for Turkish Old Believers or failed to take more than a cursory interest in the group as a whole with his infrequent visits. It is no wonder, then, that Old Believers turned to third-parties such as Brother Ambrose to assist them.

Foundation executives grudgingly accepted this fact even as they attempted to reassert control when they simultaneously "thanked brother Ambrose for his generous efforts to help" but also "requested him to withhold his personal intervention on behalf of the OBs in dealings with the US Governmental channels or programs, restricting himself to dealing with the elected Committees."²⁰² Here the report listed committee members that possessed English-language skills, with two familiar names making an appearance. Pavel Kassachev and Vasily Bodonov, both known for their involvement with the VML, are noted as being the President and Co-Secretary of the Woodburn Committee, respectively, with Sava Zarkov filling in as the other Co-Secretary of the Gervais groups comprised of mostly Turkish Old Believers. With the Community of Old Believers Committee of Assistance in Woodburn structure set in place, complete with English-speaking representatives at key positions, Foundation executives turned their attention to meeting with various municipal and state administrators.

²⁰² Ibid. (TF-5477) Interestingly, on the copy of this report found in the Tolstoy Foundation archives, the above quoted sentence has the tag line "or directly with us" written in pencil added to the end. As will be explored below, the perceived moral degradation of the Old Believer community in this 1970 visit prompted the Tolstoy Foundation to take a more hands-on approach in terms of engaging with State and Local administrators in addition to maintaining closer contact with appointed representatives going forward. They would never achieve the level of success desired and often found their distance to be a hindrance especially as Woodburn officials began actively withdrawing resources from Russian community programs in the mid to late 1970s.

On 26 August 1970, Schaufuss and Galitzine traveled to Woodburn's City Hall to meet with Arthur Johnson, Woodburn's City Manager, Robert Prinslow, Chief of Police, as well as Elvin Tarlow, Assistant Attorney General, and James Brown, Supervisor of Social Services, both representatives from state and local Welfare divisions. All parties involved possessed some interest in the Old Believer community and with the Committee of Assistance in Woodburn established, Foundation executives believed they held leverage in negotiations with the administrators listed above. "All representatives at that meeting welcomed the creation of the two a/m Committees," explained the report, "and expressed their readiness to use their services for better liaison with both Committees and their growing problems."²⁰³ If the Tolstoy Foundation wanted to reassert its role as primary cultural liaison and informant for administrators in Oregon who sought to reform Old Believers into modern citizens, then it needed to ensure that said administrators engaged with channels of communication set up for that purpose.

As it turned out there was good reason to be concerned about the willingness of administrators to utilize Old Believer committees as the Tolstoy Foundation desired. Representatives from the Welfare division reminded Schaufuss and Galitzine of the "eligibility and operational criteria for Welfare staff to follow in strict coordination with 'Regulations and Codes' at basis of Welfare assistance."²⁰⁴ Furthermore, they "expressed serious doubts about utilizing advice and information about individual cases, stemming from the elected committees or - even from Tolstoy Foundation" be it through

²⁰³ Ibid. (TF-5488) The Foundation report isn't clear on this point but the two committees mentioned here are most likely two branches of the larger 'Committee of Assistance in Woodburn' that served the Turkish and Brazilian populations. Even though the Old Believer community faced similar problems in dealing with state and local officials, it appears their interests diverged enough to warrant separate committees. Yet given the population imbalance, even after the Alaskan exodus by some of the Brazilian community, it is entirely understandable that the two groups would have different concerns or even different tactics in dealing with the problems faced by their respective communities.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

correspondence or discussion with an appointed representative.²⁰⁵ Bound by law, Welfare administrators felt obvious unease at the suggestion that inquiries or dealings with Old Believer individuals required passing through any sort of gatekeeper, be it the Foundation or elected Old Believer committee. Schaufuss pushed back, arguing that the Old Believers were a unique case due to the terms of their varied admission to the United States. To this point Elvin Tarlow, Assistant Attorney General from the Welfare Recovery Division, "concurred with the obvious necessity" of ensuring that Welfare and Immigration policies aligned, although the Foundation report is silent on whether or not Welfare administrators agreed to consult with elected Old Believer committees.

If Foundation executives soured at attitudes of Welfare administrators, they at least took comfort with discussions held between Woodburn's Chief of Police and City Manager. While Prinslow and Johnson both "expressed concern about visible disintegration" of Old Believer "moral standards" they nonetheless "promised to tap and coordinate local resources to establish better control of social factors, negatively influencing the groups under guise of ill adopted 'Americanism'."²⁰⁶ Schaufuss and Galitzine, eager to solidify the Foundation's role vis-a-vis community relations with Old Believers, seized upon the cooperative spirit offered by city officials. In an individual discussion between Foundation executives and City Manager Johnson, the two parties "planned to establish jointly a special office under City Hall, appointing a Russian speaking experienced local American worker to deal with the many special features of the O/Bs settlement."²⁰⁷ Given that the Foundation frowned upon unregulated work of 'helpful volunteers' such as Brother Ambrose, establishment of a specific municipal office

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. (TF-5489)

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

to deal directly with the Old Believer community was a concrete step towards reasserting control over who could officially speak for and who could interact with the religious group. That the Foundation provided direct input on who filled the position of ‘Russian speaking experienced local American worker’, as outlined by Johnson in their meeting, was all the better.

Further meetings with state and county Welfare officials dominated the Foundation executives' final day in Oregon. The two sides came together to hash out a common understanding regarding eligibility of Old Believers to receive welfare and the promises made to federal authorities by the same Old Believers, as well as the Tolstoy Foundation, to not take public assistance. With that hurdle cleared, Schaufuss and Galitzine returned to New York and began preparing a report summarizing their visit and accomplishments. In truth they produced two reports, one for internal review and one deemed suitable for distribution to select recipients; William Pattillo, District Director of the Portland INS bureau, and Jack Farrell, Assistant Attorney General of the Welfare Recovery Division in Salem, Oregon. Schaufuss penned the cover letters sent to each and struck a tone in her prose calculated to appease.

Cyril Galitzine and myself are most grateful to you for the time and attention you gave us and for your understanding of the rather specific problems we are facing in dealing with these Old Believers, the majority of whom are still living several centuries behind the present-day realities of life in the United States.²⁰⁸

Once again Foundation executives utilized measurement rhetoric to place Old Believers in direct contrast with the modern period, but they did so with clear intent and in specific

²⁰⁸ This paragraph is found, verbatim, in letters sent to both William Pattillo and Jack Farrell. See Tatiana Schaufuss to William L. Pattillo, 10 September 1970. (TF-5480-5481) Also, Tatiana Schaufuss to Jack F. Farrell, 10 September 1970. (TF-5483)

circumstances. In her letter to Pattillo, Schaufuss transitioned from the paragraph above to a statement that praised the majority of Old Believers for possessing "a satisfactory record of stability and adherence to moral standards" before lamenting that "the tendency amongst senior teenagers is to absorb the negative behavior of our own youth."²⁰⁹ The Old Believer community was not the problem. The problem was American modernity infecting Old Believer youth. But not all recipients of Foundation correspondence received the same message.

Shaufuss' letter to Jack Farrell of the Welfare Recovery Division in Salem contained no deliberate indictment of American modernity, nor did it expound on troubles amongst Old Believer youth tied to negative behaviors of American teenagers. Instead, it contained "general publicity material on the work of our organization" to be shared with Farrell's colleagues. Similarly, in a letter sent by Schaufuss to Arthur Johnson, City Manager of Woodburn, there are zero mentions of any specific Old Believer problems, only affirmation that the Foundation supported establishment of a specific municipal office to work with Old Believers.²¹⁰

These examples demonstrated equal parts flexibility and deliberate posturing on behalf of the Foundation when it came to solidifying links between governmental agencies and Old Believers. Within the span of a few weeks Foundation executives put into place skeletal networks of oversight and communication designed to smooth relations between two communities; the traditional community of the Old Believers and the modern community of Woodburn. Yet it is important to note in doing so the Foundation set out clear terms for what it believed the traditional Old Believer

²⁰⁹ Tatiana Schaufuss to William L. Pattillo, 10 September 1970. (TF-5480)

²¹⁰ Tatiana Schaufuss to Arthur Johnson, 10 September 1970. (TF-5474)

community should look like and on what terms that community could engage with crucial components of the American modern scene in Woodburn. Just as before, when they intervened and set up the meeting at Prohor Martushev's house, Foundation oversight and coordination of the Committee of Assistance in Woodburn sought to buttress existing methods of communal control that sustained Old Believer communities in the past. But there remained fundamental contradictions in suggesting that a dualist framework, where the separated communities of the traditional and modern interacted through established channels, could address ethical problems faced by the Oregon Old Believers. The choice for many Old Believers appeared less clear cut than deciding to remain traditional or become modern and, as will be explored below, issues of welfare and education surrounding Old Belief demonstrated the impossibility of such an arrangement anyway.

Irrespective of these issues, it is clear that Schaufuss and Galitzne's visit to Oregon in 1970 served to reassert the Foundation's role as one of the primary intermediaries between Old Believers and government/municipal officials going forward. As such they wasted little time in securing allegiance of Henry Braun to act as their local representative in Woodburn, a necessity given that Schaufuss and Galitzne could ill afford to travel to Oregon whenever problems surfaced.²¹¹ While documents surveyed did not reveal the origin of the connection between the Tolstoy Foundation and Henry Braun, his letter to Foundation executives in September 1970 suggested that Schaufuss possessed enough confidence in his abilities to offer him a job as Foundation 'assistant'. Braun was overjoyed at the offer, writing Schaufuss that he and his wife would gladly leave their current home in Abbotsford, British Columbia, and move to Woodburn. "If

²¹¹ Tatiana Schaufuss to Mr. & Mrs. Henry Brawn, 12 October 1970. (TF-5471)

you feel as you dit [sic] towards us and we can be your representative we would with all sincerity try to fulfil [sic] the assignment,” Braun wrote Schaufuss.

Within a year it was obvious that the Foundation's efforts to establish networks of communication between the communities of Woodburn and Old Believer, as well as reinforce their presence in both communities through an appointed representative, bore a measured degree of fruit. On 15 June 1971 Schaufuss received a letter from Arthur Johnson, City Manager of Woodburn who informed Foundation executives some ten months previous about the establishment of a specific municipal office to deal with the Old Believer community. His letter detailed costs involved with operation of the Russian Liaison Program, which drew its funding from a variety of sources, including city coffers and the Tolstoy Foundation itself, but was primarily financed through federal grant monies. Johnson also acknowledged Valley Migrant League assistance for the employment of Paul Barsokoff. Described by the City Manager as a "field worker," Johnson noted that the VML "agreed to have him (Barsokoff) full time under the direction of Mr. Braun" indicating that the appointed Tolstoy representative fared better than his predecessor, Father Nicholas Sanin, in actively assisting the Old Believer community.²¹²

Establishment of the Russian Liaison Program was only one effort made by the city, among others, to constructively engage with the Old Believer community. Three days after Arthur Johnson's letter arrived, Foundation executives received a request from John Hudanish, Secretary of the Woodburn Human Relations Advisory Committee (WHRAC), asking for Foundation assistance in securing Russian-language versions of

²¹² Arthur Johnson to Tatiana Schaufuss, 15 June 1971. (TF-5510)

US citizenship materials. Hudanish, a second-generation American of a Russian immigrant family, was an ideal advocate for the Old Believers. His familial background and deep interest in Russian culture, combined with Russian language skills picked up during college and service in the Army, provided Hudanish with a natural affinity for the religious community.²¹³ His request for assistance from the Tolstoy Foundation was a natural outgrowth of that affinity. "In recent months, some members of Woodburn's Old Believer community here expressed interest in seeking US citizenship," wrote Hudanish, adding that this expressed interest prompted the WHRAC to investigate "the feasibility of offering citizenship classes this Fall."²¹⁴ As will be explored below, John Hudanish played an important advocacy role for the Old Believer community in the coming years and his request for assistance in securing citizenship materials fell into a recognizable rhetorical pattern that came up again and again. The concept was simple: embracing liberal values, which were thoroughly entwined with notions of American modernity, was the only way to ensure survival of the Old Believer community.

"Many of our Russian neighbors do not meet qualification requirements at this time," Hudanish noted, "nor can it be said that interest in obtaining citizenship is universal among them." But for those Old Believers who sought help from the WHRAC there emerged a sense of responsibility amongst the local organization to aid and assist. Motives could not have been clearer when Hudanish declared that, "we believe that the rights and privileges of US citizenship, when properly understood and applied, will serve to help them safeguard and preserve their great cultural heritage."²¹⁵ In many ways this rhetoric went far beyond that proposed by the Tolstoy Foundation with their

²¹³ "Everyone Loses if Tie to Russian Colony Cut," *Oregon Statesman*, 7 August 1973. (TF-5529)

²¹⁴ John Hudanish to Cyril Galitzine, 18 June 1971. (TF-5509)

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

establishment of the Old Believers Committee of Assistance in Woodburn in 1970. Instead of advocating for greater communal control, Hudaish's rhetoric suggested that individualized citizenship provided the best means for Old Believers to secure stability in the American modern scene. But Hudaish did not advocate a complete immersion approach, as seen in his request for Russian language versions of US citizenship materials. Rather, he sought to carve out a space where Old Believers could interact with American modernity on terms that recognized the desires of both the religious group and the Woodburn community.

Another letter arrived at Tolstoy Foundation headquarters in July, this time from their appointed representative Henry Braun. Typed on Woodburn Police Department letterhead, Braun stated that "since the Community Service Office opened on July 1, 1971, I expect you might like to hear from me."²¹⁶ Picking up on details offered in Arthur Johnson's letter from 15 June 1971, Braun informed Schaufuss that Paul Barsukoff, whose position came as a result of VML funding, worked as the Law Enforcement Counselor and was "mostly in the field helping the Russians with various problems, such as medical, immigration, insurance, etc." Of all issues mentioned, the most frequent area of assistance centered on the medical. Due to a reduction of fees, Braun and Barsukoff took most of the Old Believers requiring care to the Oregon Medical School Clinic "where they pay a small fee in proportion to their earnings." While some Old Believers visited Braun in his office at City Hall, the greater number of those seeking services from Barsukoff in the field often prompted Braun to close up shop and venture out to assist his fellow community liaison. "When time permits," Braun wrote, "I am translating the

²¹⁶ Henry Braun to Tatiana Schaufuss, 1 July 1971. (TF-5508)

Oregon Driver's Manual into Russian," although the lack of a Russian typewriter made duplication difficult.²¹⁷

Taken together, the three letters from Johnson, Hudanish, and Braun demonstrated that Foundation efforts in 1970 to establish channels of communication between Old Believers and civil administrators of Woodburn yielded measurable results. Promises made by both Johnson and the VML to dedicate specific resources to the Old Believer community became a reality with the establishment of the Community Service Office and the Human Relations Advisory Committee, as well as the employment of Paul Barsukoff for the position of Law Enforcement Counselor. Yet each letter also contained seeds of discontent that portended future conflicts between these organizations, the Old Believer community they served, and the Foundation's own ability to mediate disputes between the two. Johnson's letter requested funds from the Foundation's coffers in order to supplement Barsukoff's salary, a situation that increasingly repeated itself over the coming years as Woodburn's budget, and subsequent dedication of resources to the Old Believer community, shrank. Hudanish's own belief that greater, individualized integration into the American modern scene promised the best protection of Old Believer culture inherently went against the Foundation's active maintenance of communal mechanisms of control.

Furthermore, there is little indication in the letters that fundamental problems Foundation executives hoped to address in 1970, youth participation in education and enrollment in public assistance, found any resolution. Nor is there any reference of the Old Believer Committee of Assistance interacting with the city administration or

²¹⁷ Ibid.

individuals such as Paul Barsukoff, John Hudaish, or even Brother Ambrose. But with regards to issues of Old Believer youth in education and the acceptance of public assistance by members of the Old Believer community, any illusions of success held by Foundation executives after their actions in 1970 quickly tempered themselves with the arrival of certified mail from Andrew Juras, administrator in the Public Welfare Division in Salem, six months later on 31 January 1972. "We wish to direct your attention to a serious problem," began the sternly worded letter addressed to Foundation executives, "which has grown since representatives of your organization met with some of our staff in August 1970." Sustained enrollment by some Old Believers in welfare programs was the issue at hand. Yet unlike the previous meeting with State welfare officials, Foundation executives faced potentially severe financial repercussions for the Old Believer's actions. "We submit with this communication a listing of the persons receiving public support," the letter stated, "...and request reimbursement from your organization for this and other expenditures made in behalf of these persons you have sponsored."²¹⁸

Implications of this letter could not have been more clear for Foundation executives. Juras listed sixteen names of Old Believers who applied for public assistance, with all but two names having up to eight additional individuals attached to their application and receiving benefits. Ninety-seven Old Believers in total comprised the list submitted by Juras, with a subsequent bill of \$3,469.66 attached for reimbursement. Furthermore, the list compiled by the Public Welfare Division did not

²¹⁸ Andrew F. Juras to Alexandra Tolstoy, 31 January 1972. (TF-5492-5494) As discussed in Chapter Two, the Tolstoy Foundation made assurances to Federal authorities that the Old Believers would not partake of public assistance programs once admitted into the United States. Their position as sponsor of the Old Believer settlement in America thus made the Foundation culpable for actions undertaken by the Turkish Old Believers in seeking welfare benefits.

"reflect all the persons receiving public assistance, but only those for whom we have, at this time, obtained an 'Affidavit of Support' from the Immigration Department." These affidavits stemmed from sponsorship assumed by the Tolstoy Foundation when Attorney General Kennedy gave the Turkish Old Believers parole status in order to legally enter the United States, although it is not clear if the Tolstoy Foundation also undertook sponsorship of the Old Believers immigrating from Brazil. Regardless, Juras' letter served as a prime example of challenges faced by the Foundation in providing remote oversight of the Old Believer community. Yet even as Foundation correspondence and periodic direct involvement in Old Believer affairs suggested that the organization would continue to serve as primary interlocutor between the religious group and the various state and local agencies in Oregon, simmering issues centered on Old Believer involvement in Woodburn public schools proved otherwise.

Education and the Rise of Local Knowledge Networks

With regards to public education, events unfolded over the course of the 1972 spring term signaling a shift in the debate over Old Believers, their faith, and participation in the Woodburn public school system. Almost two months after the Tolstoy Foundation received Andrew Juras' letter, John Hudanish presented a report to the Woodburn Human Relations Advisory Committee concerning what he believed to be an unfair denial of Old Believer youth access to education. The issue hinged on asynchronicity between the civic holiday calendar for public education and the Old Believer-recognized holiday calendar deemed essential for maintenance of the faith. While disparity between the two calendars was a recognized problem, leading to increased concern over Old Believer truancy throughout the 1960s, Hudanish's report

took the well-worn issue and framed it in terms of denial of Old Believer rights instead of denial of American values. In doing so he put in concrete form rhetoric displayed in his request to the Tolstoy Foundation for Russian language US citizenship materials.

Inclusion and inculcation into the spaces of American modernity, albeit on terms that favored accommodation over assimilation, was far more effective from Hudanish's viewpoint than the communal, gatekeeper approach favored by the Foundation.

Hudanish opened his report with a description of all the services and roles Old Believers played in the Woodburn community, in effect establishing a foundation upon which his later arguments regarding Old Believer willingness to accept modernity could stand. "They shop in our stores, pay their taxes, give their sons into military service, and send their children to our public schools," the report opined, adding that Old Believers "provide us with an opportunity to fruitfully interact with a culture that is not our own," enriching the lives of those who took time to get to know the Russian community. Attaching positive characteristics to the Old Believers such as generosity, spirit of goodwill, and warmth, Hudanish indulged in a twist on the usual distancing rhetoric of measurement employed in previous reports when he offered this pithy assessment; "In short, they're just plain folks." Going further, he added, "There are no jaded sophisticates among them. I am often reminded of the generous, hard-working rural folk I met in North Carolina when I was stationed at Ft. Bragg. Similarities abound."²¹⁹

Hudanish was careful, however, to not generalize the Old Believers and, instead, counterbalanced his claim of similarity with a small treatise on the value of diversity in a pluralistic society. "Each culture represents, among other things, a separate and distinct

²¹⁹ John Hudanish, *Report by John P. Hudanish to the Woodburn Human Relations Advisory Committee* (Woodburn, OR: Tolstoy Foundation Archives, 27 March 1972). (TF-5500-5507)

pattern of behavior by which men respond to God and to nature and regulate the various societies in which they live," stated the report, with the tag line "God forbid that any one pattern become universal, and thereby condemn us all to a mind-numbing conformity" added at the end to accent the author's feeling on the presence of such cultural diversity. Hudanish spilled copious amount of ink to emphasize this viewpoint because he knew there existed strong bias among some in Woodburn against the Old Believers. His analysis of the situation Old Believers faced understood how use of measurement rhetoric fueled stark, assimilationist tendencies:

Rather than accepting Woodburn's ethnic plurality as an opportunity for enrichment, they tend to measure the Russians by an American yardstick. They look with approval on those among the Russians who adapt the most to American standards of dress and behavior. ...They are waiting for the Russians to drop their "quaint" little ways and start doing things the "right" way (i.e. The American way). ...This kind of galloping ethnocentrism is the most insidious of the assimilative pressures our Russian neighbors face. Unless it is recognized and checked, within a single generation these apostles of conformity will have their way - and Woodburn's ethnic plurality will have withered away.²²⁰

Hudanish engaged in clever positioning with his analysis above. Use of an 'American yardstick' to measure assimilation is linked with producing inauthentic copies of the American ideal, hence the contradictory idea that Old Believers who adapted 'the most' garnered the most favor even as that construction denied the ability of Old Believers to completely adapt. Imperfections would thus always be visible, always able to be detected. Anticipating critics who highlighted religious devotion of Old Believers as a

²²⁰ Ibid. (TF-5502)

hindrance, Hudanish formulated a clever riposte. For a community marked as 'other' by their religious habits and devotion, and the assumed danger this 'other' introduced, the real danger would instead be the 'apostles of conformity' found in the American modern scene that inflicted greater damage to the Woodburn community.

While zealots of conformity, seeking complete assimilation of Old Believers, drew scorn from Hudanish, even well-meaning citizens and educators who desired to "free them [Old Believers] from the shackles of past ignorance and superstition" and "bring them up out of darkness and into light" did more harm than good. "The Russian Old Believers do not need that kind of help," the author argued, "for it is destructive to the fabric of their religious and cultural values." Furthermore, such actions threatened the Old Believers "Freedom of Religious Opinion and their Freedom of Worship." [emphasis in original] Hudanish even went so far as to include quotes of the Oregon Bill of Rights which spelled out protections afforded in the two freedoms invoked above. After Hudanish set up the terms of his report, he concluded "it is time that all of us, and especially our educators, acquired a little understanding about our Russian neighbors."²²¹

Harping on the necessity of religious protection for a group whose identity intertwined with religious thought and practice was all about establishing context for Hudanish because the focus of his report, seeking greater alignment between religious and civic calendars of Old Belief and Woodburn Public Schools, relied on convincing school administrators that their assimilatory power would be more effective if they made concessions to the Old Believers' religious practice. Hudanish's report is notable because it not only established a rhetorical justification for protecting Old Believer

²²¹ Ibid. (TF-5503)

religious culture but also put forth an actionable plan for accommodation that demonstrated commitment of the religious community towards furthering their children's education.

"Last fall, on behalf of the Bilingual Staff, I approached the administration with a request that the school calendar be re-written so that the spring break coincide with the Russian Easter Holidays," began Hudanish, adding, "It was our hope that by so doing, we would gain five extra contact days with the Russian children in our system." While the Woodburn school system already recognized a few of the Old Believer holidays, and took care to not penalize absent youth on these occasions, they failed to elaborate a make-up policy for days missed due to unofficial religious holidays. Hudanish suggested that a handful of recognized, American holidays could be used for make-up purposes.

Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, and the week of Christmas and New Year's came up as alternatives, although the difficulty in getting school administrators to approve these dates was not lost on Hudanish. Not everyone would want to work on traditional holidays and the school administration likely understood that such an increase of teaching services required a requisite increase of budgetary allocation for all services, which included bus driving, cafeteria, and administrative staff. Despite these hurdles, Hudanish remained steadfast in his proposal, suggesting alternative dates that could be less sacred in terms of the holiday calendar. "They could also come to school during the spring break," Hudanish mused, offering a compromise that didn't "involve any specific holidays" and "could be made to coincide with Russian Easter without any great

inconvenience on anyone's part." School administrators rejected this request as well, prompting Hudanish to air his frustrations in the report summarized above.²²²

What made this rejection so odious to the author was the fact that an experiment carried out weeks previous demonstrated willingness of both educators and Old Believer youth to utilize the sort of make-up days outlined in the report. Hudanish, along with two other instructors who taught all-Russian classes, approached the administration and requested that instead of taking Spring Break off from work they be permitted to instruct Old Believer children during this period and then take their week-long break during the Old Believer-observed Easter holiday period. "We were told it was against the law," wrote Hudanish, "but when we attempted to verify this, we found it was not so." The instructors pushed back against the administration, which admitted that "no legal impediment existed" prohibiting the trio from teaching Russian children during Spring Break. However, Hudanish and company "were expected to be on the job during the Easter Holidays whether or not we had any children."²²³

Petitioning on behalf of school administrators convinced two of the instructors to back out of the proposed project. Hudanish remained firm, dedicated to the idea that Old Believer children "needed those five days in class." Informing administrators that he intended to keep his class open during Spring Break, even at the cost of forgoing his vacation, Hudanish made it known he expected the administration to furnish a bus "so the children could realistically take advantage of the fact that school would be open." Administrators told Hudanish he could have his bus but only if he first acquired a chauffeur's license. "I got a chauffeur's license," Hudanish wrote, "and I began to ride the

²²² Ibid. (TF-5504)

²²³ Ibid. (TF-5506)

buses after school to get used to the wheelbase and transmission." An accident one day, in which Hudanish managed to become stuck in third gear, convinced school administrators that the school instructor was both determined to see his plan through and unfit for bus driving duties. They quickly approved the hiring of a professional driver in order to assure the safety of the children being ferried to and from school during Hudanish's demonstration.

"Four aides volunteered to work through the break as well, so I felt I could invite all the children in the three all-Russian classes to attend," wrote Hudanish. Old Believer children took home notes the Friday before Spring Break announcing the special week-long classes to be held. The response was overwhelming. By the second day of classes around 103 children, spanning from the third to fifth grades, made the trip to an almost-empty school building, exceeding the expectation and capacity planned by Hudanish. "We were forced to ask some of the older children to stay at home," Hudanish woefully noted before more cheerfully drawing out the significance of the act. Describing a scene in which he stood in the door of the bus and told some of the children that they couldn't come to school that day, Hudanish saw that "they were disappointed...they actually wanted to come to school [emphasis in the original]." From his point of view, the inability to accommodate all the Russian children who wanted to attend school during this experimental period fell squarely on the shoulders of reticent administrators. "Had the administration cooperated in working out a compromise, this unpleasantness could have been averted," wrote Hudanish, adding later that when "the administration denied

this reasonable proposal, it symbolically turned its back on the Russian children in school district 103C."²²⁴

This symbolic act, at least in the eyes of the author, carried with it significant consequences. Comprising around a sixth of the total school age population, Old Believer youth in Woodburn did more than draw attention for their religious beliefs; they also drew in over \$130,000 of Federal subsidies awarded through Title VII grants. Hudanish also pointed out that parents of Old Believer children paid taxes, "like everyone else," and that to discriminate against the youth of the religious group for following tenets of their beliefs "penalizes Russian children simply because they are Russians."²²⁵ Furthermore, denial of make-up days created a situation where the district potentially faced legal prosecution for failing to provide Old Believer youth the minimum number of school days required by law. Hudanish admonished administrators at the conclusion of his report for what he believed was willful abandonment of their core mission. "It is inexcusable that a school district should turn children away from school, because children are a school district's reason for being," he wrote.²²⁶ Still, while Hudanish was noticeably biased in offering up more than obstructionist rhetoric when quoting school administrators, it cannot be denied that other issues loomed large. Coordinating bus drivers, making sure enough custodial, cafeteria, and administrative personnel were present, as well as finding additional financial resources to pay for such cost outlays was difficult enough. That such services also benefited only a minority population of students enrolled was more than enough reason to justify the administrator's obvious reticence at enacting Hudanish's proposal.

²²⁴ Ibid. (TF-5507)

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

After hearing his report, the Woodburn Human Relations Advisory Committee voted to submit Hudanish's concerns to the City Council. A day later, on 28 March 1972, Chairman of the Human Relations Advisory Committee, Brent Reddaway, sent a letter to City Councilman Al Luna outlining committee concerns. Like Hudanish, they sourced their concerns to an Oregon state law mandating 175 days of classroom instruction for each student in the public school system. While the Marion County Intermediate Education District board ruled that "schools within the district may not penalize children for their religious convictions, nor for absence on certain authorized religious holidays," the Human Relations Advisory Committee's statement concluded that "failure to provide alternative days of instruction itself constitutes a penalty." Interestingly, the Committee felt that "flexibility on the part of our schools [would not] constitute a precedent for other religions or ethnic groups" because they "generally follow the same calendar as does the majority of persons within the community."²²⁷

On 4 April 1972, Al Luna presented the Committee's report to the Woodburn City Council. A letter sent by the mayor of Woodburn, E. Walter Lawson, to the Chairman of the Woodburn School Board, Clarence C. Smith, detailed the council's response to the issues raised by Hudanish's report.

It was the consensus of the Council that it was not a proper function of city government to meddle in the school's affairs and problems- real or imagined. However, the Council also felt that it might be appropriate for the school board to appoint one of their members to sit on the Human Relations Advisory Committee, as does the City Council, in order to improve the lines of communication between the people, the Committee and the schools.²²⁸

²²⁷ Brent Reddaway to Al Luna, 28 March 1972. (TF-5498-5499)

²²⁸ E. Walter Lawson to Clarence C. Smith, 12 April 1972. (TF-5496-5497)

If Hudanish or the Human Relations Advisory Committee hoped for decisive action by the City Council on behalf of Old Believer children, they faced nothing but disappointment with the results described above. Even the language of the statement above, especially the reference to problems "real or imagined," suggested that the Council possessed little will in tackling the problem directly. Instead, they called for greater communication between the school board and members of the Human Relations Advisory Committee, but not with representatives of the Old Believer community itself. Even the Tolstoy Foundation appeared to be consulted only after the fact, as Lawson sent Tatiana Schaufuss copies of Hudanish's report and letters sent to Al Luna and Clarence Smith in order to keep the Foundation "informed of developments within our community."²²⁹

If Hudanish's attempt to mediate asynchronicity between the religious calendar used by the Old Believer community and the civic calendar used by the Woodburn Public School system came across as failure, the embattled author of the report at least demonstrated willingness of Old Believers to compromise and negotiate terms of interaction with public education. City leaders were noticeably hesitant endorsing a plan that, at its core, reshaped terms of modernity offered by the public school system to suit particular needs of Old Believer children. However, as Hudanish noted in his report, a considerable sum of federal dollars flowed through city coffers specifically earmarked for use in dealing with the Russian community. Simply ignoring the problem, and potentially jeopardizing future allocation of federal funds, was not an option. (Although its questionable if the funds were truly in jeopardy or if Hudanish used this threat as a

²²⁹ E. Walter Lawson to Tatiana Schaufuss, 12 April 1972. (TF-5495)

rhetorical ploy.) And while there is no direct evidence stating the fact, it no doubt also played into the Council's decision to appoint Hudanish as head of Woodburn's new Human Resources Department. The next best thing to dealing with the religious community directly was, instead, relying upon a trusted intermediary that possessed credibility among both Old Believers and City Hall administrators. Yet Hudanish clearly believed in facilitating interaction between Old Belief and American modernity using accommodationist rhetoric sourced in liberal values, something the City Council refused to do with regards to the school calendar issue discussed above, and it would not be long before the two sides separated due to lack of common cause.

Foundation records of the period following the City Council's meeting are spotty and infrequent with little mention of activity with regards to the Oregon Old Believers. They do, however, contain copies of another Hudanish report and a newspaper clipping from The Oregon Statesman, 'Everyone Loses if Tie to Russian Colony Cut', both from August 1973. The Oregon Statesman article, penned by the editorial staff, summarized Hudanish's tenure as director of the Human Resources Department and provided context as to why the Old Believer advocate decided to resign his position at the time the article was written. "The irresistible force of government funding guidelines met the immovable object of a dedicated man's sense of duty," the piece began, with subsequent commentary suggesting that "John Hudanish resigned as director...when he decided he couldn't serve the people who need help and still meet the requirements of the federal program which, to a large extent, is paying for his department." Recounting how Hudanish worked as a bilingual teacher before assuming leadership of the city's Human Resources Department, the article addressed the role of both Hudanish and the office he directed. "One of the

primary concerns of this department is liaison with the Woodburn area's Russian colony, the Old Believers," the article explained. Desire to maintain their religious and cultural heritage often put the Old Believers at odds with "understanding and meeting the requirements of the American system," the article argued, making Hudanish, who stood "as a bridge between the two cultures," an invaluable commodity.²³⁰

Mentioned at the beginning of the article, federal funding guidelines prompted Hudanish to resign his leadership role in the Woodburn Human Resources Department. The primary issue of contention centered on expenditure of federal monies, in this case provided by a law enforcement grant fund, for services related to law enforcement and minority populations. While Hudanish felt that working directly with Old Believers to encourage law-abiding behavior was far more effective than addressing conflicts as they arose in the judicial system, Federal evaluators stressed that grant funds could only be spent on costs related to corrections, detection of crime, and adjudication of legal charges incurred when Old Believers ran afoul of law enforcement. "So, to only a limited degree does his work conform to government guidelines," the Statesman article admitted about Hudanish's work, although it vehemently concluded that, "the best interests of the entire community suggest that all involved should renew their efforts to see that this vital service is not lost."

What sort of work did Hudanish undertake as Director of the Woodburn Human Resources Department? According to a report he submitted to City Hall just before resigning, Hudanish helped the Old Believers address a wide variety of issues in his capacity as municipal officer. The 'Report on the Russian Orthodox Old Believer

²³⁰ "Everyone Loses if Tie to Russian Colony Cut," *Oregon Statesman*, 7 August 1973. (TF-5529)

Community in Oregon.' more so than any document considered so far, offered a broad perspective on daily interactions between the Russian community and all levels of local, state, and federal governance. It represented a high-water mark in terms of support offered by the city of Woodburn to the Old Believers, with municipal funds earmarked for an official liaison terminated less than a year later on 1 July 1974. It also represented the greatest actualization of Hudanish's vision for accommodation and greater integration of Old Belief into the Woodburn community and larger American modern scene. As such represented a turning point in the larger story of Old Believer settlement in Oregon, suggesting paths not taken and hints of what could have been, as the aftermath of Hudanish's resignation prompted both Woodburn and the Tolstoy Foundation to reevaluate their respective commitments and plans for the religious group.

As with most reports whose subject matter pertained to the Oregon Old Believers, Hudanish opened his observations with a brief description on religious and historical background of the Russian group. His goal mirrored the approach utilized in the report submitted to the Human Relations Advisory Committee in 1972 in that Hudanish attempted to find common ground between American notions of modernity and the traditional lifestyle lived by Old Believers. His primary recourse for establishing such common ground, just as before, lay with legal protections afforded in the American and Oregonian constitutions. "Traditionally, under the aegis of the 'American Melting-Pot' concept, newly-arrived groups are ultimately assimilated and lost in the American mainstream," wrote Hudanish, countering that, "the Russian OB's are resisting this, believing that they have a duty before God to preserve and pass on their faith, customs and traditions to their heirs and descendants as they themselves received from their

forefathers." Even though "American provincialism and ethnocentrism" proved to be just as stubborn in pursuing assimilation as the Old Believers were in resisting it, Hudanish made it clear that "the American legal tradition, with its guarantees of religious freedom and self-determination, supports the OB position."²³¹

Hudanish felt the onus of adjustment lay with various governmental agencies seeking to regulate, or assimilate, the Old Believer population and not the other way around. Importantly, he didn't argue that the Old Believers deserved exemptions from their legal obligations; they should, instead, be provided equal opportunity, in their own language, to learn expected behavior. His report tackled "discussion of problems and their solutions engendered by this muted clash of cultural and spiritual values," and specifically addressed fifteen specific organizations where these muted clashes occurred. The list reads like a laundry list of municipal, state, and federal offices. Some are more obvious, like the section covering County and Municipal Law Enforcement agencies, because of their long-standing involvement and interest in the Old Believer community. Others are less expected, like the sections covering the Oregon Fish Commission and County and Local Building Inspectors, and suggest that as the Old Believers became accustomed to life in and around Woodburn their interests came under increasing purview of more and more governmental entities. Taken as a whole, the list of agencies surveyed indicated that, at the very least, Old Believers did not shy away from engagements with modern institutions, even if those engagements fostered the "muted clash of cultural and spiritual values" mentioned by Hudanish in his introduction.

²³¹ John Hudanish, *Report on the Russian Orthodox Old Believer Community in Oregon, August 1973* (Woodburn, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1973), 3.

Each section of Hudanish's report spans, at most, a few pages. All followed a similar pattern in presentation; Hudanish summarized the most common problems, interjecting cultural commentary about Old Belief where he felt necessary, and then presented possible solutions that usually involved unilateral action on behalf of the agency in question. It was an audacious approach given the fact that Woodburn only tenuously supported the existence of a paid liaison to the Old Believer community. Take, for example, the very first agency listed in Hudanish's report; the Oregon State Police. Contact between Old Believers and state police usually occurred over violations of Oregon's fish and game laws as Old Believers often failed to secure permits or permission to fish on public and private lands. Hudanish framed illegal incidents of fishing as being, from the Old Believer perspective, both sanctioned by God and for the purpose of sustenance, not sport. "Some OB's know the law, and some do not," wrote Hudanish, "but few, if any, understand the rationale behind the law, i.e., the need to conserve and protect our wildlife resources." Far from apologetic for this seeming legal ignorance, Hudanish advocated first and foremost that Oregon State Police "must continue to enforce Fish and Game laws." But he also recommended that the police "translate these laws into Russian" so that they could be printed and distributed in the Old Believer community, in addition to publishing a brochure or producing a film, in Russian, "explaining the need for wildlife conservation." It was a proactive approach that, nonetheless, called upon the Oregon State Police to engage in far more reform than the ostensible violators of the law.²³²

²³² Ibid, 5.

Other agencies received similar recommendations. With regards to the problem of drunk driving and alcohol-related malfeasance on behalf of Old Believer male youth, Hudanish suggested that county and municipal law enforcement conduct a study to "determine what sorts of activities Russian youth would engage in if facilities and/or opportunities were available" and then proceed to provide those facilities and opportunities.²³³ The Motor Vehicle Division, whose interactions with Old Believers ranged from administering driving tests to receiving and acting upon accident reports, needed to produce a Russian-language film "which could be shown in local theaters on week-ends [sic]" that covered safe driving principles. "If such a film were shown in tandem with a popular Russian film," Hudanish wrote, "it would absolutely guarantee broad exposure, and would doubtless have a salutary effect on the driving habits of the community."²³⁴ The tendency by the Old Believers to believe that purchase of land made them sovereign owners free from interference of regulatory officials put them at odds with building codes and inspectors when members of the religious community decided to remodel homes or construct additional structures. "The various county and local building inspectors should cooperate to compose a short paper" discussing importance of safety and health issues related to enforcement of building codes "and then cause this short paper to be translated into Russian and disseminated to the Russian OB community."²³⁵

Some of the problems described by Hudanish revealed, upon closer inspection, clever tactics utilized by Old Believers to accrue advantages when interacting with

²³³ Ibid, 6-7.

²³⁴ Ibid, 13-15. The films mentioned by Hudanish read as an all-star list of early cinematography; Alexander Nevsky, Ivan the Terrible, The Cranes Are Flying, Ballad of a Soldier, and The Quiet Don. Keen observers will note that the debate amongst the Old Believer community regarding possible prohibition of movie watching, discussed in Clymer's report above, appears to have at least nominally fallen on the side of acceptance.

²³⁵ Ibid, 20-21.

authorities or regulatory agencies. Filing of taxes regularly confounded IRS officials because Old Believers often lived in extended family situations where one member, nominally the patriarch, managed all income produced and decided which wage-earner could submit exemptions for their filings. When audited, especially young wage-earners of large families often were at a loss to explain finances from years previous which might have been used for support of another family member. While seemingly capricious, such behavior allowed families to maximize their earning potential while minimizing total risk endured by the family as a whole. Applying for a driver's license, which required passing a standardized test, proved easy for Old Believers who brought along an interpreter who supplied "correct answers to the examiner's questions rather than interpret the applicant's responses accurately."²³⁶ Legal proceedings involving Old Believers provided questionable standards of justice because any member of the community summoned before the court either immediately pled guilty and paid their fine or provided falsehoods if questioned about something embarrassing or incriminating. Lack of available interpreters also made court cases difficult to prosecute.

Ultimately the Hudanish report fell into line with his previous efforts to promote accommodation among members of the American modern scene even as it called into question contradictory elements of that scene in pressuring Old Believers to assimilate. His most pointed critique surfaced in the section regarding the Marion County Juvenile Department. Ethnocentric behavior, according to Hudanish, polluted the thinking of those in the department and allowed employees to pass judgement on Old Belief "when its values tend to conflict with those of the greater American society." It was the root

²³⁶ Ibid, 14.

cause of seeking "American answers to Russian problems" and fueled wistful thinking among juvenile counsellors that Old Believers would one day "drop their 'strange' ways and begin 'doing things the right way' i.e., the American way. This, along with a demonstrated avoidance of working with elders of the Russian community (suggesting that Hudanish, like the Tolstoy Foundation, also believed in utilizing established Old Believer hierarchies of power), created a wholly combative attitude from the perspective of the author. "If the OB community could be made to feel that the Juvenile Department, rather than an agent of assimilation, were truly sympathetic to its legitimate goals of cultural perpetuation...it would feel a much greater incentive to cooperate with the Department," Hudanish wrote.²³⁷

Once again, Hudanish linked the "legitimate goals of cultural perpetuation" with the "greater incentive to cooperate" as a key reason why federal, state, and local agencies needed to adjust their own policies and approaches to the Old Believer community. In the conclusion, Hudanish argued that "all agency heads...must direct their personnel to work with the individuals they respectively serve within the context of that individual's cultural frame of reference," because "affirmation of cultural pluralism is affirmation of principals which are at the very heart of this nation's political system."²³⁸ Yet there are scant traces of how agencies could accomplish this task without furthering ethnocentric thinking and behavior or depending upon consultation with the Woodburn Human Relations Department, which consisted primarily of Hudanish who resigned just after submitting his report. There was also the issue of spending federal funds, discussed in the Oregon Statesman article above, which Hudanish mentioned in his section on Old

²³⁷ Ibid, 9-11.

²³⁸ Ibid, 23.

Believer interactions with the private sector. Describing interpretation and translation services his office facilitated between Old Believers and various attorneys, doctors, creditors, etc., Hudanish admitted that, "although it is questionable whether or not these activities ought to be supported by the National Law Enforcement Assistance Act funds, the need for such a service is clear and far above any question or doubt."²³⁹

While Hudanish harbored no doubt as to the necessity of his work, his resignation introduced more than a little doubt in the minds of Tolstoy Foundation executives, who provided funds to the Woodburn agency he directed, as to the viability of continued support for the municipal program. Their hesitancy came through in a letter received on 10 September 1973 from the new director of the Human Resources Department, William Triest. "Correspondence is not one of the better ways to introduce oneself but distance will permit no other," Triest began, letting Foundation executives know that he replaced Hudanish and would be responsible for "implementing the Woodburn Community Services Project of which funding from the Tolstoy Foundation was a part." Although Triest met with Cyril Galitzine in Woodburn "several weeks ago," the departure of Hudanish and lack of communication from the Foundation prompted Triest to ascertain commitment of Tolstoy executives. "I am compelled to mention that at present we are still awaiting receipt of the Tolstoy Foundation's share of the Community Services Program," Triest wrote, with the balance in question amounting to \$1,800. Beyond monetary concerns, Triest required Tolstoy commitment in order for his office "to officially act as a liaison between the Oregon Public Welfare Division and your foundation."

²³⁹ Ibid, 22.

As it turned out, there was good reason for the Foundation to be concerned about its continued financial support of the Woodburn Human Resources Department. Even though Triest wrote that his department would continue to devote some of its resources "towards providing a variety of services for the Russian community and the broader community" and instigate "preventative measures within the community to assist the Russian community in avoiding unnecessary contact" with various agencies, a visit by Galitzine in late September/early October of 1973 put such promises into sharp relief. Meeting with the Woodburn City Manager, Donal Stillwell, Galitzine learned that city administrators decided to adhere more closely to guidelines attached to National Law Enforcement Assistance Act funds so that interactions between the Human Resources Department and Old Believers "would be kept in line with the law enforcement agencies." Galitzine fired back, stating that the federal funds tied to law enforcement did not "necessarily meet with the purpose of the Tolstoy Foundation in the program of resettlement of newcomers in this country." Foundation executives, he explained, are "more interested in the training of Old Believers on how to prevent accidents and to avoid misdemeanors, working towards future naturalization and compliance with laws and regulations."²⁴⁰

As it became clear that interests of Woodburn administrators and Foundation executives, with regards to spending funds tied to the National Law Enforcement Assistance Act, were incompatible, there arose a need for the New York-based organization to find, yet again, alternative resources to secure their vision of how the

²⁴⁰ *Report on the Trip to Oregon, 5 October 1973* (New York: Tolstoy Foundation Archives, 1973). (TF-5530-5531)

religious group should be integrated into society.²⁴¹ Beyond financial resources, the Foundation also needed to secure a more permanent representative who lived in Woodburn and shared similar ideals vis-à-vis the Old Believers. Hudanish, whose work on behalf of the Old Believers drew favorable attention from Foundation executives, became the natural choice. "After having consulted his wife, Mr. Hudanish agreed to represent us in the dealings with the official agencies, as well as with the Office of the City Government," Galitzine wrote. The choice proved popular with the Old Believers as well. Visiting several families with the former director of the Human Resources Department, Galitzine reported that "the whole colony regrets very much the fact that Mr. Hudanish is leaving his post" and "I was told that he was doing a great job in helping people in their daily difficulties with the State and local agencies, as well as with the Federal agencies such as the Department of Immigration."²⁴²

With Hudanish accepting the position of official representative, Galitzine turned his attention to meeting with William Triest, the new Director of the Human Resources Department. While specifics of their conversation failed to make the report, Galitzine did note that "a spirit of continued co-operation and goodwill on both sides was established," suggesting that the Foundation felt comfortable in providing continued financial support to the program despite change in leadership. Again, the importance of Hudanish deciding to remain active in his role as an Old Believer intermediary cannot be underestimated in this regard. Galitzine highlighted his "personal interest in the welfare of the Old Believers' colony" as well as his "success in preventing the abuse of Public Assistance" as key

²⁴¹ There is no mention of what happened to Henry Braun, the previous candidate who represented the Foundation's interests in Woodburn specifically and Oregon in general.

²⁴² *Report on the Trip to Oregon, 5 October 1973* (New York: Tolstoy Foundation Archives, 1973). (TF-5530-5531)

reasons why the former director made such a good fit for Foundation representative.²⁴³

Even though there was little guarantee that Triest, or the Woodburn city government in general, would handle Old Believers in a manner deemed appropriate by the Foundation, the presence of Hudanish, with his intimate knowledge on the inner workings of state and local agencies, assured Tolstoy executives that their interests would be adequately voiced.²⁴⁴

Yet there was no avoiding the reality that Hudanish's resignation signaled a shift in the priorities of Woodburn's city government vis-a-vis the Old Believers. While never explicitly stated, fear of losing access to federal grant monies associated with the National Law Enforcement Assistance Act no doubt weighed heavily upon the minds of city administrators. As the Oregon Statesman article and Hudanish's report noted, federal evaluators did not want grant monies spent on costs outside of those related to legal, disciplinary efforts. City administrators clearly did not want to jeopardize receipt of these funds and made their stance known when City Manager Donal Stillwell informed Galitzine that the Human Resources Department would adhere to federal guidelines stipulated in the grant. Securing Hudanish's services was a recuperative step by the Foundation in the face of municipal reduction of total services offered Old Believers. But without any of the clout, discretion, and resources offered by his former position, Hudanish could do little more than play the role of unofficial advocate. As noted in Hudanish's report, Old Believers interacted with several state and local agencies, most of

²⁴³ Ibid. (TF-5531)

²⁴⁴ The report also stated that Hudanish would travel to the Foundation's New York headquarters and stay for one month to become "better acquainted with Tolstoy Foundation's activities and, especially, to be of help in the immigration of Old Believers from Latin America," indicating that Foundation executives believed they acquired quite an asset in the former director. As will be explored below, however, this relationship later soured and Hudanish parted ways with the Foundation in 1975.

whom lacked adequate language and personnel resources to successfully communicate with member of the Russian community. While Triest called upon the talents of Helen Lokteff, a naturalized Russian, to provide translation services, his offer to "discuss modifications" of services offered by his office "within the frame work of our federally funded program's guidelines" reinforced how his prioritization in serving the religious community differed from Hudanish.²⁴⁵

Thus it came as no surprise when Triest, in his 14 June 1974 letter to Tatiana Schaufuss, advocated for a Russian liaison position that could "operate independently of the restrictive requirements of the Law Enforcement funded Community Services Program" but still remain in the larger municipal bureaucratic organization. In the eight-month span since Triest took over as director, data compiled by his office found that juvenile affairs and courtroom translation ranked only second to individual assistance requests in terms of services offered. "Examples of individual assistance would be composing and typing of letters, explaining contents of mail, filling out forms, insurance claims, etc.," Triest wrote, adding that "private business and state agency requests" rounded out his office's Old Believer workload. Middle age or elderly Old Believers primarily sought assistance from Triest's office, prompting the director to observe that they "still have great difficulty adjusting to a fast paced 20th century way of life that is present here in America." Triest acknowledged the need to balance integration with modernity against preservation of Old Believer cultural identity, noting that, "Woodburn is a centrally located site among the Russian Old Believers in terms of habitat, municipal resources and shopping," and that an independent Russian liaison would allow the

²⁴⁵ Helen Lokteff is mentioned as working in conjunction with Triest as the Community Services Coordinator in the letter sent by Triest to Tatiana Schaufuss. See William Triest to Tatiana Schaufuss, 10 September 1973. (TF-5532)

community "to more favorably respond to the special needs of some of its residents." But even here, in what comes across as a conciliatory remark by Triest, implied contrast between Old Belief and modernity stands out in sharp relief. Use of the term habitat to describe the concentration of Old Believers living in and around Woodburn summoned images aligned more with a nature documentary, and the animals at the center of such documentaries, rather than the urban/rural settings, where the contrasting modern citizens of America lived, that Woodburn actually encompassed.²⁴⁶

A summary of Old Believer contacts between July 1973 and May 1974 followed Triest's letter, breaking down the director's claims into quantifiable numbers. The total comprised 875 contacts spread over nine categories. This included categories such as Medical, with twenty-three contacts, Schools, with four contacts, and Local Government, with thirty-three contacts. Closer inspection of the categories related to the judicial systems of Woodburn and Oregon revealed an interesting split. While the Court System category listed only thirty-four contacts, the Criminal Justice Agencies category listed one hundred and ninety contacts. This split indicated that Old Believers interacted with police or other criminal justice representatives more frequently than they did with officers or representatives of the courts, a pattern indicative of friction, rather than noncompliance, between Old Believers and municipal, state, and federal laws. The number of contacts listed as related to Private Business, totaling one hundred and seventy-six, likewise indicated that Old Believers did not live in their own hermetically sealed world but, rather, interacted with commercial elements of modern society in Woodburn.

²⁴⁶ See William Triest to Tatiana Schaufuss, 14 June 1974. (TF-5526-5527)

Copies of Triest's letter went to John Hudanish and Brother Ambrose as well, suggesting that municipal leaders knew about/depended upon an informal network of locals experienced in dealing with Old Believers. While city leaders did almost nothing to foster or support this informal network, it is interesting to note that local alternatives to the sort of expertise previously offered by the Tolstoy Foundation or academic experts began to coalesce in this early to mid-1970s period. As will be explored below, other organizations, such as the public school system, utilized this network in the coming years to enhance their own interactions with Old Believers. As the Old Believer community became more ingrained with the local scene in and around Woodburn, input from organizations such as the Tolstoy Foundation took a back seat to the first-hand experience of individuals such Brother Ambrose or John Hudanish. The Foundation's lackluster engagement with city leaders of Woodburn during this period also contributed to the ascendancy of local knowledge-brokers. Beyond appointing representatives and contributing limited financial resources, the Tolstoy Foundation provided little, direct guidance to city leaders outside of brief visits infrequently undertaken by Cyril Galitzine or, more rarely, Tatiana Schaufuss. Triest's June 1974 request for additional funds went largely unanswered by the Foundation, with records indicating they possibly sent \$1,800, and it took another letter written by Triest, sent the following year on 6 May 1975, for Tolstoy executives to take direct action.

"Quite some time ago the two of us were in communication regarding the continuation of a liaison person to assist Russian Old-Believers with personal problems in the Woodburn community," Triest wrote Schaufuss in his May 1975 letter. Since his initial request a year previous, the situation faced by Triest's office in attempting to deal

with volume of queries made by Old Believers only intensified. On 1 July 1974 the city of Woodburn, acting on a motion passed by the City Council, withdrew dedicated funding for the staff liaison assigned to the Old Believer community, increasing the burden placed upon Triest and his office's limited resources. "Since that time it has been interesting to observe that individual requests for assistance are still coming to the city, county agencies and the handful of private citizens that still provide assistance," observed Triest, with usual concerns of translation or negotiation of bureaucracy compromising the bulk of Old Believer interest. But an old, simmering issue also resurfaced. "There seems to be a growing problem among Old-Believer adolescence with the local Police Department and as you would expect school attendance," Triest explained, bringing what was once a dormant issue back to the fore once again.

Overwhelmed with work, Triest made it clear that he and his office would seek assistance from alternative institutions, "such as the City, County Health Department, etc.," should the Tolstoy Foundation abstain from financial support in securing a part-time liaison. The picture painted by Triest's request, from the perspective of Foundation executives, could hardly be described as encouraging. Furthermore, Triest's letter revealed a dual-natured threat to the Foundation's interests in the Oregon Old Believer colony. Municipal support for Old Believer assistance appeared to be waning, with elimination of the staff-liaison position a portent of things to come, and Triest's mention of securing financial support from alternative sources underscored the tenuous command of authority the Foundation held in the far-flung locale of Woodburn. Of the two, lack of municipal support proved most troubling. Since the beginning of involvement in Turkish Old Believers' lives up through events described above, collaboration with already

established organizations, and the superior logistical and infrastructural networks at their disposal, was a cornerstone of Tolstoy Foundation operating procedure. Declining interest of the Woodburn city council, and the financial support that accompanied such interest, was a severe threat to the long term feasibility of Foundation involvement in the Oregon Old Believer colony.

While loss of municipal support proved to be the most pressing for Foundation executives, it was the second issue presented by Triest, listing possible alternative agencies available for possible financial support, that proved to be the most existential concern. Triest's almost casual mention of this fact in his letter comes across as less of a threat and more of a genuine admission that other agencies possessed a stake in maintaining productive communication with the Old Believers. Nevertheless, it served as a clear indication that Foundation involvement, at least from the perspective of the Oregon functionaries that Triest represented, predicated itself more on financial contributions than specialized knowledge based offerings. Appearance of local functionaries such as Brother Ambrose and John Hudanish, not to mention the work carried out by Old Believers such as Vasily Bodunov, pointed towards development of nascent, localized sources of 'expert knowledge' once offered by outside academics and Foundation executives alike. Even if other municipal or state agencies lacked institutional knowledge required to meaningfully interact with Old Believers, they could (and did) more readily draw upon localized networks to fill gaps in understanding. Triest's letter, more than any other source from this period, succinctly hit upon crises faced by the Foundation in what became the twilight of their involvement in the Old Believer colony.

Aware of the pressing need to take action, Foundation executives began formulating a response. Cyril Galitzine, apprised of the Triest letter by telephone, strongly recommended that John Hudanish be convinced to reprise his role as Tolstoy Foundation representative. Otherwise, Galitzine warned, "the bezobraznoe [an extreme pejorative descriptor associated with disgraceful or uncouth behavior] situation, especially among the youth, will continue."²⁴⁷ His insistence on utilizing a trusted confidant, who not only spoke Russian but also possessed a well-known affinity for Old Belief, bespoke of the equal measure of disregard Galitzine held for others who might take Hudanish's place. "The present 'Mexican' Office and Co. as Cyril Vlad. calls it, [most likely referencing the Valley Migrant League]" a Tolstoy Foundation memo noted, "will not be able to handle the Old Believers' young people simply because the 'Mexicans' are not interested in Old Believers." It was a stunningly candid moment revealing the ethnically charged atmosphere operating in and around Woodburn.²⁴⁸ Hudanish, suggested Galitzine, could receive funds once allocated to Triest's office, which in 1974 amounted to \$1,800 and in 1975 fell sharply to zero. Clearly the Foundation felt increasing unease with supporting the Triest-led effort to assist the Old Believer community, but the possibility still existed for continued support should the proper candidate be selected.

Six days later the Foundation sent a proposal to Triest. Their opening, as cautious as it was agreeable, hinted at a reluctance tempered by necessity. "I certainly am most interested in renewing our splendid relationship in our joint endeavor to help Russian Old

²⁴⁷ O. Roussanow to Tatiana Schaufuss, 9 May 1975. (TF-5518)

²⁴⁸ While the memo does not specifically note who Galitzine referenced when making his remark, it is entirely possible his outburst targeted the diminished, but still active, presence of the Valley Migrant League, which at this point was primarily dedicated towards the advancement of Latino labor issues which dominated the agricultural region of Woodburn. (TF-5518)

Believers under your supervision in the Woodburn area," wrote Tatiana Schaufuss. "Maybe we could agree with you to use the services of John Hudanish," Schaufuss continued, "for liaison between your offices and the old Believers' needs described so well by you in your 'random sample cases'."²⁴⁹ After resigning as Director of the Human Resources Division, Hudanish remained in Woodburn but found work at the Oregon Employment Division in nearby Salem. Discussing the situation over the phone with Schaufuss, Hudanish agreed to contact Triest and discuss the possibility of resuming some of his former duties one day a week. In her letter, Schaufuss informed Triest that the Foundation would contribute "for the first half of the fiscal year 1975-1976" to pay for Hudanish's services. With the crisis of securing representation in Woodburn at least temporarily resolved, Foundation executives no doubt felt some small measure of relief.

It didn't last long. A little over a month later, on 25 June 1975, Schaufuss received a reply from Triest informing her that his position as Director of Human Resources would be eliminated at the end of the month. Woodburn's municipal government, it seemed, possessed little appetite for continued support of an office whose primary purpose centered on assisting Old Believers. "I feel it would be inappropriate at this time to have the City of Woodburn involved as a sponsor in any additional social service programs," Triest wrote, "because of the great difficulty in passing city budgets and the negative voter response" against offering such services.²⁵⁰ The process begun the year previous, with elimination of a municipally funded community liaison, came full circle with termination of Triest. Losing support of city government portended a

²⁴⁹ Tatiana Schaufuss to William Triest, 12 May 1975. (TF-5518)

²⁵⁰ William Triest to Tatiana Schaufuss, 25 June 1975. (TF-5516-5517)

subsequent drastic reduction of the Foundation's presence in Woodburn and surrounding environs.

Triest suggested that Foundation executives turn to seek alliances at the state level with Oregon's Director of Human Resources because, "state agencies are very much involved with services to Old-Believers." The suggestion proved unpalatable, at least partially, from the Foundation's perspective. State agencies possessed significant resources, but little desire to dedicate specific financial and manpower resources interacting with Old Believers demanded. Furthermore, any hope of maintaining a presence through the proxy of John Hudanish became an impossibility after a botched phone conversation between Schaufuss and Hudanish on 24 July 1975 produced feelings of ill-will in the latter.²⁵¹ The conversation, as recalled by Hudanish in this letter, is a striking indictment of the Foundation's motives when it came to the Old Believer community in and around Woodburn. After being scolded by Schaufuss' secretary for not contacting the Foundation sooner, Hudanish recalled being told by Schaufuss to "not make a big thing" about the scolding before being informed that the Foundation believed that the Old Believers probably didn't require additional social services. "When the conversation was over and I finally put down the receiver, I couldn't help but wonder why and on whose behalf I had expended so much effort," Hudanish wrote, adding that he "resolved never again to put myself in a position to be so infamously treated." It was clear that Hudanish would have nothing more to do with the Foundation, and the records made available corroborated this fact as no further communication appears to have occurred between Hudanish and the New York organization after this letter. Having

²⁵¹ John Hudanish to Tatiana Schaufuss, 20 August 1975. (TF-5523-5524)

introduced the Tolstoy Foundation to Ellen Schneider, who worked in the Oregon Department of Human Resources and could reasonably take over the functions once assumed by Hudanish, the once employed Tolstoy Foundation representative considered "the obligation I accepted from on 12 May" to be fulfilled.

From here on out, Foundation involvement in the community of Oregon Old Believers tapered significantly. From the apogee of influence, when the Foundation first brought in and then attempted to scatter Turkish Old Believers among communities in New York and New Jersey in the early 1960s, to the relative nadir encountered in 1975, when Hudanish, a once stalwart ally of the Foundation, turned away in disgust, executive members of the New York-based organization always possessed at least a seat at the table on issues involving Oregon Old Believers. This inclusion, in part, stemmed from the Foundation's position as specialized knowledge broker vis-a-vis Old Believer culture. By the time of the events described in Triest and Hudanish's summer missives, erosion of this position proved substantial if not irreversible. Beyond development of localized networks of knowledge, embodied by the presence and activity of John Hudanish, Brother Ambrose, and Vasily Bodonov (among others), members of the Old Believer community began solidifying their presence and input in local institutions. Hudanish mentioned in his August 1975 letter to Schaufuss the respective employment of Isaak Skorokhodov and Vasily Efimov, both Old Believers, in the city's fire and police departments.

Other factors pointed towards development of a more robust, localized effort to build knowledge networks around Old Belief. One notable effort came about shortly after events described above. In November 1976, the Marion County Intermediate

Education District released their 'Manual for Educators of Russian Old Believer Children in Oregon'.²⁵² Comprised of seven sections, the manual touched on topics such as the history of Old Belief, social and religious customs, and even games played by Old Believer children. The manual also provided teachers with a list of Orthodox Holy Days, compiled by Brother Ambrose, as well as memorandum addressed to administrators outlining public school policy re: truancy of Old Believer children due to religious considerations. Inexorably linked, the calendar and memorandum indicated that integration of Old Believer religious customs and practices within the judicial-cultural framework of Woodburn's pedagogical institutions still faced meaningful hurdles.

Problems surrounding Old Believer truancy, once seen as monolithic in terms of both cause and possible remedy, are acknowledged as being diverse in the cultural manual. "There are four possible reasons a child is missing school," the manual noted, "a Holy Day, illness or truancy or the parent needs the child at home." While the calendar of Holy Days provided "may be of some help in this respect," the manual nonetheless admitted that "different Old Believer parents may stress different Holy Days" and that the best way to determine the *true* cause of a youth's absence involved consultation of previous attendance records as well as the idea that "siblings can often give information about an absent student" because "generally all the siblings in one family should be absent for the same Holy Days." Evaluation of authenticity with regards to absence was a high stakes affair, a byproduct of the fact that, as commentary on the legal memorandum included in the manual made clear, "Juvenile authorities have no intention in becoming involved in truancy cases on a regular basis." Without the backing of

²⁵² *Manual for Educators of Russian Old Believer Children in Oregon* (Salem, OR: Marion Intermediate Education District, 1976). OHS-Mss 1521, Box 5/9.

juridical force, educators needed to be able to accurately ascertain motivations behind truancy because any effort to compel attendance on a Holy Day risked placing "a child 'in conflict' between the school and the Old Believer community."²⁵³ Considering the importance placed upon education as an agent of transformation and socialization, it is no wonder the manual struck a more tolerant tone regarding truancy and even suggested educators emphasize areas of reading, writing, and arithmetic, topics considered important to Old Believer parents, when discussing the need to "catch the children up" on work missed during an absence. Conciliatory, rather than combative, approaches advocated by John Hudanish in previous reports are echoed in the manual's presentation and argumentation--factors that suggested development of localized knowledge networks paved the way for more nuanced rhetorics of character to be utilized with regards to Old Belief.

Nowhere in the forty-nine page manual is there a reference to the work of the Tolstoy Foundation. Nor does it list any member of the Foundation, executive or otherwise, under a heading of 'Resource Persons' that included local notables such as Brother Ambrose and John Hudanish. Indeed, the plethora of state and local resources noted in the manual testified to the relative lack of necessity for an outside organization such as the Tolstoy Foundation to provide specialized assistance vis-a-vis the Old Believers. Translators are listed as available at a handful of health clinics and many elementary schools, while services related to dental, welfare, or legal needs featured prominently with local contact information should an educator seek to steer their student's families to such agencies or offices.

²⁵³ All quotes in this paragraph come from *Manual for Educators of Russian Old Believer Children in Oregon*, 12.

Taken collectively, the number of organizations and personnel listed in the 'Resource Directory of Services Available to the Russian Speaking Community' spoke to the active process, however imperfect in actual practice, municipal and state offices undertook to build a social web around Old Belief. American modernity, represented in the views of school administrators and state officials alike, still harbored misgivings about the transformation of Old Believers into model citizens, as noted in the concern over truancy in the educators manual discussed above, but its practitioners nonetheless forged ahead with purported encasement of the traditionalists within modern institutions. By 1976 this work no longer required input from outside specialists who offered authentic insight required for operation and maintenance of American rhetorics of character. Local networks, sufficiently endowed with first-hand experience of their own, felt more than capable of handling the job themselves. Fifteen years after they first became involved with the Turkish Old Believers, the era and influence of the Tolstoy Foundation came to an end.

Journeying from scattered settlements in New York and New Jersey to the far-flung hills and valleys of Oregon, few among the Turkish Old Believers could have guessed at the life they would ultimately lead in and around Woodburn. With some of their community still possessing uncertain citizenship status as 'parolees,' leaders of the Turkish Old Believers no doubt felt the rewards of a cross-country trip, and the distance it would place them from the very organization that spearheaded their immigration into America, the Tolstoy Foundation, were well worth the risks. Resettlement in Oregon not only offered the tight-knit community the ability to unite their ranks, but it also solved the

long-standing issue of securing eligible marriage partners for available youth from among the much larger Old Believer community then steaming into Woodburn from Brazil, Australia, and Hong-Kong. Yet beyond offering a means to secure both their present and possible future, resettlement in Oregon allowed Old Believers from both groups to begin articulating terms of engagement, integration, and even assimilation into the modern American cultural scene. Doing so did not necessarily entail eschewing instruction from Foundation executives, whose obligations to the Federal Government on behalf of the Turkish Old Believers fed a paternalistic outlook. But it did reveal the need for state and municipal agencies to develop their own knowledge networks in order to respond to Old Believer concerns. As Old Believers in Oregon became more sophisticated in their interactions with the terms of modernity being imposed upon them, specialized knowledge offered by the Tolstoy Foundation, which focused more on cultural preservation (and, perhaps, ossification), became less applicable.

With the rise, and subsequent fall, of the Valley Migrant League in the mid to late 1960s, in addition to desire by some in the Oregon community to form a new colony in Alaska, Foundation executives found themselves, once again, thrust into the role of cultural intermediary as resources once offered by the federal migrant program dried up and forced Old Believers to seek assistance from municipal and state agencies. Newfound cachet with local leaders did not last long, however. Unable to exercise hands-on supervision of the religious group at a distance, the Tolstoy Foundation relied upon hand-picked representatives to act in their stead with varying degrees of success. When asked to broker settlements between school administrators, judges, welfare officers, and the Old Believer community, Foundation executives preferred utilizing

established top-down networks of power in the Old Believer community to engage in self-regulating surveillance, often to little or no sustained effect. While these efforts temporarily addressed issues of Old Believer integration into modern institutions, inability of Foundation executives to foster meaningful dialog or articulate compromise solutions that blended demands of modernity with cultural/religious sensibilities of Old Belief sabotaged their position as an authoritative cultural interlocutor.

Despite the fact that Foundation efforts possessed little sustained efficacy, their involvement and dependence upon Woodburn's municipal authorities, in part, spurred on development of long-lasting localized knowledge networks. John Hudaish proved to be greatest beneficiary of Foundation support, receiving employment, first, as the Director of Human Resources for Woodburn and, second, as official Foundation representative after his resignation from municipal government. In both positions Hudaish proved to be more than capable advocating for the Old Believers, sometimes to the chagrin of Foundation executives. Opinions on how to best foster Old Believer integration into the American modern scene differed between the two, but it was the approach advocated by Hudaish, which pushed for schools and other institutions of American modernity to carve out space for co-existence of Old Belief, that proved more influential. By 1975, with Foundation influence waning, state and local authorities could turn to local groups or personalities for assistance in dealing with Old Believers. And as the Education Manual demonstrated with regards to the long-standing issue of truancy and Old Belief, accommodationist viewpoints began to take precedence over disciplinary methods. Questions concerning the transformation of Old Believers into ideal, modern citizens

didn't cease by 1975, but they certainly faded and took on more muted tones when summoned.

Easily missed in this discussion on development of localized knowledge networks is the fact that Old Believers proved to be active and eager participants in the modern scene. There was a lot of change encountered by the Old Believers over the course of the late 1960s up through the 1970s and the fragmentary record omits Old Believer responses to several of these changes. Nevertheless, in the instances examined above when Old Believers are recorded as having a voice in the matters of cultural assimilation they demonstrated a willingness to find a compromise position that could accommodate both their religious identity as Old Believers and civic identity as immigrant Americans. As noted by Clymer in her ethnographic study, Old Believers in Woodburn debated the influence and terms of accommodation their faith accepted with regards to American modernity. Hudanish found widespread support when he set out to demonstrate that Old Believer children, and by extension their parents, desired to attend school on recognized holidays in order to make up for attendance missed on civically and culturally unrecognized Old Believer holidays. Triest carefully catalogued the demand placed upon his office's meager resources by Old Believer claimants, their needs spanning from legal assistance to interaction with private business, all indicative of a community seeking engagement, not isolation, from the larger socio-cultural milieu.

Conclusion

Towards the end of the 1970s, Old Believers who lived around Woodburn came to enjoy a certain level of stability interacting with and living amongst members of the larger community. Accommodationist practices, begun and proselytized by Hudanish, increasingly took hold in schools and courts alike and created a space where Old Believers could better negotiate terms of involvement with American modernity. While the process proved anything but smooth, and may have been spurred more by economic necessity than want to eschew rigid assimilationist desires, administrators and citizens of Woodburn, located in Marion County, could at least draw upon a decade of experience and tap into local knowledge networks when dealing with Old Belief. Outside of Marion County, however, the situation could be quite different. One episode involving an Old Believer family in nearby Clackamas County, the Egoroffs, demonstrated the relative novelty of the Woodburn situation at this time.

Natalie and Artemy Egoroff looked upon their life in Oregon and counted several blessings. They moved from Marion to Clackamas County in order to start their own farm and built their agrarian efforts into a modestly successful enterprise. Natalie gave birth to eleven children during this period, with six of them still under the age of six by 1978. Running the farm and taking care of so many small children put a heavy demand on Natalie and Artemy, prompting both Old Believer parents to pull their older children out of public school in order to remain at home. When fourteen-year old Anna Egoroff left school in the spring of 1978, her sixth grade year, and failed to return the following fall, authorities in charge of the 91 Elementary School in Clackamas County took umbrage and filled charges of truancy against Natalie Egoroff.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ *Immigrant Faces Jail For Fostering Truancy*, Lakeland Ledger, 19 March 1978.

Meeting with the Clackamas county school board, the Egoroffs pleaded their case as to why Anna should be allowed to remain at home. School administrators remained unconvinced. Floyd Lapp, superintendent of 91 Elementary School, told reporters that, "one of the things I feel strongly about is that if children are going to live in our country, they're going to need enough education to fill out forms, apply for driver's licenses, and read signs."²⁵⁵ When pressed about his understanding of the situation, Lapp stated that Anna desired to remain at home and would run away if forced to attend school, labeling her "a child out of hand."²⁵⁶ Members of the Clackamas school board suggested that the older Egoroff children take turns, one at a time, staying at home to help out while the others attended class. The issue loomed large for Clackamas administrators; Anna was just one of ninety Old Believer children attending public school and actions taken by her family resonated within their community. Failure to resolve the situation, from the point of view of school administrators, could result in even greater numbers of Old Believer children being pulled from public school, jeopardizing their assimilation and transition into model American citizens.

Neither school administrators nor the Egoroff family compromised and on 24 February 1978 Natalie Egoroff stood before Judge Robert Mulvey in the District Court of Oregon City on the charge of fostering truancy. Pleading guilty, Natalie received a sentence of thirty days in county jail that could be suspended, Judge Mulvey reminded the Old Believer, if her children resumed regular attendance of Clackamas public schools. Unbeknownst to the Judge, the Egoroffs took measures to ensure their children would not be compelled to return to school in Clackamas. In the interim between meeting with the

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

school board and receiving punishment from the judge, Natalie and Artemy moved their children back to the more hospitable environs of Marion County. Superintendent of Woodburn schools, Dr. Jens Robinson, became reticent when questioned by reporters as to whether or not Anna and her older siblings attended school in Marion County. The issue loomed large in his county as well, and for far longer, but established policy of accommodation over coercion freed Robinson's hands in much the same way that the opposite restricted Lapp's or Mulvey's. Enrollment of 350 Old Believer children in Woodburn public schools, in addition to the wealth of experience gained by public school administrators in working with Old Believers over the years, certainly played a part. By 1978, almost all public schools in Marion County recognized thirty-four religious holidays deemed essential for observation, and thus school absence, by Old Believer youth, a stunning reversal from the attitudes described by Hudanish in his report.²⁵⁷ Absence, even complete withdrawal, of Old Believer children from public schools engendered far more sympathy in Marion County than it did in Clackamas.

Had the incident ended there, with jail time served by Natalie Egoroff in Clackamas county and the Egoroff children relocated to Marion county, this discussion would serve as nothing more than an example of how far the Old Believers still needed to go in order to earn cultural respect in their larger Oregon home. But the Old Believer community in Woodburn didn't falter or retreat when challenged by neighboring county officials. As news spread of the Egoroffs' defiance to pedagogical and judicial coercion by Clackamas authorities, Old Believers began to rally around the family and vocalize their concerns. While school officials in Clackamas framed the Egoroff issue as one of

²⁵⁷ *Russian sect affirms faith in schools*, Eugene Register-Guard 21 April 1978.

willful truancy fueled by anti-modernist culture, Old Believers maintained it was worry over influence of sex education courses and lax standards of discipline enforced by teachers that fomented disagreement. Natalie Egoroff's brother, Vasily Efimoff, confirmed as much to reporters when he explained Anna's absence from school as tied to concerns over sex education specifically and ideas presented in such coursework that contradicted religious beliefs generally.²⁵⁸

On 20 April 1978, eleven Old Believer representatives held a press conference in Woodburn to clarify their position and address any concerns. While translators handled prepared statements, Fedor Frolov, one of the Old Believer representatives that spoke English, personally addressed reporters. "We like to send our kids to school, but we feel there is not enough discipline. The teachers are too lenient," Frolov suggested, adding that Old Believers met with school officials of nearby area districts the week previous to discuss objections to sexual education curriculum. "They said whatever you want is fine," Frolov remarked about the meetings, "but our kids should come to school more regularly." Indeed, school administrators agreed to provide Old Believer children alternative assignments if they opted out of sexual education coursework as a result of the meeting. The eleven gathered Old Believer representatives stressed, "we are proud to live in America," and that, "we also want to carry on the beliefs and practices of our religious faith. We ask for the respect and understanding of our neighbors in Oregon." Even the Egoroffs, whose defiance sparked the incident in the first place, worked out a compromise with officials and began sending their children to public school once again.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ *Immigrant Faces Jail For Fostering Truancy*, Lakeland Ledger, 19 March 1978.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

What looked, at first, to be a divisive episode in relations between Old Believers and school administrators became, instead, a moment when both parties reached compromise in order to find an amicable solution. Old Believers formulated sophisticated responses to claims made by Clackamas school administrators and justices alike and they did so without guidance or assistance from organizations like the Tolstoy Foundation, Valley Migrant League, or even the municipal offices of Woodburn. Confident in their ability to engage with institutions of American modernity, even as those engagements brought about questions of temptation and cultural degradation, Old Believer representatives spearheaded meetings with school officials and politely, but forcibly, set out terms of accommodation that affirmed commitments to public education and carved out space for Old Belief sensibilities. They held a press conference and attempted to be as open as possible for reporters whose curiosity and narrative framing often skewed towards familiar tropes of traditional versus modern. Frolov made it clear at the press conference that Old Believers struggled to maintain their traditional lifestyle but felt that those traditions did not conflict with values of their adopted country.²⁶⁰ Such statements made by Old Believers would have been unthinkable in 1963 and exemplified inroads made by the religious group towards meaningful integration with American modernity by the end of the seventies.

Proactive engagement by Old Believers with school administrators paid immediate dividends. One month after their April meeting, Old Believers and Marion County school officials gathered at Woodburn High School to discuss formalization of "a liaison network to help bridge cultural differences," as well as contents of a Russian-

²⁶⁰ *Russian sect affirms faith in schools*, Eugene Register-Guard 21 April 1978.

language form letter to be sent to Old Believer parents "asking whether they want their children excluded from sex education and evolutionary theory classes."²⁶¹ Old Believer elders agreed to maintain contact with superintendents in districts with significant Old Believer enrollment and superintendents, in turn, offered to keep elders apprised of the most frequently truant students so long as parents agreed to disclosure of attendance records. At the conclusion of their gathering, the parties agreed to meet once more in August and focus, during the summer, on encouraging further enrollment and acquiring proper immunizations. "The main thing is that we keep getting together and keep trying," Ron Wilkerson, superintendent of the Marion County Intermediate Education District, told reporters covering the May meeting. "It won't happen all at once."²⁶²

Right around the same time as meetings between Marion County school officials and Old Believers representatives took place in 1978, Margaret Hixon made her way to Eugene, Oregon to attend a symposium held at the University of Oregon. Academics, journalists, and students alike gathered to discuss the topic of Old Belief, both in Oregon specifically and in Russian history generally. Hixon's interest in Old Belief, however, went beyond the strictly academic. Attending various presentations and taking notes, Margaret sought to acquire background information for use in her newest project; a documentary focused on Woodburn's Old Believers. She began her work the year previous, picking up threads of involvement by the Valley Migrant League, now under the moniker Oregon Rural Opportunities, as well as the work of John Hudanish, still employed in the Labor Department in Salem. Experts at the symposium provided

²⁶¹ *Old Believers, school officials talking*, Eugene Register-Guard. 10 May 1978.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

guarded optimism for Hixon and her project. While emphasizing their insular nature, as well as the possibility that the Old Believers might reject the idea of a video documentary outright, many who talked to Hixon assured her that contacts within the community could be made.

Three years later, in 1981, Hixon's *Old Believers* debuted. At just under a half-hour in length, the short documentary examined the religious community living in and around Woodburn as they prepared for a wedding between Fevrusa Kuznetsova and Antip Alagoz. All of the seeming contradictions of a traditional peoples interacting with modern society come to the fore in Hixon's work, with much of the cinematography juxtaposing the oft-colorful costumes of Old Believers against the *mis-en-scene* of American modernity. Just as previous reports utilized distinct measurement verbiage to draw sharp distinctions between Old Belief and the qualities of modernity, Hixon's documentary invoked similar notions of distancing through its camera work and narrative framing. Yet it also celebrated the fact that Old Belief managed to not only integrate but also thrive within the American modern scene, all while taking steps to preserve its cultural tradition as exemplified in the subject of the wedding itself.

Some themes found in the documentary deserve further examination. Foremost is the theme of renewal brought about through parallel narrative arcs involving both the wedding and Old Believer life in Oregon. Fevrusa and Antip's union, and the promise of generational renewal it portended, acted as a symbolic microcosm of the larger union between Old Believers and their new home in Oregon. Voiceovers utilized in the documentary testified to the prosperity of the Old Believers after their arrival in Oregon and Kiril Kutsev, shown performing his duties as cantor at the beginning of the

documentary, told the camera, "So far, we know the best place to live is America, the United States. Nobody tells us to not believe in God." Other scenes depict an Old Believer family, dressed in their colorful attire, hard at work picking berries for harvest. Still other shots followed Old Believer children riding bicycles on country roads, kicking up dust that rises against the forested environs surrounding Woodburn. Such bucolic compositions, scattered throughout the film, suggested that life in Oregon agreed with the Old Believers even as they simultaneously reinforced the notion of Old Belief being rooted in aspects of the traditional.

This last part highlighted tensions underlying the narrative arc of renewal and formed the second theme examined in the film; that being questions centered on transformation, even corruption, of Old Believer culture in Oregon. Fedorora Seledkova, an older Old Believer woman shown weaving belts for the upcoming wedding, lamented that financial prosperity meant many Old Believer youth failed to learn the traditional craft she practiced. "In America everybody buys their belts," remarked Seledkova. "If there's to be a wedding, they buy fifteen to twenty belts." Seledkova quickly pivoted from loss of belt-weaving skills to the interference of American public schools in allowing Old Believers to pass on their traditions. "They're in school all the time," lamented Seledkova. "All this schooling! When is there time to teach them anything?" Indeed, the documentary focused on this theme of corruption or loss of tradition towards the end. Narrators of the film reminded viewers that, "here in the modern setting it's hard to keep the old traditions and value," while Stepan Kutsev, son of Kiril the cantor, remarked that, "It's really hard for young people down here for Russian religion, 'cause,

you know, we can't go out drinking, smoking, and all that stuff, so it's really hard right now."

Concerns over the ability of Old Belief to withstand cultural erosion when faced with American modernity were nothing new, and Hixon's documentary echoed this familiar rhetorical angst through narrative framing. Yet for all its hand wringing, Hixon's coverage also documented, with less deliberate fanfare, a third theme; successful Old Believer integration into American modernity. While most scenes depicted Old Believers wearing the colorful peasant costume that was their most recognized feature, there are a few shots of men and boys wearing the sort of t-shirts, jeans, and trucker-hats that defined American casual wear.²⁶³ Scenes of Old Believer children running around playground equipment and attending class at Parkersville School reaffirmed dedication on behalf of the religious community towards education, even if some of the older members objected to its intrusion. Towards the end of the documentary, after wedding events conclude, the narrator reminds viewers that "everyday affairs resume" as the camera shot settles on a scene of downtown Woodburn. Here Old Believer families visit the pharmacy, couples walk down the sidewalk hand in hand, and, in a cut-away scene of a factory floor, women work as seamstresses in a sportswear factory. Far from isolationist, Old Believers found ways to integrate their community within the American modern scene while also carving out space for the practice of their religious and cultural traditions. Hixon's documentary itself is definitive proof on the successes enjoyed by Old Believers in this process, a fact backed by the narrator's assertion at the end of the film that "the Old Believers' heritage lives on."

²⁶³ While most of the clothing described appeared nondescript, one boy did wear a t-shirt with the slogan 'Have a Pepsi Day!' on the front.

One of the most consistent themes put forth by modern observers regarding Old Belief's presence in America centered on cultural viability. Sometimes, as with the case of the Tolstoy Foundation or certain individuals such as John Hudanish, compatibility of Old Believer traditions with American values trumped claims of eventual corruption or loss of identity. Yet far more often, as with the case of numerous academic experts and city administrators alike, desires for quick assimilation gave way to fears of incomplete transformation and assumption of the least desirable aspects of American modernity. Even though the issues underlying these fears, such as truancy among Old Believer youth or acceptance among some in the community of welfare benefits, largely found resolution by the debut of Hixon's documentary in 1981, that didn't stop the filmmaker from bringing to the fore, once again, questions over cultural viability of Old Belief in America. Preoccupation with transformation of traditionalists into modern citizens, which involved issues of mimesis, rhetorics of character, and use of measurement verbiage for reflexive evaluation, dominated the discourse espoused by both supporters and detractors of Old Belief.

That such a discourse prevailed is not surprising. American modernity, especially in the throes of the Cold War, built a sense of superiority upon the notion that its values inherently offered more than those espoused by the Soviet Union. Having Old Believers, one of the more conspicuous symbols of Russian history and culture, become thoroughly American was understandably seen as a means by which that superiority could be vaunted. But this situation was not unique to Old Believers. Representatives of American modernity continually held equal parts fascination and dismay with the

integration of traditionalists and other marginal figures into the cultural fold. From the 19th century up to the digital age of today, modernity as defined by Americans relied, in part, upon outwardly labeled traditionalists, such as Native American tribes or the Amish, to act as standards by which the superiority of modernity could be measured. Old Believers immigrating to the United States in the early 1960s naturally fit into this mode of definition and subsequent measurement. As explored in the chapters above, different organizations such as the Tolstoy Foundation, the Valley Migrant League, and the municipal offices of Woodburn, not to mention academics, reporters, and individuals such as Brother Ambrose and John Hudanish, all contended with or utilized this narrative trope when dealing with the Old Believers of Oregon.

What is it about traditional subjects, like the Old Believers, that captivates modern observers? For some organizations, such as the Tolstoy Foundation and the Valley Migrant League, the Old Believers became a means by which they could demonstrate their own authority and cement their role as cultural intermediary between the Russian group and American authorities. While both the Foundation and the League desired to shepherd Old Believers into the defined category of modern citizens, their framing of what characteristics constituted modernity as well as the means best used to achieve this goal of becoming modern placed them in a privileged position vis-a-vis American authorities who possessed no contextual background on the Russian cultural group. As time passed and local authorities continued to question the assimilatory potential of the Oregon Old Believers, the authority of organizations built upon the expertise of outsiders began to wane. In their place arose localized efforts spearheaded by organizations such as Woodburn's Human Relations Department and individuals such as John Hudanish or

Brother Ambrose. Yet even as these efforts to build localized knowledge networks displaced functions once provided by the Tolstoy Foundation and the Valley Migrant League, they still maintained their predecessor's predilection for defining the terms of modernity and acting as cultural interlocutor. Even as Old Believers began taking charge of their own affairs and negotiating the terms of their accommodation to modern cultural mores, as demonstrated in the Egoroff case discussed above, the use of distance-invoking measurement rhetoric still dominated the discourse of American authorities. No matter how close Old Believers came to embodying the modern American ideal, and they did so in numerous ways via the use of credit/banking instruments, home ownership, and the acquisition of material goods, outside observers found ways to invoke distance-laden rhetoric when describing the Russian cultural group.

In the end, constant questioning of Old Belief reflected more of the anxieties held by Americans regarding the status and superiority of their own modern selves and less of the fears associated with Old Believers failing to assimilate. This mirrored similar anxieties historically held by Russian authorities when dealing with Old Belief in the 18th and 19th centuries; debating the acceptance and role of Old Belief in the larger understanding of Russian culture necessarily provoked anxieties related to defining and establishing a modern identity. Even if the Old Believers possessed little historical context for American observers in the 1960s, their traditional lifestyle and conspicuous, colorful peasant clothing made them perfect candidates for the measurement and projection of anxieties related to American modernity. It is as if modern subjects see in the traditional an authenticity that both reaffirms the superiority of modernity while also undercutting it through the realization that, perhaps, the traditional subject is more

authentic than the modern observer. Evidence of this contradictory stance can be more commonly seen in the narrative framing of Native Americans or the Amish in the American historical experience, but the Old Believers' arrival in Oregon allowed this familiar trope to tackle a new, unfamiliar subject.

Bibliography

Notes on Archival Collections

Here is a list of the archival and manuscript collections utilized in this work:

Tolstoy Foundation Archives, Valley Cottage, NY.

Readers will come across designations in the footnotes, such as TF-5395, that specify the source in question as derived from the Tolstoy Foundation archives; the number after the TF moniker designates the specific photo file of the document that I took with my personal camera. The files made available to me possessed no discernable pattern of organization, hence the need to produce an organizational marker for use in finding the photograph of the document in question.

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