

Abstract

This dissertation presents an analysis and discussion of the Soviet cultural diplomatic activities towards Denmark during the Cold War, 1945-1991.

The overall aim of the dissertation is to answer three questions:

1. How were the activities organized and financed?
2. What forms of activities took place?
3. How were they received and what can be said about their impact?

The dissertation is divided into an introduction, nine chapters and a conclusion.

Following a chapter on theoretical and methodological approaches, chapters 2-9 discuss the Soviet apparatus for cultural diplomacy. Based on the theory of mono-organizational socialism, a model establishes a Soviet apparatus of three levels: Soviet, International and National, seeking to incorporate all the participating organizations. The Soviet level contains various parts of the Communist Party, ministries, state committees, state enterprises, and the so-called public organizations, the International level contains various international front organizations (e.g. the World Peace Council or Cominform), and the national level contains the national affiliates of international peace organizations (e.g. "Fredens Tilhængere"), the Danish-Soviet friendship association, and various businesses. An important point is to emphasize the role played by various communists as initiators and driving forces.

In the dissertation a variety of initiatives and activities are discussed. They include public lectures, conferences, participation in international manifestations, opinion polls, publications, film screenings, delegation visits and tourism, radio broadcasts, exhibitions, exchanges, open letters, and demonstrations. In addition, a number of coordinated campaigns are identified, for example, signature collections (e.g. on the Stockholm Appeal), accusations of American bacteriological warfare in Korea, or the campaign against (West) German rearmament.

Regarding reception and impact, it is concluded that the Soviet direct and supported activities were aimed at influencing public opinion and thereby give the impression of a public pressure that would in turn affect policy makers, but that it was very difficult for participants to achieve this aim. It proved very difficult to frame messages in such a manner that they resonated with the broader public or were not undermined by actual Soviet foreign policy actions such as the events in Hungary in 1956 and 1958.

The overall conclusion of the dissertation is that despite some success stories, including a wider audience from the mid-1970s on, it proved very difficult for the Soviet Union to achieve broad public sympathy for its messages as they more often than not seemed alien to the majority of the Danish public and therefore failed to influence the decision-makers.