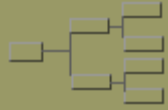


Researching Your Russian Doukhobor Roots

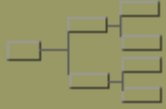


A presentation by
Jonathan J. Kalmakoff



Who are the Doukhobors?

- religious sect founded in early 18th century among Russian peasantry
- rejected the rituals and beliefs of the Orthodox Church
- abolished all priests, icons and sacraments
- *Dukho + Borets* = “Spirit Wrestler”



Who are the Doukhobors?

- believe the spirit of God resides in every human being – to kill another human being is to kill God
- teachings consist of oral collection of psalms and proverbs called *The Book of Life*
- ceremony consists of simple prayer meeting recited around table with bread, salt, water



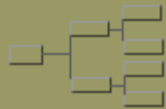
Who are the Doukhobors?

- pacifist, egalitarian and anti-authoritarian beliefs brought conflict with Church and State
- frequently persecuted and exiled to remote frontier regions of Russian Empire
- 1895 Burning of Arms and refusal to perform military service brought renewed persecution
- 1899 – 7,500 Doukhobors immigrate to Canada



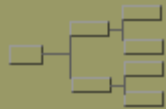
Genealogical Challenges

- most Doukhobors were illiterate
- kept few written records of their own
- often refused to register vital statistics
- frequently relocated
- Russian/English language barrier
- records scattered & difficult to access



Genealogical Advantages

- finite number of Doukhobors
- small founding population
- intermarriage within Doukhoborism
- migrated and settled en masse
- strong oral tradition
- recent archival discoveries



Doukhobor History

- basic understanding of Doukhobor history essential for Doukhobor genealogical research
- 300 year history complex and fascinating
- problem solving becomes easier with knowledge of the historical context in which events occurred



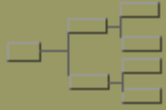
Ethnic & Religious Group

- common cultural tradition and sense of identity set Doukhobors apart from Russian society
- stayed physically and theologically separate from the hostile world around them
- for most of their history, Doukhobors have been a distinctive ethnic as well as religious group

Migration & Settlement

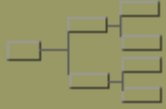
- Prior to 1801
- The Molochnaya ~ 1801-1845
- The Caucasus ~ 1841-1899
- Canada ~ 1899 - present





Prior to 1801

- mainly concentrated in South Russia
 - provinces of Tambov, Voronezh, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav and the Don
- Doukhobors scattered across Russian Empire
- no centralized doctrines or leadership
- severe persecutions during 1760s and 1790's



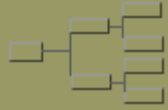
The Molochnaya, 1801-1845

- Tavia province, Russia near Sea of Azov
 - present-day Zaporozhiye province, Ukraine
 - Molochnaya district - 9 villages established
- central hereditary leadership develops
- period of prosperity, religious toleration
- renewed persecution results in exile, 1841-45



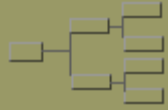
The Caucasus, 1841-1899

- Tiflis province, Russia
 - present-day Georgia
 - Akhalkalaki district - 8 villages established
 - Borchalo district - 3 villages established
- Elizavetpol province, Russia
 - present-day Azerbaijan
 - Kedabek district - 4 villages established
- Kars province, Russia
 - present-day Turkey
 - Shuragel' district - 4 villages established
 - Zarishat district – 2 villages established



The Caucasus, 1841-1899

- 1886 – central hereditary leadership ends
 - leadership crisis results
- Doukhobor community splits into factions
 - Small, Middle and Large parties
- 1887 - universal military service introduced
 - refusal to bear arms results in renewed persecution
- 1895 - Burning of Arms



1899 Immigration to Canada

- 7,500 Doukhobors immigrate to Canada
- aided by Leo Tolstoy and Society of Friends (Quakers) in England and America
- settle on three blocks of land reserved by the Dominion Government in Saskatchewan
- largest mass migration in Canadian history
- 12,000 Doukhobors remained in Russia



Canadian Settlement





Canadian Settlement

- North Reserve, Saskatchewan
 - Pelly, Arran districts
 - 20 villages established
- South Reserve, Saskatchewan
 - Kamsack, Veregin, Canora, Buchanan districts
 - 38 villages established
- Saskatchewan Reserve, Saskatchewan
 - Blaine Lake, Langham districts
 - 13 villages established



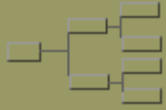
Canadian Settlement

- 1903-1907 – land ownership crisis results over compliance with homestead rules
- Doukhobors split into three factions
 - Independents – take oath, accept private property
 - Community – refuse oath, reject private property
 - Sons of Freedom – small radical zealot wing
- 1907 – loss of Community Doukhobor homestead lands

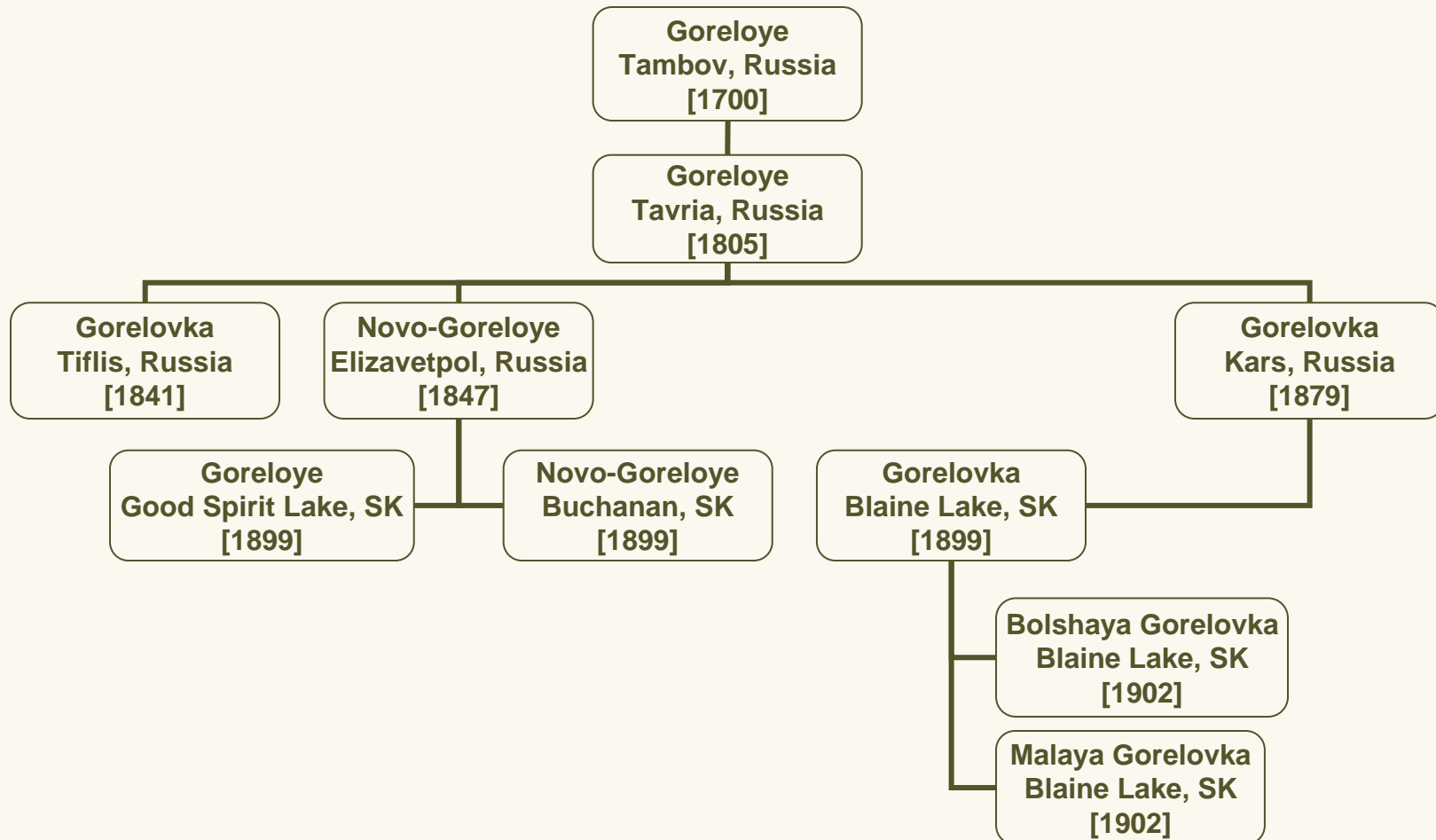


Canadian Settlement

- **British Columbia**
 - 1908-1912, Community Doukhobors relocate to Grand Forks, Castlegar, Slokan districts
 - over 90 communal villages established
- **Alberta**
 - 1917-1924, Community Doukhobors settle in Lundbreck, Cowley, Shouldice districts
 - 15 villages established
- **And Saskatchewan Again**
 - 1917-1918, 14 villages established at Kylemore
- **Demise of the CCUB, 1937-1938**



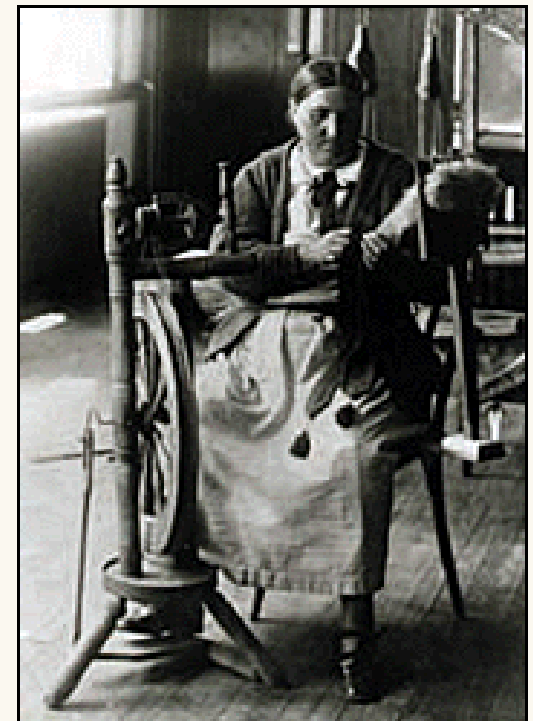
Recurring Place Names

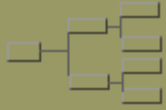




Russian Names

- personal name + patronymic + surname
- *i.e.* Ivan Vasilyevich Popov
 - Ivan = personal name
 - Vasilyevich = patronymic
 - Popov = surname
- *i.e.* Anna Ivanovna Petrova
 - Anna = personal name
 - Ivanovna = patronymic
 - Petrova = surname





Russian Names

- **Personal Names**
 - children often named after parents, grandparents
 - recurring names every several generations
 - occasionally more than one child given same name
 - small pool of commonly used names developed
- **Diminutives**
 - short, “pet” forms of personal names
 - used to express familiarity or endearment among friends and relatives
 - Ivan = Vanya, Vanka, Vanechka, Vaniusha, etc.



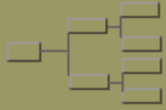
Russian Names

- Patronymics

- formed by adding suffix **-ovich** (son of) or **-ovna** (daughter of) to father's name
- *i.e.* Ivan Vasilyevich = Ivan, son of Vasily
- *i.e.* Anna Ivanovna = Anna, daughter of Ivan
- useful for identifying parentage in records

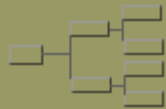
- Surnames

- suffix endings include **-in** (Salikin), **-ov** (Popov), **-ev** (Bondarev), **-sky** (Barovsky), **-enko** (Savenko)
- Additional **-a** suffix ending for female surnames (Markova, Konkina)



Russian Names

- roots of Russian surnames provide clues about the identity of early ancestors
 - formed from first names, nicknames, occupations or geographic origin of ancestors
- Doukhobor surnames also provide clues about ethnicity of early ancestors
 - Russian, Ukrainian, Cossack, Mordvin, Tatar, Polish



Name Changes in Canada

- English Spelling Variants
 - no standard system in 1899 for transliterating Russian (Cyrillic) into English (Latin) alphabet
 - most Doukhobor immigrants were illiterate
 - multiple spelling variants evolved for same name
 - *i.e.* Popov = Popoff, Popow, Popove, Papof, Papove
- New Canadian Names
 - through assimilation process, English names adopted
 - *i.e.* Vasily = Wasil, William, Bill, Walter
 - *i.e.* Anastasia = Mabel, Nellie, Nettie, Anna



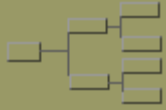
Names in Records

- Doukhobor immigrants had several different names during their lifetime
- records may list Russian or English form
- name spellings vary from record to record
- pattern of recording names inconsistent



Names in Records

Name	Record	Year
Ivan Popov	Russian Census	1853
Vanya Popo	Ship Manifest	1899
Ivan Poppoff	Canada Census	1901
Iwan Popoff	Canada Census	1906
Iwan Popow	Homestead Application	1907
Evan S. Popoff	National Registration	1918
John Popoff	Tombstone	1926



Oral Tradition

- for centuries, Doukhobors passed down names, relationships and events orally from generation to generation
- often the only source of information in the absence of written records
- interviews with elders should be a priority
- important to document and preserve
- cross-reference with records when possible



Written Records

- “myth” that there are few Doukhobor records
- while Doukhobors kept few records of their own, the State kept many records about them!
- records compiled in Canada not necessarily better or more plentiful, just more accessible
- resources developing rapidly as records are located, indexed, translated and published



Ship Passenger Lists

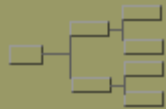
- constitute the official record of Doukhobor immigration to Canada
- ship passenger lists for 3,200 Doukhobor immigrants in 1899 are missing or incomplete
- microfilm available through NAC
- comprehensive indices available online and in book format



Ship Passenger Lists

- Doukhobors immigrated to Canada in four distinct waves

Years	Ships	Persons
1898-1899	7	7,500
1902-1906	23	260
1909-1914	36	870
1919-1925	Order-in-Council prohibiting Doukhobor Immigration	
1925-1930	13	143



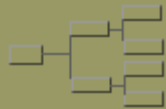
Census Records

- single most important group of records for Doukhobor genealogy
- censuses of Doukhobors taken by various governments for various purposes
 - taxation, electoral representation, homestead entry, exemption from military service, etc.
- some Doukhobors refused to provide information to census-takers or provided inaccurate information re: ages



Census Records

Year	Census	Published Index
1901	Canada Census	Online
1905	Doukhobor Village Census	Yes
1906	Census of Northwest Provinces	Online
1911	Canada Census	Online
1911	Doukhobor Village Census	Yes
1916	Census of Northwest Provinces	Online
1918	Independent Doukhobor Census	Yes
1918	Doukhobor Village Census	Yes



Membership Lists

- membership lists may exist for various Doukhobor organizations
 - Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood
 - Society of Independent Doukhobors
 - Named Doukhobor Society of Canada
 - Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ
 - Spiritual Communities of Christ (Sons of Freedom)
 - local Doukhobor societies



Membership Lists

- difficult to locate – many lost or destroyed
- often fragmentary, localized and contain only a select group of Doukhobors
- important as census substitutes, especially for the 1920-1950 period
- indices published online and in books
 - [Doukhobor Genealogy Website](#)



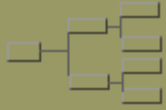
Ecclesiastical Records

- no formal clergy, sacraments nor church in the Doukhobor faith
- therefore, no religious records of baptisms, marriages, burials nor parish registers



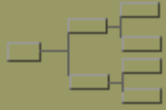
Vital Statistics Records

- in early years of Canadian settlement, some Doukhobors refused to register their births, marriages with the government
 - Independent Doukhobors complied most
 - Community Doukhobors complied less
 - Sons of Freedom complied least
- changes to legislation eventually forced all Doukhobors to comply fully with registration
- MB, SK, AB, BC vital records available online



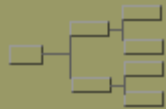
Homestead Records

- available for Independent Doukhobors who took out homesteads - often took affirmation
- Community Doukhobors either didn't apply for, or forfeited homesteads – refused oath
- Doukhobor homesteads generally correspond with original reserve settlement areas
- online databases available at NAC and SAB
- microfilm records available at SAB



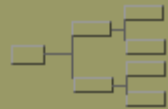
Cemetery Records

- 109 private Doukhobor cemeteries in Canada
 - many are neglected; some are destroyed
 - no burial register, cemetery map nor markers for many
- Doukhobors also buried in municipal cemeteries
- Doukhobor Cemetery Transcription Project
 - Doukhobor Genealogy Website
 - transcription of all Doukhobor cemeteries over 2 years
 - webpages of transcribed cemeteries include history, physical layout, driving directions, burials, contact info



Other Records

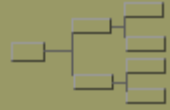
- naturalization records
- passports
- school records
- maps
- tax rolls
- newspapers
- journals & periodicals
- libraries and archives
- national registration
- local history books
- voters lists
- military and alternate service records
- police records
- court records
- prison records



Records from Russia

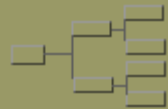
- difficult to access geographically
- records scattered throughout various local and state archives in the former Soviet Republics
- language barrier
- technological barrier
- extent of records unknown





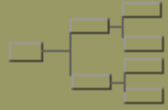
Records from Russia

- since 2002, over 10,000 documents relating to Doukhobors in 19th century Russia discovered
 - Russian State Historical Archive
 - Kherson Regional State Archives
 - Odessa Region State Archives
 - Central State Historical Archive of Georgia
 - State Archives of Azerbaijan
 - National Archives of Armenia



Records from Russia

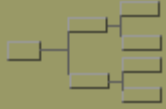
- Tsarist era documents contain census and tax lists of Doukhobor villages in Molochnaya and the Caucasus from 1820s to 1880s
- allow researchers to trace most Doukhobor families through 1800s back to mid-1700s
- in the process of being studied, translated, indexed and published



Doukhobor Genealogy Website

www.doukhobor.org

- the largest and most comprehensive internet source connecting researchers of Doukhobor genealogy
- dedicated to the reclamation, discovery, collection, preservation and sharing of information related to Doukhobor family history



Doukhobor Genealogy Website

www.doukhobor.org

- guides and indexes to archival records
- surname databases, guides to names and naming practices, glossaries
- place name databases, gazetteers, historical maps, ancestral village finder
- stories, biographies, articles and tutorials
- message board
- useful internet links