

Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich
"ЖИВОТНАЯ КНИГА"

With an AI-assisted Russian Translation of the Introduction
Facilitated for reference only by J. Kalmakov, 2025

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From the preface to the first issue of "Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism and Schism."

In undertaking the publication of "Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism and Schism," we aim to gradually publish the works of adherents of various socio-religious teachings, who are commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," as well as observations and research by outsiders who have had the opportunity to study the environment that interests us.

For a long time, almost up to the present day, these teachings, rooted in the solid ground of established socio-economic relations, have captivated the broad masses of the people, not only agitating them but often determining the path of social movement for one or another group of the population, especially among the peasantry. The principles of these teachings, almost always at odds with the sanctioned institutions of Russia's socio-political life, formed the basis of various societies, communes, "ships," and other self-organized, often secret, and almost always persecuted, popular organizations.

Creating life on their own terms, the sectarians contributed their share to the construction of new forms of Russian social life. Historical science cannot overlook this significant popular phenomenon, which for a long time shaped the internal life and structure of millions of people. By studying it comprehensively, we will find much that is instructive, interesting, and absolutely necessary for a proper assessment of past eras. Clearly recognizing the significance of the broad sectarian movement in the overall course of Russian life, we consider it essential, before drawing definitive conclusions, to bring to public attention the numerous manuscript materials that have accumulated in various public and private libraries, in the archives of private individuals, sectarian

communities, and similar places. We believe that the publication of all this material is the first necessary step in the serious study of the question that interests us.

Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich.

St. Petersburg.

May 19, 1908.

Program for Collecting Information on the Research and Study of Russian Sectarianism and Schism

Separate reprints of the program are sent free of charge from the editorial office of "Materials."

Having undertaken the publication of "Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism and Schism," we would like to involve as many people as possible in this work who, sympathizing with us, can provide assistance in the intended research.

First of all, we appeal to those people whom we commonly refer to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," and ask them to assist us. This assistance can best be expressed by sending us manuscripts and other materials that are already available and preserved in the archives and by private individuals of various communities.

If these manuscripts are handed over to us completely, we undertake to preserve them intact for the needs of future generations, for which we will transfer them to the Manuscript Department of the Library of the Academy of Sciences. If the manuscripts, etc., are sent to us for temporary use, they will be returned to their owners immediately after being read and copied.

Furthermore, we earnestly request those referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," to take up the pen and, while it is not too late, record everything that has happened in their communities during their memory or has been passed down through generations. When describing their lives, it is necessary to provide a full account of their faith and way of life; how people should arrange their lives to live well; they should also record all their teachings: psalms, prayers, verses, tales, traditions, and various interpretations. It is

necessary to describe all the events that have occurred in their lives, especially those when individuals or entire communities had to suffer for acts in accordance with their conscience. For those who have suffered and are no longer alive, their brothers and friends should write detailed memoirs. In addition to what has been listed here, we also ask for responses to all the questions printed below.

Apart from those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," we also appeal to anyone who has had or has the opportunity to study and observe the life of the groups of interest to us and ask them to describe everything they know about them as fully and in detail as possible.

1. When describing the life of a sectarian ** community (or an individual sectarian family or sectarian), it is necessary to indicate—if possible—the province, district, city, town, farmstead, village, or any other detailed location.
2. It is highly desirable to obtain detailed lists of community or family members, indicating marital status, gender, age, literacy, place of origin, etc.
3. It is desirable to provide a detailed description of the actual economic life of the community or family, with a full enumeration and description of the entire economic structure, land ownership, inventory, etc., as well as their primary occupations. Do they work only by themselves or with the help of hired laborers? Do they go away for seasonal work? And so on.
4. Were they previously Orthodox or of another religion, or were they born to sectarian or Old Believer parents?
5. The name of the faith or community to which they consider themselves to belong?
6. What nickname does the community have among the surrounding residents, or among missionaries and priests?
7. A detailed and complete description of their understanding of life and faith.
8. A detailed analysis of why and in what ways they disagree with the religion commonly called "Orthodox." Detailed descriptions of disputes and discussions between missionaries of the Orthodox and other churches and those

referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," are desirable.

9. We ask for descriptions of customs and rituals, as well as the entire way of life and daily routine of "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers." Descriptions of prayer houses and gatherings are needed.

Note: Everything indicated regarding sectarians equally applies to those commonly referred to as "schismatics," "Old Believers."

10. We ask for complete recordings of prayers, psalms, verses, teachings, instructions, interpretations, various stories, and everything else that is known and passed down through generations by community members.
11. If the Gospel and the Bible are understood spiritually, allegorically, then record all spiritual interpretations of the Bible and the Gospel in detail.
12. If psalms and prayers have two meanings—besides the external, an internal spiritual interpretation—please be sure to record the spiritual interpretation, the second meaning of the psalm.
13. If you or individuals have any manuscripts, whether old or new, or any other notes, memoirs, or writings, please send them to us. If sending is not possible, then indicate what exactly is available, with a brief summary of the content if possible.
14. It is necessary to provide a list of books and manuscripts that are now most widespread and favored by those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," and if possible, provide detailed catalogs of the libraries of communities and individuals.
15. If anyone has preserved various leaflets, brochures, newspapers, magazines, proclamations, appeals, etc., printed secretly in Russia or in free foreign printing houses—please send all of this to us.
16. We ask those who have suffered from various persecutions by the clergy, missionaries, police, courts, etc., as well as by the

surrounding population, to record all life events in detail, mentioning, if possible, witnesses and those who acted.

17. It is necessary to describe in detail imprisonments, fortresses, monasteries, trials, investigations, interrogations, exiles, life in exile, as well as, if they had to emigrate from Russia, the reasons for emigration and life abroad.
18. If anyone died in exile, in prisons, or in confinement, describe in detail: who exactly, where and when they died, where they are buried, what they suffered for. It is desirable to receive a detailed description of the life of the deceased, all the trials they endured, and, if available, to send a photographic portrait, even temporarily. If the deceased or the sufferer left behind letters, drawings, notes, descriptions of their understanding of life, or other similar writings, as well as various papers—it is necessary to send all of them to us. If in exile or confinement anyone was subjected to humiliation, beatings, or punishments—it is necessary to report this accurately: where, when, and what happened.
19. It is necessary to collect and send all correspondence between communities, brothers, friends, and outsiders.
20. It is necessary to collect and send all indictments, investigative cases, protocols, verdicts of justices of the peace, zemstvo chiefs, community verdicts, property appraisal statements, auction sale records, copies of expert examinations, and other similar documents.

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21. It is necessary to describe in detail all cases of refusal to perform military service, pay taxes, and other duties, as well as all other refusals to comply with the demands and orders of representatives of the police, clergy, various offices, etc., of government officials and institutions.
22. Those who have information about the presence of those commonly referred to as "sectarians" in regiments, garrisons, the navy, etc., are asked to describe their attitude toward military service.

23. If there is information about sectarians in disciplinary battalions, military prisons, etc., institutions, we ask for the most detailed information about their fate and life in these institutions.
 24. If anyone has information about the activities of sectarians in active armies during one or another war—it is highly desirable to receive the most detailed information about this.
 25. Those who come into contact with those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," are asked to record their impressions and observations of their life, daily routine, and activities in the most detailed manner.
 26. Members of various political parties and groups are asked to record their observations and memories of the attitude of "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers" toward the liberation movement as a whole and toward its various manifestations and episodes in particular. Also, if possible, to note and describe past connections and relations between political organizations and their members and the members and organizations of those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," even if they are now only of historical interest.
 27. A detailed and accurate description of the attitude of those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers," toward various political and social teachings is necessary.
 28. It is necessary to describe in detail where the children of sectarians and Old Believers study. Do the children attend public schools or are they taught at home? If at home, who teaches them: family members or hired teachers? Do sectarians and Old Believers have their own separate schools? If they do, where are they, and what is taught there? (Provide a detailed curriculum and the entire structure of the school). How many students are in such schools? Whose funds support the school (communal money or private donations)? What is the attitude of sectarians and Old Believers toward secondary and higher educational institutions?
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29. We ask you to send us portraits, group photos, views of the area, and any other images related to the life and way of life of "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers."
30. We ask you to collect tombstone inscriptions made on the monuments and graves of those commonly referred to as "sectarians," "schismatics," "Old Believers."
31. We ask you to send us clippings from newspapers and magazines—especially provincial ones—related to sectarianism and schism, with exact indications of the name of the newspaper or magazine, year, issue number, date, month, and page.
32. If anyone has clippings from past years, we would be extremely grateful for their submission.
33. While compiling a detailed bibliography on sectarianism, schism, and Old Belief, we ask you to point out even the smallest mentions of them in all kinds of books, providing the full title of the book and the page.
34. Those who work in public and private libraries, archives, and other repositories are asked to inform us about manuscripts and materials on sectarianism and schism encountered in these institutions.
35. To publishers of books, newspapers, magazines, descriptions of libraries, and archives, we offer an exchange of publications.
36. Those working in foreign libraries and archives are especially asked to note manuscript and printed materials related to Russian sectarianism and schism.
37. All inquiries, requests, letters, as well as manuscripts, articles, photographs, etc., should be sent to the address:

VLADIMIR DMITRIEVICH BONCH-BRUYEVICH.

St. Petersburg, Peski, Khersonskaya Street, house 5–7, apartment 27.
For personal consultations, reception is on Tuesdays from 7 to 9 p.m. *Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich.*

Appeal to Readers.

We ask the readers of the "Living Book" of the Doukhobors to assist us in the following: to study the origin of the psalms and other works of the "Living Book," it is first necessary to note all borrowings of texts from other writings. For our part, together with Vsevolod Izmailovich Sreznevsky, we have made many such notes. But this is far from all. The research must continue further. That is why we ask all those who, while reading the "Living Book," discover a coincidence of its text with any other, to immediately inform us, indicating the original source (title of the book, chapter, page, etc.). In addition to this external comparison, it is necessary to note all other coincidences: for example, if this or that psalm or verse is read or sung in any other sectarian community, this must be noted immediately and, if possible, the exact text of the variant of the psalm or verse should be sent for comparison. It is also necessary to note where and when, and if possible, from whom this new text was taken.

We especially ask those who come into contact with Canadian, Transcaucasian, Amur, Samara, or other Doukhobors to read all the texts of the "Living Book" together with them, note all deviations, report omissions, or new psalms, verses, prayers, tales, etc.

It is extremely necessary to record all interpretations of the psalms, their second, spiritual meaning, as well as interpretations of individual words and expressions.

We believe that only through such mutual, so to speak, collective efforts in research will we eventually be able to establish the continuity of sectarian communities, unravel their history, and decipher their teachings, so deeply rooted in the consciousness of millions of people and remaining hidden in the secret recesses of popular conspiracies to this day.

St. Petersburg
April 16, 1909
Bonch-Bruyevich.

**Appeal to Canadian, Transcaucasian, Amur, Samara,
and All Other Doukhobors.**

The wish of many of you has been fulfilled. Your "Living Book," recorded by me nine years ago from your brothers who were migrating to Canada, has finally been published as a separate book. Now I ask all of you to carefully review my recordings of your book, read them in detail, and point out all shortcomings and errors. There are unclear places in the psalms. It is very likely that those who read them to me forgot something or omitted something. All this must be corrected immediately. If any psalm is read differently, with significant deviations from the one printed, it must be recorded anew. If there are omissions, and it may happen that someone knows such psalms, questions and answers, verses, prayers, tales, teachings, instructions, and everything else that I did not record at all and is not printed in the book—I most earnestly ask every Doukhobor reader not to consider it a burden but to take it as a good duty to immediately record everything and send it to me. The same should be done with all interpretations. Many psalms need explanations; they have two meanings. I ask all those who know to record all this as well. If any psalm or verse is taken from another community, for example, from the Molokans, this should also be noted and reported. Only through such joint efforts will we achieve that the "Living Book," preserved among the Doukhobors from their ancestors, will be correctly recorded in its entirety, and in the future, a new, corrected and supplemented book can be published.

If any Doukhobor wishes to find a particular psalm, they should first open page 313, where the "List of Psalms" is printed.

There, all the beginnings of questions and answers, psalms, verses, etc., are printed under letters in alphabetical order. So, if you want, for example, to find the "question and answer," "In three persons the Lord abides"—you should look in the "List of Psalms" under the section "questions and answers." In this section, under the letter "V," you will find exactly the beginning of this psalm, opposite which stands the number..

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This number indicates the page of the book. Open this page, and you will find the desired "question-and-answer" psalm there.

If you want to find a simple psalm, for example, "Our house is blessed....," look for this beginning in the "psalms" section and find

the letter "D." There you will find the beginning "Our house is blessed...." Opposite it stands the number 236. This is the page of the book.

The same applies if you want to find a "verse," "The Dream of the Most Holy Mother of God," etc.

All letters, answers, corrections, and manuscripts should be sent to the address:

Vladimir Dmitrievich Bonch-Bruyevich.

St. Petersburg, Peski, Khersonskaya Street, house No. 7,
apartment 27.

I hope for your assistance.

Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich.

St. Petersburg

April 16, 1909

Exposition of the Doukhobors' worldview

PART I.

Man is a "wondrous, marvelous creation of God" **). God is the first "desire," "self-existent light," the creative principle of all existence, the beginning without beginning or end, the first cause of the world's being. "God is spirit, the light of the world," "God is the Word," "God is man," who "speaks with human lips." Birth in the flesh reveals to us the knowledge of the world only within the world. Living in the world, we come to know the world; there is no other knowledge. When there was "neither heaven nor earth, nor the course of the moon, nor the adornment of the stars, nor the radiance of the sun," then God was "within Himself, in intellectual being, in His divinity." God, whose dominion is everywhere, "does not dwell in the heavens, nor beneath the heavens, nor under any temples. Our God," say the Doukhobors, "is within Himself in a single being," that is, He resides in man, is present here on earth, among us, in each of us, for "we are all born divine." "Time gave birth to God." "In the beginning, the word" (i.e., man) called "God God." The "image" of God consists "in God's perfection, in power, and power is in God, and God is in man, and man began to speak." Only through him, man, for man, is the beginning of all knowledge of life laid, and

therefore everything proceeds from man, is contained in man—man is "a wondrous, marvelous creation of God," the creation of all life—"we are worthy to bow before him—the living man." "We confess to the living God." But God—the spiritual essence of our nature—no one has ever seen anywhere, for "God is an incorporeal spirit." "God abides in souls, in human hearts," "where one loves another, there God abides." "God is the holy spirit, Himself His own holy place; the soul—His body—is immortal; unbegotten, uncreated, eternal, self-existent—clothed in light, as in a garment, in His eternal immortality." "Our earthly body is not man, but man is the soul in the body, the heavenly, divine mind." What, then, is the soul? The human soul is the body of God. "The soul is action, human power." What kind of power is this? "The soul is reason," say the Doukhobors. The soul "dwells," "is present," "in pure, perfect reason." The soul of man—reason—is like "the merciful God." It is the "image of God"; it originated "from wisdom," and "wisdom" is "God Himself," so that the soul, the reason of man, is the dwelling place of God Himself. All that is rational is divine, and all that is divine is rational.

God manifests Himself in three persons. "The Lord abides in three persons." "The first person is the light-Father, our God. The second person is the life-Son, our God; the third person is the peace-light Spirit, our God." And since "the Father is light," "the beginning," "desire," "the Word," "the Son is the seeking of God's word," "the sustainer of all creatures," "the Spirit is truth," "the fulfiller of all spiritual blessings," this triune, three-personal God—described as "height—the Father, breadth—the Son, depth—the Holy Spirit"—is also manifested in man through three faculties: "Father-God—memory; Son-God—reason; Spirit-God—will. The Triune God is one."

The creative, unifying principle is as one within itself as man is one within himself, endowed with immutable qualities belonging solely to him: "memory, reason, and will," wherein "memory" must be understood not merely as voluntary or involuntary recollection but as the eternal connection of the present with the past.

And since the soul—the dwelling place of God in man—is reason, and reason is the Son of God, then man, who contains reason, is the Son of God, he is divine, he is man-God.

With death—the body of man disappears, but the soul of man "separates from the body, migrates to the dwellings of memory. Our

soul will go to that age, and the body will go to the earth to rot, to be eaten by worms." "Our body will return to dust, and our soul will return to its homeland, where there is neither death, nor sorrow, nor guilt, nor weeping, nor hunger, nor thirst, there is eternal day, unceasing light," that is, it will merge with all the "visible and invisible world," with the cosmos.

The soul of man—the rational principle in his life—is immortal. It is eternal, as nature itself is eternal, as life itself, the world itself, the universe itself, God Himself. With the death of man, his shell, his body, disappears, but the soul—perfect reason—this primary essence of man, remains in the world as something that knows no death, that is above death and life, that abides in being. It—eternal in being—is continuous and hereditary in humanity, passing from one to another, especially preserved and abiding with all its power in "true people," that is, where the rational, spiritual principle of life manifests itself in the greatest perfection and integrity.

Those people whose entire life most closely approaches the type of that perfect man who, in his wisdom, is equal to God; people who comprehend the true meaning of life, embody this lofty meaning in life itself, people who struggle for truth and uphold "the law of God," are the true worshippers of God "in spirit and in truth," are "vessels of God," "guardians of the divine principle."

"The law of God," "the will of God," which requires the "patience" of those who wish to ascend to the higher stage of life, perfection, is manifested in "a pure, blameless conscience: what I do not wish for myself, I do not wish for my brother." "The law of God" is "the rule of faith, what to do and what not to do." It must be observed everywhere: "wherever you may be in need, find within yourself the strength of the law." Above this law, which determines what to do and what not to do, how "to live life," there is nothing in the carnal life of man. Only "repentance," "above the law and commandments," is higher because, having realized the injustice of his life and returning to the "true path," man accomplishes for himself the most important task.

Those who have comprehended the "truth," the essence of "the law of God," become in life living sources of truth and righteousness. Their souls, their reason, bright and enlightened, pour into the bitter cup of life of the entire "unrighteous world" much true sweetness and lofty happiness.

The soul of such a "true" man—and the Doukhobors consider themselves such—passes from generation to generation in the "righteous lineage," that is, among them, the Doukhobors. It is as if it migrates from one to another, transmitting all the divine wisdom inherent in it. But even among the Doukhobors, there are and can be unrighteous ones. The soul of such "fallen" people, their "wavering" reason, obscured by the Living, carnal, devilish principle of life, is transmitted, after death, to all other people, but not to the Doukhobors, to those people who live not according to reason, whose deeds are evil. And there, from one to another, this darkened consciousness spreads, creating more evil than good, plunging people into "the abyss, the outer darkness of life." But even among these fallen people, there are the worst, those who have defiled themselves with especially wicked deeds of life. These people, degrading themselves, destroying even the very seeds of the divine principle, trampling the sprouts that might perhaps someday grow and bear fruit, themselves lower themselves, contrary to the first pure nature of man, to the level of irrational, unthinking, soulless Livings, and after death, the soul of such darkened people migrates "from the race of men to the race of beasts," and thus "the earth is cleansed of human weeds." Every other "creature," not man, coming into its natural state, lives its life as "its limit of life is set," and with its entire life—whatever it may be—does not defile life, as the "fallen man" defiles it, does not defile because it "fulfills its limits," "realizes its course of life."

Among the Doukhobors, among the "true" ones, there are "true people": people who are "above reason." These "pillars to the heavens," "prophets," "true sons of God," "Christs,"—it is they who "proclaim the truth to people" and thereby strengthen life among people, protect it from temptations and falls, draw them from the "temporal to the eternal." This "true man" is none other than "Christ God," living among us, who appeared, suffered, showed the path of life, always, continuously appeared and appears now in the living.

The leader of the Doukhobors is precisely that "true among the true," "Son of God" and "God," to whom "we are worthy to bow." And since "no one can call the Son, except the Father," and "the Father is known in the Son, and the Son in the Father," "from the Father the Spirit proceeds, abides on the Son," the highest, greatest rationality among the true people, among the Doukhobors, has always been transmitted and is transmitted hereditarily from the leading father to the leading son. The genealogy of the people, who

trace their origin to Israel, corresponds to the genealogy of the leaders; the people of these "immutable sons of God." The leader of the Doukhobors is for the Doukhobors the "living God," of whom it is said that he is "a prophet not false, an eagle under the heavens, a lofty ladder, a censer of fragrance, a golden-embroidered robe; a church not made by hands; a swift-flying star." He is the "priest" among the Doukhobors, "righteous, reverend, not defiled, not malicious, who is separated from sinners," he is the "stone" on which the "whole church" is built, he "is our Christ," the Christ of the Doukhobors.

To the specific question: "Do you believe in the incarnation of the Son of God," the Doukhobors answer just as specifically: "We believe and confess that there is one Lord God, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God is man," that is, in man is born, incarnated "the Son of God, Jesus Christ."

The Doukhobors believe that they are now "in wondrous clouds, in the second bright resurrection of Christ," that is, at the time when, "in the promised land," in Doukhoboria—"the Lord lives." In one of the psalms, it is said about the Doukhobor leader Saveliy Katsustin that when they wanted to arrest him, the authorities came and "dug up the entire juniper bush," that is, the whole of Doukhoboria, "searched for the Lord," but did not find Him, and "in that bush our Lord God lived for thirty years."

To the question:

— How do you recognize Verigin?

— He is our common brother and comforter.

— Do you recognize him as a prophet or God?

— Go, ask him, if he has God within him,—answer the Doukhobors,—then we do not deny him.

— Why did you revere Lukerya Vasilyevna? — they ask the Doukhobors.

— Rejoice, earth, spring joy, open heavens of God's glory,—so solemnly and mysteriously answer the Doukhobors about their beloved leader.

"Based on the apostles and prophets," the Doukhobors reverently honor those of their leaders who "proclaim" to them the "good news."

PART II.

"God will be with you,"—says the prophet to the Doukhobors. "The kingdom of God is among us,"—he affirms. And the Doukhobors regard themselves as the chosen people, as the "race of God."

— What are you?—they are asked.

— We are Doukhobors, true Doukhobors, we confess to the image of our Lord God Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the upholder of the holy law of God. We serve God in spirit, we boast in Christ Jesus, we are strengthened by the Spirit, we are vigilant in the Spirit, we receive the sword from the Spirit, with this sword we wage war.

— Who is your first?

— The Doukhobor Christ,—answer the Doukhobors.

"We are Christians," "of the faith of Jesus, that is, Doukhobor,"—they say of themselves,—"by the knowledge of the word of Christ." We originate "from the blessed, joyful land," from the "family of David," "the lineage of Israel, the wandering," "from the three youths: Ananias, Azarias, and Misael," that is, the Doukhobors trace their origin from those who, disobeying the orders of the authorities, did not "bow to idols," "the Baam-figure."

Our first father on earth was "Abel,"—say the Doukhobors. Tracing their allegorical genealogy "even from Abel," the first human martyr, who perished at the hand of a tyrant, the Doukhobors in a spiritual sense deny any genealogy. "Who are your ancestors?"—they ask the Doukhobors.—"No one,"—they answer, for "before the Father, only the Son knew. No one before the Son, only the Father knew." And since by birth all people originate "from one root," then "all people are brothers to one another." If in life people diverge and become opposed to one another, hostile, this stems from the imperfection of all life, this is not "divine," but "human."

We—the Doukhobors—are "the salt of the earth," for we are "salted by God's word, and glorified by His name." "We have turned away from all evil deeds, from dances, from revelry, from all devilish pastimes and have no friendship with them, likewise from drunkenness. For this, the world has hated us, delivered us into evil bonds, placed us in dark dungeons, for the word of God, for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Believing that the "recipient of Christ's deeds"—deeds of truth, goodness, and righteousness—can only be one who is "pure in body and deed, humble and meek, obedient to good deeds, removed from

evil deeds," and knowing that their fathers always taught "to turn away from evil deeds and join the righteous,"—the Doukhobors are firmly convinced that it is they who must proclaim to people with their whole life, by deed and word, about the new true life, "about the new heaven and the new earth," where "the fruits of the Holy Spirit"—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, mercy, faith, meekness, and temperance"—will give their blessed, luxuriant growth.

"The Doukhobor faith," this "fortress of good deeds," "incomprehensible in essence," but only "in spirit," "in spiritual understanding of life," manifests itself in the constant "true" struggle of "the Holy Spirit" with every "power" taken "from darkness," with every oppression. Walking "in the spirit," the Doukhobors are "alive, strong, and vigilant" with "burning faith, an indestructible conscience," that faith which many times "burned on earth but was not consumed." Believing "their law" from the "Book of Life," from the "son of Mary," from the "head of Jesus," from that unwritten and uncreated book which "opened itself, read itself," relying "on the apostles and prophets, who prophesied about eternal life," the Doukhobors consider the most important—the inner spiritual growth and perfection of man. "Write in your hearts, proclaim with your lips,"—they say. And this oral proclamation, coming from the heart, proclamation in all "tongues," that is, everywhere in the world,—they consider the "book of life," natural, the "Book of Life."

Considering themselves "chosen ones," "because we did not enter the vain assembly (church), hated the deceitful church, bypassed all the snares of deceit, took upon ourselves the holy, secret, divine marriage," the Doukhobors deny any external worship, rituals, and sacraments.

PART III.

— Do you have a church?

— Yes.

— Where is your church built?

— Our church is built not in the mountains, not in logs, not in stone walls, but our church is built in human souls and hearts.

"The church is the gathering of true Christians for sincere prayer to the Lord God." "If anyone keeps the commandment of the Lord, he will be called a church not made by hands; but we do not desire

your—Orthodox—handmade things and do not lay hands on ourselves, because this is called hypocritical prayer. There is no salvation in it." "Manual baptism is not prayer." Since "the heavenly, uncreated does not dwell in churches, nor does it receive birth from human hands," the Doukhobors quite definitely declare to the representatives of the dominant church that we, the Doukhobors, "do not wish to go to your handmade churches, do not bow to your icons, because we do not expect holiness in them, do not place divinity in them, they are like fire and corruption."

— Your church is a synagogue, and your priests are sorcerers,—say the Doukhobors.

Not seeing in the dominant church, as well as in all other confessions, anything that can be useful, necessary, and important "for soul and body," the Doukhobors say: why should they go to church when "it is better to see invisibly with one eye than to be completely blind."

The Doukhobors do not consider it necessary to have temples, prayer houses, and the like. "Every true believer can be called a temple of God,"—they say. "Our body is the temple of God, our soul is the image of God, the heavenly countenance, our prayer is the altar."

Denying the church, the temple, the Doukhobors also have a negative attitude toward everything that is "in the temple," that is in the church.

"We do not bow to your painted icons, we do not desire anything of yours for ourselves, because we do not lay hands on ourselves, but we resort to the word of the Lord, to Christ the life-giver."

Recognizing only one "icon," "worthy of bowing to," the "natural, substantial" icon, which "from its essence shows the Son and the Father," resolutely denying any worship of everything that comes "from the works of human hands," not bowing "neither to gold, nor to silver, nor to stone, nor to linen, nor to iron, nor to wood"—the Doukhobors say that the "icon" is "living people," that the "iconostasis of the church, the spiritual surroundings; the Lord has gathered His people around." And only to this "icon," the "living God"—the living man—"is it worthy to bow." And whoever bows to the soulless will himself be soulless. Exchanging bows with one another, the Doukhobors consider that they are transmitting "the gift of God,"—that is why, in every encounter with the "Egyptians," that is, with representatives of the government and authority,—the

Doukhobors first of all stopped bowing to them, because "it is improper,"—they said,—"to lower the dignity of God before those who go against His laws." The humiliation of man—this "temple of God"—is the humiliation of God Himself, which under no circumstances should be.

"The church of Christ is persecuted," and precisely for this reason, the Doukhobors consider it necessary to hold their dignity high and never lower it. But if "fierce times" come, if "Herods" begin to rule without limit and "slay all the infants of the true church of Christ," then... "flee, church of Christ, hide in the wilderness"...

— What do you have instead of a church?—they asked the Doukhobors.

— A voice crying on the waters and on the seas,—they answered.

— How many people are in your church?

— Great is God, great is His strength.

Not having a material church, spreading their voice "on the waters and on the seas," that is, everywhere, in all the world where people live, the Doukhobors attach very little importance to any rituals, prayers, and the like.

— What prayers are in your church?

— The first prayer is humility—salvation without labor for man; the second prayer is a quiet, low bow, a meek glance, a quiet conversation.

— Do you have a monastery?

— No, we have no priests.

— How do you pray to God without a priest?

— With righteous truth, humility, love...

Over time, the Doukhobors developed a rite of worship, though not obligatory, yet accepted by all *). At present, among the Canadian Doukhobors, the long-begun strong protest movement against all externality and ritualism has concluded. I. E. Konkin, in his letter to me dated February 12, 1909, writes:

"On December 15 of last year, we had a general Doukhobor assembly... The last question was introduced by P. V. Verigin, to examine more closely our spiritual rituals, which we considered necessary to perform for the salvation of our souls. But from all this, although small, some eclipse of Christ's truth emerged, because we were inclined to understand the service to God—in prayers and fasts (to torment oneself for several days without food and water). And

also, we understood the worship of the Lord—in prostrations. But the main thing, little attention was paid to the state of our hearts. But now, from that day, December 15, 1908, we, all Doukhobors, have abandoned all external spiritual rituals, although we only performed the reading and singing of psalms, with a prostration. Instead of this, we have decided to receive the grace of Christ—to keep our hearts from evil. If we do not get angry, then by this very act we are already praying and worshiping God with a humble Spirit. Then the grace of God abides in our hearts. For the entire Law of God and the prophets are based on two commandments: love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, this is the first commandment, and the second is like it: love your neighbor as yourself, on these two commandments the whole law of God and the prophets depend. But now we understand all the commandments of God and His entire law in one commandment of Christ our Savior—in goodness, because a good man is like God. And to live in goodness means to live in God. Such a man, by his goodness, will not cause harm or unpleasantness to anyone. In the innocence of the heart, the mind of man is brighter than the sun, truly—paradise, and in anger—hell. Therefore, we recognize the Kingdom of God by the word of Christ 'within us.' And also, hell with all its torments and horrors is not in some underworld of the earth, but in living people who are angry, etc... Evil spirits and all demons no longer exist, because they never were, and all troubles and misfortunes occurred because people did not look and still do not pay attention to their hearts and are not afraid to quarrel, etc. In this lies the whole power of hell and the fiery gehenna, which people depict and imagine in the afterlife, but in essence, there is only one endless eternity of being, incomprehensible to the human mind, that very rest that gave birth to all creatures and us on earth... Therefore, the afterlife should be considered as the return of the ripened fruit to its beginning. There are no torments there. The angels of the Lord, to put it simply, we recognize—as thoughts of goodness."

Thus, there in freedom, in distant Canada, the Doukhobors develop their ancient idea and seek ways to realize their old covenants in immediate life, striving to ensure that word does not diverge from deed. And we know that their growing consciousness, on the soil of communism in production and consumption, merges this strong community into one friendly family, striving to develop new forms of social and personal life.

PART IV.

Coming into contact in life with representatives of all kinds of faiths—and especially with the Orthodox—the Doukhobors have developed a spiritual interpretation of everything that is used, that is done, that is considered a necessary attribute in the dominant cult.

- Do you have a Gospel?—they ask the Doukhobors.
- The Lord said,—they answer,—what you have is the Gospel, the light to the whole world. The Gospel is the joyful news of the forgiveness of my sins, my inclusion in the number of God's children.
- Do you have a Psalter?
- We have psalms, and psalms are the Psalter.—The Psalter is reason, true knowledge.

With these answers, the Doukhobors deny the divine inspiration of the so-called "books of sacred scripture," reducing them to the ordinary level of human creativity.

- What is the kingdom?—i.e., "that light."
- The kingdom,—answer the Doukhobors,—is not food, not drink; righteousness in the world, joy in the Holy Spirit. Transferring "that light" into this life, into the world, the Doukhobors, to the question "what is hell? where is it? where do evil spirits live?" answer: "hell is people who do not know the light; evil spirits live in them," so that even this terrible threat—like the pleasant lure of "living in the kingdom"—these two driving forces of superstitious confessions—are completely destroyed by the Doukhobors, bringing heaven down to earth and raising the "abyss" of hell into the world, into life.

Having destroyed the generally accepted interpretations of the concepts "kingdom," "paradise," and "hell," the Doukhobors, naturally, reject the idea of "heaven" as the abode of God and all His "host."

- What is heaven?
- Heaven is singing, under heaven is reasoning. The heavens are distinguished thus: the first heaven—humility; the second heaven—understanding; the third heaven—temperance; the fourth heaven—mercy; the fifth heaven—brotherly love; the sixth heaven—light; the seventh heaven—love. Where there is counsel, there is light; where there is love, there is God.

The Doukhobors explain everything in the church in the same way.

- Is there an altar in your church?
- Yes.
- What is the altar?
- The altar is the haven of true Christians.
- The altar consists in pure, perfect reason.
- What is on your altar?
- On the altar is a vessel, a cross, and the Gospel.
- What is the vessel?
- The vessel is the law of God. The vessel of God is pure, blameless flesh.
- What is the cross?
- The cross is suffering for Christ.
- What is God's cross?
- Non-retaliation.
- What is the church cross?
- The church cross is the word of God.
- What is the bodily cross?
- Patience. Endure offenses without retaliation.
- What is the heavenly cross?
- Humility and meekness.
- Which cross do you believe in: the four-pointed or the eight-pointed?
- I believe in the four-pointed cross.
- What is the first point?
- The first point is faith.
- What is the second point?
- The second point is hope.
- What is the third point?
- The third point is labor.
- What is the fourth point?
- The fourth point is sustenance. Believe, hope, labor, and be sustained.
- And what is the common Doukhobor cross?
- The narrow path, voluntary sorrow, poverty, and wandering.
The Doukhobors have also had to answer regarding minor details and things used in worship in the Orthodox church.
- Is there oil in your church?
- Yes.
- And what is oil?
- Oil is virtue.
- And in what is the oil kept?
- In a goat's horn.

- What is the goat's horn?
- The goat's horn is the race of God.
- Is there a chalice in your church?
- Yes.
- What is the chalice?
- The chalice is the wisdom of consciousness, the word of God.
- What is the censer?—they ask the Doukhobors.
- The censer is waves, good spirits.
- And what do you burn in it?
- You burn incense and coal. Incense is desire, coal is the words of God.

Considering "the gifts of the Holy Spirit" to be the manifestation of the best qualities of human nature, which include: wisdom, reason, conscience, beauty, knowledge, piety, fear. The Doukhobors do not recognize any other human "blessing" than "the instruction of minds" on the true path of life. A man's life cannot improve from externally fasting, changing food; bodily fasting is necessary for man, but especially useful for him is spiritual fasting. Bodily fasting, "carnal—purity from head to foot." "Spiritual fasting"—"is the separation from union with unrighteousness: from the mouth—complaint; from the hands—murder; from all evil deeds restrain yourself."

Denying the entire ritual part of the cult, the Doukhobors are even more negative toward what are called the sacraments of the Orthodox faith.

PART V.

The Doukhobors consider "the purity of heart in good spirits" to be "the sacraments of the new covenant," and the sacraments established by the dominant church: baptism, chrismation, communion, repentance, priesthood, marriage, unction—they deny in their material implementation, interpreting and understanding them spiritually.

"Bread from wheat, and wine from grapes, and your communion is not beneficial to our soul,"—say the Doukhobors. "Communion is the teaching of the word of Christ, the word of God." "We strive for the age to come to Christ Himself, desiring to receive new strength and grace. Henceforth, we desire to live holy, in a Christian manner." Receiving communion "from the living angel," by which they mean "unharmful thoughts," the Doukhobors say that they must

"prepare themselves" for the holy, divine, immortal passions of Christ," that is, to be always ready to suffer for their neighbor, for their people, "for truth and righteousness." Whoever consciously prepares himself for such a path, who fearlessly accepts any persecution "for truth," he is the "true communicant." "I do not exalt to you your communion,"—says the Doukhobor prophet,—"which is performed in your handmade churches, but you conclude it, as if it were holy, secret,—it is visible, manifest to the whole world," but about that spiritual communion which gives people strength and fortitude to fight evil, to realize truth here on earth, among us.

"Baptism with water is not beneficial to our soul,"—say the Doukhobors,—"for our soul, baptism is when one accepts the word of God into oneself; we are baptized from Christ by the holy spirit." "Do justice and love among yourselves"—this will be true baptism not by water, but by the spirit. "We are baptized,"—say the Doukhobors,—"in the suffering of Christ." He who endures suffering for truth is "baptized" by true faith and thereby joins himself to the common "body,"—to the church, to the assembly, to the society,—of those who strive to devote all their strength, all their understanding to the realization here on earth of the "kingdom of God," that is, such a life where man, "having attained the true human image and calling," will realize on earth a life where there will be no oppression, no violence, but all will be equal, all will live in freedom.

Marriage is permitted in the Doukhobor community. "We do not forbid those who wish, but only understand thus: the married man cares for his wife and children, and the unmarried—for God and the salvation of his soul," that is, the unmarried—the non-family man lives more for those around him, for society, for the world, than for himself, for his personal family—these "accidentally close ones."

"Marriage is a matter of eternal bliss." Only that marriage is true, lawful, which is "maintained" on the basis of mutual love. "From both sides love,—the word is law,"—say the Doukhobors, that is, the mutual love of the groom and the bride sanctifies the marriage, and the given word of both sides—is the law, strong, unbreakable until... there is "love from both sides." And once love disappears, oppression sets in from one side or the other, once the main thing on which marriage is based is gone, then the "word—law" disappears. When marriage is violated in its foundation,—when the mutual love of hearts disappears,—then those in the marriage have every right to part. Divorce is completely free among the Doukhobors. In

marriage, there is not the slightest coercion, and therefore divorces, betrayals of marital fidelity, are very rare, as rare as nowhere else among other peoples and societies.

But if a divorce occurs, then peacefully, amicably, the former spouses part, dividing the children between them according to mutual desire, marry again or remarry, and always remain friends with those with whom they lived before. Among the Doukhobors, there are no straw widows, no abandoned children, no traitors to their domestic hearth, nor the worst kind of despotism—family despotism. Marriage is accompanied by some semi-rituals, more customary *).

The birth of an infant does not entail any rituals. "When an infant is born, whoever receives it in their arms gives it a name,"—say the Doukhobors.

Respect for women, especially strongly developed among the Doukhobors, is based first of all on the fact that women give birth, bring into the world that "wondrous, marvelous creation of God," which is endowed from birth with a divine principle, the highest manifestation of the creative forces of nature, full, perfect reason.

Every woman is a Mother of God, just as every man is a man-God. Every woman "from the ages a virgin, to this day a virgin, from whom was born and is born Jesus Christ," that is, that principle in life which gives people "the meaning of life." Every woman, every "virgin,"—brings into life "the way of God and the deed." Through woman comes into the world that which is above all—Man. That is why every woman, every Mother of God, who "sings and speaks," is in "the highest and sincerest veneration and respect."

Needless to say, women among the Doukhobors are completely free, equal, loved, independent, and occupy a large and honorable place in the life of the community.

Apart from its everyday meaning, the word "to marry" is spiritually interpreted by the Doukhobors thus: "To marry,"—they say,— "means to strive with righteous people, then the pope is with us. A wife is the desire of faith and meekness, temperance." "We take marriage," in the righteous lineage, among true people," there, where we also take "truth," for truth is preserved by "true people," in the righteous lineage.

When women are asked why they call themselves "virgins," they answer: "Because I am a virgin, I carry the way of God and the deed.

I did not stand under the bridal veil, did not hold a wreath in my hands, did not kiss the priest's hand. Because I am a virgin, I remember God's deed."

Regarding the act of human birth with the highest degree of respect, the Doukhobors treat the second mysterious phenomenon of life—death—with no less seriousness and sincerity. Death,—this unexpected calling of man from the world,—is a shattering phenomenon that leads to deep reflection. "You cannot ransom yourself from death with money; you cannot pay off death with tears; you cannot pray away death with prayers." Inevitably, unwaveringly, and relentlessly, it goes its way over all living on earth. Every day of our life, gone into eternity, brings us closer to the hour of death, which will strike at an unknown time. "Man grows on earth like grass; his honor, glory,—like a flower blooms. In the morning it blooms, by evening it falls. In the evening, man sits in conversation, in the morning, man lies in the grave; he presses his white hands to his zealous heart, lays aside all care for his life."

Looking calmly into the distance of life, the Doukhobors regard death just as calmly, thinking only of one thing, "how to live life" so that it would not be a burden to others. "We only do not want to die a vain death,"—the Doukhobors told me, that is, a violent or accidental death, from misfortune, through carelessness. But the coming of the hour of death they await calmly, full of dignity, without fear or trembling, they prepare for the final departure, giving last instructions to those around them from their deathbed. Death always comes, in the last moment,—according to the Doukhobors,—suddenly. "Suddenly, brothers, the mortal hour has overtaken me; swift death has seized me, brothers. In the evening, I conversed with you, brothers, and in the morning, I lie in the grave, brothers. Do me a kindness, brothers: dress me in a shroud, see me off, brothers, on my journey."

Having dressed the deceased in deathly garments, the Doukhobors see off their departed brother "on his journey," remembering his life, his deeds.

PART VI.

Every Doukhobor must know that in life there are seven virtues to which he must strive with all his might and seven deadly sins from which he must distance himself as much as possible.

What are these seven virtues?

"The first virtue—humility; the second—non-covetousness; the third—chastity; the fourth—patience; the fifth—fasting; the sixth—brotherly love; the seventh—spiritual vigor."

The seven deadly sins are their opposites.

"The first sin—pride; the second—avarice; the third—fornication; the fourth—anger; the fifth—sorcery; the sixth—envy; the seventh—despondency."

How then can one know whether a man lives in "virtue" or in "sin"?

"As a tree is known by its fruits, so a man is known by his reason, a brother—by his word, and a friend—by his greeting,"—say the Doukhobors.

In life, above all, "the perfection of righteous fruits" is required. One must be cautious in judging people. "The first salvation without labor—is not to condemn a man." Striving to perform "deeds of spiritual mercy," one must "correct the erring; instruct the ignorant; give good advice to the doubting; pray to the Lord for the salvation of one's neighbor; comfort the sorrowful; bear injustice with patience; forgive from the heart." But one must always know that perfection in life is given to man only by constant and joyful activity. "Sin against the Holy Spirit" will be precisely nothing other than "excessive reliance on God's mercy, without doing good deeds."

And although "believing in Jesus Christ," that is, in all that is best on earth,—in truth, in justice, in perfection,—is not only useful for a Doukhobor but is simply a "necessary need, because this strengthens our conscience," yet one must know that only "active love" elevates man, and in hypocritical, insincere virtue there is no salvation.

"Above virtue"—"reasoning" and "repentance,"—say the Doukhobors. "Reasoning" about life, about activity, about good and evil, reasoning about all the "visible world"—this is what gives people constant creative strength, what strengthens the will, removes all barriers on the path to truth. "If anyone wishes to know himself, let him set out with reason to seek,"—say the Doukhobors.

"Reasoning and repentance," that is, "reasoning and correction of all that is done, both in personal life, in personal actions, and everywhere and always,—are above the law and commandments." Nor should one think that once one knows "the law," then one is "safe." "It is not the place that enlightens man, but man the place,"

and therefore it is not enough to say "I know," "I understand" where to go,—one must go, one must act, accomplish, proceed, create, one must merge one's "understanding of life" with life itself. One must "in deeds" realize what is said "in words." "The sun shines on all the righteous; thus it behooves man to be truthful, just, to love one another as himself." Many think that all happiness, all the purpose in life—is work, accumulation of wealth, living in contentment. This is a delusion. Of course, one must work to sustain the flesh. "Work your work, leave your work, join good deeds." Those among the Doukhobors who do not do this, forget, trample "all the consciousness of their ancestors," who "gave their souls for their friends." "O evil man, unreasonable—you lived your life in sins,—where is your living-being, where is your wealth, pride, folly, will not all that disappear, will not all that perish, will not all be covered by ashes-earth?" Is it worthy for man to live in the world and resemble an Living, which "looks downward" and only "thinks of material food?" "The beauty of man,"—those who shed blood on earth for the name of the Lord, for the testimony of Jesus Christ, for the word of God."

"Whoever loves the seal of the Lord, for him it is tight to live on earth and shameful to be called, but whoever loves the seal of the antichrist, for him it is spacious to live on earth, praiseworthy to be called."

"Do not spare your father-mother,"—says the Doukhobor prophet,— "all your kin-tribe, all your temporal possessions in the flesh. Spare me, father, the heavenly king in spirit. They prayed to him, the dear ones: Lord! Lord! it is hard for us to enter your heavenly kingdom: all your paths are blocked, on the paths stand iron doors, brazen gates, at the gates stands foul guard." And with this "foul guard," standing at the "blocked paths," one must wage a constant and stubborn struggle during the journey to the cherished goal, radiantly shining there in the distance, like a steppe fire. "Righteous people have lived on earth, have known God—where truth is—and for this they have endured all: reproaches, scorn, blasphemy and slander, battles and offenses, sorrows and illnesses." And you, living now, "standing on the path," going "to suffer,"—"evil will visit you with evil," but you be strong, stand firm, be bold and unyielding, "do not be terrified, hold the sword without retaliation in your right hand always." What "sword," "what weapon do you have?"

"The fiery weapon, the spiritual sword, the word of God and the shield of faith." "Do not fear those who kill your flesh; when they

kill your flesh, they cannot touch your soul." Do, accomplish good, do not retreat a step from your decision, and know that you may always be "visited by death" prematurely, "crucifixion death" for your deed. What to do? For how long already has the "trumpet of the daughter of Zion" sounded, for how long already has "the blood of the righteous" been shed, and before the whole world, "before the Lord stand the slain." "Endure, my dear friends,"—comforts the voice of the prophet,— "endure at least for a little while." The time has not yet come, not all has been done, there are still righteous ones who "wish to be thus slain for the word of God, for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Much "terrible and dreadful" is done on earth, but rejoice!—"The earth has already been adorned, the earth has been filled, the earth has been embellished—with truth, love, righteous people." All this is trampled by the "mighty Babylon," all this is destroyed by the maddened "Chaldeans," "cruel Egyptians"—but all this is "for a time"... Fight against evil, while strength and opportunity remain. And if "it becomes too hard," "you flee, friends, spiritual brothers, into the dark forests, hide behind the oak logs, endure cold and hunger, you will not die from this, you will live forever."

PART VII.

At present, true life is "trampled." "The light is bound,"—say the Doukhobors,— "by priests, deacons, princes, unrighteous courts." And to "unbind the light," one must arrange life anew, manifest this newness, "rejecting" all the old.

The world long ago split. It has always been so, that people went against one another, dividing into two camps. Even "when Jesus Christ went to Jerusalem on a donkey, there were two Jerusalems. The rich met Him—they spread cloth and such; and in the other were the poor—they threw under His feet willow and palm." The disciples of Christ were simple, poor people, fishermen. The rich were against Christ, sent spies to Him, mocked Him, and sought by all means to destroy Him. And in the end, they achieved their goal. "Not the simple Jewish people hated Christ, but the high priests, scribes, and Pharisees, out of envy, persecuted and persecute Him." It is they, the rich, who have on their conscience the greatest sins—"idolatry and avarice,"—out of their greed, out of hatred, out of malice "persecuted and persecute" those who, together with the destitute and oppressed, seek paths to a new life, where there will be

"neither sorrow, nor weeping, nor sighing, but endless life," joyful and perfect. All who unite to enslave the people, to oppress them—will never be forgiven. "To judges, unmerciful authorities—hell, deep places, abyss,—they will have eternal torment, everlasting life." From generation to generation, from age to age, their black fame as tormentors will pass, and even after their death, "their life will be everlasting," there will be "eternal torment" in the retelling of posterity, for by all their activity they have cast themselves "into hell."

Authorities who commit lawlessness—are themselves lawless. Those who do their work justly and honestly,—let them do it, "only let them not hinder people from living." Viewing the activity of any representative of authority as a purely private, his personal matter, or the matter of those "to whom he has hired himself to serve," the Doukhobors say that they "do not delve into these matters" until these "matters" "do not oppress people." "What business is it of us how a merchant in the neighboring town runs his household? Let him run it,—as he knows, only let him sell his goods honestly,—he is on his own, we are on our own; but if he begins to deceive, steal, lie, cheat, especially to commit any violence against people,—then we renounce him and have no dealings with him,"—thus the Doukhobors explained to me their attitude toward any governmental authority, explained in Canada, when the first signs of dissatisfaction of the Doukhobors with the Canadian government flickered.

They also do not recognize spiritual authorities. The Doukhobors deny all "recipients of apostolic official deeds,"—as they say. They deny "Christ's vicars on earth" and all the rest of the spiritual hierarchy.

At various times, the Doukhobors have been asked many questions concerning authorities, regarding "prayer for the tsar," relations with the government, etc.

"Which tsar will you go to serve?"—they ask the Doukhobors. "The Great Tsar; the tsar is our God, who wrought salvation before the ages in the midst of the earth in proverbs and reasonings. The Almighty from the captivity of His people returned not with honey but with gifts, to such a tsar we desire to bow our heads, but to the earthly tsar—only the fads of this age."

Regarding the "prayer for the tsar," about which so much inquiry was made among sectarians and schismatics especially at the end of the 18th and in the 19th centuries, the Doukhobors answered thus:

"We pray to God, as for ourselves, so for the pious tsar, we pray and ask in prayers: save, O Lord, the pious tsar."

— Whom do you consider a "pious tsar"?— I asked the Doukhobors in Canada.

— We have it said about Alexander the first,—answered the Doukhobors,—who gave us the "manifesto of the wide gates" and permitted us to resettle and gather together from everywhere to the Milky Waters, it is said in the psalm thus: "He was blessed, good, as the goods of the soul,"—but of others we know not.

The last movement of the Doukhobors in the Caucasus (in the 90s of the 19th century) very clearly showed and emphasized the direction of the political thought of the most active part of the Doukhobors.

Having at our disposal carefully collected extensive material concerning the political and social views of the Doukhobors, we unfortunately cannot use it now, as the extremely restrictive conditions of contemporary censorship do not give us the opportunity to tell in full the sharply negative attitude of the Doukhobors toward the activity of modern governments, toward the activity of those classes of society who hold in their hands power and armed force. Here we will say only that for the Doukhobors who resettled in Canada, even the laws of this most free country seemed restrictive, unnecessary, harmful, and they flatly refused to submit to many of them.

The Doukhobors firmly believe that the time will come when over people will resound the summoning, formidable sound of the trumpet of "Michael the Archangel," and the enslaved and oppressed "will cast down Satan from the throne, will destroy the throne of Satan, the glory of the devil will perish." Then the cool earth will turn into freedom from their violence."

The consistent application of the Doukhobors' teaching to life leads to systematic disobedience to all modern established states. What the Doukhobors who resettled in Canada carried out in life, at the time when they lived in Transcaucasia:—refusal of military service, refusal to submit to authorities, refusal to pay taxes, refusal to perform any duties, and at the same time communal life, communism in production and consumption—all this fully follows

from the very essence of the Doukhobors' teaching. The Canadian Doukhobors, who suffered so cruelly in Russia for striving to realize in life the ideal they had conceived,—by all these actions introduced nothing new into their ancient teaching. They only awoke from a "deep sleep," they followed the call of "the voice of reason," they, to the extent of their strength, tried to "restore the consciousness of their ancestors," once again to confirm what had been repeatedly attested earlier by the life of their communities.

The Doukhobors allegorically call themselves "weeping grass." And "weeping grass,"—these are those peoples,"—explain the Doukhobors,— "when the Lord sowed seeds and they fell on good ground and grass grew and that grass could swim against the water. This water is the institutions of humanity, which flow to the darkening of the people; but the children,—who are born of the Lord,—weep for eternal life and go against authority."

PART VIII.

"Woe to the cruel!"—the voice of the Lord speaks—says the prophet of the Doukhobors.

"Fear not, brothers, fear not, my people, any passions—torments." "Set your hearts in strength, accept chastisement, proclaim among the nations His deeds." "Go forth across the breadth of the earth, renew all the face of the earth." The earth is aflame with blood. "In the latter time,—now is the time of persecution-judgment,—the evil antichrist was born. He has sent his cruel tormentors throughout the earth, through all settlements, there is no refuge for my slaves neither in the mountains, nor in caves, nor in distant deserts."

But never mind. "Time is passing swiftly, not delaying." And it will come. The Great Judgment will begin, the judgment of wrath without mercy. "I will raise My wrath against the glorious city of Babylon, against those who dwell in it, the Chaldeans... I will destroy the Babylonians, the ancient serpent, all the cruel beast-tormentors; I will slay the Babylonians—the ruler and the prophet; I will slay the Babylonians—the man and the woman; I will slay the Babylonians—the youth and the maiden; I will slay the Babylonians—the chariot and the rider; I will slay the Babylonians—all the glorious and the brave; all his land will be desolate." Babylon will perish! All its glory will perish! All its

strength, binding the nations, destroying freedom, enslaving people, will perish!

And now already "at the sound of the trumpet, loud-voiced," the Cossacks (Doukhobors) are preparing to go on a campaign, to the glorious, great city of Babylon, against that foul woman, the adulteress." Long have people sought to escape from "Babylonian captivity" to "Jerusalem-city," that is, breaking free from the old world, full of violence and oppression, to arrange their life anew. But the path there is thorny, all strewn with misfortunes. "It is easier to walk on steel blades," than to reach the final goal, so cluttered is this path, so much suffering and grief awaits everyone who steps onto this "righteous path." Always in humanity "young men of courage" have been born, who boldly set out on this path, go and perish, fearlessly parting with their lives. "Young men of courage"—fighters for truth, for freedom,—have "neither kin nor tribe, only they have brothers-sisters spiritual" and "hoping comrades." They go "young men of courage across the earth with glory, with great, with human beauty," they shed their blood for their holy cause. It is hard for them to live on earth. "Antiochus the prince has imprisoned them," he has filled with them "dark dungeons." "The young men of courage wept bitterly before the Lord: Lord! Lord! release us from the dark dungeons, we wished to pass into your Jerusalem-city." "My young men of courage!"—the Lord says to them, their inner voice, their consciousness, their experience,— "My Jerusalem-city is far away, beyond steep mountains, beyond dark forests, beyond black seas." And to reach this end, one must open heavy gates. "Hard it is to open the gates: the gates are blocked by a self-born stone, covered with sea sand; to open Your gates for us—on earth blood must be shed." "Sea sand,"—"people who do not know themselves and their own best good,"—serving those who violate people, destroying all that is good—this is the main force, this is the obstacle on the path of the procession to freedom, to the arrangement of a new truly brotherly life throughout the earth. And this path must first be washed with "the blood of the righteous," and only then will these "darkened" people understand where their happiness lies.

But "the time will come" and "it is near, at the doors." This "time will be and will be"—the Doukhobors say with conviction—when on earth will be performed "the great judgment of God." Before this time, the struggle between "uncomprehending" people will reach extreme tension. "Abomination, desolation will be in the world,

hatred in this generation." "Brother will rise against brother, everyone against his neighbor; city will rise against city; law against law; kingdom against kingdom. The king will take the spirit of fire, their whole council will scatter." "The time will be fierce."

No one will be able to help another. "With terrible fear and trembling" all will await the last day of the passing life, "when the final battle will take place." Before the face of "this day" all will be equal, nothing will be taken into account at this universal "last judgment." "Small or great, old or young, rich or poor, glorious or not glorious, or in royal purple,"—to all will be applied one measure: "according to their deeds, it will be rendered to them." And to all who have done evil,—it will be hard. "Only one will have it easy—the dead and the unborn."

The "judgment" will end. From all sides will gather all the persecuted, oppressed, enslaved, all the toiling and burdened, all those who "sowed," but did not reap, but only "poured into granaries" those who did not labor but lived by others' labor, others' sweat, blood, grief, and tears.

They will gather "for the sake of perfect righteousness." And then "the Lord will show honor to all living on earth." "The old heavens"—the old order of life,— "will perish by burning," "all will melt." "There will be new heavens, and a new earth, and all earthly things will be renewed; and all earthly foundations will be forbidden; the dead will come forth from their graves of one stature; all will be equal and every human nature" will be equalized; "all the 'red deserts,'"—distinctions, rewards, orders, ranks, estates, and all else, partitions" between people—"fire will consume," "all will disappear." A new spiritual life will come on the renewed earth, new orders will be established, new relations between people will begin, and "man will cease to hate man," and "peace and goodwill among men" will be planted.

The "Kingdom of God" will come on earth, the kingdom of "peace and joy" among people, full of perfect reason.

And man,—this "wondrous, marvelous creation of God"—for the first time will feel himself completely free from all oppression and will begin to realize a new, free, joyful life, full of fresh forces of great creativity.

We have tried,—to the extent of our strength and understanding,—to present here the worldview of one of the ancient Russian sects, the worldview of the Doukhobors. Throughout their teaching runs the red thread of the fundamental motif of the life of the peoples inhabiting Russia: patience, patience, patience...

Age-old slavery to the Tatars, the oppression of later governments, serfdom, and many other sorrows of the great people,—have left an indelible mark on the martyred face of those who were always ready "to suffer even unto death" for truth, for righteousness, for all that is best, which seemed to them necessary to realize in life, as the immutable "law of God." Superhuman sufferings, exceeding all measure of representation and living imagination, have been endured by these simple Russian people, scattered across the face of Russia, united by the common name of "sectarians." Only the sufferings experienced by Russia in the last "constitutional" years,—in the years of "pacification,"—give us, contemporaries of this terrible era of the revelry of dark forces and political reaction,—an understanding of what the sectarians endured for whole centuries in a row. The creativity of the people always reflects its social and political being. The motifs of chants especially clearly reflect the mood of the soul of the collective, the community, the people; they absorb all the sweetness and bitterness, all the hopes and disappointments of the life of the collective, striving into the distant heavenly heights of a better future.

The plaintive, weeping sounds of the Doukhobor psalms, gradually drawing in all voices, passing from a small group of the initial choir, widening and widening, to all the singers, to all those standing and calling, affect your soul shockingly, distract attention from the everyday, and involuntarily carry you away, together with all, into the contemplation of past life, into deep feeling of the grief and melancholy of present life.

I remember them, concentrated, with bowed heads, lowering and clasping their hands, I remember these faces, full of thought and resolve, I remember them, as if standing, firm and unyielding in will, the Doukhobors. And here are the women,—filled with faith and hope,—with inflamed eyes, on which tears of tenderness and rapture rarely glisten. To them, in their sonorous choir of life, belongs the great role of courageous sowers of the aspiration to feat among their loved ones, among their husbands and sons, doomed to suffering. It was they who said to their children: "Go to suffer, fear not, do not doubt, accept all, even unto death, but do not betray, do

not disgrace the fatherland." It was they who blessed their children to certain death, to torture, rods, torment, to imprisonment in prisons, to distant exile and confinement, and only asked one thing of their "beloved children," "not to forget your ancestors; not to disgrace your fathers, your mothers, who have already accepted torments for truth, for righteousness, for our freedom."

How much suffering they themselves endured! Horror freezes the heart when I read these simple, epic narratives, these records, in which they told their grief-misfortune, endured by them in the cruel time of executions, accompanied not only by beating, corporal punishment for men and women, extortions and robberies, but also by the terrible shame of vile violence against girls, women, and mothers. Into what infinite depth of despair they must have been plunged, if not saved by their firm conviction of their unconditional righteousness, if not inspired by the joyful hope that someday, if only for the distant generations of their "chosen Doukhobor race," times of happiness, freedom, and freedom will come? Conscious of themselves as the forerunners of this "new life," that "cornerstone" on which the structure of a better, happy future is laid,—the Doukhobors fearlessly and firmly set out on the path of suffering—this peculiar high social service of contemporary generations.

These age-old sufferings, these "labors of the flesh," have created a special harmony of the spirit; these expectations and hopes, together with active life, have developed that ideology, that understanding of the world and life, which we have attempted to present here.

Possible self-improvement, spiritual growth of the individual—this is the direction of activity for the individual Doukhobor.

Passivity in self-defense, and the most resolute activity in action, activity in creativity, in carrying into life what is considered necessary for the life of the community, organization,—these are the two fundamental motives in the social and political activity of the Doukhobors.

All-round striving for community—(communism)—in production and in consumption, work, in principle, by one's own forces without hired labor,—these are the social foundations of the existence of their "Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood" in Canada, a foundation directly following from the entire ancient teaching of the root Doukhobors of Russia.

Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich.

Preface to the "Living Book"

The "Living Book," preserved to this day through oral transmission, was never written down by the Doukhobors themselves because they hold oral tradition in much higher regard than printed or written books. "Write in the heart, proclaim with the mouth," say the Doukhobors, adding, "It is no marvel to write on paper—what matters is to imbue the heart with truth and righteousness." Thus, a person who is sufficiently introspective and has come to know the "true spirit of Christ" will have no need for anything written, for it is already inscribed in their heart, and their lips will proclaim the truth when they feel the need to speak.

1. Here, we publish the complete manuscript of the "Living Book," along with its preface, in the form it was compiled by us in 1901. This manuscript was submitted to the Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences. It is currently housed in the Manuscript Division of the Academy and is cataloged as "16. 14. 19." In this edition, we have only expanded and supplemented the annotations to the Doukhobor texts.
2. It is necessary to note that the vast majority of Doukhobors have an extremely vague notion of the evangelical Christ. They regard all people as sons of God. Each of these "sons of God," through self-improvement, can draw closer to Christ—a man who once lived and attained "all the wisdom of the ancestors," the full truth of their covenants, and thus became the "incomparable son of God." This level of perfection, as the Doukhobors teach, is attainable by anyone, but such people—"pillars reaching to heaven"—are very few in the world. The Doukhobors count their leaders among such people, "perfect in spirit," who have come to know "the truth." Recently, I heard from Canadian Doukhobors that Leo Tolstoy was also "revealed to the world to establish truth on earth; he was and is a pillar reaching to heaven." To know the "true spirit of Christ" means to attain a high degree of moral perfection.
3. See also about this in *Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism*, Issue 1. *Letters of the Doukhobor*

Thanks to this deeply rooted tradition, the Doukhobors diligently pass down their wisdom from mouth to mouth, from generation to generation—all the Doukhobor teachings that, as they say, have come to them "from the very beginning of the world," "from the son of Mary, from the head of Jesus."

4. This wisdom, this "Law of God," is "laid upon" (preserved by) "the apostles and prophets who foretold eternal life"—that is, upon people so morally and spiritually elevated that they stand out clearly from others in their way of life and deeds. These people "foretell," or spread knowledge of "eternal life," showing the path to a state of mind that, harmonizing with all existence, feels no breath of death but perceives "eternal life" as one in all things, seeing even in the fact of temporal death a transition to a new existence.
5. These "apostles" and prophets—whom the Doukhobors sometimes vividly call "the ships of the Pharisees"—are the forerunners of "Christ," who "has appeared to the faithful and is with them now." They prepare "the way of the Lord," who was revealed and now, as always, appears to establish truth and righteousness on earth.

The transmission of Doukhobor teachings is accomplished through the memorization of psalms, prayers, etc., as well as through frequent discussions between elders and the younger generation.

From a very young age, as soon as a child begins to speak, a caring Doukhobor mother teaches them one of the "children's psalms," and one may encounter a three-year-old child who already knows several such psalms.

4. Without delving into a detailed explanation of the Doukhobors' understanding of terms like "Mother of God" or "son of Mary," we note only that by "Mary," the Doukhobors do not mean the specific evangelical "Mary" who gave birth to Jesus Christ through immaculate conception but simply a woman who, like any woman, gives birth to people and undoubtedly bore those Christs who established "truth and righteousness" on earth (see also the second footnote to the "Preface," p. 1).

5. Based on their teachings, the Doukhobors believe in the "transmigration of the soul," though not all understand or interpret this identically, which naturally depends on their level of intellectual development. Some understand it quite crudely; the more advanced explain it in a more philosophical, spiritual manner.
 6. The "children's psalms" are short psalms easily memorized by children. These include, for example, Psalms 53, 54, 55, etc., from the "Living Book."
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I have seen children aged five or six who already knew up to sixty different "psalms," "questions and answers," etc. Every day—morning and evening, and sometimes during the day—the younger generation of Doukhobors recite aloud various psalms or learn new ones, usually from their mothers. Thus, as they grow up and enter adulthood, all Doukhobors, regardless of gender, know the essential psalms, which include:

1. Why are you called Christians (Doukhobors)?
2. Why do you call yourself a Christian?
3. With whom did the Lord create the heavens?
4. What kind of people are you, of what faith, what is the name of your sect?
5. The Lord abides in three persons...
6. What kind of person are you?
7. I believe in one God the Father... (the "key of faith")
8. From the general views of the Christian community of universal brotherhood, and some others.

In addition, each Doukhobor knows many other, so-called non-obligatory psalms.

This mandatory course of education gives the Doukhobor a solid foundation of knowledge and the ability to answer any questions—whether everyday, dogmatic, or philosophical—posed by outsiders. It is this well-organized system of educating the younger generation that explains the secret which so often astonished officials who engaged in lengthy and varied discussions with the Doukhobors in the course of their duties. This universal and compulsory Doukhobor education led one administrator, conducting an investigation into the latest Doukhobor movement in the Caucasus on orders from St.

Petersburg, to exclaim in amazement at the perfectly consistent answers given by Doukhobors across widely separated settlements:

"Do you have telephones connecting you all or something?!"

The Doukhobors who told me this amusing anecdote added:

"The general didn't know that we have a spiritual telephone among us!"

And this "spiritual telephone" strongly united the Doukhobors.

It should also be noted that on Sundays and holidays, the Doukhobors hold their "worship services," during which they recite psalms, thereby "renewing them," as they say.

Who created these psalms and other texts? As with most folk traditions, it is nearly impossible to determine. We have only been able to establish, with more or less certainty, the origins of some psalms from the last decade. Most of these were composed by the current Doukhobor leader, Pyotr Vasilyevich Verigin, who is presently in exile in the remote northern village of Obdorsk, Berezovsky District, Tobolsk Province. He was sent there after being imprisoned in various jails and detention centers in Transcaucasia, Moscow, and the northern provinces of European Russia. He was first arrested in 1887.

This was the case in 1901, when this "Preface" was written. At present, P. V. Verigin—having served his term of administrative exile—has been living in Canada for several years and leads the Canadian Doukhobor community.

There are indications that previous leaders of the Doukhobor community also composed psalms or adapted chapters from the Gospels, the Epistles of the Apostles, the Bible, etc. It is also highly likely that one of the active contributors to the creation of the *Living Book* was the Doukhobor Moses and lawgiver—Savely Kapustin, whose memory is still reverently honored by modern Doukhobors.

The so-called "*Stishki*" (little verses) are also in a constant state of creation. These are eagerly sung by the youth to South Russian steppe melodies, and it is not uncommon to hear that a new "*stishok*" has appeared.

The most important part of the *Living Book*, the most original and independent, is the section "*Questions and Answers*." Their influence is strongly felt in other psalms as well. It should be noted

that "*Questions and Answers*" are not recited on their knees, except in rare cases when someone wishes to confirm a forgotten passage. Otherwise, each person present must recite a simple question-and-answer psalm.

According to the majority of Doukhobors, the *Living Book* should also include "*Prayers for the Sick*," "*Incantations*," etc., as during my visits to Doukhobor villages, when I asked for a psalm to be recited, I was often—especially by women—given a prayer for the sick or an incantation instead. However, after compiling a "*list*" of all recorded materials, which included these prayers and incantations, I received numerous and insistent requests from Doukhobors living in Canada not to publish them alongside the *Living Book*: "*We have renounced them*," they wrote. Honoring the request of the Canadian Doukhobors, we have not included these texts in the *Living Book*, though we plan to publish them separately.

We will publish these prayers for the sick and incantations in one of the issues of our Materials. We also plan to soon publish the psalms of the breakaway group of Canadian Doukhobors known as the "Svobodniki" (Free Ones).

Here are the contents of some memorial books and "prayer books":

Prayer Book of Nikifor Zybitsa:

"This Lord comes with rebuke in the last..."; "Hear the words of the Lord..."; "The Lord abides in three persons..."; "Terrible is that day to us, the second..."; "Rejoice, O cave, be glad, O wilderness..."; "The righteous souls are in the hands of God..."; "There was among us, the Doukhobors, an Orphan House..."

Book of Pyotr Mikhailovich Morozov (October 8, 1897):

"What kind of people are you, of what faith, what is the name of your sect?"; "Why are you called Doukhobors?"; "With whom did the Lord create the heavens?"; "The Lord abides in three persons..."; "Why do you call yourself a Christian?"; "What kind of person are you?"; "Behold now, the Lord speaks to me..."; "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly..."; "The

singing of psalms is an adornment to our souls..."; "Terrible is that day to us, the second coming..."; "In true wisdom, the words proclaim..."; "This Lord comes with rebuke in the last..."; "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down..."; "The heavens declare the glory of God, they proclaim..."; "My words which I speak to you..."; "It shall come to pass in my mind, all nations shall inherit..."; "In that time, the Lord went up into a mountain..."; "Hear, O God, my voice when I pray..."; "Give ear, O my people, to my law..."; "To whom shall I go from Thee, O Lord of mine..."; "I am the proclaimer, I saw night in the day..."; "The Dream of the Most Holy Mother of God."

We will publish the contents of other handwritten books and prayer books found among the Doukhobors in Canada in one of the issues of *Materials*.

See *Materials for the History and Study of Russian Sectarianism*, Issue 2: I. *Explanation of the Life of Christians* and II. *There Was Among Us, the Christians, an Orphan House...* (two Doukhobor manuscripts), with a preface and annotations by Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich. Published by *Free Word*, England, 1901.

Despite this categorical preference for oral over written tradition, I did encounter thick notebooks among some Doukhobors containing various literary works. These notebooks were highly valued, as many had been verified by one of the most respected Doukhobor elders, experts in the *Living Book*. Such notebooks were usually called "*Molitvenniki*" (Prayer Books), "*Pamyatnye Knizhki*" (Memorial Books), or simply "*Knizhki*" (Little Books).

In addition to these written records of Doukhobor literature, I came across a highly popular manuscript titled "*Explanation of the Life of Christians*." This manuscript, now published, is considered extremely important by the Doukhobors. It briefly outlines their teachings and provides a detailed account of the persecutions their community endured.

Confining myself here to these brief and general remarks about the *Living Book* and Doukhobor literature in general, I find it necessary to inform readers how I collected and recorded the *Living Book* presented here.

In 1898, the Doukhobor pacifists in Transcaucasia were permitted to emigrate from Russia. Over the course of a year, 7,400 Doukhobors

left Batum by steamship and resettled in Canada. I was asked to accompany the last of these ships as a representative of the Quaker "*Committee of Friends*." I traveled to Canada with the specific aim of studying the life, customs, and oral literature of this sect, which had long interested me. I had heard much about their oral traditions from those acquainted with the Doukhobors in Transcaucasia, but to my knowledge, no one had yet recorded or studied them.

Departing Constantinople for Canada in early May 1899 with 2,318 Doukhobors, I lived among them until the end of January 1900.

By June, while we were quarantined on Grosses-Île at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, I began recording psalms and prayers, as well as collecting letters, memoirs, and stories about the Doukhobor community. This material grew substantially and, combined with documents held by A. K. and V. G. Chertkov, P. I. Biryukov, E. I. Popov, and D. A. Khilkov, now forms a single archive in my possession.

After establishing closer ties with the Doukhobors during quarantine, I was able to systematize my recordings only after relocating from Grosses-Île to a temporary camp near Winnipeg. Even there, the work of settling the immigrants left little time for extensive recording, though the groundwork had been laid, and the initial distrust typically shown by sectarians toward outsiders had faded entirely.

In August 1899, I parted ways with this group of Doukhobors, who were heading to their settlement in Prince Albert, 300 versts from the main Doukhobor colony. I went to Yorkton, intending to travel from there to the farthest point of their settlement—the village of Mikhailovka in the northern district of the Yorkton region—to begin my research.

In Mikhailovka, I soon acquainted myself with the local Doukhobors, explained my intention to record the *Living Book*, and found support among some elders, particularly the respected old man Emelyan Romanovich Konygin, who provided invaluable assistance in collecting psalms and other texts.

The Doukhobors told me that this was the first time they had decided to reveal all their psalms, "*for,*" they added, "*we have left the land of oppression for the land of freedom, and now we must share the teachings of our ancestors, who have guided us to the true path of life for so long.*"

"Write it down and go forth to conquer the nations," one elder solemnly declared to me.

I began recording psalms first in Mikhailovka. Nearly every evening, the villagers gathered in one of the houses. The women worked on handicrafts while someone recited psalms, which I transcribed. In Mikhailovka, I met an exceptional reciter, a Doukhobor woman named Tanya Obeyodkova, about thirty years old. Deeply devout, intelligent, and thoughtful, she recited many psalms for me, and I must express my gratitude for her invaluable assistance in this endeavor.

After recording all that the Mikhailovka Doukhobors knew, I set out in October 1899 with Emelyan Konygin to tour all the villages of the Northern District. In each village, we stayed long enough to interview the residents, moving from house to house and asking everyone to recite what they remembered. Most were willing to share their knowledge.

After touring the entire district, we found only two small psalms in the last large village, Osvobozhdeniye (Liberation), that had not yet been recorded. This led me to conclude that the psalms had been fully collected and that the *Living Book* was now complete. Around this time, I also sent requests to the southern district of the Yorkton region and to the Prince Albert Doukhobors, asking them to record any additional psalms they knew. I received many responses, which remain in my possession, but the vast majority—with the exception of two or three minor psalms—had already been recorded. This further confirmed that the psalms had been fully, or nearly fully, collected.

Incidentally, after returning to Europe, I published a separate booklet titled *"List of Psalms,"* mentioned in the footnote on page 6, and distributed it to nearly every Doukhobor family in Canada, asking them to supplement it with any psalms not already included. Despite more than six months having passed since its publication, and despite receiving over two hundred letters from Canada during that time, only two small psalms and seven *stishki* were added. Many Doukhobors wrote plainly: *"We see that all the psalms have been taken, and there is nothing left for us to add."*

All of this convinces me that the *Living Book* has been fully recorded. Perhaps only the Doukhobors remaining in Transcaucasia could add to it.

Having gathered all these works that constitute the *Living Book*, I classified them into the following sections:

1. Questions and Answers
2. Psalms
3. Dreams of the Most Holy Mother of God
4. Legends, Teachings, Holidays, Commemorations, etc.
5. Stishki (Little Verses)
6. Prophecies
7. Prayers for the Sick, for Various Occasions, Incantations, etc.

The second section ("Psalms") was further subdivided into:

1. Dogmatic
2. On the Afterlife and the Final Judgment
3. Denunciatory
4. Didactic
5. Supplicatory
6. Thanksgiving
7. Praise
8. On Gospel Events
9. Miscellaneous

It is important to note that this classification is artificial and was created by me for ease of study. The Doukhobors themselves divide the psalms into:

1. Festive
2. Supplicatory
3. Funerary

I have added annotations to many of the psalms, attempting, among other things, to indicate their sources. In compiling these notes, I observed that borrowings were taken mostly from the Psalter, certain chapters of the Bible, the Gospels, the Epistles of the Apostles, the Book of Revelation, Orthodox prayers, the works of Tikhon Zadonsky, and others. Often, these texts were adapted in a highly characteristic and original manner, with the Doukhobors sometimes attributing entirely different meanings to them.

It must be remembered that the Doukhobors were largely illiterate for a long time—literacy began spreading among them only after their last exile—and thus they could not have borrowed these psalms directly from the aforementioned books. Many were unaware of the existence of the Gospels and the Bible until recently. When the Doukhobors arrived in Canada, the Quakers who met them were shocked to learn that almost none of them owned a copy of the Gospels. Only two or three elders had the book. The Quakers felt obliged to distribute the Gospels to the Doukhobors and soon sent a large quantity of them.

Some Doukhobor leaders, of course, were quite familiar with the Bible and the Gospels. It was they, in collaboration with other prominent Doukhobors, who orally transmitted biblical and gospel narratives in the form of psalms. I myself have heard Doukhobors in Canada remark while reading the Gospels:

"This is all known to us; it is all in our psalms, and this book—the Gospels—was taken from us..."

All the Doukhobor texts I recorded were obtained from those who lived in the Tiflis Governorate, Akhaltsikhe District, in the villages of Yefremovka, Spasovka, Orlovka, Bogdanovka, Rodionovka, and Tambovka. I also made recordings among the so-called Kars and Elizavetpol Doukhobors. Comparing these groups, I noticed no significant differences in their recitations of the same psalms, apart from minor variations. Clearly, the *Living Book* is their common heritage, evolving or changing only with communal consensus.

In conclusion, I must express my deepest gratitude, first and foremost, to the Doukhobors themselves, who, with immense trust, enabled me to complete this work.

With sincere appreciation, I honor the memory of Anastasiya Verigina, the now-deceased mother of P. V. Verigin, who, after a thorough discussion about my work, retrieved from her chest a notebook of psalms recorded by the Doukhobor Morozov and gave it to me. The texts were immediately incorporated into the *Living Book*. Her kind regard for me likely influenced the entire community's willingness to assist in my recordings.

I extend special thanks—in addition to the aforementioned Tanya Obeyodkova and Emelyan Konygin—to:

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verify doubtful psalm texts, establish correct versions, and note interesting variants.

In offering this literary monument of one of Russia's most fascinating sects to the attention of Russian society, I will be deeply grateful for any feedback on this work.

Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich
Geneva, March 22, 1901