SONGS OF THE DOUKHOBORS

BY KENNETH PEACOCK

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SONGS OF THE DOUKHOBORS

An Introductory Outline

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Foreword

When the National Museum of Canada began its research on Canadian folklore and folkmusic in the early years of the century, attention naturally was focused first on Canada's long-established cultures: Indian, Eskimo, French, British. Since that time the Museum archives and research publications have reflected the preponderance of materials from these native and founding cultures. As cultures of other ethnic origins grew and flourished, however, the Museum felt an increasing responsibility to investigate the rich traditions they have brought to contemporary Canadian life.

The prospect of researching an additional thirty or forty cultures was indeed frightening, especially when we considered the problem of finding suitable specialists for each ethnic group. But when Kenneth Peacock agreed to undertake the project, we were confident that his broad knowledge of music, his wide field experience, and his versatile talents would assure the success of the initial project. His work among many Indian tribes had already brought to light much valuable material, and his extensive research in Newfoundland was later to become known through his three-volume collection *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* (National Museum of Canada, 1965).

As a precautionary measure, Mr. Peacock decided to initiate the project with a general survey of ethnic communities in central and western Canada to ascertain the research potentialities of various cultures. The results of this 1962 survey were staggering. Here was a completely new frontier for the study of folk traditions in Canada. With the assistance of local interpreters and consultants, Mr. Peacock has since uncovered an unsuspected wealth of material from many cultures. The wide interest aroused by his varied collection *Twenty Ethnic Songs from Western Canada* has encouraged the planning of further publications on the music and culture of Canada's smaller ethnic communities. Since the chapter on the Doukhobors and their music was especially well received, we felt that a more detailed study of their music and background would be in order.

There were several good reasons for this choice. In the first place, Mr. Peacock had received remarkable cooperation from the Doukhobors themselves and had become a respected interpreter of their culture in his writings and radio broadcasts. The sometimes misleading publicity given the Doukhobors in the mass media had tended to obscure the very real contributions they have made to the Canadian Community. Any objective appreciation of their culture has been very difficult for the general reader. On a more academic level, the book should be of great interest to musicologists because of the unique style of choral and part singing still practised by the Doukhobors. This had never before been available in music

notation until Mr. Peacock began to transcribe it from his recordings. Moreover, the technique of using traditional texts to illustrate the religio-historical background of the Doukhobors should appeal to many readers, especially those slavists who might not have had the opportunity to examine them before. Despite its modest proportions as 'an introductory outline,' *Songs of the Doukhobors* should acquaint Canadians and interested readers abroad with the remarkable music and traditions the Doukhobors have brought to Canada.

The prompt preservation of such materials from our smaller ethnic communities is of vital importance in the rapidly changing environment of Canada. Its dissemination should create a new awareness of Canada's multi-cultural society and help to build new bridges of understanding from our modest community of 'united nations' to the various mother countries from which they emigrated.

Special thanks are due Professor Jaroslav B. Rudnyc'kyj, Department of Slavic Studies of the University of Manitoba, for his reading of the song texts, and Professor George Woodcock, Canadian Literature Department of the University of British Columbia, for his appraisal of the manuscript from a historical viewpoint.

CARMEN ROY
Chief of the Folklore Division,
National Museum of Man

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Résumé

Le recueil intitulé *Songs of the Doukhobors* est le deuxième d'une nouvelle série de publicatron que prépare le Musée national du Canada sur la culture et la musique des groupes ethniques minoritaires qui existent au pays. L'ouvrage présente quatorze cantiques et treize chansons populaires profanes choisis parmi les quelque 500 oeuvres qu'a recueillies M. Kenneth Peacock, au cours des étés de 1963 et 1964, en Colombie-Britannique, en Alberta, en Saskatchewan et au Manitoba.

Les chants religieux présentent un intérêt particulier puisqu'ils étaient jusqu'ici en grande partie inaccessibles au public et même à la plupart des slavisants. Le soin apporté au choix des textes traditionnels avait pour but de faire voir les origines religieuses et historiques du doukhoborisme, depuis la fondation de la secte en Russie jusqu'à son stade actuel d'évolution dans son nouveau milieu au Canada. D'égale importance est le remarquable style des Doukhobors en musique chorale et dans le chant à plusieurs voix dont M. Peacock a fait la première notàtion musicale. Les diverses catégories de chansons sont présentées par un commentaire général, et l'interprétation de chaque cantique fait l'objet d'explications données à la suite de la traduction anglaise.

Malgré ses fortes tendances religieuses, la culture Doukhobor comprend aussi un assez grand nombre de chants profanes. Ces chants sont tirés pour la plupart du folklore russe, bien qu'on en trouve aussi plusieurs dans des variantes ukrainiennes.

Dans son intruduction, M. Peacock offre un bref exposé des origines et des croyances des Doukhobors jusqu'au moment de leur exode de Russie en 1898-1899. Puis il en consacre une partie à leur musique et à leur style choral, et une autre aux textes et aux traductions.

Woman elder from Kamsack, Saskatchewan

INTRODUCTION

The Doukhobor songs reproduced in this study were selected from a collection of nearly 500 religious and secular items tape-recorded during the summers of 1963 and 1964 for the folkmusic archives of the National Museums of Canada. Doukhobors from more than twenty communities throughout western Canada assembled in their local prayer homes to have their religious songs recorded. Most of the secular folksongs were recorded in private homes. During this research about 750 black-and-white and colour photographs were taken to provide visual documentation of Doukhobors and their culture in Canada.

Virtually all the major Doukhobor settlements were covered in the survey. In British Columbia, Doukhobor singers from Grand Forks, Brilliant, and Castlegar, and from the Slocan Valley and the surrounding districts are represented on the recordings. In Alberta they came from Cowley, Lundbreck, Pincher Creek, Bellevue, Mossleigh, Calgary, Shouldice, and Arrowwood; in Saskatchewan from Kamsack, Verigin, Kylemore, Saskatoon, Blaine Lake, Canora, Yorkton, Wadena, Watson, Arran, and Pelly. Also represented is the Manitoba community of Benito, which is situated near the Saskatchewan border northeast of Kamsack.

My first contact with the Doukhobors took place in the summer of 1962, when I made a general survey of thirty-three ethnic communities in central and western Canada for the National Museums to establish the feasibility of instituting a folkmusic research program among Canada's minority cultures. One afternoon in August 1962 I stopped off in Grand Forks, B.C., to confer with local members of the Orthodox Doukhobor sect for the purpose of recording a few representative samples of Doukhobor folkmusic. Their response was warm and most cooperative. That evening a large group of singers, hastily assembled from the district, provided me with my first recordings of Doukhobor choral singing in the new Doukhobor Community Centre in Grand Forks. The diversity of the music and the quality of the singing were astounding. There and then I resolved that Doukhobor music would be my prime area of research in the next year or two.

In the summer of 1963 most of my ethnic folkmusic research was conducted in the Orthodox Doukhobor communities of British Columbia. Several items were also recorded from members of the Sons of Freedom sect. An especially memorable evening was spent with a group that had gathered in the home of the late John F. Sysoev, the noted Doukhobor poet and hymnist. During these researches in British Columbia, my constant companion, guide, interpreter, and translator was Eli A. Popoff, a prominent member of the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (Orthodox Doukhobors) in Grand Forks. Mr. Popoff arranged the research

itinerary down to the last detail, and the numerous recording sessions ran as smoothly as clockwork. Everywhere I went I was received with the utmost kindness and hospitality and was often fêted and dined in private homes after the recording sessions. Never before had I received such cooperation in the pursuit of my folkmusic researches.

This same spirit of cooperation and hospitality was repeated again in the summer of 1964 during my research on the prairies. This time my itinerary was arranged by the young Doukhobor sociologist Koozma J. Tarasoff. Although Mr. Tarasoff was unable to accompany me to the various communities, the arrangements he made with local prairie representatives of the Doukhobor Society of Canada (Independent Doukhobors) assured me of the same cooperation I had received in British Columbia. Thus, in the space of a few weeks I was able to accomplish research that otherwise might have taken months or years had I been working on my own.

Despite the different outlooks of the Independent, the Orthodox, and the Freedomite Doukhobors, I found their traditional oral literature and music to be basically the same. They all share the common inheritance of their Russian forebears. True, the factionalism that later developed in the Canadian environment had its roots in the Russian Doukhobor culture of the late nineteenth century, but in the main these differences are purely Canadian manifestations and, to my way of thinking, are not of serious consequence at the present time.

Broadly speaking, the Doukhobors of Canada may be divided into three main groups: 1) the Independent Doukhobors of the prairies, who rejected the communal social organization and dietary customs followed by the Orthodox Doukhobors of the Verigin culture; 2) the middle-of-the-road Orthodox Doukhobors, who seek to continue, within the framework of Canadian law and custom, the teachings that their prophetic leader Peter Vasilievitch Verigin introduced in the late nineteenth century; 3) the more militantly conservative Sons of Freedom, who claim to have preserved the ideals and practices of Doukhoborism in its purest form. Whatever divisions may have rent these factions in the past—and there have been many—the present situation is one of growing intergroup understanding and cooperation. I found little evidence of the extremist activities so luridly described by reporters and journalists in the popular press. It soon became evident that the views and activities of a few zealots had been blown up out of all proportion, and that the great mass of Doukhobors now live peacefully and productively in all walks of life throughout Canada.

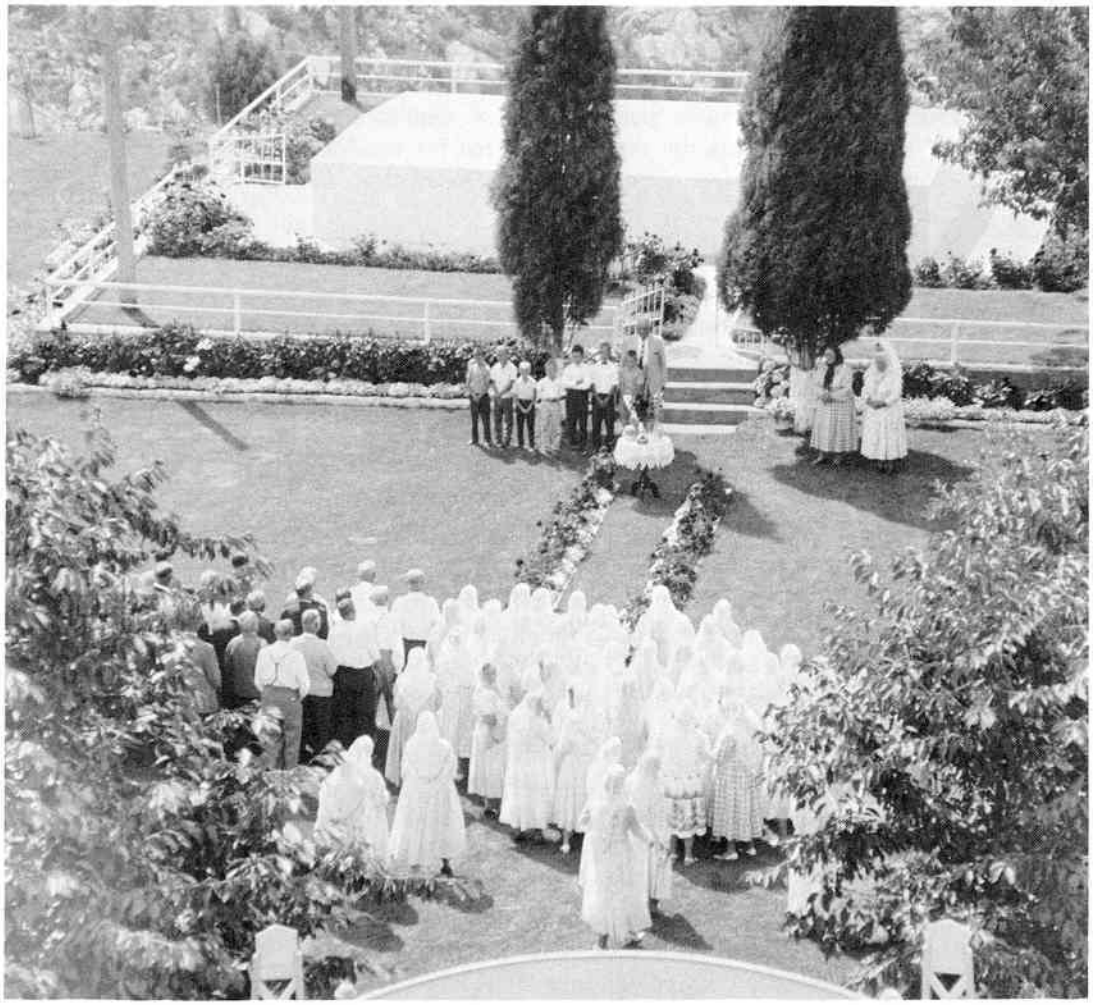
To give the general reader some insight into the background and culture of the Doukhobors I offer the following summary of Doukhobor origins and beliefs up to the time of the exodus from Russia in 1898–99. The history of their recent involvement in Canada is so complex that I feel this part of their story should be told by someone more competent than I. At the moment I am aware of two Doukhobor histories in the final stages of production, which promise to treat the subject in a responsible and objective manner: one by Professor George Woodcock

and Professor Ivan Avakumovic of the University of British Columbia, and the other, a pictorial history with commentaries, by Koozma J. Tarasoff. Both should be available by the time my book appears. Although the material for the following outline of Doukhobor origins was gleaned from a number of sources, I am especially indebted to two manuscript reports prepared for the National Museums by Eli A. Popoff (*A Historical Exposition on Doukhobor Beliefs*) and by Koozma J. Tarasoff (*A Sociological Study of the Doukhobors*).

DOUKHOBOR ORIGINS AND BELIEFS

The Doukhobors are the most famous of all the Russian peasant sects whose fundamentalist Christian beliefs branded them as heretics in the eyes of the Russian Orthodox Church. Some Doukhobors believe they can trace their religious ancestry back to at least the fifteenth century, but it was not until 1785 that Archbishop Ambrosius referred to them derisively as the *Doukhobortsi*, or Spirit-Wrestlers. Far from rejecting this epithet, however, they regarded it as an essential summing-up of their approach to life and have borne the name proudly to this day. A previous nickname, *Ikonobortsi* (Ikon-Wrestlers), was the result of their refusal to worship the ikons of the Orthodox Church; but this involved only a small part of their 'wrestling.' The suppression of selfish personal appetites concerned them as much as the social injustices perpetrated by secular and religious institutions. They regarded the whole far-flung empire of Church wealth and power—the hierarchy of the priesthood, the political influence of the state, the pomp and ceremony, the theological dogmas, the condoning of warfare—as materialistic perversions of the simple message of love and brotherhood expounded by Christ. As a result of these beliefs they were unmercifully persecuted by both Church and State and banished to remote parts of Russia at various periods. The persecutions reached such a pitch in the 1890's that in 1898–99 they decided to immigrate to Canada.

The persistence of such fundamentalist beliefs throughout the centuries raises some interesting historical questions. The later Russian sects doubtless derived some inspiration from the Protestant movement in Western Europe, but actually the Russian 'reformation' began somewhat earlier. One of the earliest Russian sectarian heresies was recorded in the city of Novgorod in 1471, twelve years before Luther was born. Centred around a teacher named Scharius, the adherents of this 'Israelite' cult openly professed disbelief in the efficacy of worshipping ikons, in the supernatural birth of Christ, and in the Trinity of the Godhead—remarkably 'modern' theological controversies. The movement apparently was gaining a popular following, for in 1504 the Orthodox Church issued an edict strongly condemning the heretical cult. Several of the ringleaders were said to have been publicly executed.



The Verigin Tomb near Brilliant, British Columbia, where the bodies of former leaders Peter Vasilievitch and his son Peter Petrovitch are entombed. The photo was taken during the Declaration Day celebration, August 1, 1964.

Did this heresy arise spontaneously, or was it based on traditions surviving from previous centuries? In this connection there is an interesting legend surviving in Doukhobor tradition that tells of a trail supposedly used by early Christians on their trek to the Kars region of southern Russia near the Turkish border. This magic trail through the mountains of Ararat remained strangely green all year round, despite the sereness of the surrounding vegetation. Moreover, to honour the apostles the early Christians were said to have planted twelve miraculous trees, which had the power to rejuvenate themselves from their roots. According to the

legend, the trees were there when the Doukhobors settled in the Caucasus in the 1840's and were still standing fifty years later when they left.

Several attempts have been made to trace a direct line of descendance from early Christian sects to the heretical sects which emerged in Russia centuries later. Beliefs surviving in Doukhobor oral tradition point to this relationship. The Bogomil doctrines, which originated in Bulgaria in the tenth century, are of particular interest in this connection. The fundamentalist teachings of Bogomil soon spread into southern Russia where they were heavily censured by the newly established Orthodox Church. Bogomil beliefs, in turn, are thought to be based partly upon the much earlier Manichaean doctrines, which spread from Babylonia throughout the ancient Christian world during the third and forth centuries. The influence of early Christian sects like the Basilidians and the Marcionites on Manichaean thought must also be taken into consideration. The extent to which Doukhoborism has been influenced by these early Christian traditions remains to be established. In the case of Bogomil beliefs and practices, the influence appears to be considerable. However, conclusive evidence will depend upon comparative studies between Doukhobor oral literature and the Slavonic texts upon which our knowledge of the Bogomil doctrines is based.

A later Russian sect that has influenced the Doukhobors are the *Khlisti* or Self-Lashers, who arose to some prominence in the mid-seventeenth century. Self-flagellation was not the only distinguishing characteristic of these 'Children of Israel,' or 'People of God' as they preferred to be called. They believed that God existed in man as a spirit that should be protected and cherished. To kill a man was to kill God. Furthermore, this spirit could not exist in material substances like ikons. Christ, although he was born naturally like everyone else, had more of this spirit than most men. Like the earlier 'Israelites' of Novgorod, the 'People of God' believed that only Christ's spirit arose after his crucifixion, not his body. His spirit became resurrected in outstanding people of subsequent eras. The 'People of God' firmly believed that Christ's spirit became resurrected in their own leaders, a belief that the Doukhobors inherited. A prominent leader of the 'People of God' at this time was Daniel Filipovitch, an educated man who at first used the Bible as a basis for his teachings. Later he threw the Bible into the Volga River and elaborated a new body of teachings for his followers. This event is described in an old hymn still sung by the Doukhobors (see *A Young Man Was Walking*).

(Two later leaders of these 'People of God,' Ivan Suslov and Prokop Lupkin, became so venerated that their bodies were entombed in a special shrine. In an attempt to stamp out the sect, Empress Anne in 1739 had the shrine destroyed and the bodies of Suslov and Lupkin burned. A remarkable contemporary parallel to this shrine is the Orthodox Doukhobor tomb on a hillside near Brilliant, British Columbia, where the bodies of leaders Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and his son Peter Petrovitch are interred.)

Under Peter the Great (1672–1725), the sectarians, who, in their hundreds of thousands, appeared to threaten the supremacy of the Orthodox Church, were mercilessly persecuted. Rather than submit to torture and burning at the stake,

some members of the *Staroveri* (Believers in the Old Ways) committed mass suicide by locking themselves in their prayer homes and setting them afire. Contemporary Doukhobors still sing a psalm which reflects the anguish of this period:

> "Whosoever esteems the mark of our Lord, for him life on earth shall be in narrow straits, living in want and discomfort; but whosoever esteems the mark of the Antichrist [Peter the Great], for him life on earth shall be on broad byways, living in comfort. The one true King gives this message for us: My friends, my spiritual brothers and sisters, my comrades whom I rely upon, why are you not concerned about your souls? Why are you not weeping about them? To whom shall you turn; where shall you lay your head to rest? For we have only the one true Lord and no others, but they have Church fathers, hirelings, who have let their hair grow long; they have persecuted and scattered our true witnesses. Where are these true witnesses witnessing now? Bear all things, my dear friends; bear all in the name of Christ. If you come to the point where you can bear no more, go away and seclude yourselves in the dark forests and die there a hungry death. You shall not really die; you shall live in life eternal. But from the eastern sun to the west a river of flame is coming. Await, all ye sinners; you shall suffer, and your sufferings will not abate; the flames will not cease devouring you."

During the reigns of Anne (1730–1740) and Elizabeth (1741–1762), the political intrigues in the Russian court left little time for the persecution of dissenting sects. In fact, as a result of the influence of foreign Lutherans, it was the Orthodox priests themselves who became the tortured dissenters if they opposed the policies of the new bureaucracy. During this period of governmental instability, the sectarians, who were largely ignored, found many new converts among the Russian peasantry. Two early Doukhobor sects with a large following became established in Ekaterinoslav and Tambov provinces.

The Ekaterinoslav colony, in the village of Nikolskoye, came under the leadership of Sylvan Kolesnikoff. His policy of 'live and let live' seems to have had a benign influence on the cult. Although the group continued the tradition of non-participation in formal Church worship, they did not place themselves in any extremist position that would force the authorities to act. Kolesnikoff, an educated man, often read from the New Testament during the prayer meetings held in his home. One of the many maxims surviving in Doukhobor tradition is attributed to him: "An apple is recognized by its taste, a flower by its scent and a Christian by his good deeds." Sylvan Kolesnikoff's influence is felt to this day among the Doukhobors. Many contemporary Kolesnikoffs are referred to as belonging to the 'Sylvan' branch of the family, or the 'Sylvanoffs.'

When Kolesnikoff died, the leader of the Goreloye colony in Tambov province, Ilarion Pobirohin, took over the leadership of the Ekaterinoslav settlement as well. Pobirohin was the direct opposite of the mild-mannered Kolesnikoff. He was an outspoken opponent of ikon worship and the 'evils' of Church rituals. He branded the Bible as a 'maker of controversy' and set about composing a number of psalms and other oral documents, which are still sung and recited by the Doukhobors. The behavioural directive *Be Devout* and the long catechism *What Manner of Person Art Thou?* are attributed to Pobirohin. For his many contributions to Doukhobor oral literature he is sometimes referred to as

Kormilits (the Provider). Notwithstanding these contributions to Doukhobor thought, Pobirohin's influence on the cult itself was disruptive. When Catherine the Great (1762–1796) once again established monolithic state control of the affairs of the Russian empire, Pobirohin was exiled to Siberia for his heretical teachings, and key members of the cult were scattered to distant parts of the empire.

In the 1790's Saveli Kapustin, who had served twenty-five years in the army, became the spiritual leader of the Doukhobors, first in Tambov and Ekaterinoslav, and later in Tavria province. As the Doukhobor 'Moses,' Kapustin established the basic laws, used to this day of Doukhobor belief and conduct. He introduced the modern forms of group prayer worship and the custom of deep bowing, still practised by many of the Orthodox Doukhobors in Canada. Instead of bowing to 'spiritless' ikons, the Doukhobors would henceforth bow to the spirit of God which existed only in man. Kapustin shared Pobirohin's antipathy towards the Bible and regarded traditional Doukhobor literature itself as the supreme fountain-head of inspiration. Existing psalms were amended and categorized according to the occasions for which they were most suited—weddings, funerals, and so on—and new psalms were composed to further elaborate the tenets of the Doukhobor faith. A psalm attributed to Kapustin's authorship, *What Is a Doukhobor?*, clearly sets forth beliefs which are held by many Doukhobors to this day:

> "A Doukhobor is one whose body Christ has chosen for the continued manifestation of God's Spirit that was within him. The Spirit of God dwells on earth within a physical body, and it is the source of eternal wisdom. It was necessary for Jesus Christ to have a body and be a physical being, for it is through the lips of man that God speaks. The apostolic church and the Mount of Zion are embodied in the Doukhobor commune. Within this mount there dwells God's Spirit. Wisdom and the power of God are exemplified in man. Present within this mount is a source of living water that brings forth the glad tidings of life eternal. The commune's virtues, its exemplary life, shall overcome the world, the kingdom of this world whose end is nearing. Then, the Doukhobors shall become known to all mankind, and Christ Himself shall be the worthy King. Around Him shall gather all nations. This honour to the Doukhobors shall come only after a time of great sufferings and tribulations. There shall be a great struggle in the world, but Truth shall conquer all, and the Kingdom of God shall be brought into being on earth."

The fortunes of the Doukhobors changed dramatically with the ascension of Alexander I to the throne in 1801. The young emperor realized the futility of continuing the persecution of religious minorities and granted general amnesty to all dissident sects, which henceforth would be resettled at government cost in the Milky Waters region of Tavria province bordering on the Black Sea. Many exiled Doukhobors from all over the empire, including Siberia and Finland, were brought to this semi-tropical paradise under the continuing leadership of Saveli Kapustin. (The area has since become part of the Russian 'Riviera.') Here, with their traditional diligence and agrarian skills, the Doukhobors flourished as never before. Kapustin's prophecy that 'the Kingdom of God shall be brought into being on earth' truly seemed to have come to pass. Kapustin was worshipped as a near-deity. The memorizing of traditional music and literature was pursued with

almost fanatical zeal. Choirs of young Doukhobor maidens assembled in the new *Sirotskoye* (Orphan's Haven) to commit to memory the religious and musical lore accumulated through the centuries. Thus was continued the so-called 'Living Book' of Doukhobor oral tradition, which Vladimir Bonch-Bruevitch was later to collect and publish in 1908 as *The Book of Life of the Doukhobors.*

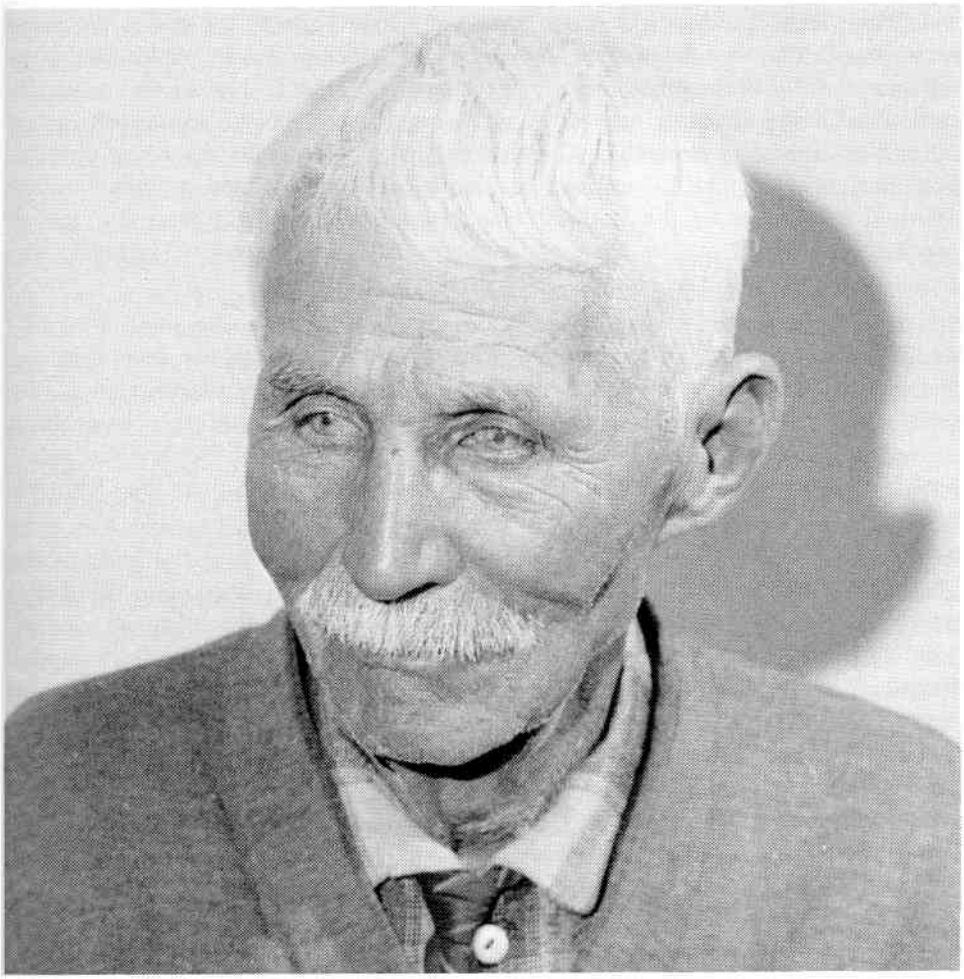
As the years progressed, however, certain 'irregularities' came to the attention of the government. Both religious and secular emissaries were sent to the area to investigate alleged 'proselytizing' and 'perverting of the Orthodox,' but nothing untoward was found. So long as Alexander I remained on the throne, the Doukhobors were apparently safe from mass persecution, although sporadic arrests and imprisonments continued at the local level. But after the death of their leader Kapustin, rumours of drinking, orgies, and even of torture and murder among the Doukhobors continued to emanate from the area. Using these rumours as a pretext the new tsar, Nicholas I, instituted in 1834 a full investigation of the Doukhobor situation.

During this two-year inquiry, twenty-one corpses, some decapitated or otherwise mutilated, were said to have been disinterred. It would be impossible at this late date to ascertain whether the government findings were true or exaggerated, or were even a complete fabrication to condone its renewed policy of persecution. Though a certain amount of extremism on the part of a few individuals may have existed, the great mass of Doukhobors continued their peaceable way of life. They even learned many hymns from the neighbouring Mennonite and Molokan sects, a further corroboration of the stable and peaceful social conditions existing in the area. To all outward appearances, then, the Tavria colony was a model of industry and prosperity. Dissident groups from all over the empire had flocked to the area to participate in this Doukhobor renaissance. Even some of the famed Cossacks and other army personnel had turned pacifist and had joined the colony.

The government acted swiftly. Between 1840 and 1845 over four thousand Doukhobors were banished to the Wet Mountains of Caucasia, a sort of second 'Siberia,' to which many criminals and pacifist Cossacks had already been exiled. At that time Caucasia was a wild frontier, inhabited by semi-nomadic Tartars and Turks who plundered the countryside on horseback, much as their famous ancestors had done. Perhaps the government felt that in this environment the Doukhobors would do well if they merely survived, let alone start another pacifist movement.

With their usual perseverance, however, the Doukhobors once again prospered. They converted the grasslands to flourishing crops and gardens, raised large herds of sheep and cattle, and built solid, permanent villages. Their thriving settlements astonished the local tribesmen, whose own primitive attempts at agriculture were inconsequential by comparison. Even Grand Duke Michael Romanov, governor of Caucasia, looked upon the Doukhobor settlements with favour.

The traditions formerly established at the Tavria colony were further elaborated in Caucasia, thought there was at first some trouble in finding a suitable leader. Both Saveli Kapustin and his son Vasili had died in Tavria before the exodus, and Vasili's son, Ilarion Kalmakoff, died during the exhausting first year of establishing



Ivan Samarodin of Calgary, who was nearly 30 years of age when the Doukhobors settled in Canada in 1899. He remembers the pre-Verigin culture in Caucasia under the woman leader Lukeria. Samarodin's brother served in the Russian army in the 1890's when Doukhobors were conscripted.

the Caucasian colony. (The change of the family name from Kapustin to Kalmakoff is the result of Vasili having been raised in the home of his maternal grandparents, the Kalmakoffs.) Since Ilarion's son Peter was only a small child, community affairs for the first few years in Caucasia were handled by a council of elders. The Doukhobors lived in separate family dwellings and farmed individual plots as before, but the common ownership of pasture and haylands continued. The *Sirotskoye* or Orphan's Haven, a communally owned property where people without immediate kin could live and work, became the central economic and policy-making agency in Caucasia. It was in the *Sirotskoye* that the future leader Peter Kalmakoff was raised under the watchful eyes of the elders.

When Peter became of age, the 'spirit of Christ' entered his body, according to ancient Doukhobor belief, and he became the theocratic leader of the Caucasian settlements. At the age of twenty he married Lukeria Hubanova, generally considered to be the most beautiful girl in the colonies. Peter's leadership turned out to be something less than Christ-like. His penchant for drinking, hunting, and playing wild pranks on his bewildered followers added nothing to the spiritual edification of the faithful. His untimely death in 1864 at the age of twenty-eight turned out to be a godsend, for his capable widow, Lukeria, was proclaimed leader in the absence of children.

Life under Lukeria was a paradise for the Doukhobors. She was universally admired and loved by all Doukhobors for her wit and charm, her quiet wisdom, and her shrewd administrative capabilities. On her tireless travels throughout the villages she was soon known by the endearing nickname Lushechka. No problem seemed too small for her personal attention. Contemporary Doukhobor elders look back with nostalgia to this period, one of the happiest in their long history.

With her warm gregariousness and practical cast of mind, Lukeria did little to foster the mystical belief in the divine incarnation of Christ in the body of the Doukhobor leader. This is the first inkling of the general abandonment of this belief, a rejection that took place later in Canada. The divine-leader concept, with its numerous abuses, probably has been the most important single disruptive force both within the Doukhobor movement itself and in its dealings with external agencies.

In 1877 Lukeria had to make a difficult decision. Russia was preparing for war with Turkey to free the Balkans from Turkish rule and to extend the Russian empire south to Constantinople. The Doukhobor settlements in Caucasia lay just to the north of the Turkish–Russian frontier. If Russia lost Caucasia to Turkey, the Doukhobors might face renewed persecution under the Turks and lose the privileged position they had won through Lukeria's brilliant diplomacy in dealing with Russian authorities. Consequently, when the governor of Caucasia approached Lukeria for the assistance of the prosperous Doukhobor colonies, she could hardly refuse. But she did specify that no Doukhobors were to be used as active combatants in the war, since this would be against their religion. They would merely supply horses and foodstuffs to the army and transport army supplies to the front.

The war ended the following year, 1878, and Russia was partially successful in her campaign to wrest new territory from Turkey. As part of its policy to expand the agrarian economy of the area, the government invited the skilful Doukhobors to set up new villages in nearby Kars province, formerly a Turkish territory. Thus, through their traditional diligence and a new, more realistic approach in dealing with secular authority, the prosperous Doukhobors seemed assured of eventually expanding their movement throughout southern Russia, exempt from military service and with the full support of the government. This, however, was not to be.

With the ascension of Alexander III to the throne, the Doukhobor pacifist position was once again threatened. All able-bodied men, including Doukhobors, who had reached the age of twenty-one were subject to conscription into the army

for a three-year period. Lukeria must have been at her wit's end. Had her friend Grand Duke Romanov still been governor of Caucasia, she probably could have arranged to have the Doukhobor exemption from military service continued. But the new governor was adamant. Since Russia was not then at war, Doukhobors would not be required to kill their fellowmen. Lukeria reluctantly acquiesced to the government edict. The strain of these deliberations probably undermined Lukeria's health, and in December of 1886 she died.

For years Lukeria had been preparing a young man, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, to succeed her as leader of the Doukhobors. He first came to her attention as a child in the wealthy Verigin family, which had large livestock and mercantile holdings in the villages of Elizevetpol and Slavanka. Peter's early marriage to Dunia Katelnikoff produced two children, a girl who died at birth, and a boy, Peter Petrovitch Verigin, who later was to succeed his father as leader of the Orthodox Doukhobors in Canada. After his divorce from Dunia (arranged by Lukeria), the handsome and intelligent Peter Vasilievitch went to live in Lukeria's household where he was instructed 'in the ways of God.'

The differences in their personalities were striking. Where Lukeria was practical, gregarious, and affectionate, Peter was idealistic, introspective, and aloof. Lukeria probably saw in him all those qualities of leadership that the Doukhobors had lacked since the days of the prophetic Saveli Kapustin. Even as a child Peter had memorized dozens of Doukhobor psalms from his mother, a remarkable woman who, significantly, was a grand-daughter of Saveli Kapustin. It is said that on one dramatic occasion she even announced that Peter's real father was the dead leader Peter Kalmakoff—incontrovertible evidence that her son was of 'royal' lineage. The temptation, then, to assist Kapustin's 'rebirth' in Peter was irresistible. Using both traditional oral literature and the scriptures of the New Testament, Lukeria and a group of elders tirelessly instructed him in the tenets of the Doukhobor faith. Peter was an apt pupil. With his undoubted intellectual gifts, his utopian vision, and his commanding god-like appearance, Peter, indeed, seemed destined to be the new prophet of the Doukhobors.

His assumption to the leadership, however, was a long and painful process. In the weeks following Lukeria's death, Peter's Olympian pronouncements of new policy completely undid the practical accommodation with secular authority that Lukeria had so carefully built up during her twenty-two-year leadership. Her brother Michael Hubanoff, and Alex Zubkoff, who managed the communal funds and properties of the *Sirotskoye,* naturally expected the affairs of the Doukhobor settlements to continue as before. But long before Lukeria's death they had realized the potentially disruptive influence of the heir-apparent and had tried to persuade Lukeria to abandon her plans to have the prophetic Peter succeed her. But she remained faithful to Peter to the end.

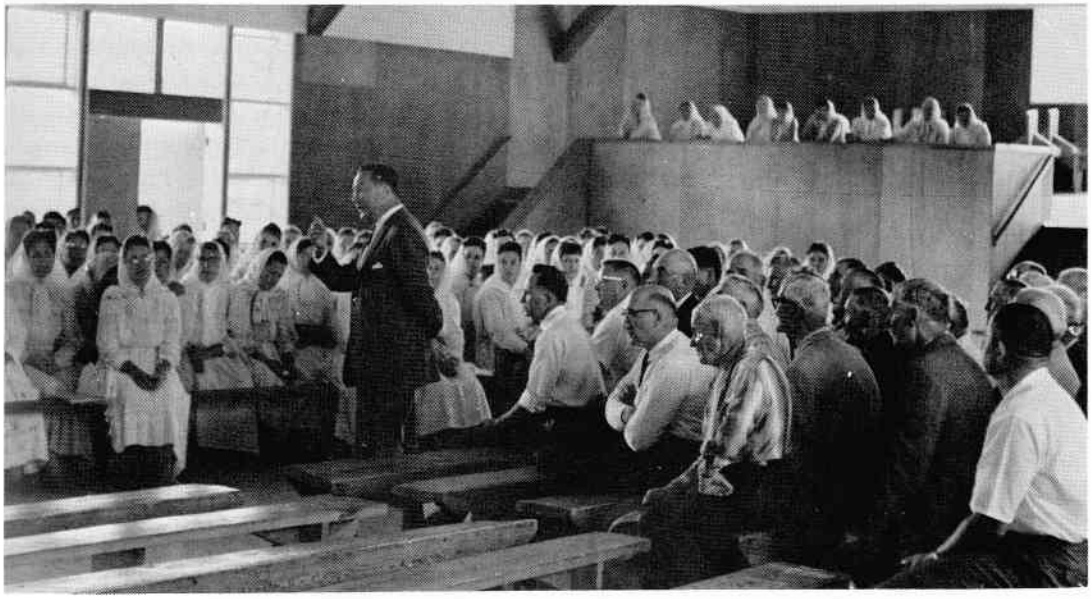
The resulting clash of ideologies split the Doukhobors into two factions. On the one side were the followers of the practically minded Hubanoff–Zubkoff faction, who apparently were satisfied to have the compromises with secular authority continue. It must be admitted that from a traditional Doukhobor

viewpoint these compromises had reached alarming proportions, even to the acceptance of military service. How much further could the Doukhobors go and still remain faithful to their traditional beliefs? On the other side were the followers of Peter V. Verigin who, like the Doukhobor prophets of old, promised to lead his people on the true path of Christ—no deviations, no compromises, and no acceptance of secular authority. Peter (the Lordly) Verigin would henceforth be the only 'tsar' recognized by his faithful followers.

The gulf between these two extremes could not be bridged. One or the other had to go. Since the government naturally supported the status quo Hubanoff–Zubkoff faction, it was Peter who went. At first he was merely interrogated by the authorities and kept under close police surveillance in his native village of Slavanka and in neighbouring Elizevetpol. He was most careful not to claim divine leadership of the faction he inspired. His followers were instructed not to give him any special status beyond the usual 'brother in Christ' if they should be questioned. The veil of secrecy that descended on the faction was disquieting both to the authorities and to the opposing faction. After the frank and joyful openness of the Lukeria régime, Doukhoborism was forced once again to become a mystical and vaguely 'threatening' underground cult in the eyes of the authorities.

Again the government acted swiftly. In 1887 Peter was sent into exile, first to the northern community of Shenkursk and later to Siberia. He managed to keep in touch with his followers by means of messengers who brought him news of the Caucasian settlements and funds to make his exile more bearable. His enforced leisure in Shenkursk enabled him to continue his studies and meditations. It was during this period that he came under the influence of Leo Tolstoy, whose later writings so closely paralleled the ideals of Christian brotherhood espoused by the Doukhobors. Peter incorporated many of Tolstoy's ideas into his own teachings, which he sent to his faithful followers in the form of missives and edicts. The first of these advised the faithful to redistribute the wealth of the Caucasian settlements on a more equitable basis so that the principles of Christian brotherhood could be more fully realized. Later directives included the banning of tobacco, alcohol, and meat. No personal gratification of the sensual appetites that demeaned the reverence-for-life concept of the new Doukhoborism would be permitted. Foreseeing the troubles that lay ahead, Peter even issued a directive to the faithful to cease sexual intercourse 'during your time of tribulation.'

In 1894, for his refusal to swear allegiance to the new Tsar, Nicholas II, Peter was removed from his comparatively comfortable house in Shenkursk and exiled to Siberia. It was here he planned the famous 'burning of the guns' episode of June 29, 1895, to symbolize the Doukhobor belief in non-violence (see hymn *Let Us Recall, Brethren, Our Struggle*). This pacifist demonstration so angered the military authorities that the Doukhobors were subjected to renewed persecution, torture, and exile. To escape possible extinction, the Doukhobors decided to emigrate from Russia in 1898. With the aid of English and American Quakers and with funds from the sale of Tolstoy's last novel *Resurrection*, 7,500 Doukhobors



John J. Verigin, Honorary Chairman of the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (Orthodox Doukhobors), addressing a meeting in the Doukhobor Community Centre, Grand Forks, British Columbia, 1963

were permitted to immigrate to Canada with the stipulation that they would never again set foot on Russian soil. Released from prison in 1903, Peter arrived in Canada to direct the spiritual and practical affairs of the Saskatchewan settlements.

To sum up, the origins of Doukhoborism may be divided into three main phases: 1) the early period dating back to at least the fifteenth century when proto-Doukhobor fundamentalist sects emerged to challenge the 'official' Christianity of the established Orthodox Church; 2) the middle period dating from 1775 to 1887 when the principles of Doukhoborism were elaborated and later consolidated in the Tavrian and Caucasian settlements; 3) the contemporary emergence of the new Doukhoborism, originally inspired by the teachings and leadership of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and now undergoing re-evaluation and modification in the Canadian environment.

The factionalism that characterized Doukhoborism in Canada up to the early 1960's is now abating, and it seems likely that the various groups will eventually meet on common ground. It is highly significant that the present leader of the Orthodox Doukhobors, John J. Verigin, claims no charismatic status as a divinely inspired 'spiritual leader.' He is known merely as the Honorary Chairman of the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC). Under the capable administration of Mr. Verigin and his colleagues, the newly prospering Orthodox communities are at last achieving an accommodation with secular authority that

in no way threatens the continuing evolvement of Doukhoborism in Canada. If the middle-of-the-road Orthodox administration, working in close collaboration with the Doukhobor Society of Canada and with the Sons of Freedom, can provide policies and programs that appeal to the youth of the various factions, then the USCC could very well become the mediating body that eventually would unite all Doukhobors in Canada. There are indications that such a rapprochement is already under way, at least among those respected Doukhobors whose opinions carry some weight in intergroup affairs. What has been lacking up to now is the voice of youth. Younger Doukhobors of broad education must become more involved in the interpretation and application of traditional Doukhobor principles in a contemporary context. Only then will the worthwhile Doukhobor legacy from the past come to fruition in the present.

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Aside from the psalm and the hymn in my *Twenty Ethnic Songs from Western Canada*, the fourteen musical transcriptions of religious songs reproduced in this study represent, to my knowledge, the first attempt to transcribe into musical notation the traditional choral singing of the Doukhobors. Since the beginning of Doukhoborism in the fifteenth century, a surprising diversity of material has accrued to the body of traditional religious music sung by the Doukhobors. For the sake of convenience this has been divided into seven categories: psalms, early hymns, transitional hymns, historical hymns, contemporary hymns, sectarian hymns, interdenominational hymns. These are not to be regarded as rigidly defined musical categories but, rather, as convenient pigeon-holes to classify the formidable amount of textual materials extant in the current repertoires of Doukhobor choirs and congregations, both in British Columbia and on the prairies. When more detailed research on the collection is done, these categories may have to be modified in some respects, perhaps by the addition of sub-categories.

The thread joining the categories into a homogeneous unit is the unique style of choral singing that the Doukhobors have preserved and developed over the centuries. Even when singing a four-square, chorale-type hymn borrowed, say, from the Mennonites, the Doukhobors always manage to stamp the rendition with their own inimitable style of singing. After much listening and marvelling at the Doukhobor choral 'sound,' I have come to the conclusion that its basis is, in fact, much easier to figure out than I had at first anticipated.

The key to the Doukhobor choral style lies in the old unison singing of men and women in octaves. At first, in the psalms, the unison singing was embellished by a very simple type of counterpoint. Later, more complex harmonies were used. But no matter how complex the sound became, the unison singing an octave apart was kept as the central building core from which the cantilevered harmonies projected. The familiar soprano-alto-tenor-bass voice spacing of the typical Lutheran-type chorale has never influenced traditional Doukhobor singing. As a consequence, their singing, with the melody planted firmly in the middle (not on

top, except occasionally), sometimes produces harmonic effects so archaic that they sound almost 'modern.'

One must remember that Doukhobor choral groups are not just choirs; they are congregations as well. Most people in church congregations do well if they manage just to carry the tune, but in Doukhobor congregations there are so many musically sophisticated singers that the use of extemporized harmony is a commonplace. However, the basic inner theme of each psalm or hymn is usually sung by at least half the congregation and is, for the most part, quite easily discernible, even on a recording. In any case, to the Doukhobor ear the important thing is the *total* musical creation, not the fragmented balance of the theme with the harmonies. In one sense, a Doukhobor choir is something like an African percussion orchestra or a jazz combo—each person is a soloist and, at the same time, is aware of his responsibility in the functioning of the complex musical structure assuming shape around him. He performs and listens at the same time and in the process creates an edifice of choral sound unique in Canadian folkmusic.

After much experimenting and improvising, a more or less permanent harmonic matrix is established, which is passed on orally from generation to generation. Canadian Doukhobors who have visited Doukhobors in Russia tell me that the centuries-old psalms and hymns are still sung in virtually the same style in both countries, although the tempo is noticeably slower in Russia. Even the large corpus of contemporary material composed by Canadian Doukhobors is sung in the old Russian style. Choral renditions of folksongs, however, tend to imitate the mannerisms of contemporary Russian choirs like the Don Cossacks or the Red Army Chorus, whose recordings are popular among the Doukhobors. As a result, I have confined most of my folksong research to soloists, duos, and trios, who continue to sing the secular material in the traditional Doukhobor style.

Again, it must be emphasized that Doukhobor choral and part singing is done completely by ear. There are no hymn books or musical scores. I must admit that at the beginning of the research I was constantly on the alert for evidences of musical arrangements and conductors. None ever appeared. The musical culture of the Doukhobors is completely oral. A member of the choir or congregation begins each verse to establish the pitch and tempo, whereupon the entire group joins in, either to continue singing the principal inner melody begun by the soloist or to provide contrapuntal parts above and below. There is no conductor. Through constant association and practice since childhood, each member instinctively sings those voice parts suited to his vocal range and innate musical talents.

Of course such sophisticated choral singing does not arise spontaneously. Preliminary research indicates the influence of Russian Orthodox Church music at various periods since proto-Doukhobor sects began to break away from the Church about 500 years ago. Indeed, the art of psalm-singing, which may very well pre-date the fifteenth century, may have been inherited from much earlier Christian sects which, according to Doukhobor tradition, wandered into southern Russia from the eastern Mediterranean. At any rate, we *do* know of the much later influence of Bazilewski, an Orthodox priest-musician, who defected to the

Doukhobors during Kapustin's leadership in Tavria province and who helped them preserve the ancient forms of singing they still practise. To have projected these ancient musical forms via oral tradition into the alien environment of Canada in the mid-twentieth century is a remarkable cultural feat.

In transcribing the choral singing I have tried to avoid all association with the traditional SATB voice spacing of church hymns by placing the theme of each piece in large notes in the two middle staves, not on top. These two melodic lines an octave apart, one for the men and one for the women, indicate the principal melody, which the greater percentage of the congregation sings. The uppermost stave, consisting of smaller notes, indicates contrapuntal or harmonic embellishments sung by some of the more musically gifted of the women. Similarly, the lowermost stave indicates male embellishments to the basic theme. However, despite this necessary separation of the singing into various parts, one should try to hear the piece as a harmonic whole, not as a theme with embellishments; for this is the way the Doukhobor 'musical gestalt' functions. It may be regarded as an extension into the musical realm of the basic Doukhobor philosophy of communalism through creative interdependence.

The relative simplicity of the secular Russian folksongs enabled me to examine the part-singing skills of the Doukhobors in more detail. I often recorded folksongs in two, three, and even more parts from singers who had become known for their ability to combine their voices. However, occasionally I would deliberately invite singers whom I knew had never sung together before, to try their skill at inventing 'instant' counterpoint. The results were always amazing. Probably the most spectacular of these demonstrations occurred in Calgary where a small group of elders and younger Doukhobors had gathered in the home of Steve Faminow for a recording session. A woman elder, Dora Markin, had just finished singing a Russian lullaby (see *Bye-You, Bye-You*), when the idea occurred to me that this charming little song would be a perfect vehicle to demonstrate the part-singing skills of those present. The lullaby was recorded again with another woman elder providing an improvised vocal counterpoint. In the next rendition a third part above the melody was improvised by a younger woman. Finally, I obtained a seven-part 'choral' recording of the lullaby sung by all the men and women present, all of it improvised on the spot!

The folksong musical transcriptions are a composite of the most common features of several verses, producing a sort of 'ideal' rendition. I have found this to be the most economic method of communicating the essential features of a particular performance to the general musician when space and intelligibility are of prime consideration. Specialists who want to make longer and more elaborate transcriptions can use the enclosed recordings. In any event, no musical transcription, however detailed, can convey the musical subtlety of the original performance.

NOTES ON THE TEXTS

Much thought has also gone into the choice of textual materials. Despite the millions of words written about Doukhobors and Doukhoborism in the popular

press—some true, some false, most of them misleading—no one seems to have taken the trouble to examine traditional Doukhobor literature itself to find out just what it is the Doukhobors are singing about. This has been my aim in choosing the fourteen religious texts for this study. Of course it would take years of patient research by various specialists to explore and annotate my total Doukhobor collection. In the meantime, these fourteen carefully chosen texts should give the general reader some insight into the basic tenets and ideals of Doukhoborism and into the historical events that led to the exodus from Russia in 1898–99.

The texts are the common heritage of the three main Doukhobor groups in Canada—the Orthodox, the Independents, and the Sons of Freedom—and were recorded from these sources. Documentary information on the texts is given in the DATA section following each English translation. I offer no interpretive critique that is not based on Doukhobor sources. Doukhobor literature is, in effect, allowed to speak for itself.

The secular folksong texts involved no problems of presentation. The material, used purely for recreational purposes, exists quite apart from the body of Doukhobor religious songs. I suspect that much of the secular material survives from the time of Lukeria in Caucasia when Doukhoborism did not exhibit the strong religious orientation of the earlier leadership of Kapustin or of the later Canadian communities led by the two Peter Verigins. It is significant that most of the folksongs were recorded from the prairie Independent Doukhobors who largely rejected the strictures of the 'new Doukhoborism' introduced by Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and carried forward by his son Peter Petrovitch in the Orthodox communities. However, the singing of secular folksongs is now an important cultural recreation in contemporary Orthodox communities, and the old distinctions are fast disappearing. As a matter of fact, the Doukhobors themselves have suggested that I continue my folksong research among Orthodox and Sons of Freedom families.

The English texts are, for the most part, direct line-by-line translations from the original Russian. No attempt was made to imitate the metrical and rhyming patterns of the originals. Such 'poetic' translations, I feel, often detracted from the documentary accuracy I was trying to achieve. Anyone who wants to make metrical translations to fit the music can do so by using these basic documentary translations as a guide.

The principal translator of the religious texts was Eli A. Popoff who, being a Doukhobor himself, has a special insight into this material. I am also indebted to Peter P. Legebokoff, editor of the weekly Doukhobor journal ISKRA (The Spark), for placing at my disposal all the facilities of the ISKRA office and of the library in Grand Forks, B.C. Mr. Legebokoff also made many valuable suggestions regarding the translations. Finally, the translations were further checked and amended by Robert B. Klymasz, whose academic and field experience with Slavic folklore texts has made him an expert in this field.

Despite all these precautions, I know there will be a few readers who will find 'errors' here and there. The problem is, translation is such a personal thing that no two people can agree on the 'correct' interpretation of a particular word, phrase,

or passage. At any rate, those who must rely solely on the translation are assured that they are not too far off the mark. And I trust that Russian-speaking readers, who have the advantage of being able to appreciate all the subtleties of the original texts, will view the translations with a modicum of indulgence.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the hundreds of Doukhobors throughout western Canada who, through their co-operation and hospitality, have made my research so fruitful and enjoyable. It is they and their ancestors who have composed this book. I have merely recorded it.

Woman elder from Kamsack, Saskatchewan