

Chapter 12: "Migration and Loss," 1874-1945

1. Read the dialogue between the Russian officials and the Mennonites in 1871. What does the first comment by the Russians about language tell you about the involvement of the Mennonites with their neighbours?
2. Why do you think the Canadian and American governments did all they could to attract the Russian Mennonites to North America in the late 1800s?
3. Why did the Slavophiles view the Russian Mennonites with suspicion and hatred? Judging by the Russian Mennonite welcome to the German armies during WWI, do you think the Slavophiles were justified in their criticisms?
4. What appear to be some of the reasons why Nestor Makhno and his men were so eager to pillage and plunder the Russian Mennonite communities?
5. How do you evaluate the Self-Defense (Selbstschutz) units among the Russian Mennonites? Do you feel there was justification for young Russian Mennonites to take up arms during the Bolshevik Revolution? Do you feel Dietrich Neufeld's statement is too critical? Explain.
6. What organization was organized in 1920 by North American Mennonites to assist Mennonites in Russia?
7. How did Communist religious and economic goals for the Soviet Union threaten the Russian Mennonite way of life?
8. What are the three factors that Harry Loewen judges are the reasons for the failure of the Russian Mennonites to live up to their Anabaptist Heritage?
9. In spite of difficult circumstances under the Soviet Union (1917-1991) what are some positive outcomes for Mennonites during these years?

1. Nestor Makhno
2. Selbstschutz
3. Mennonite central Committee
4. Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization
5. Number of Migrants in 1870s, 1920s,