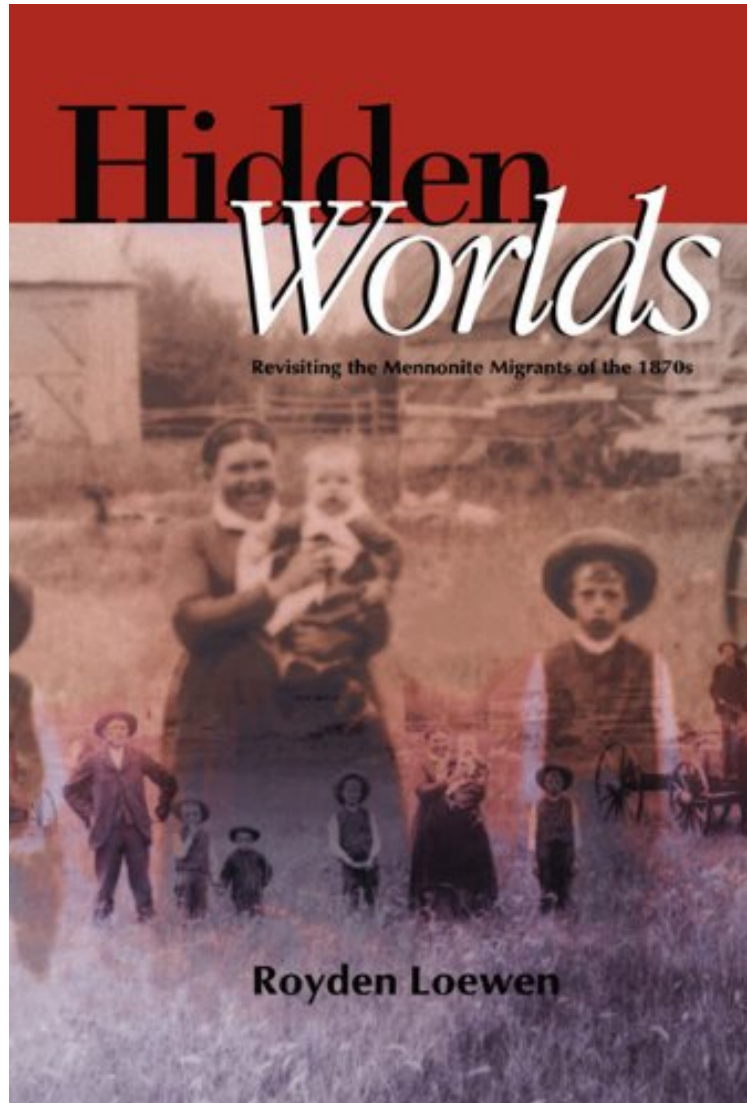


(Download ebook) Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s

Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s

Royden Loewen

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Royden Loewen : Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Collection of EssaysBy Steve FastRoyden Loewen has collected and edited five essays that he previously published in other sources. He tries to bring a consistent theme to them - that Russian Mennonite emigrants to North America had a number of hidden worlds that they tried to transplant from Russia to North America. These worlds are "hidden" because outsiders, who focused a lot of attention on these

immigrants in their early decades here did not know about or understand their cultural world. The first chapter uses diaries of several migrants to describe something of their life in Russia, a lot of the trip to North America, and their experiences in the New World. This was the most interesting chapter as he contrasted how the Mennonites viewed themselves and how journalists viewed them. I got a much better understanding of what it meant to emigrate to a new world and to leave family and a familiar world behind. The second chapter analyzes a number of wills, probates, and Mennonite inheritance regulations. He shows how the bilateral partible system of inheritance was foundational to the agricultural and communal way of life that was so important to Mennonite. He also discusses how it became more detailed in Russia and then changed under cultural pressure in North America. The third chapter focuses on the experience of Mennonite women in North America and argues that, although Mennonite society was strongly patriarchal, women too had important status and an important role in it. Much of this section relies on women's letters to the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. The fourth chapter uses the diaries of two men, one from the Swiss Mennonite community of Waterloo, Ont., and one from the Russian Mennonite community of Hanover, Man., to discuss family and community structure and the degree to which it assimilated over time. Finally, the fifth chapter is a compilation of four of Loewen's book reviews that are more or less relevant to Russian Mennonites. These books discuss the immigrant experience in North America, and Loewen uses this to comment on various theories of assimilation and transplantation. This is the most technical chapter and the hardest to read. As a result of being a collection of essays, the book has something for everyone. But it's also going to be the rare person who enjoys all of it.

In the 1870s, approximately 18,000 Mennonites migrated from the southern steppes of Imperial Russia (present-day Ukraine) to the North American grasslands. They brought with them an array of cultural and institutional features that indicated they were a transplanted people. What is less frequently noted, however, is that they created in their everyday lives a world that ensured their cultural longevity and social cohesiveness in a new land.

About the Author Royden Loewen is a professor of history and Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg. His books include *Family, Church and Market: A Mennonite Community in the Old and New Worlds*, and *From the Inside Out: The Rural World of Mennonite Diarists*.