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Plakun TRAVA, CD-ROM, **From the book Plakun Trava, The Doukhobors by Koozma J. Tarasoff (Ottawa, Spirit Wrestlers Publishing, 2000, ISBN 1-896031-10-2, SWCD001 — Developer: Imaginique Windows/ Macintosh Compatible)**

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***Plakun TRAVA*, CD-ROM**, From the book *Plakun Trava, The Doukhobors* by Koozma J. Tarasoff (Ottawa, Spirit Wrestlers Publishing, 2000, ISBN 1-896031-10-2, SWCD001 — Developer: Imaginique Windows/ Macintosh Compatible).

This CD-ROM is, as the title indicates, a PC version of a book published in 1982 and now out of print. *Plakun Trava* was a major and valuable work in Doukhobor Studies when it first appeared, and its reappearance in the CD-ROM medium is a welcome and important event. I examined it on a Macintosh PPC Performa 6400/180 with maximum 136 MB/RAM onboard, a large SysFile and a few minor programs up.

First, as to content: the CD-ROM includes all materials from the 1982 publication, as well as supplementary and promotional information, and a rapid Link to the publisher's website. Some photographs now appear in colour where possible. A substantial index has been added (thank goodness — too many publications continue to appear without one), but it is not interactive, and requires the user to return to the Contents page, open the chapter including the page number cited and leaf through to the page. I did catch one or two misprints. One could also debate the merits of refining some materials (e.g., refining Map content) as against exact reproduction of the original.

Text appears, on a Mac, in Classic screen size of 13 x 17 cm, typically allowing under 120 words per screen, which scrolls to the page end. CD-ROM pages correspond within a very few words to pages in the original book, which means that users citing the CD-ROM can count on consistency with the book. Footnotes are presented at the foot of every full page, an improvement over the original, where they were found at book-end. Illustrations appear either as splash pages (between sections and chapters), usually with overlaid or subscript text, or as large thumbnails beside the text. Clicking on the thumbnails calls up a full-screen version. Maps can often be zoomed into quarters, and old panoramic photographs can be mousetracked laterally. Unfortunately, there is no separate index of photographs, nor can they be cut-&-pasted (even when they are in the Public Domain).

The Interface as a whole is very well crafted. The CD-ROM opens quickly; a command set at the screen foot usually gives access to Contents/Back/Next/Exit in logical order; executing /Back/ commands often took more time. Chapters, Maps and Illustrations can be accessed

directly from Contents or List. Text is in a darker brown colour backed by a low-contrast texture, which may tire some intense users. Going to /Exit/ presents the user with a very complete set of credits; those in a rush may prefer to simply /Quit/, which is swift and seamless. There is no /Find/ tool. Supplementary and promotional materials include a short foreward to the CD-ROM with instructions for the novice user, and bibliographic and other information on current and anticipated publications, including graphic and sound images. The CD-ROM opens automatically on insertion, or can be opened from the icon if one has quit. Unlike some other academic CD-ROMs I have used, there is no access to the (Mac) command bar.

I have recently examined a new Anthropology textbook with a CD-ROM which merely reproduced the text content without illustrations, and added lists of weblinks, its only real use. Students would be better served by a floppy file of weblinks. By contrast, Tarasoff's CD-ROM is far more valuable because it is designed for more uses, and thus sets a fine mark for emulation.

If I have any regrets, these can be summed up in a few recommendations for those who would make better use of this often poorly-imagined medium. The great virtues of CD-ROM format are its massive capacity and its multimedia accessibility, which are best served by quick, plain interface qualities and tools. To my mind, the ideal CD-ROM will have an efficient /Find/ tool; will permit at least limited Cut-&-Paste and Page Print; will be uncluttered by complex fonts, textures, frames and backgrounds; and will display the richest possible range of content formats.

While I may regret that the *Plakun Trava* CD-ROM does not meet this perhaps overweening ideal, we all can celebrate how close it comes. Tarasoff and Imaginique are to be commended for the high standards they apply to moving material from print to CD-ROM format. I look forward to their next production.

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