This paper presents an 18th-Century place-name study based on Kashin official discourses selected from the Tver State Archive (ГАТО, ф.103, оп.1, ед.хр.801). Created from dictations of lifelong residents of the Kashin District, conversations were recorded by scribes and reflect four hundred-fifty such place-names.

Historical facts and archeological finds reveal that Finnish tribes lived in the Kashin district before Slavonic people settled there. Place-names within the district where two Finnish tribes, the Chud’ and Meria, lived confirm that three counties had names with Finnish roots: Мерецкой, Нерохотский, and Чютской.

The names of rivers used in Kashin official discourse also were Finnish derivatives: Инобож, Кукса, Нерехта, Неропож, Пудица и Шакша (Матвеев, 2004).

The words кулига and кашка are common in present-day Russian dialects and are used as ordinary place-names, having Finnish roots in kyla and kask, the first meaning ‘village’, the second, ‘slash-burn clearing’ (Мамонтова, Муллонен, 1991).

This paper’s linguistic analysis will also demonstrate that some river-names and place-names form equivalents. For example, pairs naming streams and wastelands use Finnish and Russian terms: Тумахта/Черный and Заболотье/Захетна. The appellation, Тумахта, from Finnish into Russian, is translated as тумма ‘dark’ (Русско-финский словарь, 1992: 291). In Kashin official discourse, тумма has the Russian equivalent черный, which is used in Russian dialects with the meanings ‘black’, ‘dark’ or ‘deep’ (Даль, IV: 595). The word, Захетна, when translated from Finnish into Russian, is hete, and means ‘quaq’ (Русско-финский словарь, 1992: 299); it is a direct equivalent of the Russian place-name Заболотье.

Даль, В. 1978. Словарь живого великорусского языка в 4-х томах. Москва.