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Leonard G. Friesen, ed. *Minority Report: Mennonite Identities in Imperial Russia and Soviet Ukraine Reconsidered, 1789–1945*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2018.

For the past fifteen years, scholarship on the history of Mennonites in Russia has waned. While a number of interesting memoirs, document collections, and other primary sources materials have been published, interpretations of those materials have been few. In this desert, Leonard Friesen's new volume of articles by Ukrainian, Russian, and North American scholars is a welcome addition. This book, divided into four sections, delves into Mennonite history from the early 19th century to World War II. It covers a range of themes (religion, education, business, identity politics) as well as events (collectivization, the 1930s famine, German occupation during the war) within Imperial Russia and Soviet Ukraine.

In the first section, Svetlana Bobyleva provides a microhistory of the colony of Borozenko, focusing on events during the revolutionary period. This research offers new insight into Mennonite relations with their Ukrainian neighbors, especially between the villages of Sholokhovo and Steinbach, which ended in violence during the Civil War. Through archival and interview sources, Bobyleva illuminates the multitude of factors shaping this relationship; however, as she shows, these factors cannot fully explain the violence that occurred. Of special interest is her contention (unfortunately without citation), that Soviet authorities attempted to find out what happened in Steinbach by questioning residents of Sholokhovo (44). This article illustrates the value of a *longue durée* approach to understand complex events in specific spaces.

John Staples offers a contribution on the religious inspirations behind Johann Cornies's engagement with "the Tsarist reform agenda." While I am convinced that religion (though not necessarily pietism as Staples argues) performed a significant role in Cornies's actions, I appreciated Staples's idea of the importance of aesthetics in shaping Cornies's understanding of the role of Mennonites within the empire. Perhaps it would have been fruitful to place this article in dialogue with John B. Toews's assessment of A.A. Friesen, as both gifted men had strong views of how Mennonite life should be constructed as a way to secure their future as a people, and their ideas

found both supporters and detractors.

In the second section, “Imperial Mennonite Isolationism Revisited,” Irina Cherkazianova, Oksana Beznosova, and Nataliya Venger explore Mennonite-state relations in education, religion, and business. This title is somewhat misleading, as for at least twenty years scholars featured in this book (and others) have been considering the Mennonite story within the broader framework of Russian/European history. Despite this quibble, these articles, particularly Venger’s, use a host of new sources to show how policy priorities of the state influenced the opportunities and possibilities of Mennonites living within the empire. These papers demonstrate the importance of understanding the “state” as a multi-layered entity, with policies of the imperial center given a spin by local authorities. Venger’s portrait of the 1915 liquidation laws shows how local politics and sentiment influenced the interpretation of these laws. In the case of education and religion, local authorities used openings created by the state in St. Petersburg to address concerns about the Mennonite population in their territory.

The papers in the fourth section, on Soviet identities, display the most cohesion as a group. Colin Neufeldt, Alexander Beznosov, and Viktor Klets offer interpretations on how three major events of the Soviet period—the formation of collective farms, the 1930s famine, and the Second World War—shaped Mennonite identity. Neufeldt, whose ground-breaking work on the Mennonite experience during the 1930s has transformed our understanding of this period, shows how Mennonites in leadership positions “helped to undermine the authority of traditional Mennonite religious, political, and economic institutions and the leaders at their helm” (240). This identity was further reshaped during the famine, as Mennonites relied greatly on aid from family, co-religionists, and relief organizations in Germany and North America. This reliance in combination with Soviet state repression laid the groundwork for welcoming the German army in 1941. Klets has uncovered fascinating source material offering insight into Mennonite actions, especially through the eyes of their Ukrainian neighbors. His article suggests fruitful paths for future research.

In many ways, this book summarizes the research born out of two significant events: the opening of the archives in the former Soviet Union during the early 1990s, and the first major Mennonite conference organized

by Harvey Dyck in Khortitsa in 1999. The significance of this period to the development of transnational scholarly relations cannot be emphasized enough. This volume has laid a solid foundation for future research in the field.

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Joseph R. Wiebe. *The Place of Imagination: Wendell Berry and the Poetics of Community, Affection, and Identity*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017.

In *The Place of Imagination*, Joseph R. Wiebe provides an account of Wendell Berry's moral imagination via compelling readings of Berry's fiction. Wiebe's project centers on the contention that "fictive journeys" with Berry's characters "can articulate to readers what it means to live well in wounded communities and broken places" (10). *The Place of Imagination* is divided into two sections. The second section contains close readings of three of Berry's novels *The Memory of Old Jack*, *Jayber Crow*, and *Hannah Coulter*. The first section appears to be an attempt to set a foundation for the close readings in the second section, first outlining Berry's understanding of imagination, then presenting his vision of affection and community primarily via the account of race and racism in *The Hidden Wound*, and finally discussing Berry's various narrative styles.

Wiebe is at his best when performing close readings of specific texts. His readings of the novels draw on Berry's own literary sources and inspirations, as well as Wiebe's impressive range of scholarship, to deliver subtle interpretations. Each interpretation presents a substantive and provocative theological vision and way of life. Wiebe draws us into his subject's imaginative world where knowledge is a work of faithful affection to "visible and invisible reality" (83), magnanimous despair and heartbreak expand "the soul's capacity to love" beyond guarantees (111), and the bodily ascents and descents of patient affection unite a person "with the world" (141). Wiebe's reading of *The Hidden Wound* is likewise superb, not only