



Foreword	3
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#### THE 2006 BECHTEL LECTURES

### **Time and Memory: Secular and Sacred Aspects of the World of the Russian Mennonites and Their Descendants**

*James Urry*

LECTURE ONE	
Time: the Transcendent and the Worldly	4
LECTURE TWO	
Memory: Monuments and the Markings of Pasts	33

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Music and Development: MCC Workers in Chad	
<i>Jonathan Dueck</i>	63

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#### **Book Reviews**

Scottie May, Bath Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell. <i>Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community.</i>	
Reviewed by Eleanor Snyder	83
Oliver O'Donovan. <i>The Ways of Judgment</i>	
Reviewed by Paul Doerksen	85

## Book Reviews

- Proceedings of the 2001-04 Goshen Conferences on Religion and Science. Nancey Murphy. *Religion and Science: God, Evolution, and the Soul*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. George F.R. Ellis. *A Universe of Ethics, Morality, and Hope*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Antje Jackelén. *The Dialogue between Religion and Science: Challenges and Future Directions*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. John F. Haught. *Purpose, Evolution and the Meaning of Life*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Reviewed by Darrin W. Snyder Belousek 88
- Richard A. Yoder, Calvin W. Redekop, and Vernon E. Jantzi. *Development to a Different Drummer: Anabaptist/Mennonite Experiences and Perspectives* Reviewed by Larissa Fast 92
- Roman J. Miller, Beryl H. Brubaker, and James C. Peterson, eds. *Viewing New Creations with Anabaptist Eyes: Ethics of Biotechnology* Reviewed by Ray Epp 94
- David L. Weaver-Zercher, ed. *Writing the Amish: The Worlds of John A. Hostetler* Reviewed by Steven M. Nolt 97
- Mark Thiessen Nation. *John Howard Yoder: Mennonite Patience, Evangelical Witness, Catholic Convictions*. Reviewed by Gayle Gerber Koontz 99
- Geffrey B. Kelly and F. Burton Nelson. *The Cost of Moral Leadership: The Spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Reviewed by Weldon D. Nisly 102
- Geoffery Dipple. *'Just as in the Time of the Apostles': Uses of History in the Radical Reformation*. Reviewed by Jonathan Seiling 104
- Ivan Kauffman, ed. *Just Policing: Mennonite-Catholic Theological Colloquium*. Duane K. Friesen and Gerald Schlabach, eds. *At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security, and the Wisdom of the Cross*. Reviewed by Andy Alexis-Baker 107

Cover picture shows Mennonite industrialist Kornelius Hildebrand (see Bechtel Lecture One). Photo courtesy of Pandora Press, Kitchener, ON.

## Foreword

It is our pleasure to present the 2006 Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies in this issue. The lectures were given at Conrad Grebel University College on March 9 and 10 by James Urry, professor of anthropology at the University of Victoria in Wellington, New Zealand.

Well known for his pioneering research on Mennonite life in Russia, James Urry has also conducted extensive research among “Russian” Mennonites in Canada. He has held visiting fellowships at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Calgary. His publications include *Mennonites, Politics and Peoplehood: Europe-Russia-Canada 1525-1980* (University of Manitoba Press, 2006) and *None but Saints: the Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889* (Hyperion Press, 1989; reprint Pandora Press, 2007).

We are also happy to offer in this issue Jonathan Dueck’s article, “Music and Development: MCC Workers in Chad,” and an array of book reviews. As you will note, this issue marks the return of book reviews in print form after a temporary absence. In future, book reviews will continue to appear both in print and on the CGR website, which is undergoing significant improvements. The website will soon include a searchability feature that will enable exploration of past issues online.

As always, we invite submissions of papers for consideration (see inside back cover for details), and we encourage subscriptions from individuals and institutions.

C. Arnold Snyder, *Academic Editor*     Stephen A. Jones, *Managing Editor*

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### THE BECHTEL LECTURES

The Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies were established at Conrad Grebel University College in 2000, through the generosity of Lester Bechtel, a devoted churchman actively interested in Mennonite history. Lester Bechtel’s dream was to make the academic world of research and study accessible to a broader constituency, and to build bridges of understanding between the school and the church. The lectures, held annually and open to the public, offer noted scholars and church leaders the opportunity to explore and discuss topics representing the breadth and depth of Mennonite history and identity.

## 2006 BECHTEL LECTURES

### **Time and Memory: Secular and Sacred Aspects Of the World of the Russian Mennonites and Their Descendants**

*James Urry*

#### **LECTURE ONE** **Time: the Transcendent and the Worldly**

If, in casual conversation, I asked you a question about “time,” most of you would look at your watch. It is just after 7:30 pm. But it is also Thursday, March 9, 2006. “Thursday” is the name for the day of the week derived from the pagan Norse deity, Thor. “March” is equally pagan, a month named after Mars, the Roman deity of war. Indeed, our entire calendar is founded on a pre-Christian Roman system associated with the reforms of Julius Caesar, hence the “Julian” calendar. But the date of the year is profoundly Christian. All time in the western world is Christ-centered, although the actual calculation begins with his birth and not his resurrection.<sup>1</sup> The Julian calendar was eventually adopted by Christians some five hundred years after Christ’s birth and long after Christian churches were established. It is the work of the abbot Dionysius Exiguus. Unfortunately he miscalculated. So just over a thousand years later, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII ordered that time be advanced by nine days.<sup>2</sup>

Hence we now calculate the year according to the Gregorian calendar – that is, if you are not a member of the Orthodox Church, or a Jewish believer, a Muslim, or a Buddhist. Pope Gregory’s recalculation was primarily motivated by problems with the calendar of religious celebration, most importantly that Easter had to be brought back into synchrony with cycles of the moon. This in turn reveals how the annual cycle of the Christian year also follows established pagan celebrations of death, rebirth, and death that once followed the agricultural seasons of the northern hemisphere. Christmas is the winter solstice celebration in the heart of winter; Easter

follows earlier pagan rituals marking the rebirth of spring, when crops and livestock would flourish and the agrarian cycle would begin again for yet another year.

This brief excursus on dates, days, months, years, and celebrations reveals some interesting aspects of the cultural expression of time. First, even in a largely modern secular age, time retains sacred points of reference. Second, even for Christians, time retains references to pagan ideas that existed before Christ's birth.<sup>3</sup> Third, the calculation of time has varied and continues to vary in different traditions. But the time displayed on the face of your watch is really a more modern expression of time. Clock time, however, is not just modern, it is also global. Historically, it developed with the need to calculate longitude and latitude for navigation, a concern inherent in the expansion of British trade and naval supremacy and linked to Britain's pre-eminence in the industrial revolution. The need to coordinate time for transport and business eventually saw the establishment of Greenwich Mean Time in 1884. Today we all exist in real time, members of a world in which telecommunications have shrunk time and space, and trading in stocks and shares never ceases. Unlike calendar time with its links to sacred concerns in the past, clock time is profoundly secular and is still being refined by science.

The subject of my first lecture involves both sacred and secular representations of time. These I will relate to Mennonite experiences, especially in the Russian tradition. As I will approach this subject as an anthropologist and a historian, do not expect theological insights; and you will have to forgive my rather cavalier treatment of religious ideas, past and present.<sup>4</sup>

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Unlike the French revolutionaries in 1792, sixteenth-century Anabaptists did not seek to change time by renaming the days or months or by renumbering the years.<sup>5</sup> But they certainly discarded, like other reformers of the period, encrustations that the Catholic Church had added to sacred time. Just as the churches were stripped of what were seen as signs of idolatry in the form of sacred relics and depictions of the holy family and saints, so also were the

church's elaborations of ritual time in the form of masses, saints' days, and other periodic celebrations abandoned. But the basic cycle of annually re-enacting Christ's life and marking key events in his life in ritual – a practice established in the early Church – was continued. The key events emphasized were those concerned with Christ's death and resurrection, with Pentecost for most Mennonites being the time of baptism when new members committed themselves to the congregational community (*Gemeinde*) and the narrow path of life. This pattern of worship only developed once functioning Anabaptist/Mennonite congregational communities were established. Members of these communities sought, through following Christ's instructions and example, to live and die in the hope of salvation. The only way a person could hope to achieve salvation was to live a Christian life in a community of fellow believers, separated from the corrupting influences of "the world."

The "world" was trapped in the grip of time, counting down to its apocalyptic destruction. God's creation of the world, as told at the start of the Book of Genesis, occurred in a sequence of events in lineal time. It is almost as if time itself had first to be created before the acts of creation could begin. Once created, at first a timeless paradise existed; lineal time, so essential for creation, ended. After the Fall and Adam and Eve's expulsion from the timeless Garden of Eden, time began to run once again, but in the reverse of creation itself: the world and all its inhabitants were headed towards a final destruction. Having betrayed God's creation, the ancestors of humans were cast from a timeless existence into the world of lineal time-dominated events involving evil and inevitable suffering and death. At a future time known only to God, there would be a finite moment and then, infinity. The apocalypse would therefore not be just the endtime of the endtimes; it would be the end of time itself.

Christ came into the world, as a person of mortal flesh, to take upon himself the evils of the world and suffer death in order to show believers a way to escape the inevitability of time, past and future. His aim was to show mortals how they too could achieve everlasting salvation through the resurrection. It was in this spirit that many early Anabaptists welcomed martyrdom in the belief that by following Christ they would be assured of salvation.<sup>6</sup> But for members of Anabaptist/Mennonite communities established once the intense period of persecution and martyrdom ended,

salvation was to be hoped for by following Christ in everyday life, participating with others in the search for salvation in the regular cycle of ritual re-enactment of Christ's life and death. This produced a continuity of existence for members of the congregational communities, out of time, away from the "world" until the time that the living and the dead would face the Day of Judgment. Just as congregational communities were situated *in* the "world" but were not *of* it, so they were also in time but not of it. In a sense, the communities lived a kind of timeless time.

The strong sense of continuity found in many pre-modern Mennonite congregational communities (*Gemeinden*) emphasized the atemporal nature of earthly life. The cyclical practice of faith in congregational worship reinforced this sense of timeless-time. But it was not just in religious ideas and practices that a sense of continuity existed; it was also apparent in the community's social life. Just as Mennonites watched season follow season, neatly paralleled by the cycle of religious worship, so also in social life generation succeeded generation. The members of a congregation were bound together in a social community where kinship and marriage, the essential bonds of connectedness and relatedness, created a deep sense of continuity of life and faith. So the sacred aspects of congregational life were integrated with more profane aspects of life.<sup>7</sup>

By "sacred" I mean those aspects of congregational life focused on transcendental issues associated with "otherworldly" matters and ultimately with salvation; by "profane" I mean concerns with "this worldly" aspects of everyday, communal life mainly taken up with the production and reproduction of people, food, and shelter. For Mennonites both the sacred and profane aspects were focused on life in a congregational community. However, there was a certain degree of tension between aspects of the sacred and profane as expressed in the practices of that community. The institution of marriage was central to the continuity of the profane in social life and the succession of generations, but salvation was ultimately a personal matter. Yet salvation could be achieved only through a life lived in a community which had to be replicated, and in which marriage-legitimated offspring were required to reproduce that community. In regard to death, individuals might be concerned with their personal salvation, but for their relations and friends it was a rupture in the continuity of social time; on earth it was the

living who had to deal with death's immediate consequences.

The contradictions between a transcendent sacredness centered on the congregation and the profane demands of community can be seen in the marking of events of the life cycle integral to the continuities of production and reproduction. Events associated with the profane aspects of marriage and death – weddings and funerals – were not involved predominantly with transcendental issues and occurred outside the sacred spheres of time and space.<sup>8</sup> Weddings were once held on the family farm of one of the parents of the couple, and not in the meetinghouse or church. The same was true of funerals. Of course, a minister performed the brief part of the ritual connecting the sacred with the profane – blessing the couple or the corpse – but then he often hastily departed before the real “celebrations” began. In the Prussian/Russian tradition the barn (or more correctly the *Scheune*) was cleared out and cleaned, and it was here in non-sacred space that ceremonies marking the passage of the unwed to the married state and the separation of the living from the dead occurred. Marriage celebrations and the funeral wake were often times of “indulgence,” but by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century religious leaders in Russia sought to move these events from the farms and homesteads of the community into the congregational meeting houses or churches; sacred space took over from profane areas associated with everyday life.<sup>9</sup> By doing so, the leaders effectively subordinated life cycle rituals to the sacred, transformed profane ceremonial into sacred ritual, and brought earthly “excesses” under control.

Another area of ambiguity encompassing the life cycle, its rites of passage, and the sacred/profane aspects of life is seen in the layout of Mennonite graveyards.<sup>10</sup> In some, the dead are buried in the order they died.<sup>11</sup> In others, husbands and wives are buried together or in family plots. These variations in practice can be related to different views of salvation, especially the time when resurrection is thought to occur. Such issues involve a major divide between those people who believe that the resurrection or damnation will occur only at the day of judgment at the end of time, and those who believe that heaven (and hell) is a place to which the soul departs immediately after death. One issue inherent in these different views is whether the profane aspects of community, especially those associated with kinship and marriage, will be replicated after resurrection. Those supporting



the view that heaven already exists as some kind of parallel universe in time and space, to which the soul departs immediately after death, often insist that loved ones will be reunited in heaven and that kinship connections and relationships will continue after resurrection.

What happens if the widow or widower remarries after the death of a spouse? I recall looking at a gravestone in Steinbach, Manitoba, with the late Roy Vogt. A widower had engraved both his deceased wife's name and his own, leaving a space to add his own date of death when he would be interred with her. Roy pointed out that the man had recently remarried; that raised some interesting practical (and perhaps theological) issues. Is there bigamy or polygamy in heaven? And there are other issues about the profane in a transcendent state. What age is everyone in heaven? Will the resurrected remain the same age as when they died? A Mennonite once told me confidently that everyone in heaven would be 21! And what of infirmities or injuries acquired in life? Will amputees be reunited with their lost limbs?

But there is another view of the resurrection. Many years ago I asked an elderly conservative Mennonite whether or not he thought married partners and families would be reunited in heaven. He pondered for a moment and then said, "Probably not." Marriage was for this world, primarily concerned with producing children in a stable relationship; such a function would be unnecessary in heaven.

Such different views of salvation point to the gulf between the profane focus of community in this world and time and the sacred aspects of faith that hopefully will eventually transcend this world, its physical necessities, and temporal existence. While Mennonites required community and congregation in order to live a Christian way of life in the hope of salvation, ultimately their resurrection or damnation would be an individual, not a collective, matter. Mennonites are unlikely to be resurrected as a congregational community, *en masse* as it were, but I have never asked this question of either conservative or evangelical Mennonites.

I am aware that such issues as these are probably not, and probably have never been, a matter of conscious concern to most ordinary Mennonites. As every anthropologist knows, people *live* their lives more than *reflect upon* them. Most people can also live unaware of contradictions between

their ideas and practices. Some Anabaptists and early Mennonites, however, seem to have thought deeply about issues of time relating to life, death, and resurrection. While they rejected Catholic notions of purgatory – the idea of a kind of waiting room for the soul before judgment – some did subscribe to the idea that upon death the soul entered a timeless state. This was known as “soul sleep.”<sup>12</sup> A description of it is found in a number of sources, including the *Martyrs Mirror*:

... even as, when a man falls into a deep sleep, his heart, soul or spirit does not entirely sleep, as the body; so also the spirit or soul of man does not die or fall asleep with the body, but is and remains an immortal spirit. Hence temporal death, in the Scriptures, is called a sleep, and the resurrection of the dead an awakening from this sleep of death. And as a sleeping man cannot receive and enjoy any good gifts ... unless he be previously awakened from his sleep; so also, believers cannot receive the perfect heavenly existence, nor unbelievers the eternal death or the pain of hell, either in the soul or in the body, except they have first been awakened from the sleep of death, and have arisen, through the coming of Christ. Until this last day of judgment the souls of believers are waiting in the hands of God, under the altar of Christ, to receive ... in their souls and bodies, the rewards promised them. So also the souls of unbelievers are reserved to be punished, after the day of judgment....<sup>13</sup>

In a sense the timeless-time of life in a congregational community (“in the world but not of it”) was to be followed by timelessness; the sleep of the soul was “out of time” as much as in time between earthly existence and either the ageless age to come or damnation where the soul would suffer endlessly, presumably in time for eternity.

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As I have already noted, Christ entered the earthly world of space and time, and through his sacrifice at a moment in time showed believers a path to salvation if they lived and died in the faith of the resurrection. But Christ

did not interfere with time already set, as it were, in reverse motion from Creation and the Fall. The end of the world was unstoppable. Such ideas imply an essentially negative view of time. Time in the world is heading towards inevitable destruction, a finite moment that will last for infinity; the past is not seen as a triumphant passage to the present leading towards a future age of improvement. Time has no suggestion of human progress leading towards a better earthly existence within time; only with the end of the world and of time would a different state of being come into existence. Such a vision of human decline from a former golden or heroic age is not unique to Christianity or the Judaic tradition; the cosmologies of many peoples, including the ancient Greeks, contain references to glorious ages past and lost and to futures of continued degeneration and decline leading inevitably to a sad end.

Sometime after the Reformation, however, European views about such matters began to change. While the past might have contained grander eras than the present, a pattern of rise and fall could be seen in other civilizations. The present world, then, might be viewed not as in decline but as improving within a cycle of time. It is but a short step from a cyclical view of past, present, and future to a lineal view of time implying constant improvement. Gradually the idea that the past might be inferior to the present, and that the future might see even greater improvement, became commonplace. At first such views were restricted to intellectual circles eager to discover new forms of knowledge rather than repeat the ideas of the past.<sup>14</sup> This was particularly true among those living in urban areas of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, in what later historians would call that Republic's "Golden Age." Here many, including some Mennonites, experienced a degree of wealth, security, and toleration in one of Europe's wealthiest and most innovative societies. The transformations of Dutch society showed that improvement was possible.<sup>15</sup> Later, these views found official favor outside the Dutch Republic as "enlightened" rulers elsewhere in Europe sought to expand their territories, create empires, and increase their control through the application of rational ideas. Prior to the French Revolution, a number of rulers of the *ancien régime* viewed an emphasis on continuity as a reflection of backwardness, and encouraged discontinuities as positive markers of progress.<sup>16</sup> The modern age had begun.

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The Mennonites who emigrated to Russia at the end of the eighteenth century in many ways thought they were moving into a land ruled by a supreme autocrat. Certainly many later immigrants believed they were escaping the time clocks of Europe as nationalism, constitutional reform, and rationalism advanced across the continent. But the reality was that Catherine the Great was an enlightened autocrat, and the imperial manifestos she issued in the 1760s that set the framework for Mennonite migration were intended to help develop the country according to the latest thinking on economic development.<sup>17</sup> Her successors basically followed her lead in trying to develop the empire, reforming government, and adopting policies of reform – even if at times they hesitated at the pace of change or halted reforms and even tried to reverse them. Mennonites had entered a land where rational change was official policy.

At the local level, however, Mennonites moved into a new physical and cultural environment where time was marked in ways new to their previous experience. Most important among the new influences were their Ukrainian and Russian neighbors, most of whom followed the Orthodox faith but also continued older pagan folk traditions.<sup>18</sup> As Mennonites increasingly associated with these people, and especially as they employed growing numbers as workers in the home, fields, and factories, their own views of time had to adjust to the ritual cycles of the Orthodox calendar. Seasonal workers were employed for periods defined by this calendar, and all the ritual holidays had to be observed.<sup>19</sup> This was just one aspect of what I have called the unofficial “russianization” of Mennonites.<sup>20</sup> No one who has dealt with Mennonites from the Russian experience can avoid noting the influence of Orthodoxy on their passion for Easter, with the greeting “Christ is risen” requiring a response and the varieties of *paska* added to older baking traditions associated with sacred time.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, the periodic markets held in towns situated around Mennonite settlements also provided a new rhythm to Mennonite life. These aspects of time were linked primarily to an agrarian peasant rural culture that was not really so alien from older Mennonite traditions that

stressed continuity within the regular cycle of timeless time. But the official forms of time Mennonites were to experience in their dealings with the state involved a more discontinuous, lineal time that was rational, bureaucratic, and ultimately secular in its intent.

Interestingly, the first confrontation over time between Mennonite religious leaders and Russian state officials concerned a fundamental misunderstanding over sacred and secular time. In the early 1820s state officials requested that Mennonites move from the Gregorian calendar they had adopted in Prussia during the eighteenth century to the Julian calendar used in Russia. Although the move mainly involved synchronizing bureaucratic procedures, it would also result in the ritual worship calendar reverting to the old dates.<sup>22</sup> Some conservative Mennonite religious leaders interpreted the requested change as a veiled attempt to force them into Orthodoxy. While the Julian calendar was used by the Russian Orthodox Church, the official request had nothing to do with converting Mennonites to another form of Christianity. The reality was that Russian officialdom had long operated according to the Julian calendar, at least since an earlier reforming Tsar, Peter the Great, had introduced it in the early eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

This alignment of Mennonite practices with secular governance was greatly intensified in the 1830s and 1840s as Mennonites became models for the reform of State Peasants led by the Ministry of State Domains. Under the leadership of Johann Cornies, a host of social and economic reforms were introduced, first into the Molochna colony and later elsewhere. These included new forms of agriculture, industry, and a general reorganization of education and local government. Each reform brought more emphasis on time management, aimed at maximizing Mennonite development through the application of rational procedures.<sup>24</sup> To achieve his ends, Cornies believed the old ways had to be abandoned and progressive policies be adopted across all areas of Mennonite life. Time and the times had to change. As Cornies is supposed to have announced: “Es ist Zeit, dass die Mennoniten die Pelzhosen ablegen” (*It is time that the Mennonites put aside their old-fashioned dress* – literally their sheepskin pants).<sup>25</sup> Nothing and no one were exempt from Cornies’ plans, and when conservative religious leaders questioned his authority, he had them removed and their congregations reorganized into

more rational units. Under Cornies' leadership the different congregations, historically constituted often by their opposition to each other, were also forced to co-operate and meet in a common council. Sacred continuities were subordinated to secular reforms and ultimately to the demands of the state.

Although following Cornies' death there were attempts to reassert religious authority, the changes made with the state's support proved irreversible. The agricultural reforms led to highly profitable forms of agriculture, based mainly on grain production. As a consequence agriculture became more mechanized, and to meet the demand for machines local Mennonite industries were developed. A number of the early industrialists had first acquired their mechanical skills as clockmakers.<sup>26</sup> There is a charming picture, reproduced below and on the cover of this issue of *CGR*, of one successful industrialist in old age, holding in his hands the key component of both a mower and a clock's mechanism: a cast metal cog.<sup>27</sup> As David Landes has argued, elsewhere in Europe the craft of watch and clockmaking provided much of the skill and technology for producing the first machines that would eventually power the new factory economies of the industrial revolution.<sup>28</sup> The Mennonite experience, where clockmakers played a leading role in the rise of industry, appears to confirm his argument. It also confirms another contention linking new forms of time with the industrial revolution. Other scholars have pointed out the connection between clocks, machines, and the



*Kornelius Hildebrand. Photo courtesy of Pandora Press, Kitchener, ON.*

new factory workplaces where workers, accustomed to the more irregular time rhythms of seasonal agricultural labor, had to be disciplined into new forms of continuous shift work.<sup>29</sup> Again the same pattern occurred in Mennonite factories where workers, mainly non-Mennonites but including some Mennonites, experienced new regimes of time-intensive labor driven by clock time.

Clock time also invaded almost every home of the rural Mennonite world, as every prosperous farmer purchased a clock.<sup>30</sup> Life once ruled by the seasons and the agricultural cycle was now supplemented by the regular order of clock time. As the compulsory elementary education system became an accepted feature of village life, teachers, children, and their parents were disciplined by its daily and term time routines. Schools had to be organized, and local and regional school boards became an important bureaucratic factor in Mennonite life, especially after the period of the Great Reforms (ca. 1860 -1880). Clerks in the district offices worked to clock time. The Forestry Service introduced in the 1880s to run the Mennonite alternative to military service created almost a military discipline for recruits. Meanwhile its organization meant the establishment of complex bureaucratic structures, including a system of taxation to manage its massive capital expenditure and considerable ongoing costs. In time other institutions were set up to provide social welfare services: hospitals, a school for the deaf, an orphanage, and an old peoples' home. Co-operatives, credit unions, and even a bank were also created before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.<sup>31</sup> These essentially secular Mennonite organizations formed just a part of the complex world that emerged between the Great Reforms and 1914, creating almost a state within a state more generally referred to as "the Mennonite Commonwealth."

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In Russia the end of the Great Reforms followed the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. This was followed by a long period of reaction under his successor Tsar Alexander III that continued well into the reign of the next Tsar, Nicholas II, roughly from 1881 until 1905. The decline of official interest in social and political reform, and the government's support for a very conservative and stable agrarian society, provided Mennonites with a period of relative calm after the earlier hectic period of reforms between the 1830s and 1880s. No longer did they have to react to further homogenizing and integrating reform policies. The period of conservative reaction in the Russian Empire thus allowed Mennonites to consolidate and build on the changes already made to their organizations through earlier bureaucratic

reforms. This allowed time to strengthen the foundations of their society and to develop institutions under their own control. During the same period Mennonites continued building on the economic base founded on commercial agricultural and industrial production. Mennonite entrepreneurs also drew on the benefits of improvements in education and rational organization that had begun earlier in the century. All these factors helped establish the state within a state that the government now, through neglect, permitted to develop.

The organizational skills required to run the structures of the Mennonite Commonwealth were honed in school, especially in the high schools that had initially been founded in Cornies' time to train clerks for local government offices. Anyone dealing with the records of Russian Mennonite organizations, and those of their successors as Mennonites migrated to Canada in the 1920s after the Russian Revolution, cannot fail to be impressed – and at times overwhelmed – by the complexity of bureaucratic structures they created. Committees, boards, endless minutes of meetings, account books, conference proceedings, annual reports, and large letter files all bear witness to the triumph of rational bureaucratic organization. All this required a careful structuring of time in order to run efficient organizations across many communities and large distances of space. Truly one is looking at the records of a secular, state-like civil service, often in a situation where the Russian state itself lacked many of the same provisions or organizational genius.

But what place did religion have in the midst of all this essentially secular activity? In terms of congregational structures, considerable rationalization also occurred, a process begun in Cornies' time but greatly expanded following the Great Reforms. Long-established congregational differences between Flemish/Frisian/Groningen Old Flemish congregations, based largely on historical factors and minor distinctions in ritual practice, weakened as more parish-based structures were set up. Promoting these changes was a new generation of ministers, more highly educated than the lay farmer-ministers of old. These were the “teacher-preachers,” many of whom increasingly dominated both sacred and secular affairs before 1914. These educated ministers also served on school boards, forestry boards, and other institutions in conjunction with other teachers and businessmen, all



of whom were devoted to the improvement of the Mennonite world. Not surprisingly, the structures and procedures adopted to run congregational affairs, and especially the larger conferences that grew increasingly important, were influenced by the new educational system, bureaucratic forms, and expansion of secular institutions within the Mennonite world.

The secular world thus entered the sacred world of religious organization in ways that closely resembled how the governmental role of the Roman state had been assumed by the Church in the first centuries after the fall of the Roman empire. By doing so, Richard Fenn has argued, the Church in fact established the foundations of modern secular society:

The Church (not Christianity per se) was largely responsible for creating in the [European] West a world where organizations, institutions, and the state seemed to transcend the passage of time.... In an effort to administer a large and complex organization with claims to universality, the Church not only introduced high levels of rationality to systems of law and governance but focused on technical matters of procedure and precedent – highly pragmatic concerns in which the transcendental aim [of Christianity] can easily be lost.<sup>32</sup>

In light of the development of the Mennonite Commonwealth in Russia, it is ironic to reflect that for some early Anabaptists it was the establishment of just such a link between state and society by the Emperor Constantine that had corrupted the original Christian faith!<sup>33</sup>

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An important factor in the development of the Mennonite Commonwealth was the adoption of a sense of collective Mennonite peoplehood – an identity broader than just membership of a religious community. Mennonites in Russia would become *Russian* Mennonites. At first the development of a sense of common peoplehood was encouraged by officialdom. Despite congregational differences and other profane distinctions derived from descent, dialect, and settlement patterns among those who immigrated to Russia, all Mennonites were treated as a single people by the government. Identified just as “Mennonite colonists,” they were differentiated from

other peoples, colonists and non-colonists, and the special attention they received as “model” colonists helped further a broader sense of identity not based solely on religious factors. When in the later nineteenth century some Mennonites tried to argue that the schismatic Mennonite Brethren were not really Mennonites but Baptists, the government initially rejected their accusations. Being “Mennonite” was a matter of an official designation of a group of foreign colonists who were also legally state peasants; internal differences of religious identity were something Mennonites would have to settle among themselves.

Paradoxically, the process of Mennonite identity formation was given a major boost once the Great Reforms ended, not by further official encouragement of their distinctiveness as a people but by increasing opposition to their continued separateness. The rise of Pan-Slavist sentiments, proto-Russian nationalism, and increased anti-German feelings resulted in public accusations of disloyalty aimed at Russian subjects of alleged German origin, including foreign colonists such as the Mennonites.<sup>34</sup> These accusations forced Mennonites to insist upon their loyalty to the state and to assert their identity as one of the Empire’s many peoples not of Great Russian origin. This made them develop an identity in terms of the same discourses in which they were attacked. Thus they had to discover an identity as a distinct people with an origin in time and space expressed in nationalist sentiments. This required them to identify as a people in largely secular, not religious, terms.

To achieve that aim, they drew on the profane aspects of their identity rather than on the transcendental markers of faith. Existing profane aspects of identity associated with kinship and descent were greatly expanded into broader secular identities. Mennonites began to speak of themselves as a *Volklein*, another “small people” in Russia’s multi-peopled Empire. In pre-Revolutionary times this concept of “*Volk*” was extended to identify Mennonite schools (*Volkschulen*) and even the church (*Volkskirche*).<sup>35</sup> In a sacred congregational community separated from “the world,” individuals sought a safe environment to hope for salvation; in a secular colonist community situated in the Russian Empire, they sought ways to fulfil their destiny as a *Volk* and loyal subjects of the Tsar.

In this manner, economic growth, bureaucratic reorganization, and the emergence of a pan-Mennonite identity were combined in the Mennonite Commonwealth to give Mennonites that sense of being members of a state within a state. In its emergence, the Mennonite Commonwealth as social, economic, and institutional structures that also provided a sense of distinct identity mirrored the processes of state development and national identity formation that occurred in western states when industrialization and nationalism transformed social life.

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By the early twentieth century, therefore, the experience and organization of time in the Mennonite Commonwealth no longer related to a timeless time, and was no longer centered just on congregational communities. The emphasis on the continuity of faith and practice and a concern with transcendent time in a future life was not so dominant. Instead, Mennonite life was now clearly located *in* time; for younger Mennonites the general idea about – and experience of – time was that they lived in an age of improvement and a world that was moving forward. This was obvious from their surroundings and in terms of the secular achievements of the Commonwealth: greater wealth, improved education, expanded opportunities for many young people. This essentially lineal view of time encouraged them not to expect continuities with the past but instead to welcome discontinuities between their present, the past, and their futures. It involved a positive, expansive view of the future but also entailed a similar view of the past, as the present was now seen a continuum of positive developments moving forwards. This stimulated the view that the past, if interpreted rightly, might provide not just an explanation of the present but a guide to the future. Past time thus acquired a sense of teleology that allowed progress to be measured and connected through selected key events and the lives of leading individuals – secular and religious – to models of positive growth and improvement.

The experience and expression of time as essentially lineal, now integrated with a particular view of the past, meant that most historical accounts published by the Russian Mennonites before 1914 concentrated positively on their Russian experience.<sup>36</sup> As historical accounts they tend to

be rather shallow in their time focus, only briefly tracing Mennonite life and faith back to its alleged foundations, if at all. Not surprisingly, most accounts lay greater stress on secular achievements than on religious affairs.<sup>37</sup> Many were written in an attempt to prove to Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike that as a people Mennonites had always been loyal subjects of the Tsar and valuable members of the Russian Empire. The secular emphasis was thus linked to the further development of a sense of peoplehood loosely connected to the idea and practices of a faith community.

The issue of Mennonite loyalty to Russia that had been questioned during the 1890s in sections of the Russian press re-emerged in the years before 1914 and became critical during World War I. Accused of being of German descent and political loyalty, Mennonites were now threatened with expropriation of their property and even banishment from the western borderlands. The use of history then became important in “proving” that Mennonites were of Dutch and not German descent.<sup>38</sup> *Volk* now became an issue of origin and identity clearly outside the bounds of the sacred. History, as the ultimate realization of lineal time linked to the present, was now implicated in a search for an acceptable national identity and, despite their foreign origin, proof that Mennonites had always been loyal, patriotic Russians.

All these efforts, however, came to nothing, as any idea they were part of an Empire that most of their ancestors had adopted over a hundred years before ended in revolution and civil war. Time was ruptured by violent events, and the hopes and prospects for a better future were destroyed. Many Mennonites became refugees, forced either to flee or to emigrate to other, usually more backward, lands. Those who remained were eventually swept into the destructive forces of the Soviet state under Stalin. Those who became refugees outside their Russian “homeland” (*Heimat*) developed a strong sense of exile that often resulted in overemphasizing past achievements and drawing sharp distinctions between “then and now,” and between “there and here.” At the same time Mennonites in exile developed a sense of being victims that led many to concentrate on issues of Mennonite suffering, past and present. These issues helped to shape Mennonite collective visions of the past, often mixing sacred and secular issues through drawing on models of suffering from their own experience and beyond.<sup>39</sup>

For those forced into exile in Canada, Germany, and Paraguay, the loss of a homeland and an uncertain future at first resulted in a reconsideration of their past and a search for peoplehood linked to different markers of identity than they had used in Russia. Immigrant leaders in Canada, and later in Paraguay, tried to rebuild not just the religious base of their communities but also many of the secular institutions of the old Mennonite Commonwealth. In Canada these efforts had failed by the early 1930s, and in Paraguay the backwardness of the country severely limited progress.<sup>40</sup> However, this did not stop some Mennonites from fantasizing about creating a Mennonite state that would replace the lost Russian Commonwealth.<sup>41</sup> For many Mennonites, understanding the significance and destiny of the Mennonite *Volk* now became crucial. Such views were increasingly associated not just with a religious community but with a sense of peoplehood founded on blood. These ideas drew from ideas derived from Germany and were couched in the language of Nazi ideology.<sup>42</sup> Now Mennonites had to prove their identity in terms of race more than religion, and the profane world of kinship connections became entangled with a search for racial origins of families and Mennonites as a distinct people of German descent. The idea that Mennonites had been founded as a faith community was replaced by a need to establish a legitimate, secular racist ancestry, one that reached back in time well beyond the Reformation.<sup>43</sup> As a *Volk*, defined primarily in terms of race, Mennonites had a racial destiny to fulfil with the German people rather than a faith to follow with other Christians in the hope of salvation.

Time and destiny also manifested itself in the few post-revolutionary accounts of Mennonite history that Mennonites published in the Soviet Union, but in rather different terms from those of the racially motivated accounts of Mennonites in exile.<sup>44</sup> The Soviet accounts tend to condemn the path of progress that other Mennonite historians described in triumphant terms and instead, in Marxist language, stress the exploitive ways of pre-revolutionary Mennonites. These accounts are written within a model of materialist history that assumes the past has a structure, is open to scientific analysis, and leads to one, inevitable end. This finality, though, was not a triumph of faith in a final apocalypse, or of the fulfilment of a racial destiny, but instead a victory of a social class – the proletariat – within a historically determined socio-economic formation. In both *völkisch* and communist views time was to be

transcended, but not in terms of faith in the resurrection. Instead, Mennonite fulfilment would be achieved through peoplehood: either through the racist inheritance of the *Volk* or through the worldwide victory of a social class, the *narod* (the “people”).<sup>45</sup>

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The emphasis on placing Mennonites in historical time, where religion played a secondary role to the destiny of peoplehood, was to a great extent also a logical outcome of the expansion of secular spheres of activity in the late Imperial Russia Mennonite Commonwealth. One consequence of this was that the generation who grew to maturity during this period, and especially those who attended high schools and often went on to higher education (even to Russian and foreign universities), was an increased diversity in personal expressions of belief. These ranged from a withdrawal from organized forms of worship into personal piety and even into what might be called varieties of unbelief.<sup>46</sup> In the older established congregations in Russia, there had been few outlets for any public expression of personal faith. After their formation in the 1860s and '70s, members of the Mennonite Brethren developed ways of expressing their faith through recounting their conversion experiences.<sup>47</sup> Individual Mennonites expressed their faith by quietly rejecting organized religion through withdrawal into personal reflection instead of attending church services.<sup>48</sup> For others a kind of natural religion developed.<sup>49</sup> Most notable in this regard were the Templers, many of Mennonite descent and highly educated, who developed forms of faith in which rational reflection on the world and their place within it appears almost devoid of the established forms and expressions of Mennonite faith.<sup>50</sup>

Varieties of unbelief certainly existed, but there are major problems in identifying their nature and the people involved. Mennonites holding such views either left the Mennonite community or, if they remained, were careful never to discuss such matters openly. Questions about Johann Cornies' views have long been raised. Later in the nineteenth century doubts arose about the noted Khortitsa teacher Abraham Neufeld, who left the colony world to found an advanced school in the city of Berdiansk. Some Mennonites who adopted socialist and later communist ideas were self-declared atheists;

but the beliefs of others such as Heinrich H. Epp, who cooperated with the Soviet regime, are harder to ascertain. In Canada, however, some of the more radical supporters of the idea of a Mennonite *Volk* exhibit signs of unbelief in their writings and actions. This might best be characterized as a form of general agnosticism, in which religious matters were rarely if ever discussed and religious ideas were subordinated to *völkisch* concerns with racial origins and purity of descent. Some Mennonites, even ministers, appeared to possess a split allegiance to sacred and secular views, expressing themselves publicly in religious terms but at other times speaking and writing in a quite secular language.<sup>51</sup>

A number of Mennonites also seem to have been only casually committed to a religious Mennonitism. Prominent among them were some who had emigrated from the Soviet Union in the 1920s and by the 1930s dominated the publication of newspapers and creative and historical forms of writing, much of it with a marked secular emphasis. Some held important positions in Mennonite “secular” organizations.<sup>52</sup> Arnold Dyck, today remembered more for his humorous Low German writing than for his other activities, edited an influential newspaper, and in 1935 founded the first secular Mennonite literary and arts periodical in North America, the *Mennonitisches Volkswarte*.<sup>53</sup> His commitment to promoting the idea of the Mennonite *Volk* is clear from the periodical’s title and is confirmed from a reading of its contents.<sup>54</sup> Dyck published articles on Mennonite history with an obvious stress on the world of the Russian Mennonites before the Revolution, and the more radical writings of people excluded from publishing in other Mennonite newspapers.<sup>55</sup> In later life he became quite alienated from Canada and settled in Germany; he died never having found a suitable *Heimat* for either himself or his vision of the Mennonites as a people.<sup>56</sup>

While Dyck’s allegiance to a secular version of Mennonite peoplehood is clear, the position of the editor of the major immigrant newspaper, *Der Bote*, Dietrich H. Epp, is harder to discern. Epp’s elder brother David, a teacher-preacher like his father Heinrich before him, was a major writer of historical accounts of the Russian Mennonites before 1914. But Dietrich, like his other brother Heinrich who never immigrated to Canada, did not become a minister. A leading teacher in Russia, in Canada Epp was active

in the central organizations of the immigrants and headed the major body, the *Zentrale Mennonitische Immigranten Komitee* (ZMIK), founded to re-establish the secular cultural and welfare institutions of the Mennonite Commonwealth before economic and political circumstances forced its closure in 1933.<sup>57</sup> Although in his newspaper Epp published religious articles and news of the Mennonite conferences, he resisted all overtures to make it the official organ of the conferences. As editor he permitted a considerable degree of freedom to immigrants of obviously rather secular and extreme political views to argue their case, often to the chagrin of many religious leaders of the Mennonite immigrant communities. Eventually he and the other editors of Mennonite newspapers agreed to restrict these discussions and not to permit certain Mennonites a voice in their columns.

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In 1944 Dietrich Epp and Arnold Dyck organized a reunion of former pupils of the Khortitsa High School who had immigrated to Canada, mostly since 1923. The reunion was to mark the centenary of the school's foundation in Russia, and was held in Winnipeg in July. The actual date of the centenary fell in 1942, but this was during one of the darkest years of World War Two, as the conflict expanded to global proportions and involved Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan, as well as Britain, the U.S., and the Soviet Union. And in 1942 the very future of the British Empire and Canada seemed uncertain. Since the outbreak of war in 1939, Mennonite supporters of a *völkisch* peoplehood had learned to assume a low profile in Canada, but they were privately excited when Hitler attacked the "evil" Soviet empire and German troops occupied the Mennonite homeland in Ukraine. But by July 1944 the tide had turned. The Red Army had retaken Ukraine and was rapidly advancing on Germany itself. Just a month before, in early June, British, American, and Canadian forces had landed in Normandy, opening a third front on mainland Europe to help their Soviet allies destroy the Third Reich. The Reich's future now looked doubtful, although no one could know that within less than a year the War would be over, Hitler would be dead, the Reich destroyed, and Stalin's Red Army would occupy Berlin. I am just speculating as to the atmosphere at that meeting of former teachers and



students of the high school in Winnipeg, but to many it must have seemed that any hope of Russian Mennonites regaining their lands and reclaiming their destiny had finally been dashed. In terms of history, the time of the Mennonites in Russia as they had known it had ended.

At the meeting, with typical Russländer efficiency, a formal program was prepared, and a president and secretaries were appointed to record the decisions.<sup>58</sup> A number of former pupils spoke, and the religious blessing was provided by a minister and former pupil, Johann G. Rempel. Rempel's closing address was strangely devoid of religious references; instead, he included quotes from Pushkin, the German poet von Kotzebue, and a German student fraternity (*Burschenschaft*)!<sup>59</sup> It was decided that a new publishing series be created to produce books on Mennonite history – in German, of course. As the meeting consisted of the “former members of the Chortitzer Zentralschule in Canada” so this title, in abbreviated form, gave the new venture its name: the Echo Verlag.<sup>60</sup>

Arnold Dyck designed a seal for the new series, featuring the great oak that had stood in the main settlement of Khortitsa long before Mennonites first settled in the region at the end of the eighteenth century. What better symbol to give Mennonite history a sense of time and rootedness in the Russian environment? Indeed, all but one of the fourteen books published in the series over the next twenty years were devoted to aspects of the history of Mennonites in Russia. The only exception was a volume marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the colony of Fernheim in Paraguay, for some the closest that Russian Mennonites in exile came to recreating the Mennonite Commonwealth. Not one of the books was devoted to Mennonite settlement in Canada, even though none of the organization's statutes excluded such a consideration or required that only accounts of Russia be published. Some books in the series reprint works published in Russia before 1914, but the new accounts of Mennonite settlements in Russia tend to follow a common template. In



*Echo Verlag logo first appeared in C.P. Toews, Die Tereker Ansiedlung (Rosthern: Echo Verlag, 1945).*

the volumes devoted to individual colonies, the initial years of settlement are dealt with first, often stressing the hardships of pioneering. Then secular achievements such as those in agriculture, industry, education, and community institutions are carefully chronicled, along with biographies of the leading figures in the community, many not ministers. Religious affairs are usually restricted to a single chapter.

Despite the obvious continued emphasis on Mennonite achievements in the past, there is a certain sense of pathos in most of the accounts. Most end with details of the particular settlement's decline and destruction, either during the revolution and civil war or later under communism.<sup>61</sup> The accounts are unlike those written before the Revolution that treat time as a continuum, where past, present, and future are united in a single, forward-looking triumphant narrative. In the new books any triumphant discussion focuses solely on the past. Overall, the books are dominated by a memory of time past, not of a sense of time connected with a fulfilment of destiny. Time seemed to have either stopped or stood still for an entire generation of Russian Mennonites; time present had turned into time past without any real links to the future. Perhaps, as the title of the series suggests, all these Mennonites could deal with was an echo of the past in the present that they alone could still hear in the far distance.

In presenting the proposal for creating the Echo Verlag series in 1944, Arnold Dyck noted that discussions on how to mark the centenary of the High School in the Mennonite press since 1942 had centered on a search for a suitable memorial to the school's achievements. The words he chose to express the process of creating a memorial naturally involved the German term *Denkmal* (monument): a *Denkmal-Frage* had been proposed and this had resulted in a *Denkmal-Projekt*.<sup>62</sup> The history of Mennonite time in Russia now had not just turned into a memory; it also entailed the need to establish a proper form in which memory could be memorialized. The issue of how Mennonites have shaped time into collective memories of their past, and realized them through memorials, will be the subject of my next lecture.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, rev. ed. (London: SCM Press, 1962), 17-18. As Cullmann points out, originally there was only time after Christ's birth (*anno domini*) and such time

was referred to as “in the years of the Lord” with time before being counted from the date of creation. Later, in the eighteenth century, the idea of counting back developed so Christ’s birth was seen as a mid-point in time.

<sup>2</sup> David Ewing Duncan, *The Calendar* (London: Fourth Estate, 1998); see also A.F. Aveni, *Empires of Time: Calendars, Clocks and Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> On the persistence of paganism into Christian time names see Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Seven Day Circle. The History and Meaning of the Week* (New York: Free Press, 1985), 24-25.

<sup>4</sup> Useful sources on anthropological approaches to time include Alfred Gell, *The Anthropology of Time. Cultural Constructions of Temporal Maps and Images* (Oxford: Berg, 1992), Carol J. Greenhouse, *A Moment’s Notice. Time Politics across Cultures* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), and the contributions by historians and anthropologists in Diane Owen Hughes and Thomas R. Trautmann, eds., *Time: Histories and Ethnologies* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Quakers in North America, however, did attempt to rid their calendar of pagan-derived names. See Zerubavel, *The Seven Day Circle*, 147 quoting Samuel G. Barton, “The Quaker calendar,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 93 (1949): 32-39.

<sup>6</sup> Many Anabaptists also believed that they were living in the endtimes so their salvation was close.

<sup>7</sup> The distinction between the sacred and profane was developed by Émile Durkheim in his *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1915).

<sup>8</sup> There were no birth ceremonies as these were associated with rituals of child baptism in most other Christian traditions. Due to high rates of infant mortality in most pre-modern societies rituals associated with birth were often muted.

<sup>9</sup> This was in the context of the emergence of a larger institutional “church” and conference in Russia that in turn subordinated the authority of the old, localized congregations; see below.

<sup>10</sup> John M. Janzen has discussed this variation in his entry “Burial customs,” *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (from now on, *ME*) 5, 110-11; it is an area that needs further research.

<sup>11</sup> Sometimes unbaptized children are set to one side as they would be treated differently from the baptized on the day of judgment.

<sup>12</sup> Soul sleep was roundly condemned by both the Protestant and Catholic opponents of Anabaptism; Calvin in particular condemned the idea.

<sup>13</sup> Thieleman Jansz van Braght, *Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenceless Christians who Baptized only upon Confession of Faith, and who Suffered and Died for the Testimony of Jesus, Their Saviour, from the Time of Christ to the Year A.D. 1660....* Trans. Joseph F. Sohmn. (Scottsdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1964), 406-07.

<sup>14</sup> Although not without some debate and controversy; see R. F. Jones, *Ancients and Moderns: a Study of the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth-Century England*, 2nd ed. (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1975).

<sup>15</sup> Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1988).

<sup>16</sup> The classic study is J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress. An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth* (London: Macmillan, 1920).

<sup>17</sup> See Roger Bartlett, *Human Capital: the Settlement of Foreigners in Russia, 1762-1804* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979) on the intellectual and modernizing context of imperial immigration policy at this period.

<sup>18</sup> On the background to Russian time see R.E.F. Smith, "Time, space and use in early Russia" in T. H. Aston et al., eds., *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), 273-93.

<sup>19</sup> On these connections see Leonard G. Friesen, "Mennonites and their peasant neighbours in Ukraine before 1900," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* (from now on, *JMS*) 10 (1992): 56-69.

<sup>20</sup> As opposed to official *rossification* (making Mennonites subjects of the Tsar in a multicultural empire) and *russification* (making them Russian by identity and culture); see James Urry, "The Russian Mennonites, nationalism and the state 1789-1917" in Abe J. Dueck, ed., *Canadian Mennonites and the Challenge of Nationalism* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1994), 21-67.

<sup>21</sup> See Norma Jost Voth, *Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 1990), vol. 1, 24-30, 94-104; vol. 2, 113-25.

<sup>22</sup> Franz Isaak, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten* (Halbstadt: H.J. Braun, 1908), 94; 98; I have discussed this episode elsewhere: "Mennonites marking time: a message for the Millennium," *Mennonite Historian* 25.4 (1999): 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Lindsey Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1998), 249. Peter's reforms of time and the liturgy provoked a massive counter-reaction that led to the formation of the Old Believers, who were subsequently severely persecuted by church and state.

<sup>24</sup> See the careful planning of the Mennonite agricultural year reported in an official scientific journal by Philip Wiebe, Cornies' son-in-law and successor, "Ackerbauwirtschaft bei den Mennoniten im südlichen Russland," *Archive für wissenschaftliche Kunde von Russland* 12 (1853): 496-536.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in the memoirs of Abraham Braun, "Kleine Chronik der Mennoniten an der Molotschna seit ihrer Ansiedlung bis in mein 80. Jahr," *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch* (1907), 72-73. "Pelzhosen" referred to large sheepskin pants Mennonites had probably adopted from their neighbors the Tatars, and which Cornies obviously thought were opposed to modern forms of dress that indicated Mennonite progress in society.

<sup>26</sup> Clocks had been manufactured in Prussia; see Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen, "Keeping faith and keeping time: Old Testament images on Mennonite clocks," *Mennonite Life* 55.4 (2000) ([http://www.bethelks.edu/mennonitelife/2000dec/2000dec\\_toc.html](http://www.bethelks.edu/mennonitelife/2000dec/2000dec_toc.html)); Arthur Kroeker, "Old clocks – keeping time, yesterday and today," *Preservings: the Journal of the Flemish Mennonite Historical Society* 23 (December 2003): 128-30.

<sup>27</sup> The picture is of Kornelius Hildebrand; another Khortitsa clockmaker, Peter Lepp, founded the industrial giant Lepp and Wallmann; on these figures and their links to clockmaking see David H. Epp, *Sketches of the Pioneer Years of Industry in the Mennonite Settlements of South Russia*. Trans. Jacob P. Penner. (Leamington, ON: Jacob P. Penner, 1972).

<sup>28</sup> David Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press for Harvard Univ. Press, 1983).

<sup>29</sup> The most famous paper in this regard is E. P. Thompson's "Time, work-discipline, and

industrial capitalism,” *Past and Present* 38 (1967): 56-97.

<sup>30</sup> Although not just for practical reasons. Arthur Kroeger, descendant of the Khortitsa clock manufacturing family, told me that a large clock formed part of the dowry of the daughters of wealthy farmers even when they had become outdated in terms of their technology. His father would not have one of the old-fashioned clocks his firm still manufactured to meet this demand in his house, preferring modern German clocks (Arthur Kroeger, personal communication).

<sup>31</sup> I have discussed the economic aspects of this institutional complex in my “The cost of community: the funding and economic management of the Russian Mennonite Commonwealth before 1914,” *JMS* 10 (1992): 22-55.

<sup>32</sup> Richard K. Fenn, *Time Exposure. The Personal Experience of Time in Secular Societies* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001), 3.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Klaassen, “The Anabaptist critique of Constantinian Christianity,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (from now on, *MQR*) 55 (1981): 218-30.

<sup>34</sup> These attacks were mainly a reaction at the international level to the rise of the German Empire as an economic and military threat to Russia, especially its crucial western regions. See Terry Martin, “The German question in Russia, 1848-96,” *Russian History* 18 (1991): 371-432.

<sup>35</sup> For references to such usage and its connection to the idea of a state-within-a-state, see my *Mennonites, Politics and Peoplehood: Europe – Russia – Canada 1525-1980* (Winnipeg: Univ. of Manitoba Press, 2006), 95-96, 127.

<sup>36</sup> The earliest Mennonite “history” in Russia is *Kurze älteste Geschichte der Taufgesinnten (Mennoniten genannt)* (Odessa: Franzow & Nitzsche, 1852). This was probably produced by Philipp Wiebe of the Molochna-based Agricultural Union; a manuscript copy slightly longer with details on agricultural production is in the Peter Braun Archive (File 1636).

<sup>37</sup> Even P.M. Friesen’s massive attempt to document the emergence of the Mennonite Brethren, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Brüderschaft in Russland (1789-1910) im Rahmen der mennonitischen Gesamtgeschichte* (Halbstadt: Raduga, 1911), became burdened with details of Mennonite secular achievements. On Russian Mennonite historiography with special reference to the Khortitsa writers, see David G. Rempel, “An introduction to Russian Mennonite historiography,” *MQR* 48 (1974): 409-46.

<sup>38</sup> This matter has been thoroughly investigated by Abraham Friesen in his *In Defense of Privilege: Russian Mennonites and the State before and during World War I* (Winnipeg: Kindred, 2006).

<sup>39</sup> On the importance of the collective shaping of past time, see Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps. Collective Memory and the Shape of the Past* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press), 2003; on its realization in memorials see my next lecture in this issue of *CGR*.

<sup>40</sup> On the efforts in Canada see my *Mennonites, Politics and Peoplehood* Chapter 8; on Paraguay see Peter P. Klassen, *Die Mennoniten in Paraguay. Reich Gottes und Reich dieser Welt* (Bolanden-Weierhof: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1988); *Die deutsch-völkische Zeit in der Kolonie Fernheim, Chaco, Paraguay 1933-1945. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der auslandsdeutschen Mennoniten während des Dritten Reich* (Bolanden-Weierhof: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1990); John D. Thiesen, *Mennonite and Nazi: Attitudes*

among Mennonite Colonists in Latin America, 1933-1945 (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Books, 1999).

<sup>41</sup> J.J. Hildebrand and others; see my “A *Mennostaat* for the *Mennovolk*: Mennonite immigrant fantasies in Canada in the 1930s,” *JMS* 14 (1996): 65-80. Hildebrand, fascinated with proving the destiny of Mennonites as a *Volk*, also produced a detailed chronology of Mennonite history: J.J. Hildebrand, *Hildebrand's Zeittafel: Chronologische Zeittafel. 1500 Daten historische Ereignisse und Geschehnisse aus der Zeit der Geschichte der Mennoniten Westeuropas, Russlands und Amerikas* (Winnipeg: the author, 1945).

<sup>42</sup> Heinrich H[ayo] Schroeder, *Russlanddeutsche Friesen* (Döllstädt-Langensalza: Selbstverlag, 1936), a book widely distributed among refugees from the Soviet Union in the 1930s in Germany, Canada, and South America. At the start of his book Schroeder lists “German” Mennonite “Kameraden” murdered in the “struggle” against Bolshevism, thereby establishing a sense of racial victimhood.

<sup>43</sup> Most notable in this genre was the work of Benjamin H. Unruh in his *Die niederländisch-niederdeutschen Hintergründe der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Karlsruhe: Selbstverlag, 1955). Although published ten years after the end of World War II, the work was originally conceived in Nazi Germany where, though not a Party member, Unruh had close links with the Nazi regime. See Diether Götz Lichdi, *Mennoniten im Dritten Reich. Dokumentation und Deutung* (Weierhof: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1977).

<sup>44</sup> Heinrich H. Epp, “Aus der Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonien” in M. Jaworsky, ed., *Kurzgefasste Geschichte der Ukraine* (Kharkov: Zentralverlag, 1928) and especially Reinmarus [David Penner], *Anti-Menno: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mennoniten in Russland* (Moscow: Zentral Völker Verlag, 1930).

<sup>45</sup> There is a difference here in the apparent similarities; while Mennonites who supported *völkisch* ideas thought they would survive as a distinct *Volk*, communists believed that a separate Mennonite identity would disappear as a member of the *narod*; in terms of salvation, individual Mennonites would be judged but all the *Volk* and the *narod* would share in a collective destiny.

<sup>46</sup> I have adopted the phrase “varieties of unbelief” from Martin E. Marty’s book of the same name, *Varieties of Unbelief* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964); his discussion is relevant to my theme, especially Chapters 7 and 8. On secularization in British and German society during this period see Hugh McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848 -1914* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 2000), and on intellectual ideas associated with secularization, Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1975).

<sup>47</sup> On the expression of conversion experiences see John B. Toews, “The early Mennonite Brethren and conversion,” *JMS* 11 (1993): 76-97; John B. Toews, “Mennonite Brethren founders relate their conversion,” *Direction* 23 (1994): 31-37. As an organized church the Mennonite Brethren were as influenced by secular institutional forms as all other Mennonites, and in spite of their emphasis on personal experience, as a church in Canada they have perhaps become even more centralized and influenced by rational organizational procedures than other Mennonites.

<sup>48</sup> David G. Rempel's father rarely attended church but instead on Sundays would retire to the sitting room for a period of quiet reflection and personal devotion. See David G. Rempel (with Cornelia Rempel Carlson), *A Mennonite family in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union 1789-1923* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2002), 98, and personal communication; I have heard of similar things from other Mennonites about their father's attitudes to organized religion.

<sup>49</sup> The schoolteacher, poet, and writer Gerhard Loewen reveals such tendencies; see Harry Loewen, "Gerhard Loewen: Bridge between the Old World and the New (1863-1946)" in Harry Loewen, ed., *Shepherds, Servants and Prophets: Leadership among the Russian Mennonites (ca. 1880-1960)* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press/ Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2003), 279-95. There is also the interesting natural history and conservation society established by school teachers in Khortitsa before 1914; see the account by Heinrich H. Epp in N.J. Kroeker [ed.], *First Mennonite villages in Russia 1789-1943; Khortitsa – Rosental* (Vancouver: N.J. Kroeker, 1981), 142-44.

<sup>50</sup> Heinrich Sawatzky, *Mennonite Templers*. Trans. and ed. Victor G. Doerksen. (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1990); Victor G. Doerksen, "Mennonite Templers in Russia," *JMS* 3 (1985): 128-37.

<sup>51</sup> Jacob H. Janzen, the influential elder of the Russian Mennonites in Waterloo, might be included in such a consideration. Of course, all educated religious leaders had to face the reality that their understanding of faith varied considerably from that of the Platt Mennonite members of their congregations.

<sup>52</sup> These include Gerhard W. Sawatzky of the Mennonite Land Settlement Board, the writer Walter Quiring, the poet Gerhard J. Friesen (Fritz Senn), the author Gerhard Toews, and a host of other writers on Mennonite issues in the 1930s including J.J. Hildebrand, B.J. Schellenberg, and others.

<sup>53</sup> On Dyck see Al Reimer, "Arnold Dyck (1889-1970)" in Harry Loewen, ed. *Shepherds, Servants and Prophets: Leadership among the Russian Mennonites (ca. 1880-1960)* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press/Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2003), 69-84.

<sup>54</sup> Dyck outlined the aims of the periodical in the first number; see "Ein Geleit vom Herausgeber" in which he also explains why this "newest child" off the Mennonite press is "baptized" with the term *Volk: Mennonitisches Volkswarte* 1.1 (1935): 1.

<sup>55</sup> For instance, the racist writings of Heinrich Hayo Schroeder, including his "Russlandfriesen erleben ihre Urheimat," *Mennonitische Warte* 4.44 (August 1938): 286-92; 4.45 (September 1938): 318-25; by this time Dyck had dropped the Volk in the title but not in the content.

<sup>56</sup> In April 1963 Dyck wrote to the Mennonite poet Fritz Senn (Gerhard J. Friesen), who was visiting South Africa, noting that Senn was in "exactly that spot on the globe where I would have liked to go with our Mennonites and try to establish our own state in proximity to our ethnic cousins, the Boers, in order to make it manifest – especially to ourselves – that we are truly capable of the utmost accomplishments." Quoted in Gerald K. Friesen (trans. and ed.), "Life as a sum of shattered hopes: Arnold Dyck's letters to Gerhard J. Friesen (Fritz Senn)," *JMS* 6 (1988): 128. On the Russian Mennonites' strange liking for the Boers, see my "Russian Mennonites and the Boers of South Africa: a forgotten connection," *Mennonite Historian* 20.3 (1994): 1-2, 12.



<sup>57</sup> On ZMIK, Epp's work, and the circumstances of its closure, see my *Mennonites, Politics and Peoplehood*, Chapter 8.

<sup>58</sup> *Die ehemaligen Schüler der Chortitzer Zentralschule in Canada* [Rosthern: Echo-Verlag, 1945].

<sup>59</sup> Johann G. Rempel, "Nachklang" in *Die ehemaligen Schüler ...* [Rosthern: Echo-Verlag, 1945], 40-41; Rempel was secretary to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and elder brother of the noted historian David G. Rempel. I am grateful to Walter Sauer of Heidelberg and Jack Thiessen for identifying the anonymous German sources.

<sup>60</sup> The name was derived from selecting the first letters from the phrase, *die ehemal-Schülern der Chortitzer Zentralschule*.

<sup>61</sup> It was, in the words of a popular picture book on the Russian Mennonites, a time when their destiny as a people had been fulfilled: Walter Quiring and Helen Bartel, *Als ihre Zeit erfüllt war: 150 Jahre Bewährung in Russland*, translated as *In the Fullness of Time: 150 Years of Mennonite Sojourn in Russia* (Kitchener, ON: A. Klassen, [1974]).

<sup>62</sup> Arnold Dyck in *Die ehemaligen Schüler...*, 34-35.



*Monument photo courtesy of Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, MB.*



## LECTURE TWO

### Memory: Monuments and the Marking of Pasts

*James Urry*

The annual cycle of rituals that re-enact the life of Christ, discussed in my first lecture, still structure sacred time for most Christians, including Mennonites. The rituals create a regular pattern of observance that also acts as a form of continuous remembrance. Although the worshipers have no personal experience of the events being marked, through regular participation an additional form of remembrance is created as those raised in faith remember their own earlier involvement in acts of worship. Such acts, however, entail more than just personal experiences; all public rituals regularize action and help establish common identities and shared experiences that over time create collective memories.<sup>1</sup> For Christians this collective sense of being and belonging reaches back to the very foundations of the faith and the establishment of the early church. For Mennonites it has increasingly been focused on their Anabaptist ancestors, who themselves believed they had reconstituted the early church and thereby recaptured the true meaning of the Christian faith.

The sense of a connection between the Christian past and the present is clearly seen in Thieleman van Braght's *Martyrs Mirror*, one of the central edificatory books of the Mennonite canon from the seventeenth century onwards.<sup>2</sup> This massive volume brings together published and unpublished accounts of Anabaptist suffering, mainly in the movement's formative years in the sixteenth century, and links these experiences to those of the martyrs of the early church.<sup>3</sup> The *Martyrs Mirror* presents readers with shocking accounts of the suffering and death of hundreds of people. Personal testimonies of victims, records of their imprisonment, torture, interrogations, and executions are almost obscenely enhanced by the vivid engravings that artist Jan Lyuken produced to illustrate the volume.

At the start of the book van Braght tells his readers that his collection

... was written for a perpetual remembrance of the steadfast and blessed martyrs; concerning whom it is the will of God that they

should not only always be remembered here among men, but whom He Himself purposes never to forget but to remember with everlasting mercy.<sup>4</sup>

Van Braght thus intended the *Martyrs Mirror* to be not just a record of Christian past suffering; by concentrating on Anabaptist martyrs it was to establish a perpetual memorial for their descendants in faith. The martyrs' faith had been tested through persecution, suffering, and death. Van Braght believed that the spirit of relative toleration, wealth, and luxury Mennonites enjoyed in the Dutch "Golden Age" exposed them to the dangers of "the world." Worldly success was not a sign of God's blessing but merely a new test of Mennonite faithfulness. As a consequence, their salvation was now at as great a risk as it had been for their Anabaptist ancestors at the time of their widespread persecution.<sup>5</sup> By reading the martyr accounts, van Braght hoped contemporary Mennonites would reflect upon their salvation by considering the sufferings of true Christians at earlier times.

This reflective purpose is why the words "theater" and "mirror" occur in the book's title. The term "mirror" hints at the idea of a "mirror of memory," an idea common in Renaissance thought, while "theater" suggests an exhibition or display in the public sphere. The kind of theater van Braght had in mind was not for entertainment:

... most beloved, do not expect that we shall bring you into Grecian theatres, to gaze on merry comedies or gay performances ... we shall lead you into dark valleys, even into the valleys of death (Ps. 23:4), where nothing will be seen but dry bones, skulls, and frightful skeletons of those who have been slain; these beheaded, those drowned, others strangled at the stake, some burnt, others broken on the wheel, many torn by wild beasts, half devoured, and put to death in manifold cruel ways....<sup>6</sup>

The mention of Greek theater is not van Braght's only reference to the classical world. Elsewhere he compares the heroes recorded in antiquity with Christian martyrs.<sup>7</sup> However, he does so in order to contrast ancient depictions of heroic acts involving violence and earthly triumphs with the faith, suffering, and desire for salvation that early Christians and

Anabaptists sought through martyrdom.<sup>8</sup> In doing so, he draws attention to the contradiction between triumphant celebration and profound reflection implied in the marking of pasts. This contradiction would later re-emerge in Mennonite attempts to memorialize the past with forms derived from worldly mirrors and theatrical performances.

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In the original Dutch edition, van Braght refers to the Anabaptist martyrs as *Doopsgezinden* or “Baptist-minded,” and points out that this term was not really accepted “by choice or desire, but of necessity.” He suggests that “their proper name ... should be, Christ-minded, Apostle-minded, or Gospel-minded.”<sup>9</sup> He mentions Menno Simons only in passing and rarely uses the term “Mennonite” or its variation “Mennist.” Like the term “Anabaptist,” Mennonite was a label first applied to the *Doopsgezinden* by their opponents. In the Dutch Republic of van Braght’s time Menno Simons was recognized by descendants of the scattered Anabaptist founders as an important early leader, but his name had still not been adopted by many to differentiate themselves from others in a world of competing Protestant groups identified by the names of their alleged founders.<sup>10</sup> Just as Calvin’s name became associated with the Reformed Church (Calvinist/Calvinism) and Luther’s with German protestant churches (Lutheranism), and these terms were gradually appropriated by their own followers, so too was the term Mennonite.

While for many believers their identity became associated with Menno’s name, it took longer for Menno to achieve iconographic status for Mennonites and for members of other Protestant groups. A Dutch engraving of 1817 for a monument celebrating the history of Protestantism includes a portrait of Menno, along with Calvin, Luther, and others, as one of the founders of reformed religion.<sup>11</sup> However, two earlier engravings depicting triumphant monuments dedicated just to *Doopsgezinden* give Menno’s portrait pride of place, high above the other pictures and allegoric images surrounded by heavenly clouds and chubby cherubs disguised as angels.<sup>12</sup> In spite of the architectural and sculptural appearance of the monuments, the structures illustrated in the engravings were probably never intended to be

realized in physical form.<sup>13</sup> But by the middle of the nineteenth century some Mennonites in Germany did propose that to mark the 300th anniversary of Menno's death in January 1861 a physical monument (*Denkmal*) should be raised to Menno's memory and his role in founding their faith.

The idea for such a monument was first proposed in the *Mennonitische Blätter* in 1859. It was but one proposal for a series of celebrations also intended to include festive church services on a specific date (*Gedenktage*) and the establishment of a fund (*Menno-Stiftung*) to support the training of ministers and the widows of ministers. The idea to mark Menno's death in these ways met with considerable opposition from leaders of more conservative congregations in the German lands and in Russia. The resulting debates were publicly played out in the columns of the *Mennonitische Blätter*.<sup>14</sup> Wolfgang Froese, in his analysis of these debates, suggests the issue brought to a head differences that had emerged by the middle of the nineteenth century between the views of the mainly older, rural lay ministers and the newer, educated and professional clergy serving mainly urban congregations.<sup>15</sup> These differences are complex but at the time included theological issues and divergent attitudes to the development of a professional, trained clergy. The main opposition came from rural areas of southern Germany, Prussia, and Russia.<sup>16</sup>

Conservative correspondents questioned the appropriateness of celebrations that focused on a mere mortal, and reminded readers that it was Jesus, not Menno, who had died on the cross. By focusing attention on Menno, they argued, believers' thoughts would be drawn away from this basic truth. Some also questioned whether Menno, or any single early Anabaptist, should be seen as a founder of the Mennonite faith. Had not, they asked rhetorically, the Anabaptists only rediscovered the true Christian faith and re-established it? Anabaptist martyrs stood in a long line of Christian martyrs who had suffered and died for the true faith. This line reached back before the Reformation, in their view to the Waldensians and eventually to the first Christian martyrs. Marking Menno's memory in the proposed ways threatened to betray the Mennonites' foundation in Christ and as a faith community. In southern Russia, a minister of the *Kleine Gemeinde* was so impressed by the arguments of one south German elder that he wrote to him in support.<sup>17</sup>

Behind this debate lay deeper concerns about how the past was to be represented in an increasingly secular society. One elder described events such as the unveiling in 1856 of a statue to Luther at Worms, and the 1859 festival to celebrate Schiller, the poet of German liberty, as “an unseemly veneration of the human spirit and homage to the spirit of the times.”<sup>18</sup> The “spirit of the times” to which he referred was the promotion of nationalism. The age of nationalism provided immense opportunities for celebrating public events and building triumphant monuments associated with the creation of nations.<sup>19</sup> While religious events such as the Reformation and figures such as Luther could be, and indeed were, appropriated to the cause of national identity, the major focus was on secular historical events and individuals involved in national awakening and the struggle to achieve independence. War was often glorified in oversized monuments and statues raised to national heroes, military figures, and “martyrs” to the nationalist cause, many of whom were plainly not acting as true Christians. But nationalism itself took on many of the features of religious fervor, and the marking of a nation’s past acquired sacredness outside Christian tradition. As one scholar has noted:

... every nation has its own story of triumphs and tragedies, victories and betrayals ... those who have sacrificed themselves on behalf of the nation have demonstrated in their lives – or their deaths – that its worth transcends other values. Hence, the significance of cenotaphs, tombs of the unknown soldier, memorial services, and the like.<sup>20</sup>

It is not surprising, therefore, that in such a context the proposal for a Menno monument met with opposition from conservative religious leaders.

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Although no monument was erected in 1861, Menno’s death was marked by services in a number of Mennonite congregations.<sup>21</sup> During the 1870s, however, plans for a monument were renewed, and eventually in 1879 a stone obelisk was erected to Menno’s memory at Witmarsum in the Dutch province of Friesland.<sup>22</sup> It was claimed that the site on which it was located



*Menno Simons monument photo by Jan Gleysteen courtesy of Mennonite Archives of Ontario.*

was where Menno had first preached after leaving the Catholic Church in 1536, but as with many nationalist monuments, the historical accuracy of this claim is dubious.<sup>23</sup> The erection of the memorial again provoked controversy. The editor of the American Mennonite newspaper *Zur Heimath* described it as an idol.<sup>24</sup> This newspaper was newly founded by immigrants from Russia, but the Mennonites who remained in Russia were soon to raise monuments themselves to their more immediate past.

In 1889, during celebrations to mark the centenary of Mennonite settlement in Russia, an obelisk, somewhat similar in shape to the Dutch Menno monument, was erected in the Khortitsa settlement.<sup>25</sup> Two other memorials were also raised at this time, though not to spiritual leaders but to Johann Bartsch and Jakob Höppner, the deputies who had negotiated with Prince Potemkin the initial agreement leading to massive Mennonite migration from Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>26</sup>

After 1889, however, Mennonites in Russia do not appear to have erected further monuments to mark similar anniversaries of key pioneer events, most notably the centenary of receipt of the Mennonite Privilegium in 1800 or the founding of the Molochna colony in 1804.<sup>27</sup> Instead, the opening of new schools, hospitals, and other institutional structures seemed sufficient to mark the steady march of progress in the Mennonite world. Russian Mennonites looked to the future and played down their immigrant status, stressing that they were part of an Empire of diverse peoples and origins working towards a common future.<sup>28</sup> The only other Mennonite memorial of significance in pre-revolutionary Russia was a large cross erected in 1888 in the cemetery of Neu Halbstadt, Molochna to the memory of the noted preacher and poet Bernhard Harder. The cost of this marker was raised by private subscription, so it was not an official marker of collective memory.<sup>29</sup>

The destruction of the Mennonite Commonwealth in the twentieth century, after a period of bitter war and revolution and the assumption of Soviet control, removed any further possibility that Mennonites would celebrate their past in their old Russian homeland. Instead, these events were to lay the foundation for a new marking of the past by Mennonite refugees from the Soviet Union in North and South America. They would draw on older ideas of Mennonite suffering, whereby the sacredness of suffering would be combined with secular appeals to peoplehood emphasizing their status as victims.

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In North America during the twentieth century, as the idea that diverse groups of mainly European immigrants had pioneered the continent became increasingly acceptable, a large number of pioneer monuments were erected by their descendants, usually to mark significant anniversaries of settlement. Mennonites in the United States, and somewhat later in Canada, would eventually join the descendants of other immigrant communities in triumphantly marking their settlement with celebratory events and the raising of monuments. This has become especially popular among the descendants of Mennonites from Russia. The monuments and memorials usually emphasize the Mennonites' maintenance of faith, their contributions to the development and prosperity of the regions where they settled, and their status as good citizens. Sometimes the lead was taken by non-Mennonites, as with the statue erected in 1942 by the municipal council of North Newton, Kansas.<sup>30</sup> At other times Mennonites were active in their own cause, most notably in 1974, the year marking the centenary of the first immigration of Mennonites from Russia to North America. Undoubtedly, the most striking of the memorials raised on this occasion is that by the descendants of Swiss Volhynian Mennonites at Hopefield, Kansas.<sup>31</sup> But a less monumental marking of the past had occurred earlier in North American history.

In Canada the first marking of the Mennonites' arrival from Russia in 1874 seems to have occurred in 1924, at the fiftieth anniversary of settlement.<sup>32</sup> Celebrations appear to have been muted and no monuments were erected. At this period Mennonites still kept largely to themselves, and



public celebrations of nation-building were largely dominated by Canadians of British descent. However, books to mark the anniversary were published, one surprisingly written by a newly-arrived Mennonite refugee from Soviet Russia.<sup>33</sup> Ten years later another new settler, Arnold Dyck, published a booklet marking the sixtieth anniversary of settlement.<sup>34</sup>

As I argued in my previous lecture, up to World War Two a number of these new Mennonite settlers in Canada, or *Russländer* as they became known, were more concerned with issues of Mennonite peoplehood and events in their old homeland than with their place in Canada. One indication of this is seen in the wording of the Loyal Address that Mennonites presented to King George VI on his official tour of Canada in May 1939. Three Mennonite groups are identified in the address, and each has a paragraph briefly outlining in sequence their historical settlement in Canada. The first group identified are those who came in the late eighteenth century from the United States because they “preferred to remain under British rule and protection”; these people pioneered “in a new and undeveloped country.” The second paragraph describes those who, between 1874 and 1877, settled in the Red River Valley and “had to undergo great hardships as pioneers” but “rejoiced in the new found liberty which had been denied them in Russia.” The last group described are the *Russländer* who “came from Russia during the years 1925 to 1930”:

The terrible revolution which convulsed that country just prior to the years named, and the bloody character of the Russian Government, brought the greatest distress to them. All they possessed was taken from them. Many, together with other Christians, were either murdered or banished to the bleak tundras and forests of Northern Russia. Famine and contagious diseases decimated their ranks. In their great need and distress they asked for help in order to escape from the horrors of that country. The Canadian Government on the petition of the Mennonites here, granted the same and 21,000 of these refugees were permitted to make their home here.<sup>35</sup>

The account of *Russländer* settlement presented in the address in fact collapses a number of events into a single story of unrelenting suffering, although neither the Soviets nor Stalin are mentioned by name.



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The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 meant that Russländer who still hoped they could return to Russia were forced to realize their future now lay in Canada.<sup>36</sup> Not content with marking their own past, they were now eager to appropriate the past of other groups in order to stress their contribution as pioneering settlers by linking themselves to the 1870 immigrants. J.J. Hildebrand, one of the strongest supporters in the 1930s of Mennonite peoplehood and a separate *Mennostaat*, in the post-war world turned his attention to Canadian history. In 1950, just ahead of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the first Mennonite settlement in Manitoba, he published an account, in the settler-pioneer mode, of the 1870s immigration.<sup>37</sup> By the time the centenary of Mennonite settlement in Manitoba from Russia was celebrated in 1974, official multiculturalism policies gave additional support to the idea that non-British immigrants, including Mennonites, played a major role in settling Western Canada. But during the year of celebrations, so prominent were some Russländer in organizing events that an outsider might have mistakenly thought it was the 1920s groups and their descendants, not those of the 1870s, who were the original pioneer settlers. In Winnipeg and surrounding areas, a key Russländer in many of these activities was Gerhard Lohrenz.<sup>38</sup>

In the early 1950s Lohrenz was younger than most leaders of the Russländer community. Since the 1930s he had been a teacher and minister with literary ambitions in a Manitoba country school, and he moved to Winnipeg only after the Second World War. As many of the older leaders retired or died, he became more influential in Mennonite affairs, and by 1974 he was the elder of the Sargent Avenue congregation in Winnipeg. Lohrenz had also become something of an expert on Russian Mennonite history, lectured at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College on that topic, and helped establish local and national historical societies. Later he would try his hand at writing popular historical accounts. During the 1960s and '70s he also pioneered guided Mennonite tours to the Soviet Union, taking groups to revisit the old settlements in Russia and Ukraine. This required

considerable skill, but his language proficiency and earlier experience of Soviet officialdom made his tours a great success.

One consequence of these visits was that Lohrenz was instrumental in convincing Soviet officials to sell to Canadian Mennonites the Khortitsa centennial memorials to Johann Bartsch and Jakob Hoepfner (Höppner). Bartsch's memorial stone arrived in Canada in 1969 and Hoepfner's – complete with its original headstones – in 1973.<sup>39</sup> They were placed in a new complex devoted to Mennonite settler pioneers, the Mennonite Heritage Village outside Steinbach.<sup>40</sup> As common ancestors of the 1874 immigrants and later immigrants and refugees, Höppner and Bartsch in memorialized form were made welcome by all Mennonites. But for Russländer the memorials had special significance, as they provided an important link between their role in the development of Russian society and, after the prosperous post-war years, their own contribution to Canada's growth and prosperity since the 1920s.<sup>41</sup>

In 1974, in conjunction with the centenary celebrations, Lohrenz published a short account of Mennonite settlement in Western Canada. In it the 1870s immigrants are dealt with in a single chapter that, strangely, covers only 1874 to 1926. The following chapters hardly mention the earlier immigrants or their descendants but instead focus on Lohrenz's own Russländer, who “served as stimulation to the Mennonite body and led to a veritable [cultural] renaissance.”<sup>42</sup> Obviously, for Lohrenz, any Mennonite achievements as Canadian settler-pioneers to be honored in 1974 were as much the work of his own people as of the original settlers. But he really belonged to that generation of Russian Mennonite refugee/immigrants who, exiled from their real homeland, remained at heart more in Russia than in Canada. Lohrenz's autobiography, published in 1976, ends with his move to Winnipeg in 1947. Although by the time he published his memoirs Lohrenz had lived longer in Canada than in Russia, twelve of the book's eighteen chapters deal with his life prior to emigration – and chapter thirteen is entitled “We emigrate from our Fatherland.”<sup>43</sup>

This Russia-focus of many Russländer also remained dominated by concerns with events surrounding the Russian Revolution and its immediate aftermath. In the period following World War Two, however, this part of their past became refocused as new refugee immigrants arrived and the

Cold War began. Ideas of suffering – a theme linked to older Mennonite traditions and developed in the inter-war period – now drew on new sources of victimhood. Primarily this centered on their being victims of communism, a useful identification in the Cold War’s chilly atmosphere. Indeed, many Russländer with rather shady pasts in the 1930s, due to their pro-German and in some cases pro-Nazi sympathies, found redemption in the increasing polarization of East and West. The stand-off between the United States, its allies, and the Soviet Union produced new dichotomies: communism versus democracy, totalitarianism versus freedom, atheism versus Christianity. The Russian revolution, the civil war, and other sources of their suffering were clearly all the result of communism; Russländer now discovered they were on the side of the righteous.

However, the problem was that many Russländer had left the Soviet Union in its very formative period; most had departed before Stalin came to power, and certainly all who could leave had left long before the Great Terror began in the late 1930s.<sup>44</sup> While nearly all Russländer had lost relatives, many close family members, and friends in Stalin’s purges, the Mennonites who really experienced the full force of communism as depicted in the western rhetoric of the Cold War were the refugees who had escaped with the retreating German armies in World War Two. Members of these groups who avoided being forcibly repatriated to the Soviet Union had come to Canada, either directly or via Paraguay, between the late 1940s and the 1950s. If after the war Russländer had to appropriate the pioneer settler history of earlier Mennonite immigrants to prove they were loyal Canadian citizens, so also did they have to align themselves with these later refugee groups who had suffered under Stalin to insist they too had been victims of communism.

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In 1979, Gerhard Lohrenz raised the issue in the Mennonite German-language press of whether the time had come to erect a memorial to, as he put it, “our martyrs.”<sup>45</sup> After noting how Cossacks, Poles, and Jews had all built monuments recording their bitter experiences during the twentieth century, he briefly reminded Mennonite readers of the suffering “our little people (*unser Völklein*)” had experienced in Russia, particularly under the

Soviets. Then he asked, “Where are our memorials?”<sup>46</sup> The term *Völklein*, referring to pre-revolutionary and inter-war usage, was instantly recognizable to older Russländer readers but was not so familiar to Mennonite refugees who had arrived after 1945. Yet Lohrenz clearly had these people in mind when he brought up the subject of a memorial to new Mennonite martyrs. His congregation included a large number of post-war Mennonite refugees as well as some Russländer, and both groups were to be included in his suggested memorial.

Lohrenz’s article produced a number of responses. A post-1945 immigrant noted that the idea of erecting a suitable memorial to their suffering had been raised first by his people in 1971.<sup>47</sup> The issues surrounding the memorial therefore involved different interpretations of past Mennonite suffering, and longstanding differences between Russländer and post-1945 refugees about the true nature of communism and the Mennonite experience in Russia and the Soviet Union.<sup>48</sup> As has been noted, Russländer views of suffering centered on their experiences of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and subsequent events that had been given new shape and meaning in the inter-war period. The post-1945 immigrants stressed their experiences in the Stalinist period, especially arrests, terror, executions, deportation, the Second World War, and the Great Trek out of the Soviet Union with retreating German troops between 1930 and 1945. The two groups shaped their memories very differently. Given their number and longer experience in Canadian society, the Russländer tended to dominate discussions of the past.

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A committee was soon established to plan for the memorial. From the minutes of the first meeting and the press articles that followed, clearly Lohrenz had already decided the purpose, size, and best location for the memorial. A granite pillar, “four foot square at its base and nine foot high,” decorated with bronze plaques, would record Mennonite victims from “the time of World War I to the present in Asia and Europe.” It was to be located in Winnipeg, adjacent to the Legislature Buildings, or at Centennial Park or in North Kildonan.<sup>49</sup> Lohrenz favored a site somewhere between

the Legislature Buildings and the Assiniboine River, an idea he apparently had already discussed with politicians.<sup>50</sup> Interestingly, this was the area where a general monument to Mennonite contributions to Manitoba had been suggested during the 1974 centenary celebrations. In spite of a design competition being organized, a memorial was never built.<sup>51</sup>

After 1979 Lohrenz's idea for a memorial to the suffering of Mennonite martyrs in Russia continued to be discussed in the Mennonite press, but like the 1974 plans it failed to find widespread support.<sup>52</sup> Lohrenz would later note that his proposal had met opposition from some people who thought it involved too much "self-glorification" (*Selbstverherrlichung*).<sup>53</sup> But in 1984 a new committee under the auspices of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society was established to revisit the idea, this time under the leadership of Gerhard Ens.<sup>54</sup> The committee met at Douglas Mennonite Church, where they were hosted by its minister, George K. Epp, himself a post-war refugee from the Soviet Union who had been involved in the discussions over a decade before.<sup>55</sup> The committee also included people from the post-1945 generation of immigrants, including Otto Klassen and Jacob Rempel, who acted as secretary.

The first meeting of the new committee agreed in principle that the monument should honor Mennonite victims of violence in the twentieth century, "especially in Europe." These events had "to be recorded and remembered" as "the great majority of Mennonites are not ... aware of the enormous suffering and the great number of victims of this violence." A memorandum prepared for the meeting also recommended that the term "martyr" be avoided, "because it is a risky description" of the "violence suffered by a minority for various reasons" and because the form of violence Mennonites suffered "was beyond any known norms in western countries." What these norms were is left unexplained. The memo continued that even those who died during "the war" were also "victims of the violence of our century" – presumably a reference to World War Two. Members agreed they should "avoid political overtones as much as possible," and while the monument might remind "us of injustice and violence suffered ... it must create ... awareness without fostering the idea of hatred or revenge."<sup>56</sup> The wider world must be informed "that the Mennonite community [had] suffered, but it must also know that this Christian community invites all to forgive and love their enemies." Eventually any reference to martyrs

was dropped from the name of the memorial, and a rather clumsy title, “Mennonite Monument Dedicated to the Victims of War and Terror,” was chosen in its place.

Discussions on themes to be depicted on the monument’s brass relief plaques reveal some of the finer issues inherent in differences between Russländer and post-1945 immigrants as to how the memory of suffering should be suitably expressed.

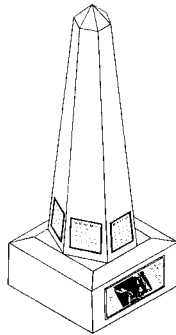
Originally, Lohrenz had preferred using brass sculptures by the 1920s immigrant artist Johann Klassen of Bluffton, Ohio.<sup>57</sup> Klassen had produced a number of fine plaques depicting Mennonite suffering, but these did not include the specific type of references favored by the post-1945 immigrants. The new committee eventually settled on a large relief plaque depicting suffering, and six more to fit on each side of the obelisk with texts in German and English. One is devoted to the Victims of War and Anarchy between 1914 and 1920, basically the major experience of the Russländer.<sup>58</sup> Three of the others deal with the post-1945 group’s experience as Victims of the Terror (1929-41) and Victims of World War Two (1939-45), with one of these

honoring the many women who were often “bereft of husband and home” in the 1929-53 period.<sup>59</sup> One plaque to Unknown Victims covers the entire 1914 to 1953 period; for those victims the cenotaph-like monument might “be their gravestone and remind us of their suffering.”<sup>60</sup> The final plaque

### **Mennonitisches Denkmal**

gewidmet den Opfern des zwanzigsten  
Jahrhunderts

Lobe den Herrn und vergiss nicht was er  
dir Gutes getan hat . . . der dein Leben  
vom Verderben erloest, der dich kroenet  
mit Gnade und Barmherzigkeit . . .



Bless the Lord and forget not all His  
benefits . . . Who redeems your life from  
the pit, Who crowns you with steadfast  
love and mercy . . .

Ps. 103:2-4

October 21, 1984

*Brochure cover provided by  
James Urry.*

contains a religious message calling for forgiveness and urging people to love their neighbors.

The form “favoured” for the monument was “a six metre hexagonal column on an appropriate platform.” Its location, however, remained a matter of debate.<sup>61</sup> A number of sites were discussed by the new committee, and for the first time mention was made of the “Steinbach Museum” or, more correctly, the Mennonite Heritage Village.<sup>62</sup> Approaches were made to the government about placing the memorial adjacent to the Legislature, but these were soundly rejected.<sup>63</sup> Eventually, under Ens’ guidance, negotiations were begun to place the memorial at the Steinbach site.<sup>64</sup> These proved successful, and on July 28, 1985 the memorial was unveiled in Steinbach before a large crowd of Mennonites and non-Mennonite dignitaries.<sup>65</sup>

In the long term the post-1945 group has succeeded in making the Steinbach memorial their own. The online site guide for the Mennonite Heritage Village identifies the stone and brass sculpture as “The Great Trek Memorial ... dedicated to the memory of the Mennonites in Russia and the Soviet Union who suffered persecution during Stalin’s reign of terror and undertook the ‘Great Trek’ during World War II.”<sup>66</sup> Reflecting on a symposium in 1997 to mark the sixty years since Stalin unleashed the Great Terror that would consume the lives of thousands of Mennonites and hundreds of thousands of other Soviet citizens, Gerhard Ens began with a reference to the memorial.<sup>67</sup> And the book issued to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Trek and post-war emigration of Mennonites to Canada refers to it as the “Monument to Mennonite suffering in the Soviet Union.”<sup>68</sup> The earlier, clumsy title intended to connect the Russländer experience with those who suffered under Stalin and during World War Two seems to have been forgotten.

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The author of a recent book on the history of Europe since 1945 has noted how, long after World War II and in contrast to the period after World War I, Europeans were unwilling to raise memorials to the war. Only in more recent times have memorials been constructed to mark this period, and many of these are to specific groups or events, most notably to Jewish victims of the

Holocaust.<sup>69</sup> In North America memorials to both wars were constructed, although both the involvement of some Mennonites in the armed forces during World War Two, and the raising of memorials in predominantly Mennonite towns where the names of those killed include Mennonites, have proved controversial.<sup>70</sup>

In eastern Europe the collapse of communism and the freeing of states held captive under Soviet control since 1945 has led to major changes in interpretations of the past. How the past should be marked in monuments and memorials has often been contentious. The statues of hated communist leaders were soon toppled, and today even Lenin lies uneasily in his Moscow mausoleum. In the new environment, monuments have become sites of contention as different interest groups assert their own view of the past. In eastern European countries, old Soviet war memorials are no longer seen as monuments to liberation but to the enslavement of nations.<sup>71</sup> Perpetrators are transformed into victims, and plans to erect new memorials can cause international incidents.<sup>72</sup> It is in this highly charged political atmosphere, where memories of the past are contested, that some Mennonites have embarked on an extensive program of erecting Mennonite memorials in Ukraine.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was preceded by a gradual easing of relations with the West. Mennonites were quick to take advantage of the situation. Tour visits became more regular and intense, archives were opened and material copied, and critical events in Mennonite history were marked by academic conferences. The latter have included a symposium in Winnipeg to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the start of the Great Terror named the “Soviet Inferno,” and in Ukraine the centenary of Mennonite settlement in Ukraine (Khortitsa 99) and the founding of the Molochna settlement (Molochna 04). The major force behind the organization of these events is Harvey Dyck of Toronto, as part of his Research Program for Tsarist and Mennonite Studies.<sup>73</sup> Following the Khortitsa 99 conference, he and a group of other Mennonites established a Mennonite International Memorial Committee for the Former Soviet Union (MIMC-FSU).<sup>74</sup>

The decision to erect memorials was triggered partly by the experience of many visitors to former Mennonite villages in the FSU, where they saw that war and revolution, as well as



time and neglect, were relentlessly effacing physical evidence of a one-time Mennonite presence. The simple memory of Mennonites in the region, and the name Mennonite itself, had virtually disappeared from public discourse. ... [A] group of participants in [the conference] Khortitsa '99 decided to carry forward the vision of memorialization, as an act of historic justice for those of this background and in order to fill in blank pages in the historical record.<sup>75</sup>

Since the Khortitsa 99 conference, when a small memorial was unveiled in Nieder Khortitsa, the Memorial Committee has organized and facilitated the erection of other memorials across Ukraine.<sup>76</sup> Their unveiling has often been coordinated with the marking of particular anniversaries, associated academic conferences, and the presence of tour groups. Some memorials mark Mennonite achievements as settlers in the region and thus belong to the triumphal mode of monument-raising. Examples include the monument to Mennonite civic contributions unveiled in Molochansk and the memorial to Johann Cornies, one of the great heroes of economic and social progress for many Russländer and their descendants.<sup>77</sup> Another memorial, a stone bench on the Lichtenau railroad station in Molochna, relates to emigration, but not quite in the migrant-pioneer tradition, as it recognizes the station as a place of departure for Mennonites and loss of their homeland.<sup>78</sup> Most migrant peoples put up memorials to their ancestors' *arrival*; it takes a particular view of the past to erect a monument to their *leaving*.

I have neither the time nor space to examine in detail all the monuments and memorials erected in recent years in Ukraine; instead I will concentrate on one memorial in the victim/suffering mode and the booklet that has been produced to tell the story behind it.<sup>79</sup> This is the memorial erected in 2001 at the site of a massacre in October 1919 of over seventy Mennonites at Eichenfeld-Dubowka in the Yasykovo settlement, north of Khortitsa. In a form suggestive of a coffin laid out for viewing, the Eichenfeld memorial clearly marks an event of death and great suffering. It clearly indicates some of the problems in trying to mark a complex past event in a singular stone memorial. At one level its message might appear simple: it is a memorial to the victims of a savage massacre who have lain in mass, unmarked graves



*Eichenfeld memorial designed by Paul Epp. Photo of site visitors courtesy of Pandora Press, Kitchener, ON.*

until the stone was erected and unveiled. But the memorial is also supposed to mark not just a single event and its victims.

It is a wider statement about a past in the present. It stands in a context larger than the actual event, one serving to represent a Mennonite world savagely brought to end, a past forsaken,

and a future destroyed. It points to the perpetrators of the massacre not as individuals but as carriers of an evil, false ideology who are precursors of greater horrors yet to come. This wider context is hinted at by the memorial itself but articulated in greater detail in the booklet. The problem is that explaining context is not a matter of detailing certain facts; rather, it often entails the interpretation of contested issues open to critical questioning. Once set in stone, these contextual issues cannot be subjected to such reasoning. But a text claiming to provide a *context* to a stone memorial is open to critical questioning that in turn raises new questions about the meaning of that memorial itself.

The fact that a number of people were murdered in such a terrible manner, on the date stated on the stone and detailed in the book, is not in question. But why the deaths occurred in this particular village, to this group of people, and at this particular time is something that must be interpreted and explained. The explanation in press releases provided at the memorial's unveiling, and the more detailed account given in the later booklet, are simple and inadequate. We are presented with simple dichotomies of good and evil, with innocent Mennonite victims and guilty perpetrators.<sup>80</sup> Such stark oppositions have little explanatory power in understanding such complex

events. And in several places in the booklet the use of the word “innocent” to refer to Mennonite victims becomes a rhetorical screen that in many ways prevents a closer examination of Mennonite actions prior to the massacre. A number of relevant sources are also not referred to in the booklet, even though they are important in grasping the context of the massacre.<sup>81</sup> This is especially so in the account given of the sequence of events leading to it.

Following the collapse of the Tsarist regime in 1917/18, local peasants seized land they believed they had rights to, including areas owned by Mennonites. The German army that occupied the region briefly in 1918 assisted some Mennonites to regain their land, sometimes forcibly. German troops also trained Mennonite youth in the use of weapons and military tactics ostensibly for purposes of self-defence. In the area centered on Eichenfeld, these armed Mennonite units (*Selbstschutzler*) were later involved in both offensive and defensive actions against neighboring groups they saw as a threat. But in the section of the booklet intended to explain events leading to the massacre, the self-defence unit is mentioned only once. Even then, the only person named as a member of the unit is misidentified.<sup>82</sup> In contrast, almost every one of the oral accounts by local contemporary Ukrainians included in the booklet mentions the role of the self-defence unit as a factor contributing to the attack on the village.<sup>83</sup>

One inevitable consequence of erecting memorials to events involving complex historical issues is that the memory produced is, of necessity, shallow and simplistic. This is why some academic interpreters of such memorials – including those to war, victimhood, and suffering – have argued these memorials are often more concerned with forgetting than with remembering. Or at least they are concerned with remembering selectively and forgetting strategically.<sup>84</sup> But what Mennonite message is being stamped upon the landscape of Ukraine by the erection of all these memorials?

It certainly is not a general Mennonite vision of a transcendent faith community. The one exception might be the Mennonite Centre in Molochansk, housed in the old Halbstadt Girls’ School, which provides essential ongoing social services to the local community.<sup>85</sup> But the other stone memorials are passive, not active. Moreover, they appear to reflect a very particular Mennonite view of the past. They emphasize individuals and events – triumphs and tragedies – predominantly from the perspective

of one section of the Mennonite community: the Russländer and their descendants. And it is members of the latter who are most active in promoting the memorials. The view of the past is taken essentially from a secular perspective, one first developed by educated Russländer refugees in their Canadian exile. Despite the religious sentiments expressed in the texts inscribed on the monuments and the religious nature of the ceremonies that accompanied their unveilings, the larger message remains more secular than sacred, more worldly than transcendent.

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A special seal was designed for the Khortitsa 99 Conference. In the background is an outline of the Khortitsa oak, similar in shape to Arnold Dyck's earlier Echo Verlag design. The tragedy is that by 1999 the great oak was dying; today it stands leafless, its boughs pointing skyward like fingers pleading to the sky in suffering. But over the years a number of Mennonite visitors to the tree have picked up its acorns and brought them back to North America where, once planted, they have produced new trees. In September 2004 one of these trees was presented to Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo. Planted in a "Russian Mennonite Memorial Garden," the young sapling is intended "to memorialize and honour the experiences of Soviet Mennonites who suffered and died under Stalin in the Soviet Union."<sup>86</sup> In August 2005 another tree was presented to the College, this time to recognize "the Swiss Mennonite story."<sup>87</sup> Whereas the Russian Mennonite experience is still firmly rooted in the old world symbolized by a transplanted oak, the descendants of the older Mennonite settlers of Ontario seem to be saying, with their native black walnut, that "we are of this continent" in a way that some other Mennonites still have to come to terms with.<sup>88</sup>



*Seal design by Paul Epp. Image from [www.paulepp.com](http://www.paulepp.com)*

All this talk of trees whets my anthropologist's imagination. Trees have played a significant part in the symbolic and ritual lives of people of many cultures. The possible pagan associations of the Khortitsa oak were noted in some College and University press releases when the tree was planted. The religious significance of trees has also been the subject of anthropological interpretation and explanation.<sup>89</sup> That great classicist, folklorist, and anthropologist Sir James George Frazer titled his most famous work *The Golden Bough*. Frazer's immense output included, in that nuanced manner only Victorian intellectuals could manage, a subtle message that Christianity was a religion much like any other, primarily concerned with the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. As we have seen, the seasonal cycle of Christian worship following pagan rhythms of time is widely acknowledged; but Frazer's hint that accounts of Christ's death parallel older religious traditions involving the killing of sacred figures was perhaps a little more risqué for his time.<sup>90</sup>

Frazer was greatly influenced, like many nineteenth-century writers in ethnology and folklore, by the pioneering research of the great German folklorist, Johann Wilhelm Emanuel Mannhardt. Mannhardt devoted considerable effort to the study of the folklore of plants, in particular the symbolism of trees in European folk culture.<sup>91</sup> Mannhardt was born in 1831 into a well-known Mennonite family long established in the city of Friedrichstadt.<sup>92</sup> His father, Jakob, would become elder of the Danzig congregation and founder of the *Mennonitische Blätter*, the journal that in the 1860s had carried the first, and apparently last, major Mennonite discussion on the appropriateness of erecting memorials to mark the Mennonite past. Wilhelm is probably better known in Mennonite circles for his book on Mennonite privileges, published in 1863 as Mennonites in Prussia faced the secularizing influences of the Prussian nation state.<sup>93</sup> But his interest in folklore, plants, and especially trees perhaps needs proper recognition by Mennonites. If Conrad Grebel University College intends to further develop its gardens and extend the planting of memorial trees, might I suggest room be made for a Wilhelm Mannhardt Memorial Garden?



*Khortitsa oak tree in former years. Photo courtesy of Pandora Press, Kitchener, ON.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The classic study of collective memory is Maurice Halbwach's essay, first published in French in 1925, *On Collective Memory* (London: Routledge, 1992). The literature on this subject is large and growing; see the recent overview by Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social memory studies: from 'Collective Memory' to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 105-40. Of particular relevance is Paul Connerton's *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> Thieleman J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, trans. Joseph F. Sohm (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1972).

<sup>3</sup> On the earlier collections and their connection to van Braght's book, see Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2001), Chapter 6; on the theme of suffering in the book, see Alan F. Kreider, "The servant is not greater than his master': the Anabaptists and the suffering church," *MQR* 58 (1984): 5-29.

<sup>4</sup> Van Braght, *Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>7</sup> "Of old, among the heathen, the greatest and highest honors were accorded to the brave and triumphant warriors, who, risking their lives in the land of the enemy, conquered, and carried off the victory ... this usage has obtained from ancient times, and obtains yet, in every land, yea, throughout the whole world. We say nothing of the honor and praise, which, many years after their death, was bestowed in public theatres, upon those who had been sacrificed to idols, for the narration of it would consume too much time." Van Braght, *Bloody Theater or*



*Martyrs Mirror*, 11, 12.

<sup>8</sup> “We have already spoken of the great honor which custom conferred [by the ancients and others] upon the brave and triumphant warriors; yet not one of all these, however great, mighty, valiant and victorious he may have been, or how great the honor and glory with which he may have been hailed, could in any wise be compared with the least martyr who suffered for the testimony of Jesus Christ.... The honor, therefore, which is due to the holy martyrs, is infinitely greater and better than that of earthly heroes; just as the fight they fought, was infinitely more profitable, and their victory, as coming from the hand of God, infinitely more praiseworthy and glorious.” Van Braght, *Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, 13, 14.

<sup>9</sup> “We could have wished that they had been called by another name, that is, not only after the holy baptism, but after their whole religion; but since it is not so, we can content ourselves with the thought that it is not the name, but the thing itself, which justifies the man. For this reason we have applied this name to them throughout the work, that they may be known and distinguished from others.” Van Braght, *Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> H[arold] S. B[ender], “Mennonite,” *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (from now on, *ME*) 3, 586-87; R[odney] J. S[awatsky], “Mennonite,” *ME* 5, 555-57.

<sup>11</sup> In Piet Visser and Mary Sprunger, *Menno Simons: Places, Portraits and Progeny* (Altona, MB: Friesens, 1996), 93; at the center of the tableaux was Calvin, reflective of the central role of the Reformed Church in Dutch history in spite of there being freedom of religion at this period.

<sup>12</sup> The engravings from 1792 and 1800 are reproduced in Visser and Sprunger, *Menno Simons*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> In 1515-17 Albrecht Dürer produced a series of woodcuts for a Triumphant Arch of Maximilian I (The Arch of Honor) which, when assembled and displayed just as prints, produced the desired monumental arch.

<sup>14</sup> I am most grateful to John Thiesen of the Mennonite Library and Archives in Kansas for supplying me with printouts of the relevant pages of the *Mennonitische Blätter* (from now on, *MBL*).

<sup>15</sup> Wolfgang Froese, “... ein würdiges und bleibendes Denkmal zu setzen. Ein Diskussion in den *Mennonitischen Blättern* über die Feier des Menno-Simons-Gedenkjahres 1861,” *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 53 (1996): 62-76.

<sup>16</sup> Christian Schmidt, an elder in Baden, Johann Toews, a Prussian minister from Ladekopp, and Johann Wall, a minister from Prussia on the Volga who was a leader of the last large group of Prussian migrants to settle in Russia in the 1850s.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from the minister Heinrich Enns dated February 24, 1861, in Delbert Plett, ed., *Storm and Triumph: the Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde (1850-1875)* (Steinbach: D.F.P. Publications, 1986), 155-57.

<sup>18</sup> Christian Schmidt in *MBL* 7 (1860), 52; also quoted in Froese, “... ein würdiges und bleibendes Denkmal,” 71; on the Schiller festivals see George L. Mosse’s *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975), 87-88.

<sup>19</sup> Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses*, Chapter 3 is a pioneering study of such memorials.

<sup>20</sup> Ross Poole, *Nation and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 17.

<sup>21</sup> See also Jakob Mannhardt's "Zum 13 Januar 1861, dem dreihundertjährigen Todestage Menno Symonis," *MBL* 8.1 (1861), 1-9.

<sup>22</sup> P. Cool, *Gedenkschrift van het Menno Simons monument* (Zwolle: W.E.J. Tjeenk Willink, 1879); see also reports in *MBL* (1878-79).

<sup>23</sup> [Christian] Neff, "Menno Monument," *ME* 3, 567-68; Neff described the historical veracity of the site as "rather improbable." There are plans to redevelop the site around the monument into an International Menno Simons Centre; see <http://www.mennosimonscenter.org/en-US/helpproject/html.aspx>.

<sup>24</sup> [Christian] Neff, "Menno Monument," *ME* 3, 576-77; see reply to American criticisms by B.C. Roosen in *MBL* (1878).

<sup>25</sup> On the celebrations and the memorial, see James Urry, *None but Saints: the Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia, 1789-1889* (Winnipeg: Hyperion Books, 1989), Chapter 13. In New Halbstadt, Molochna a Russian general had earlier erected a memorial to recognize Mennonite assistance to his soldiers in the Crimean War of the 1850s; see picture in Peter M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia*, trans. J.B Toews et al. (Fresno, CA: Board of Christian Literature, General Conf. of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1980), 581.

<sup>26</sup> Their monuments were placed at their gravesites, though not without the opening of old wounds about their treatment in Russia after they had emigrated. These obelisks and their gravestones, but not the bodies of the deputies, were later moved to Manitoba (see below).

<sup>27</sup> This was perhaps an indication of changed political circumstances, and Mennonites did not wish to draw attention to their past in this manner.

<sup>28</sup> On the obvious style and splendor of such architecture and how public buildings presented a collective identity, see Rudy P. Friesen (with Edith Elisabeth Friesen), *Building on the Past: Mennonite Architecture, Landscape and Settlements in Russia/Ukraine* (Winnipeg: Raduga Publications, 2004).

<sup>29</sup> Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia*, 949, picture 162; the base of the monument contained the figure of a large "black Labrador" and the words "Faith, Hope, Love." It was erected at the same time the book of his poems was published (Leland Harder, personal communication).

<sup>30</sup> Keith Sprunger has described the background to the raising of this striking statue in his "The most monumental Mennonite," *Mennonite Life* 34.3 (1979): 10-16; Sprunger has carried out further comparative research into what he calls 'Mennonite Monumentalism' – the apparent desire by Mennonites to seek public recognition in monumental form (Keith Sprunger, personal communication).

<sup>31</sup> Harley J. Stucky, *The Swiss Mennonite Memorial Monument: Is it Inspirational Art, Symbolic Expression, or History?* (Newton, KS: Harley J. Stucky, 1999).

<sup>32</sup> The publication in 1900 of elder Gerhard Wiebe's *Ursachen und Geschichte der Auswanderung der Mennoniten aus Russland nach Amerika* (Winnipeg: Nordwesten Druckerei, 1900) was probably timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary. However, I have not made a systematic investigation of this matter or the possibility of any other events or publications marking the anniversary.

<sup>33</sup> Novokampus [Dietrich Neufeld], *Kanadische Mennoniten: bunte Bilder aus dem 50 jährigen Siedlerleben zum Jubiläumsjahr 1924* (Winnipeg: Rundschau Publishing House,



1925); Neufeld was a highly educated Mennonite who had fled Russia before the start of the major Mennonite emigration to Canada in 1923. He held socialist views and could be considered among those I suggested in my first lecture might be considered unbelievers. He spent most of the latter part of his life living away from the Mennonite community under the name Dedrech Navall; see the biography in his *A Russian Dance of Death: Revolution and Civil War in the Ukraine*, trans. and ed. Al Reimer (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1977), xiii.

<sup>34</sup> *Das 60-jährige Jubiläum der mennonitischen Einwanderung in Manitoba Canada gefeiert am 1. August 1934 in Steinbach Manitoba* (Steinbach: Warte Verlag, 1935). Beiträge zur mennonitischen Geschichte, Heft 1.

<sup>35</sup> The typescript of the address can be found in Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives, Vol. 1078 File 107a; a black and white photo of the presented address in Vol. 545.63. The original address is still in the Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, England.

<sup>36</sup> Some, like Walter Quiring, were never fully reconciled with the situation; Quiring spent his last years in Germany and one of his last writings, aimed primarily at American Mennonites, accused them of betraying the real basis of Mennonite peoplehood. See his “Zum Problem der innermennonitischen Abwanderung. Versuch einer Deutung am amerikanischen Beispiel,” *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch* (1974), 19-34.

<sup>37</sup> J.J. Hildebrand, *Aus der Vorgeschichte der Einwanderung der Mennoniten aus Russland nach Manitoba: zum 75-jährigen Jubiläum dieser Einwanderung* (Winnipeg: J. Hildebrand, 1949).

<sup>38</sup> On Lohrenz see Gerhard Ens, “Gerhard Lohrenz: his life and contributions” in John Friesen, ed., *Mennonites in Russia 1788-1988. Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1989), 1-12; I also knew Lohrenz personally, conducting several extensive interviews with him in 1974.

<sup>39</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz, “The Johann Bartsch monument: from Russia to Canada,” *ML* 24.1 (1969): 29-30; Lohrenz wrote that the monument “will remind us of our past, of our achievements and failures, and it is hoped that from these we will learn in order to become better men and women for today,” 30.

<sup>40</sup> The original nucleus of the Mennonite Heritage Village was a collection of artifacts from the pioneer period gathered by the teacher John C. Reimer, a descendant of the founder of the Kleine Gemeinde. Museums are, of course, also sites of memory; see Rachel Waltner Goossen, “Museums,” *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. <http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/M87ME.html> (Retrieved 5 Dec 2005).

<sup>41</sup> For Lohrenz and other Russländer there was also a sense of triumph in the “rescue” of these Mennonite objects from the hands of the Soviets who had destroyed most of their property, persecuted their people, and banished the history of Mennonites from their accounts of the development of Russia and Ukraine. The concept of “rescue,” linked to the Biblical theme of exodus, was a major trope in Mennonite writing of the 1920s immigrant experience; see Frank H. Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites since the Communist Revolution* (Altona: D. W. Friesen & Sons, for the Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, 1962).

<sup>42</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz, *The Mennonites of Western Canada, their Origin, and Background and the Brief Story of their Settling and Progress here in Canada* (Winnipeg: the author,

1974), 39; earlier, at the end of the chapter on the 1870s groups, he notes how “conservative” Mennonites had left for Paraguay and Mexico but were replaced by the Russländer who, according to Lohrenz, “caused an intellectual awakening among the Mennonites of the west,” 29.

<sup>43</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz, *Storm Tossed. The Personal Story of a Canadian Mennonite from Russia* (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1976). A similar pattern can be seen in Russian-born Russländer obituaries, often autobiographical as they were prepared prior to the person’s death. In these, the section dealing with life in Russia is often extensive while details on their life in Canada is surprisingly brief, despite its being of longer duration for most.

<sup>44</sup> I have noted elsewhere how the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP) is rarely discussed not just in Russländer memoirs but in the scholarly writing of their descendants: “After the rooster crowed: some issues concerning the interpretation of Mennonite/ Bolshevik relations during the early Soviet period,” *JMS* 13 (1995): 26-50.

<sup>45</sup> The idea that the Russian Mennonite experience could provide the basis for a new collection of martyr stories to match those of the sixteenth century was realized by A.A. Toews in his two-volume collection *Mennonitsche Martyrer der jüngsten Vergangenheit und der Gegenwart* (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1949, 1954), a work dominated by the Russländer story. In more recent years the usefulness of the idea of “martyrs” and “martyrdom” in relation to the events in which Mennonites suffered and died in the twentieth century has been a matter of debate in the Mennonite community; see the essays in the special edition of *The Conrad Grebel Review* 18.2 (2000) devoted to “Living with a history of suffering: theological meaning and the Soviet Mennonite experience,” and Harry Loewen, “A Mennonite-Christian view of suffering: the case of Russian Mennonites in the 1930s and 1940s,” *MQR* 77.1 (2003): 47-68.

<sup>46</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz, “Ein Denkmal unseren Märtyrern?” *Bote* 56 (September 1979), 4-5.

<sup>47</sup> Otto Klassen, “Zu: Anregung zum Denkmal von Gerhard Lohrenz,” *Bote* 56 (24 October 1979), 4; Klassen, who was to make a film on the trek of Mennonites from Ukraine in 1943/44, mentions the involvement of Kornelius Epp and George Epp in the discussions.

<sup>48</sup> See Krista Taves, “The reunification of Russian Mennonites in post-World War II Canada,” *Ontario Mennonite History* 13.1 (1995): 1-7; Krista Taves, “Dividing the righteous: Soviet Mennonites as cultural icons in the Canadian Mennonite narrative, 1923-1938,” *JMS* 16 (1998): 101-27. On the larger context, Ted D. Regehr, *Mennonites in Canada 1939-1970: a People Transformed* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1996), Chapter 4; Marlene Epp, *Women Without Men. Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2000).

<sup>49</sup> Minutes of a meeting at Springfield Heights Church, 22 October 1979; “Minutes of the Local History and Historic Sites Committee for 1988-1992,” Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Volume 700:5. I am very grateful to Alf Redekopp of the MHC for locating this file and providing copies.

<sup>50</sup> Lohrenz, “Ein Denkmal unseren Märtyrer,” *Bote* 56 (14 November 1979), 7; see also his “Ein Denkmal der Mennonitennot,” *Mennonite Mirror* [from now on, *MM*] (April 1980), 19-20.

<sup>51</sup> See R[udy] P. Friesen, “The missing Mennonite monument,” *MM* (March 1975), 15.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Regier, "Ein Denkmal unseren Opfern im Osten," *Bote* 59 (6 January 1982), 4; Heinrich Wiebe, "Denkmal für Mennonitische Märtyrer des 20. Jahrhunderts," *Bote* 58 (28 October 1981), 4; "Zu: Denkmal den Opfern der Repressalien in der UDSSR," *Bote* 58 (23 December 1981), 4.

<sup>53</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz, "Das Denkmal," *MM* (January 1983), 26.

<sup>54</sup> Ens, a former principal of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna and editor of *Der Bote*, was a Mennonite leader with more experience of Canadian society and broader connections in the Mennonite community than Lohrenz. By this date Lohrenz was unwell, and he died in 1986.

<sup>55</sup> Epp was becoming a more influential leader in the community by this time.

<sup>56</sup> The political issues involved were undoubtedly obvious to members of the committee, though not expressed openly. The language of North American Cold War politics lies just below the surface of their discussions and would re-emerge at the monument's opening. As victims of Soviet oppression, Mennonites could partake in anti-Soviet rhetoric, but there were problems in taking full advantage of Cold War rhetoric. First, Russländer political sympathies with Nazi Germany prior to World War II were questionable; second, the post-1945 immigrants were "rescued" by German forces during the War. Finally, the language of Cold War politics was couched in militaristic and warlike terms inappropriate for many non-resistant Mennonites.

<sup>57</sup> On Klassen, see Harry Loewen, "Johann P. Klassen (1885-1975)" in Harry Loewen, ed., *Shepherds, Servants and Prophets: Leadership among the Russian Mennonites (ca. 1880-1960)* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press/ Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2003), 213-28.

<sup>58</sup> Ens suggested in the discussions it should be 1922 so as to include the famine period; eventually 1921 was apparently settled on as the end of the Russländer experience.

<sup>59</sup> Proposals for the title of the women's plaque included "Frau und Mutter."

<sup>60</sup> Any connection between the concept of "Unknown Victims" and military memorials to "The Unknown Soldier" does not seem to have occurred to anyone on the committee.

<sup>61</sup> Gerhard Lohrenz had continued to push for a site near the Legislature, repeating that the "English, the French and the Ukrainians all have memorials on parliamentary ground": "Das Denkmal," *MM* (January 1983), 26-27.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes of meeting of March 13, 1984 held at Douglas Mennonite Church.

<sup>63</sup> Victor Schroeder, of Mennonite descent and at the time Minister of Finance, allegedly told the committee that they should not think that every ethnic group could record their "tragedies" in the Legislature area and instead suggested Centennial Park.

<sup>64</sup> Ens was a founder and keen supporter of the Steinbach Mennonite Heritage Museum.

<sup>65</sup> Shortly afterwards, in September 1985, another memorial dedicated to Mennonite pioneer women was unveiled at the Village. It consisted of a large boulder with brass plaques but did not specify any particular group or migration. It was the idea of a Russländer, Olga Friesen (nee Heese), who was married to a descendant of the 1874 migration, Ed Friesen, after she saw a memorial to Boer women pioneers during a visit to Pretoria, South Africa. This may well have been the large Vortrekker Monument, a massive political statement to the tragedy and eventual triumph of the Boers. Friesen was a member of the wealthy Heese family of Ekaterinoslav; see her obituary in *The Carillon*, December 16, 2004; on the South African

monument, see Andrew Crampton, "The Vortrekker Monument, the birth of apartheid, and beyond," *Political Geography* 20 (2001): 221-46. I am grateful to Roland Sawatzky of the Mennonite Heritage Village for details on this memorial and others at the Village.

<sup>66</sup> Website of the Mennonite Heritage Village.

<sup>67</sup> Gerhard Ens, "Mennonites and the Soviet Inferno: reflections on the symposium," *JMS* 16 (1998): 95; Ens was acknowledging Peter Letkemann's reference to the memorial at the start of the symposium. Ens himself had earlier acknowledged a similar focus of the memorial in the newsletter of the Mennonite Heritage Village, "The Great Trek," *Preserving our Heritage* 1.2 (1993), 1.

<sup>68</sup> Harry Loewen, ed., *Road to Freedom. Mennonites Escape from the Land of Suffering* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Books, 2000), 3.

<sup>69</sup> Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Heinemann, 2005), 823-26. In the Soviet Union, however, massive monuments were constructed to the victims of "The Great Patriotic War" and every major town has a war memorial; see N. Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead. The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

<sup>70</sup> On the war memorial in Altona in southern Manitoba, see A. James Reimer's reflections in his "Weep with those who weep," *Canadian Mennonite* 5.3 (February 12, 2001); see also the responses in the next two issues of the *Canadian Mennonite* by Arthur K. Dyck (March 12) and Conrad D. Stoesz (March 26).

<sup>71</sup> Paul Stangl, "The Soviet war memorial in Treptow, Berlin." *The Geographical Review* 93.2 (2003), 213-36.

<sup>72</sup> Pawel Lutomski, "The debate about a center against expulsions: an unexpected crisis in German-Polish relations," *German Studies* 27.5 (2004): 449-68; see also the essays in Daniel J. Walkowitz and Lisa Maya Knauer, eds., *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2004).

<sup>73</sup> The program, which also has its own publication series, is connected to the Centre of Russian and East European Studies at the University of Toronto. Dyck has long had an interest in marking Mennonite anniversaries; he dedicated a 1979 article on the 1929 Mennonite rush on Moscow to emigrate from the Soviet Union "as a small fiftieth anniversary memorial to the victims of 1929." Harvey L. Dyck, "Despair and hope in Moscow. A pillow, a willow trunk and a stuff-backed photograph," *ML* 34.3 (September 1979), 23.

<sup>74</sup> *Mennonite Brethren Herald* 39.11 (May 26, 2000); the title seems to have changed to the International Mennonite Memorial Committee for the Former Soviet Union (IMMC-FSU).

<sup>75</sup> Press release May 2000 at the time appearing at <http://home.ica.net/~walterunger/Memorials.html> but since removed. Funding for memorials was "expected to come through private donations including public subscription promoted by special events and the Mennonite media; and through special levies on selected tours specifically organized to attend dedicatory events." In a 2003 press release for the Molochna 04 conference, organizers invited new proposals for historic memorials in the Molochna area but said each proposal would have to be approved and require a funding guarantee.

<sup>76</sup> Most if not all the memorials and monuments have been designed by the artist Paul Epp of Toronto, and in terms of aesthetics are very finely realized.

<sup>77</sup> The new memorial reproduces the monument once located in Ohrloff at Cornies' grave, but now lost. It was in the form of a broken column that according to "popular legend" had been chosen by Cornies, who wished to symbolize that at his death his work was incomplete; Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood*, 879. The new monument is situated at the site of his Molochna estate, Yushanlee (today Kirovo); see *Canadian Mennonite* 8.22 (November 15, 2004).

<sup>78</sup> The memorial is predominantly focused on the emigration to Canada of Molochna residents in the 1920s, especially in 1924, and hence is a Russländer monument; at the time of its unveiling it was also dedicated to the memory of Mennonites deported by the Soviets, especially ahead of the advance of German forces during World War II.

<sup>79</sup> The booklet, published as part of the series "Tsarist and Mennonite Studies" of the research program of the same name, is authored by Harvey Dyck, John R. Staples, and John B. Toews: *Nestor Makhno and the Eichenfeld Massacre: a Civil War Tragedy in a Ukrainian Mennonite Village* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004). The other major memorial in this mode is to the massacre at Borosenko in 1919; see Margaret Bergen, "The Borosenko Memorial," *Mennonite Herald* 28.4 (December 2002). Bergen proposed the idea for a memorial and financed the work, which was organized by the Memorial Committee.

<sup>80</sup> Overwhelmingly, the perpetrators are identified in the booklet as Makhnovisty, followers of the anarchist Nestor Makhno. Evidence suggests that local Ukrainian peasants from neighboring villages were also involved; they certainly looted the settlement once the Mennonites fled.

<sup>81</sup> These include both primary and secondary sources, including for instance references in Neufeld, *A Russian Dance of Death*; Gerhard P. Schroeder, *Miracles of Faith and Judgment* (Np.: Gerhard Schroeder, 1972); Toews, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*; Julius Loewen, *Jasykowo. Mennonite colony on the Dnieper* (Beausejour, MB: Henning Loewen Family, 1995 [Orig. in German 1967]); Isaac Tiessen, *Why I do Not Take the Sword* (Aylmer, ON: Pathway Publishers, 1991); Marianne Janzen, "The Eichenfeld massacre – October 19 1919," *Preservings: the Journal of the Hanover Steinbach Mennonite Historical Society* 18 (2001): 25-31; David G. Rempel, "The Eichenfeld massacre, October 26, 1919," *Preservings*... 21 (2002): 25-27. An older account can be found in Heinrich Toews, *Eichenfeld-Dubowka: ein Tatsachenbericht aus der Tragödie des Deutschtums in der Ukraine* (Karlsruhe: H. Schneider [1938]); the author of the latter is in fact B.H. Unruh, writing under one of his pseudonyms approved by Nazi authorities. Peter Letkemann informs me he has a large file of sources on this event, some still unpublished.

<sup>82</sup> Dyck, Staples, and Toews, *Nestor Makhno and the Eichenfeld Massacre*, 33; they confuse the victim Heinrich Heinrichs with his son of the same name who, unlike his father, survived, served in White armies, and escaped to North America; see Rempel, "The Eichenfeld massacre," 26. Some accounts suggest that Heinrich Heinrichs' house was the first attacked and that the attackers were seeking Heinrich junior (Peter Letkemann, personal communication).

<sup>83</sup> The Ukrainian researchers under Svetlana Bobyleva report that seven of the thirteen accounts they collected made this connection. See Dyck, Staples, and Toews, *Nestor Makhno and the Eichenfeld Massacre*, 80; see also references on 82, 84, 85, 86, 87.

<sup>84</sup> See the essays on war memorials in Adrian Forty and Susanne Küchler, eds., *The Art of Forgetting* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

<sup>85</sup> See <http://www.mennonitecentre.com/Referencepaper.html>.

<sup>86</sup> Press release September 7, 2004 at [http://www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca/aboutgrebel/releases/2004\\_12\\_memorialgarden.shtml](http://www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca/aboutgrebel/releases/2004_12_memorialgarden.shtml)

<sup>87</sup> “Where the black walnut grows,” *Canadian Mennonite* 9.16 (August 22, 2005); the Mennonite pioneers in Ontario chose land on which the black walnut grew, as it was a sign that the soil was good for agriculture.

<sup>88</sup> Somewhat ironically, however, I have been informed that the suggestion for a “Swiss” tree to match the Khortitsa “Russian” tree was made by a descendant of the Russländer (Paul Tiessen, personal communication).

<sup>89</sup> Laura M. Rival, ed., *The Social Life of Trees: Anthropological Perspectives on Tree Symbolism* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

<sup>90</sup> Robert Ackerman, *J.G. Frazer: His Life and Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), 107-09; 169.

<sup>91</sup> See for instance Wilhelm Mannhardt, *Der Baumkultus der Germanen und ihrer Nachbarstämme: mythologische Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Borntraeger, 1875); *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte aus nordeuropäischer Überlieferung* (Berlin: Borntraeger, 1877).

<sup>92</sup> See the entry on the Mannhardts by Erich Göttner in *ME* 3, 467-69, and for Wilhelm Mannhardt by Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 9, 230-31 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999).

<sup>93</sup> *Die Wehrfreiheit der Altpreussischen Mennoniten: eine geschichtliche Erörterung* (Marienburg: Altpreussischen Mennonitengemeinden, 1863).

# Music and Development: MCC Workers in Chad

*Jonathan Dueck*

## Introduction

*It was late evening in April 1999. We were perched on the tailgate of a market truck full to the brim with Chadian travelers and market goods. A warm, light rain fell on us, and we were quiet. Celia mentioned that soon we would be at the Lutheran Brethren theology school at Gounou-Gaya, where she was living, on a Mennonite Central Committee cultural exchange. When we arrived, we would hear the theology school students singing.*

*When the truck slowed to a halt, we hoisted our backpacks and walked through the rainy mud to a small white building. It was full of the students, and their singing – one tall student up front, conducting with one hand, but not in a Western pattern, singing a call, the other students singing a response. Though they spoke a variety of ethnic Chadian languages, the students all sang in French. Some songs were recognizable as Western-origin hymns, while others were totally new to me. I tried to sing along, reading the text from a small red hymnal – which contained no notated music – but couldn't quite catch the melody. They sang several more songs in that warm room, with Celia and me their only audience. Only after the last song was sung was I introduced to Celia's friends and schoolmates, the leaders and singers of this worshipful performance.*

*I only later found out that the event was not a service, but a party for the family of a theology school teacher who was leaving to pursue church work elsewhere in Chad. Singing and dancing, not only of hymns but also of "local songs" in traditional styles associated with particular Chadian ethnic groups, were frequently part of such celebrations at the school, Celia told me.*

I begin with this short fieldnote from my visit to southern Chad in 1999 to introduce the sound and character of my experience of Chadian church music. Several aspects of the singing I described above marked the Chadian



church services and Christian gatherings I attended: the central place of Western hymns, sung a capella but often with melodies that differed strongly from their Western counterparts; the use of these hymns, sung in French, as shared repertoire at an inter-ethnic church gathering; and my own marginal, observational role as a new Western visitor.<sup>1</sup> However, not all Westerners are marginal to music in Chad.

I was there to visit my fiancée, Celia Mellinger, who was nearing the end of her year working for the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Gounou-Gaya, Chad. Nearly a year before the singing just described, she had begun her journey as a development worker in Chad in the MCC-SALT program<sup>2</sup> and I had started graduate studies in ethnomusicology at the University of Alberta. In that year of correspondence with Celia, I became interested in the questions I address here: particularly, how can we describe the involvement of MCC workers in music in their host country? How does this cultural involvement “map” onto the official discourse of MCC’s statements on the role of its development workers? What can we learn, from answering these questions, about the cultural dimensions of development work?

These questions presume that a musical occasion is not only a set of sounds but a set of interacting roles that people perform both during the musical occasion and during the preparation for, and subsequent evaluation of and discourse about, that occasion.<sup>3</sup> Such musical roles are relevant to what a person does musically and to how those musical acts are understood by others. The meaning of musical activities as I analyze them here depends on multiple actors who negotiate symbolic meanings through their performance and reception of musical roles.<sup>4</sup>

This paper addresses the relationship between roles in music and development through a case study of MCC workers and church music in southern Chad,<sup>5</sup> drawing on interviews I conducted in 1999-2000 and in 2005 with North American MCC Chad workers, especially in the SALT program, and with Chadian MCC workers and other Chadians who have significant contact with MCC in Chad. Additional fieldwork data was gathered in a three-week trip in 1999.<sup>6</sup> My argument centers on the roles performed and experienced by MCC workers in music, not the sonic or structural content of “the music itself” in Southern Chad. Consequently,



my own ethnographic and musicological observations as a fieldworker in Chad do not form the primary data for my account. Instead, the perceptions among my interviewees of their own roles and those of others are the most important pool of data. Missionary accounts and the records of MCC-Chad from the annual *MCC Workbooks* provide a historical point of comparison.

### **MCC's Official Statements of Role**

Ronald J.R. Mathies, executive director of MCC, has outlined several successive and cumulative “generations” of the organization. While MCC began as a relief agency in response to the devastation of World War I,<sup>7</sup> it was during the 1960s that it began to pursue development as such. As many African states became independent, MCC instituted the Teachers Abroad Program that placed Mennonite teachers in African schools; the role of the North American MCC worker was that of a teacher.<sup>8</sup> In the 1970s MCC recognized that service work provided education for workers themselves; the role of the North American worker now shifted to that of a student or learner.<sup>9</sup> In the late 1980s and 1990s MCC began to work consciously on education of North Americans to encourage international structural change; workers used their cross-cultural learning as material for teaching other North Americans.<sup>10</sup> Mathies described MCC's work in the mid-1990s as connecting its Western and non-Western constituencies; North American MCC workers and those in partner organizations in the non-West entered into a relationship of mutual teaching and learning.<sup>11</sup>

These “generations” of MCC workers' roles in education correspond to broader shifts in development work. Fred DeVries identifies three such generations for both MCC and secular agencies: relief work (pre-1960s), local small-scale development work (1960s-70s), and sustainable development work (1980s-90s).<sup>12</sup> During the 2000s, development theorists have been promoting a fourth generation of approaches that focus on cultivating transnational networks in order to change problematic policies and structures.<sup>13</sup>

Whether conceived of in terms of education or development more broadly, these “generations” are all cumulatively present in MCC's current organizational mission statement that identifies the agency's roles as relief work, working as a “channel for interchange” so that “all may grow and

be transformed,” and “peace, justice and dignity” through the sharing of resources.<sup>14</sup> This statement is used in planning and representing MCC programs; for example, MCC’s 1999 *Workbook* described its Africa programs in respect of their fidelity to the statement’s priorities.<sup>15</sup>

Symbolic interactionist theorists have argued that statements made by elite spokespersons of an organization can form the basis of the roles that rank-and-file members try to perform in their interactions with clients and partners.<sup>16</sup> This implies that MCC’s reflections on the roles of its workers as a group could represent not only MCC’s public face but also on-the-ground roles for its workers. When workers play these roles, they effectively perpetuate organizational culture. Richard Yoder, Calvin Redekop and Vernon Jantzi’s recent study suggests that Mennonite development workers have been strongly shaped by the role models of the previous generation; many grassroots-level workers placed high value on engaging in a cross-cultural interchange, symbolized by the phrase “drinking tea with MCC.”<sup>17</sup> Similarly, many MCC workers return to North America and value the activity of educating other North Americans on the global context of development.<sup>18</sup>

However, members of the organization must also try to play the roles that its partners and clients expect; negotiations with partners and clients shape organizational culture as well.<sup>19</sup> MCC’s partners and clients often expect MCCers to play roles that are rooted in their experience and understanding of other Western activity in their local context.

Mennonite missions in Africa, beginning in the early 1900s, laid the groundwork of connections for MCC to begin development work in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>20</sup> It is thus not surprising that one key role expectation encountered by MCC workers has been that of the missionary. For example, Janice Jenner, the MCC country co-representative in Kenya from 1989 to 1996, described her initial concept of her role as a worker doing “service” and “development.” She describes herself as using both words chiefly to distinguish my work from ‘mission work’. . . with which I was decidedly uncomfortable.”<sup>21</sup> As Jenner worked in Kenya, she began to feel that “peacebuilding” was the most necessary role to play. However, another set of client and partner role expectations came into play: the Western teacher, technical expert, or government worker who provides

knowledge in a short-term trip. Jenner began to understand that many Africans resented short-term Western-led conflict resolution projects. In the end, she aspired to a different role, that of an “interpreter” between African community peacebuilders and “the powers” of the international community.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Fremont Regier, an MCC and African Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) administrator of rural development in Congo (Zaire) found that his Western MCC workers, who traveled to villages with Congolese co-workers and promoted agricultural strategies there, had to work at relationship-building with locals because of “the memory of harsh, demanding Belgian agricultural agents.”<sup>23</sup>

These stories highlight the negotiations between Western concepts of appropriate worker roles in development and the expectations of Western involvement already present in African contexts, particularly those of the missionary and the teacher or technical expert. While these roles do not directly concern music, I will argue that this kind of negotiation is also important for the often unofficial cultural roles played by MCC workers, and that role-expectations derived from past contact with Westerners, especially missionaries, provide a key context for the roles played by MCC workers in music.

### **A History of Roles in Chad: Missions and MCC**

What sorts of roles, then, did missionaries play in the musical and social life of Chad, prior to MCC work there?<sup>24</sup> Protestant and Catholic missions in Chad began in the 1920s.<sup>25</sup> Both evangelized, established social services such as hospitals and schools, pushed converts to conform to Western styles of worship at first, and moved to indigenize the clergy and worship styles between the 1960s and today.<sup>26</sup> Missionaries negotiated a broad set of roles, some explicitly concerned with worship and music, and some associated with development work.

Jacques Hallaire, a French Jesuit missionary to southern Chad from 1952 to 1989, pursued his missionary role collaboratively. He taught Catholic catechism (including theology and a sung liturgy) to Chadians who became the primary Catholic evangelists in his area.<sup>27</sup> He collaborated with Chadian Catholics in translating the Gospels into the Sara language<sup>28</sup> and worked with them on agricultural development.<sup>29</sup> In addition, he saw

himself as a mediator of conflicts in the church and as a priest administering the sacraments.<sup>30</sup> Not a gifted singer himself, Hallaire worked as a musical intermediary. From the beginning, he encouraged composition in local Chadian idioms; when a Chadian Catholic composed a song, he tape-recorded it and played the recording in other villages.<sup>31</sup> Mathias Ngartéri, the Chadian Catholic priest who succeeded Hallaire, reflected that not only did Catholics in other villages begin to sing the songs but they were also inspired to begin composing their own songs.<sup>32</sup> Hallaire helped distribute a substantial body of Catholic hymns and songs in this way, eventually resulting in the production of a hymnal.<sup>33</sup>

C. R. Marsh, an English (Christian) Brethren missionary who served in both Muslim northern Chad and N'Djamena from 1961 to 1971, described translation work, one of his primary roles, as follows:

[Listening] to the colloquial languages; sitting round smoky fires... listening to criticisms of the version he was using; sitting behind a bush with a notebook in hand as the men returned from market; sitting in a coffee house, noting each new expression.... This is what makes a man a translator, to sit where they sit.<sup>34</sup>

Marsh placed a high value on immersion and cultural learning, albeit as a means to evangelism; throughout his memoirs he consistently referred to himself using the Arabic name Abd Al'Masih (Servant of Christ). He also described his activities as an evangelist and evangelical storyteller, and as a language teacher to Southern Chadian Christians, providing them with Arabic language skills so they could better evangelize Muslims.<sup>35</sup>

Marsh observed Chadian Church music, describing in detail the music of several services.<sup>36</sup> He described the tunes as European in origin but, he reflected, "it is very hard for a stranger to recognize the tune."<sup>37</sup> Teaching the Western style of singing to Chadians was impossible: "In Africa the Africans were not to be outdone.... In every instance the missionary has had to renounce his efforts and the tunes are sung à l'Africain."<sup>38</sup> Though he valued cultural immersion, Marsh found himself an outsider to Chadian music performance. Nonetheless, he compiled a hymnal in Chadian Arabic for use in evangelization and opened every day of his Arabic and French language evangelization training classes with hymns.<sup>39</sup>

Missionaries in Chad thus played (and play) a broad range of roles

besides evangelist: translator, linguist, teacher, priest or minister, conflict mediator, hymnal compiler, and musical gatekeeper or intermediary. Other missionary memoirs suggest additional roles: for example, Abe Taves, who worked in southern Chad with The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), was known as both “docteur Tahvess” and “pasteur Tahvess” and worked as a consultant on a Lele-language hymnal.<sup>40</sup>

These roles were not universal, but were negotiated between particular Chadians and missionaries. While Hallaire, Marsh, and Taves understood and tried to present themselves as playing the role of the missionary, their highly varied activities contributed to what might be better theorized as a “role set.”<sup>41</sup> While each was recognized as “missionary” by their Chadian partners, being a “missionary” may also have implied being a doctor, pastor, translator, or other things. Roles associated with missions, development, and music overlap in the role sets negotiated between these missionaries and Chadian church members. Though North American Mennonite missionaries did not make inroads into Southern Chad, these missionaries and their negotiated role sets are part of a larger pool of possible understandings of Western church workers in Chad that predates MCC work there.<sup>42</sup>

How did MCC’s work in Chad relate to the role-sets associated with missionaries outlined above? MCC Chad began its work in partnership with Western-based missions agencies and moved to partner with local Chadian groups in recent years. MCC’s work in Chad began in 1973.<sup>43</sup> In 1975 MCC workers were “under the umbrella” of the United Evangelical Mission (MEU), an organization under which French Mennonite missionaries worked.<sup>44</sup> European Mennonite missionaries supervised an MCC well-building project in 1976-1977.<sup>45</sup> In 1978 MCC workers built wells for a TEAM hospital.<sup>46</sup> As Chad’s civil war worsened in 1979, MCC workers and their missionary partners were evacuated.<sup>47</sup> As MCC workers returned in 1982, they discussed co-operative missions and MCC placements with MEU.<sup>48</sup>

Until the mid-1980s MCC workers in Chad played roles centered on providing technical expertise and training. MCC personnel served as hydrologists, civil engineers, and construction experts in connection with well-building projects, and as agriculturalists in dry areas.<sup>49</sup> MCCers worked as teachers of English and French, and of appropriate technology

construction and use.<sup>50</sup> They also worked in public health.<sup>51</sup> In sum, their roles might be characterized as those of an “expert technician” or a “teacher.” Some workers also “preached, led Bible studies [and] taught choirs,” and MCC supported the reprinting of an Arabic songbook.<sup>52</sup> The MCC worker role-set seems congruent with the model of a knowledge-worker: teachers, technologists and experts, music teachers and experts.

In 1984 MCC Chad gave an operational grant to the Entente Évangélique, an organization of Chadian Protestant churches.<sup>53</sup> Three years later MCC provided meeting space for the Entente.<sup>54</sup> In 1990 MCC workers offered a conflict resolution seminar through the Entente, and the Entente sent the first of many young visitors to North America on the MCC International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP).<sup>55</sup> By 1991 MCC considered the Entente their primary contact and partner in Chad.<sup>56</sup> In 1993 the relationship was expanded to include CAEDESCE, the development organization of the Entente.<sup>57</sup> MCC workers began to act as a resource for CAEDESCE planning and programs.<sup>58</sup> A Chadian national, Madjibe Levy, was country representative for MCC Chad in 1998-99.<sup>59</sup> By the beginning of 2001 the MCC office in Chad was closed, and a regional office was created in Burkina Faso that continued to support the work of the Entente, CAEDESCE, and several additional Chadian partner organizations.<sup>60</sup>

Between the mid-1980s and the 2000s MCC workers began to teach Chadian teachers. MCC workers taught various agricultural strategies to a Chadian agriculturalist who taught other farmers<sup>61</sup> and trained Chadian masons in well construction and maintenance, and this group of masons took over these projects.<sup>62</sup> Similar collaborations took place for health workers, and MCCers also served as advisors to the Entente and CAEDESCE on a larger scale to plan development and peace programs. Rather than playing the role of “technical experts” and “administrators” or “teachers” themselves, MCCers taught this role to Chadian partners and encouraged them to perform it.

The timing of this move towards sustainable locally-run development work coincides with that of MCC’s two exchange programs in Chad: IVEP and Serving and Learning Together (SALT). The *MCC Workbook* reports that the Église évangélique au Tchad saw SALT as “a good exchange for having sent a youth to the U.S.”<sup>63</sup> A new role for MCCers in Chad, the

SALTer, thus appeared in 1988 and continued until 2000. While MCC at the time promoted SALT as a way for North American young adults to “test their gifts for future service,”<sup>64</sup> Catherine and Terrance Sawatsky noted that the immersion aspect of SALT in Chad was highly valued, though it is not clear whether by Chadians or Westerners:

On arrival, SALTERs go directly to their Chadian homes and live the lifestyle of their Chadian families. Their example has been widely remarked on. It is unusual for expatriates to live in the same lifestyle as Chadians – eating, sleeping and working under the same conditions as their Chadian friends and families.<sup>65</sup>

If those who remarked on the example of the SALTERs were Chadians, then the SALTERs helped establish common living and work roles for MCCers and Chadian partners. This role, “liv[ing] the lifestyle of their Chadian families,” is one of cultural learning through immersion. The Sawatskys’ description of SALTERs’ roles seems to strain against “testing one’s gifts for service” – at least when service is defined as a teaching, helping or expert role.

The country reports published in the annual *MCC Workbook* document a broad variety of roles and a significant change over time that broadly conforms to Mathies’ schema of successive generations. Further, the association of MCC workers with missions, especially the MEU, was quite close during the 1970s and 1980s, and interactions with Chadian partners were sometimes played out in the name of both MCC and MEU. What kind of musical and cultural roles, then, were negotiated by SALTERs, given the divergent descriptions of the SALT program and the varied role expectations established by prior MCC workers and missionaries?

### **MCC-SALT and Music in Chad**

Marie Moyer is a young Canadian Mennonite woman who spent 1998-99 in Moundou, Chad as a SALTER. I interviewed her by telephone on March 16, 2000 and October 8, 2005, and we also conducted e-mail conversations.<sup>66</sup> Marie’s roles in the musical life of her church were significant as were the difficulties she faced in trying to play the learner and helper roles. Marie studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC; presently Canadian Mennonite University); her SALT year formed the internship for her theology



degree in Service Education. Her North American SALT orientation in Akron, Pennsylvania offered little explicit guidance as to what her role in Chad might be. For her CMBC studies, however, she wrote down goals for the part she would play: she sought to be a “mirror” of Chadian church culture from her position as an outsider to the community – not to teach, but to reflect in a way that Chadians might find useful.

Marie’s host church in Moundou was the Assemblé Chrétien du Tchad (ACT) de Doyon, an urban church attended primarily by people of the Gor ethnic group.<sup>67</sup> Her host father was both the pastor of this church and, during the year of Marie’s visit, the president of the ACT denomination. Near the beginning of her time in Chad, the council of elders at ACT de Doyon asked Marie to fill four roles: Sunday School teacher, English teacher, drama troupe member, and choir member. Church leaders also discouraged community members from asking Marie to start or provide funding for new development projects; Marie noted that leaders had been told this was “not my role.”

Marie taught two English classes, one for beginners, and one for advanced students. The beginners’ class did not last long because the night it was to be held conflicted with a weekly Sunday School event during the Christmas season. However, the advanced English class, composed mostly of educated young people, met in each other’s homes, and members “took turns hosting and having a bit of a meal.” This class became for Marie “some of my best friends” and “a tight-knit group.”

The ACT de Doyon also purchased an electronic keyboard and asked Marie to play it with the choir and also to teach keyboard skills to choir members so that the instrument could be used when she was gone.<sup>68</sup> Marie became part of the contemporary choir, a young persons’ choir that performed sacred African popular music in French.<sup>69</sup> The performance norms were quite different from Marie’s Western classical training: as a keyboardist, she had to learn a recurring keyboard melody by ear, and then transpose it by ear during performance into the key picked by whichever instrumentalist started the song.

Marie was “fitted in” by her hosts as one of a set of five leaders of the choir (in addition to the choir director). “The choir members expected me to teach them something,” Marie told me. She decided to teach “I Will Sing

for Joy,” a South American chorus from the *Mennonite World Conference Songbook*,<sup>70</sup> which she thought reflected already-existing performance norms. Marie taught it as songs were usually taught in the choir: she sang each line and the choir repeated it. However, each member sang the line back to her in a version that differed from hers in a uniform fashion. Interested, Marie then asked several members to sing what they considered to be a very traditional Gor song. After notating it she found that, as she had guessed, it was pentatonic. Marie taught from the keyboard to help choristers increase their proficiency in singing the diatonic scale.<sup>71</sup> She also taught keyboard skills to several members, including other leaders and instrumentalists.

Being a choir leader and a choir member was not a trivial commitment. In addition to its three weekly practices, the contemporary choir often led congregational music and taught new songs to the congregation. The choir also sang by itself, and occasionally offered very quiet singing as a meditative backdrop to congregational prayer. The choir was involved in nearly all parts of the worship service, except for the sermon.

A particularly intimate aspect of Marie’s involvement was her participation in singing all-night mourning services with the choir after the death of a community member. Marie guessed that the choir was likely taking the place of traditional mourners when a Christian died. She felt privileged to be an insider to such important community events as part of the choir.

Marie also described attending a workshop in Moundou offered by some visiting North American speakers.

I was with the [ACT de Doyon] choir.... [T]hese guests ... were sitting at the front in this position of honor, and I was dancing with my choir.... Part of me wanted to go and sit with them and talk with [the North Americans]. The other part of me did not want to be invited up there.... I was very conscious that I was placed in this particular role, as a Chadian more than as a North American.

Marie’s roles as choir member and leader were internal to the choir, and had existed before she arrived. Her descriptions of the community mourning event and the workshop illustrate the significant extent to which being part of the choir provided Marie with an “insider” role in the existing social fabric for young people at the church.

What did her Chadian hosts expect of her? “I think what they saw me as having was knowledge, that I should give them,” she said. Marie felt that this knowledge-worker expectation covered most of the areas in which she contributed, including public health, Sunday school teaching and English teaching, and music. However, she was sometimes described and understood by her friends as a missionary. She “would complain and protest loudly that I wasn’t. I didn’t like all the other things that went along with that.... And they would ... say, ‘but a missionary is someone who’s sent for the church, so you are.’” When I asked Marie what she told her friends she was, instead of a missionary, she said, “I think that was the problem, I didn’t know....”

One way to understand the confusion and difficulty that Marie encountered in trying to negotiate a role for herself at the ACT de Doyon is to note the conflicting roles for Westerners that preceded her time there: the missionary as teacher and leader, the development worker as teacher and expert. In addition, MCC-SALT prescribes a different role for its workers from that of other MCC workers who preceded Marie in Moundou. While she tried to create her own role as “mirror” – as a respectful outsider reflecting on the Chadian church – she felt she was expected to be a teacher and a missionary. Despite this confusing position, through her own creativity and that of her friends in the Chadian choir and advanced English class, Marie was at times understood as playing roles internal to the ACT de Doyon that she neither expected nor knew about before arriving in Chad.

Marie’s experience was not the same as that of other SALTers or MCCers in Chad in 1998-99. Celia Mellinger described having a relatively clear sense of role, as mediated by her host father: “to learn how to be Chadian.” However, navigating it was very difficult in the absence of other North Americans with whom she could process “how to be Chadian.” Celia was a choir member and was also asked to teach her choir a song, but unlike Marie she was not a choir leader.<sup>72</sup> Other MCCers whom I interviewed found themselves alienated by the music of their church and said they had “no role” in it.<sup>73</sup>

On the other hand, Madjibe Levy, a middle-aged Chadian man who was the MCC-Chad country director for 1998-99 and is now a leader in the MCC West Africa office, offered his own view of the history of SALTER

contributions to music in Chad. His description shares a great deal with Marie's experience. He noted that former country representative Verna Olfert started the choir "Les joyeux serviteurs" in his church, L'Église du Foyer Fraternel of N'Djamena. Levy sang and provided leadership in this choir from 1983 to 1991.<sup>74</sup> He described the role of Anita Hershey, the first SALTER whom his church received, in 1991: she taught his church choir to sing solfège, which "allowed the choir leaders to better master melodies, notes, and harmonies."<sup>75</sup>

Levy stated that "MCC volunteers have played the role of encouragers, teachers, and gift-givers of music to Chadian choristers" through sharing with Chadians the training in music they received in North America.<sup>76</sup> He placed this gift in the context of the vitality and importance of music in Chad: "For Africans and for Chadians in particular, music is an irreplaceable means of communication."<sup>77</sup> This means of communication, for him, was enhanced by the teaching of SALTERs – though, as Marie's navigation of her role demonstrates, the SALTERs' attempts to teach likely also constituted cross-cultural musical learning.<sup>78</sup>

## **Conclusions**

How, then, can we describe the involvement of MCC workers in music in their host country? In the case of Chad, MCC workers have had an important impact on church music, especially choral music (though choral music, as Marie's example demonstrates, rarely duplicates Western classical performance styles or repertoires). MCCers founded church choirs, taught various skills and ideas in those choirs, and also simply sang as choir members. In Marie's case, the choir provided an "insider's" place in the social fabric of the community – a profound learning experience, though Marie was also viewed as a teacher. Her experiences were not universal; MCCers' experiences ranged from disinterest and alienation from local music and worship, to limited participation in music, to strong and proactive involvement in it.

How does this cultural involvement map onto the official discourse of MCC's statements on the role of its development workers? While MCC statements emphasize the extent to which workers have moved from a teaching role to a partnership role – and the MCC-SALT program in particular

addresses itself to partnership and cultural exchange – Marie’s experience with music in Chad shows that Western MCCers may play multiple roles encompassing teaching, learning and partnership, and may understand those roles differently than do their local partners. “MCC development worker” comprises a role set containing multiple roles in both the worker’s official capacity and the everyday cultural life that the Western MCCer lives in the host country and host church.

What can we learn from this about the cultural dimensions of development work? While MCC officials have a great deal of power in describing and prescribing roles for their workers, and while MCCers themselves are reflective and creative role-players, in the Chadian case that I have described MCCers found many already-existing roles and role expectations for Western workers. The history of interactions between Western missionaries and Chadians, and between MCC and other development workers and Chadians, overlapped and formed a framework through which Western MCCers and Chadians had perforce to understand each other. New roles in development and in music were not simply invented but collaboratively constructed from pieces of old and well-known roles.

This history of interaction is no discriminator between the work of inter-cultural teaching and learning, and the more official or structural roles that MCC workers might play. The negotiation of roles can be confusing and difficult on both sides of the interaction. Both MCCer and Chadian church partners may well arrive at different but simultaneously held understandings of the roles.<sup>79</sup> In sum, MCCers have played important cultural roles in local Chadian churches, not least through their involvement in music. Chadian Christians and MCC workers together have created, out of their individual hopes and their already-existing expectations, new musical sounds and new cultural roles in their on-the-ground relationships.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In Protestant churches that I visited both in Gounou-Gaya and in N’Djamena, hymns were printed, text only, in the *Chants de Victoire* hymnal: Commission des Chants de Victoire, *Chants de Victoire: recueil de cantiques pour réunions d’évangélisation, d’édification, missions de réveil et classes d’enfants* (Genève: Éditions «Je Sème», 1970).

<sup>2</sup> SALT stands for Serving and Learning Together. MCC ceased offering its SALT program in

Chad in 2001, though other programs continue through a regional office located in Burkina Faso.

<sup>3</sup> Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1982); Jonathan Dueck, “An Ethnographic Study of the Musical Practices of Three Edmonton Mennonite Churches” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Alberta, 2003); Ruth H. Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-making in an English Town* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> These multiple actors present not one but many performances of musical roles, and receive them in not one but many ways. However, there are also shared musical meanings that are emergent in and change through the interactions of these actors.

<sup>5</sup> In this paper, I will use the English spelling of Chad, rather than the French spelling of Tchad.

<sup>6</sup> Interview data gathered in 2005 has been collected under the terms of the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board. All data has been gathered according to the ethical norms of the discipline of ethnomusicology: that is, with the informed consent of all interviewees in the context of an honest and open research relationship.

<sup>7</sup> Robert S. Kreider, “The Impact of MCC Service on American Mennonites,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 44 (1970): 245-46.

<sup>8</sup> Kreider, “The Impact,” 247; Ronald J.R. Mathies, “Service as (Trans)formation: The Mennonite Central Committee as Educational Institution,” *CGR* 13.2 (1995): 120-21; Ronald J.R. Mathies, “Service as (Trans)formation: MCC as Educational Institution” in *Unity Amidst Diversity: Mennonite Central Committee at 75*, eds. Robert S. Kreider and Ronald J. R. Mathies (Akron, PA: Mennonite Central Committee, 1996), 69, 72.

<sup>9</sup> Mathies, “Service as (Trans)formation,” *CGR*, 123; “Service as (Trans)formation” in *Unity Amidst Diversity*, 73-75.

<sup>10</sup> Mathies, “Service as (Trans)formation,” *CGR*, 126-30; “Service as (Trans)formation” in *Unity Amidst Diversity*, 77-78.

<sup>11</sup> Mathies, “Service as (Trans)formation,” *CGR*, 131; “Service as (Trans)formation” in *Unity Amidst Diversity*, 78.

<sup>12</sup> Fred DeVries, “Worldviews and policy action: a comparative study of the Mennonite Central Committee Canada and Oxfam-Canada” (M.A. Thesis, Univ. of Guelph, 1991), 17-21.

<sup>13</sup> Richard A. Yoder et al., *Development to a Different Drummer: Anabaptist/Mennonite Experiences and Perspectives* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2005), 34-36; Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 97-102.

<sup>14</sup> MCC, “Mission Statement,” *MCC Contact* 15. 3 (1991): 1; Mennonite Central Committee, “MCC - About Us - Mission Statement.” 2005. <http://www.mcc.org/about/whatis.html>.

<sup>15</sup> MCC, *Mennonite Central Committee Workbook: Reports and Statistics* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> Tim Hallett, “Symbolic Power and Organizational Culture,” *Sociological Theory* 21.2 (2003): 128. This role-making capability only functions if rank-and-file members recognize the elites as legitimate spokespersons.

<sup>17</sup> Yoder et al., *Development to a Different Drummer*, 208-11. While Yoder, Redekop and

Jantzi's study concerns Mennonites working with Mennonite Economic Development Associates and in the secular non-governmental organization world as well as with MCC, their sketch of values held by Mennonite development workers in general specifically mentions the role model that previous generations of MCC workers provided. The study characterizes MCC work as often focused on local relationship-building. Further, these roles and values become important to the identity of not only MCC workers but of other Mennonites in contact with MCC workers. See Donald B. Kraybill, "From Enclave to Engagement: MCC and the Transformation of Mennonite Identity" in *Unity Amidst Diversity*, 19. Leo J. Driedger and Howard Kauffman, *The Mennonite Mosaic: Identity and Modernization* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1989), 176-78, 257-58.

<sup>18</sup> Kristen Grace et al., "MCCers and Evangelicals: Perspectives of Development," *CGR* 13.3 (1995): 365.

<sup>19</sup> David R. Maines, "Social Organization and Social Structure in Symbolic Interactionist Thought," *Annual Review of Sociology* 3 (1977): 235. My argument here reflects a fundamental principle of frame theories of symbolic interaction: that sources of information about role that are external to the interaction context impact the kinds of role the role-player can perform, as famously argued by Erving Goffman. See Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor, 1959), 222-24.

<sup>20</sup> Robert S. Kreider and Rachel Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988), 85-86; Yoder et al., *Development to a Different Drummer*, 42-46.

<sup>21</sup> Jan Jenner, "Development and Peace: You Can't Have One Without the Other" in *Development to a Different Drummer*, 97, 99.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 97, 110-11.

<sup>23</sup> Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger*, 92.

<sup>24</sup> In contrast to the resources found in missionary accounts, ethnomusicologists have produced very little documentation of church music in Chad. Monique Brandily has contributed substantial ethnomusicological documentation of music there, but she has focused on the Muslim North. See Monique Brandily, "Songs to Birds among the Teda of Chad," *Ethnomusicology* (1982): 371. French-language anthropological studies in Chad also provide some documentation of musical instruments in Southern Chadian life, but these sources avoid music associated with Christians. Examples are Françoise Dumas-Champion, *Les Masa du Tchad: Bétail et société* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983); Claude Pairault, *Boum-le-Grand: Village d'Iro* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1966).

<sup>25</sup> Mario J. Azevedo and Emmanuel U. Nnadozie, *Chad: A Nation in Search of its Future* (Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1998), 108; Jacques Hallaire, *Naissance d'une église africaine: Lettres et chroniques du pays sar, Tchad 1952-1989* (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 1998), 5.

<sup>26</sup> Azevedo and Nnadozie, *Chad*, 108-9; Hallaire, *Naissance d'une église africaine*; Rodney Venberg, "The Lutheran Brethren Church in Chad and Cameroun" (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1970).

<sup>27</sup> Hallaire, *Naissance d'une église africaine*, 37.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 75, 87-88.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.



<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 278.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 234. In addition, in the 1960s, both the political climate of the newly independent Chad and the advent of the Second Vatican Council meant the entire Mass had to be reconstructed in the Sara language. This language is tonal, like many sub-Saharan African languages. Hallaire reflected that using Gregorian tunes for the liturgy was no longer possible, since the melodic contours of the chants would change the meanings of Sara words by distorting the tonal contours of the words. He set this task before a group of Chadian catechists, who reconstructed the liturgical music of the mass in newly composed tunes, using local musical idioms. See Hallaire, *Naissance d'une église africaine*, 187-88.

<sup>34</sup> C.R. Marsh, *Streams in the Sahara* (Bath: Echoes of Service, 1972), 36-37.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 50-51. Marsh's descriptions of his evangelical activity are especially interesting, since he describes his evangelism and evangelical storytelling in terms strongly reminiscent of his descriptions of traveling Muslim religious experts. See Marsh, *Streams in the Sahara*, 10-11, 21, 123-24, 138-41.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 62-65, 78, 91-97, 103-105.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 166, 162.

<sup>40</sup> Abe Taves and Hilma Taves, *From Thatched Huts to Celestial City* (Three Hills, AB: Abe and Hilma Taves, 1996), 14-15, 94, 61.

<sup>41</sup> Robert K. Merton, "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," *British Journal of Sociology* 8 (1957): 106.

<sup>42</sup> There is some documentation of Mennonite mission activity in Chad though not, to my knowledge, of activity in the south. Raymond Eyer, a French Mennonite missionary, was present in Abéché in the north of Chad from 1958 until at least 1971. See the following for a description of the beginning of his mission: Raymond Eyer, "Lettre du Tchad" *Bulletin du Comité de Mission Des Eglises Evangeliques-Mennonites de France (Extrait de Christ Seul)* 1 (1960): 6. C.R. Marsh records two contacts with Eyer on trips to the North, the second in 1970-71. See Marsh, *Streams in the Sahara*, 118-19, 169-72. Marion Hostetler wrote a fictional account of a girl's experience in the north of Chad in "Achéba" with a development organization called "Church Overseas Aid," usually printed in its abbreviated form, "COA," describing the girl's father's work in agricultural development in the arid north and the co-operation of COA workers with a northern missionary station. See Marion Hostetler, *African Adventure* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1976). Descriptions of music in a church in the north, whose congregants are mostly southerners who work for the Chadian government, conform to the accounts of church music in Chad cited above: European-origin hymns sung with a leader, who lines out the hymn, and a congregation who respond. See Hostetler, *African Adventure*, 106-108. Hostetler's book was written on the basis of a research trip to Chad in the summer of 1974, just as MCC work in the area began.

<sup>43</sup> Eric Olfert, "Chad (Country Report)" in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1980* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1981) 34, 35.

<sup>44</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1975* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1976), 9. The United Evangelical Mission (MEU) originated with Western missionaries from the Sudan United Mission and TEAM in 1969, and in 1988 MEU became part of the organizational structure of the Église évangélique au Tchad, a national Chadian church initially connected with TEAM. See: Reformiert online, “Chad - (Afrika).” 2002. Database on-line. Available from Stiftung Johannes a Lasco Bibliothek Grosse Kirche Emden. [http://www.reformiert-online.net/weltweit/25\\_de.php](http://www.reformiert-online.net/weltweit/25_de.php). See also Worldwide Evangelization for Christ, “WEC Chad’s organisation.” 2005. [http://www.wec-int.org/chad/wec\\_chad's\\_organisation.htm](http://www.wec-int.org/chad/wec_chad's_organisation.htm).

<sup>45</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1976* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1977), 15. “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1977* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1978) 17, 18.

<sup>46</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1978* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1979) 19, 20.

<sup>47</sup> Eric Olfert, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1979* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1980), 20.

<sup>48</sup> Eric Olfert, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1982* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1983), 24.

<sup>49</sup> See “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1976*, 15; MCC, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1978*, 19-20.

<sup>50</sup> David Foxall and Justine Foxall, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1985* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1986), 48, 50; same authors, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1986* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1987), 45, 47.

<sup>51</sup> Foxall and Foxall, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1985*, 48, 50.

<sup>52</sup> Foxall and Foxall, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1983* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1984), 47, 49; same authors, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1986*, 45, 48.

<sup>53</sup> Foxall and Foxall, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1984* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1985), 49, 52.

<sup>54</sup> Foxall and Foxall, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1987* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1988), 47, 46.

<sup>55</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1990* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1991), 41, 43.

<sup>56</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1991* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1992), 49, 51.

<sup>57</sup> Catherine Sawatsky and Terrance Sawatsky, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1993* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1994) 15, 16.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 15, 16; Greg Brandenburg, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 2000* (Akron, PA: MCC, 2001) 13, 14.

<sup>59</sup> Levy Madjibe, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1998* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1999) 14; same author, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1999* (Akron, PA: MCC, 2000), 14.

<sup>60</sup> Greg Brandenburg, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics*

2000 (Akron, PA: MCC, 2001), 13, 14; same author, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 2001/2002* (Akron, PA: MCC, 2002), 13, 15.

<sup>61</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1988* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1989), 47.

<sup>62</sup> Brent Friesen and Judy Friesen, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook: Reports and Statistics 1996* (Akron, PA: MCC, 1997), 17-18.

<sup>63</sup> “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1988*, 43, 47.

<sup>64</sup> Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger*, 332.

<sup>65</sup> Sawatsky and Sawatsky, “Chad (Country Report)” in *MCC Workbook 1993*, 15-16.

<sup>66</sup> This section of the paper is based on personal Interviews with Marie Moyer, former MCC-SALT volunteer in Chad, conducted in 2000 and 2005. Unless otherwise cited, all references to Marie Moyer are to these interviews.

<sup>67</sup> Doyon is a *quartier* of Moundou.

<sup>68</sup> The church had two keyboards: a small battery-powered keyboard and a new, large one that needed to be plugged in. The church normally did not have power but rented a generator so this keyboard could be used for performances in celebration of the new church building.

<sup>69</sup> Most of each church service at the ACT de Doyon was conducted in the Gor language, with which Marie was unfamiliar on arrival in Chad. That the contemporary choir practiced in French was helpful as she developed relationships within the group.

<sup>70</sup> Doreen Klassen and Mennonite World Conference, *International Songbook* (Carol Stream, IL: Mennonite World Conference, 1990).

<sup>71</sup> Moyer noted, however, that some choir members knew both the diatonic scale and the solfège system well before she arrived.

<sup>72</sup> Personal Interview with Celia Mellinger, former MCC-SALT volunteer in Chad (2000).

<sup>73</sup> Personal Interview with Dan and Phebe Balzer (former MCC-Chad volunteers (2005).

<sup>74</sup> The choir, “Les joyeux serviteurs,” originated in N’Djamena but due to the war was relocated to Moundou until 1985. The choir subsequently continued both in Moundou and in N’Djamena, to which Levy moved, from 1985 to 1991.

<sup>75</sup> My translation. Levy’s text: “La formation donnée par le volontaire du MCC a permis aux animateurs de mieux maîtriser la mélodie, les notes, les accords.”

<sup>76</sup> My translation. Levy’s text: “Les volontaires du MCC ont joué le rôle de stimulateurs, formateurs et encadreurs musicaux des choristes au Tchad car les jeunes du Tchad n’ont pas accès à la formation musicale.”

<sup>77</sup> My translation. Levy’s text: “Pour les africains en général et tchadiens en particulier, la musique est un moyen de communication irremplaçable.”

<sup>78</sup> The successor to the MCC-SALT program in Chad, which ended in 2001, is a cultural exchange program called Harmonie, sponsored by MCC-Québec in which Francophones from Africa, Europe and North America live in community in Montréal and practice theology, service, and music. While music was by and large an unofficial part of the MCC-SALT program in Chad, it is an official and central part of Harmonie.

<sup>79</sup> MCC-SALT workers in Chad may well have been at a special disadvantage in understanding the context of their interactions with Chadians, by which they negotiated the roles they played in Chad, because of the emphasis MCC-Chad’s SALT program placed on immersion

in the Chadian context. In the experience of workers whom I interviewed, this meant a lack of discussion and processing time with other Westerners in Chad. Key ethnomusicological studies and studies of cross-cultural education stress the importance of having an interpretive community with whom the cross-cultural worker or student shares cultural background, in understanding and negotiating appropriate roles in the cross-cultural environment. See for example Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Let Jasmine Rain Down: Song and Remembrance Among Syrian Jews* (Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998); Susan Talburt and Melissa A. Stewart, "What's the Subject of Study Abroad? Race, Gender, and 'Living Culture,'" *The Modern Language Journal* 83.2 (1999): 163.

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Scottie May, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell. *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community*. Eerdmans, 2005.

*Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community* is a comprehensive sourcebook for people who care about children's ministry. The authors, women who have been immersed in Christian education most of their lives, offer theory and theology, stories and examples from the Canadian and US Protestant context, and biblical and historical foundations to help readers grasp the broad view of children's ministry.

The book is divided into foundations, context and content, and methodology. A primary foundation is our view of children, which affects all we do in ministry with them. If we view them as empty vessels, we try to "fill" them with information. If we view them as pilgrims, we will want to walk with them as guides and companions. The metaphors we live by shape the ministry model we choose and determine what matters most in terms of content, relationships, learning activities, and involvement in the congregation. The authors describe ministry models in North American churches that represent the various views.

Part 1 explores ministry with children through biblical, theological, developmental, and historical lenses. Even though people may use the same theological language, they interpret it differently; assumptions are made based on their theological tradition, whether sacramental, covenantal, or conversional (55). With the growth of independent churches, the authors refer to an unnamed "unclear" tradition that appears in nondenominational congregations as a reaction to tradition and liturgy (65).

Part 2 examines the present contexts in which faith is formed in children; the authors name the congregation and the home as the two most important arenas for faith nurture. This does not minimize the congregation's role but encourages adults to pay attention to the children in their midst in all aspects of church life. Children can worship and participate in the life of the congregation, and can build relationships with caring adults who model a vibrant lived faith. And adults can experience grace as they witness an uncomplicated faith. The congregation gifts the children when it pays

attention to the spiritual nurture of the parents and gives them the skills to speak and live out their faith every day. A carefully planned core curriculum for all ages will benefit the whole congregation in its spiritual formation. The congregation that “practices what it preaches” teaches children about the church’s values and beliefs.

Part 3 addresses practical suggestions that build on the principles outlined earlier. It does not give step-by-step instructions but offers models for ministry that can help a congregation think beyond “the way we always do it.” The writers share personal experiences and offer a wealth of suggestions that will enhance any congregation’s ministry with its children.

I highly recommend this book for leaders in our denomination. It can serve as a textbook for faith formation courses at the college and seminary level. For pastors and leaders in children’s and youth ministry, it can reshape the way ministry happens with specific age groups and, indeed, the whole congregation. However, the writers make some assumptions that do not represent the typical Mennonite experience. Take church size, for example. Our denomination has many small to medium-sized congregations that do not have multiple pastoral staff, but the model for effective children’s ministry presented here is that of a paid children’s minister who works closely with a team of volunteers. The responsibilities outlined may overwhelm a volunteer with good intentions but little time to give to children’s ministry. I wonder, too, how many congregations have gifted and creative Christian educators who are motivated to do all that is needed to envision and shape a dynamic children’s ministry.

Nevertheless, the authors have provided an excellent, comprehensive resource. I urge anyone who believes that children matter to use this book as a tool for discernment on how to provide effective ministry with the children.

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Oliver O'Donovan. *The Ways of Judgment*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

In this companion volume to the acclaimed *The Desire of the Nations*, Oliver O'Donovan puts forward the thesis that "the authority of the secular government resides in the practice of judgment" (3), which summarizes a characteristic biblical approach to government that has had a decisive effect in shaping the Western political tradition. While he disavows any necessary distinction between political theology and political ethics, suggesting instead that these constitute two moments – reflection and deliberation – in a single train of thought, this second 'moment' nonetheless treats matters primarily from the political side.

O'Donovan assumes here the theological framework developed in the earlier book, and seeks not to argue for the establishment of any church but to make political institutions intelligible and to clarify the coherence of political conceptions. He considers the act of judgment as the paradigmatic political act, then the forming of political institutions through representation, and finally the apparent opposition between political institutions and the church, the community instructed by Jesus to 'judge not.'

The author premises his discussion on the belief that Christ's triumph has created new terms that ground a distinction between secular and spiritual authority, between this-worldly and ultimate rule. It is in the secular theater, the secondary theater of witness to the appearing grace of God, that political rulers attest to the coming reality of Jesus Christ by way of their judicial service. Such judgment is "an act of moral discrimination that pronounces upon a preceding act or existing state of affairs to establish a new public context" (7).

A political act is one in which both the interests and the agency of the community are in play. While the imperfectability of human judgment suggests limits in terms of truthfulness and effectiveness, nonetheless our judgment anticipates God's judgment precisely by not pretending to forestall it. Further, the use of liberal equality arguments in dealing with judgment tempts us to believe arguments can be settled without needing to judge their truth. O'Donovan contends the equality that should interest us is the theological assertion based on creation, which calls for differentiated



moral and social engagements. He also addresses issues of freedom, the possibility of mercy (although not forgiveness) within political judgment, and punishment.

No single kind of political institution is necessarily presumed by the political act of judgment, says the author. However, the question of legitimate representation is important. He claims that political authority arises as judgment is done, and therefore we simply devise political institutions to channel that authority. To recognize political authority is to recognize a particular bearer of authority, one that bears the common good: “political authority arises where power, the execution of right, and the perpetration of tradition are assured together in one coordinated agency” (142).

Such authority arises where it meets a ‘people,’ a community not created by political invention, as in Thomas Hobbes or John Rawls, but reflecting the communal reality made possible by virtue of God’s creation. Thus, “to see ourselves as a people is to grasp imaginatively a common good that unifies our overlapping and interlocking practical communications, and so to see ourselves as a single agency, the largest collective agency that we can practically conceive” (150). O’Donovan seeks to answer how the responsibilities of government are to be attributed justly, which leads to discussions of the power of the three branches of government and the role of international judgment.

The third part of the book addresses the relationship of the church and political institutions. O’Donovan wants to avoid any view leading to idealist politics, whereby ecclesial self-description is seen as the key to policy. Such a move corrupts politics and creates an ironic depoliticization, since the church is better viewed as counter-political or even post-political; the church has the judgment of God to which it defers. However, “a well-conceived political theology” cannot make that move, nor should it attempt to do so, since it “begins from the point of transition between the political and the counter-political, the defining limit where closure is imposed upon the act of judgment, an opening made for that free activity of not judging” (235). Judgment appears as a parenthesis between the pre-political society of God’s creation and the post-political society of the church – an interim that is a definite something yet not identical to the church, which looks forward to the human race gathered around the throne of God, and looks

backward on the given sociality of creation.

O'Donovan takes up issues in a way that provides insight without requiring the reader to agree with a larger construct. For example, his treatment of the difference between late liberal individualism and evangelical concern for the person offers penetrating insight into contemporary culture and theology of the individual. Similarly, his discussion of the complex dynamic of the individual and the church offers a compelling account of both issues (despite how the church drops from view too quickly when secular politics is discussed).

While this book is very important for Western Christian political thought and impressively argued, I have several reservations about it. O'Donovan has the church play too indirect a part in political theology and ethics. At times the church is referred to as post-political or counter-political, but it cannot ever *be* political by its active presence as the community of the slain Lamb. A Christian political theology, he suggests, can profoundly affect the secular theater and offer to it truthful judgment, appropriate effectiveness, mercy, freedom and so on, but all in a provisional manner that distinguishes between the penultimate and ultimate realms.

O'Donovan's concern to resist idealistic depoliticization of the Christian political tradition without succumbing to Niebuhrian realism is well taken. Nonetheless, what follows from his view seems to assume a demarcation between private, public, and political that is too clearly drawn and does not give enough credence to the practices of the church as political.

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Nancey Murphy. *Religion and Science: God, Evolution, and the Soul*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Proceedings of the 2001 Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2002.

George F.R. Ellis. *A Universe of Ethics, Morality, and Hope*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Proceedings of the Second Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2003.

Antje Jackelén. *The Dialogue between Religion and Science: Challenges and Future Directions*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Proceedings of the Third Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004.

John F. Haught. *Purpose, Evolution and the Meaning of Life*. Carl S. Helrich, ed. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2005.

The contemporary religion-science interaction is all too often not a dialogue but a debate or, worse, a diatribe. This contentious conversation is premised upon a dichotomy: one believes either in science as the sole source of truth about humanity and the world (“scientism”) or in the Bible as the sole source of truth about the cosmos and our place within it (“fundamentalism”). Each position is based upon an epistemological faith-commitment. Such is the making of an intractable conflict (“science” versus “faith”) that sadly has pierced the Body of Christ, dividing the church into ideological factions (“liberals” versus “conservatives”). Christians formed within the peace tradition ought to be conscientious objectors to this culture war, encouraging instead a conflict-transforming dialogue between science and theology.

The Goshen Conference on Religion and Science cuts through the false dichotomy of the culture war by enacting and modeling an alternative conversation. Occurring annually since 2001 at Goshen College and funded through the Miller-Jeschke Program for Christian Faith and the Natural Sciences, these gatherings bring together clergy and laity of various Christian traditions, biblical scholars and theologians, scientists from different fields of research, and even the odd philosopher or two. Each three-day conference

is organized around the person and writings of a single prominent scholar, and is limited to fifty participants. The published proceedings under review here include the guest lectures, transcripts of Q & A sessions, and reflections from Sunday morning worship.

The 2001 conference featured Anabaptist scholar Nancey Murphy (Fuller Theological Seminary), who lectured on theories of human nature, divine action, and biological evolution. The 2002 conference featured cosmologist and Quaker George F. R. Ellis (University of Cape Town), who explored interrelations between physics, metaphysics, and meaning. The 2003 event featured Antje Jackelén (Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago), who lectured on the challenges and potential contributions of hermeneutics, feminism, and postmodernism to the dialogue, emphasizing the need for attention to hermeneutics in both theology and science. And the fourth (2004) featured Catholic scholar John F. Haught (Georgetown University), who examined the connection between scientific questions of the origin of life and the structure of the cosmos and theological questions of cosmic purpose, divine providence, and the meaning of human life.

Of particular interest for peace tradition Christians are the interrelated respective lectures by Murphy and Ellis, which build on previous jointly authored work (Nancey Murphy and George F.R. Ellis, *On the Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996]).

Seeking a coherent worldview conversant with recent science and consistent with their faith commitments, they envision a cosmic hierarchy that is nonviolent “from top to bottom” by divine design. As Creator, God ordains “top-down” cosmic constraints via the laws of physics that not only are finely tuned to favor a stable cosmos and complex organisms but allow human freedom. As Redeemer, God enters the cosmos “bottom-up” in a non-coercive, kenotic (self-limiting, self-emptying) manner that respects rather than violates the created nature of things. Within this worldview, they view suffering as part-and-parcel of the ongoing divine work of cosmic redemption by kenotic means; it is a necessary cost of a nonviolent cosmos, exemplified supremely by the voluntary death of Jesus.

Their account of divine action offers a welcome alternative to the dominant Protestant view that sees divine freedom and physical necessity

as contestants in a zero-sum game—and thus pits the Creator against the creation. On their account God acts not contrary to, but only in a manner consistent with, the God-created nature of things. God does not exercise cosmic sovereignty by overpowering creation but rather freely conforms to it. And God can enter the cosmos freely yet non-coercively at the most basic level of reality by acting primarily via subatomic events, so that the divine sway in the material realm is hidden behind the veil of quantum uncertainty.

Murphy and Ellis presuppose that the epistemic uncertainty (unpredictability) inherent in quantum theory entails that subatomic events are ontologically indeterminate. The supposed undetermined nature of quantum phenomena “makes room” in the cosmos for both divine freedom and physical laws: God can freely sway an electron here or photon there without making observable waves that might upset the statistical predictions of quantum theory. But is nature at bottom really indeterminate? Although they share the majority position, their account begs a major question of ongoing debate among physicists and philosophers. This is especially problematic, given that a well-developed alternative theory to standard quantum mechanics accurately describes all subatomic events by fully deterministic laws.

One wonders how their account could be compatible with the orthodox Christian doctrine of incarnation. The ancient creed does not say God became an electron or photon and entered the cosmos via an unobservable subatomic event! Instead, God became a flesh-and-blood human being, entering the world as a complex body at the macro-level of reality via an observable event. Moreover, biblical accounts depict God as acting in the world via macro-level observable events, such as the words and deeds of Jesus. But quantum uncertainty is physically irrelevant at the macro-level of complex bodies and observable events, which are adequately explained by the deterministic laws of Newtonian physics. Hence, there is no recourse here to the indeterminate character of quantum phenomena to allow for free yet non-coercive divine action. It seems that they must either revise their account of divine action or abandon the orthodox doctrine of incarnation.

Nonetheless, Murphy’s and Ellis’s work deserves attention, for in effect their worldview defends Gospel nonviolence as a “natural-law ethic”

immanent in the divine cosmic design. They thus offer an alternative both to “Constantinian” Christianity that appeals to “natural law” to justify war and to secular worldviews that interpret nature fundamentally in terms of competition and conflict.

These Conference proceedings would prove useful in the college or seminary classroom. They would helpfully supplement courses in philosophy of science, systematic theology, contemporary theology, philosophical theology, biblical hermeneutics or ethics. But they are not for the uninitiated. Digesting the lecture material requires at least some background in theology and science. As well, the transcriptions of the Q&A sessions, while highly valuable for insiders, will read like an already ongoing conversation for outsiders. For those lacking an orientation to basic questions and viewpoints within the religion-science dialogue, I recommend using these volumes to supplement a standard text such as Ian Barbour, *Religion & Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997).

“Science versus religion” is a pressing cultural issue affecting the church and its mission, and needs to be addressed by our colleges, seminaries, and mission agencies. The proceedings of the Goshen Conference are a welcome resource.

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Richard A. Yoder, Calvin W. Redekop, and Vernon E. Jantzi. *Development to a Different Drummer: Anabaptist/Mennonite Experiences and Perspectives*. 2004. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

*Development to a Different Drummer* is written by three scholar-practitioners at Eastern Mennonite University. The book is the culmination of a process of analysis and reflection that began many years earlier, based on their own experiences with the development enterprise as well as a 1998 conference at EMU that brought together Mennonites “doing development.” It is divided into three Parts. The first provides an overview and background to development and a history of Mennonite involvement; the second features stories of Mennonites involved in development at the grassroots, middle-ground, and public policy levels—stories providing the basis for the authors’ formulation of a Mennonite ethic; and the third identifies common assumptions, themes and patterns, describes a Mennonite ethic of development, and articulates some key tensions and dilemmas inherent in development work.

So, a reader may ask, what is development? The authors briefly review competing perspectives in the second chapter, and in Part III suggest that a Mennonite ethic of development relies upon “eight mutually reinforcing values: people-centeredness, service, integrity, mutuality, authenticity, humility, justice, and peace” (223) with the ultimate goals of justice, sustainability, quality of life, and peace/*salaam/shalom*. Each of these values and goals, they maintain, are congruent with an Anabaptist theology and ethic.

They acknowledge that Mennonites have historically been involved at the grassroots level, where a relational approach to development is natural and most effective, but they argue repeatedly (and persuasively) for more involvement at the public policy level, suggesting that “those positions present opportunities to be faithful to the call of Jesus” (279). At this level prevention and transformation of structural injustices are possible. The final chapter, “What kind of world,” addresses practical and ethical challenges, particularly issues of power, culture, values, and effectiveness.

As someone raised in the Mennonite Church who has worked for MCC and other development organizations, attended the 1998 EMU conference,



and focuses scholarship and practice on issues of humanitarianism, development, and peacebuilding, I found the book's premise intriguing. I particularly welcomed the honesty and variety of the individual stories in the second section and the authors' discussion in the final chapter of lifestyle issues ("Living well while doing good"), and the tensions between grassroots, relationship-focused development and public policy work ("Raising goats or changing systems"), and between mission and service work ("Connect or disconnect with the missiological thrust of religious organizations").

My primary criticism lies with the book's implicit attempt to speak to multiple audiences. On the one hand, the book is Mennonite focused and relies heavily on sources written by other Mennonites, it is published by a Mennonite press, and many of the topics speak more to a Mennonite audience. Indeed, the book's strongest contribution is its articulation of a Mennonite/Anabaptist ethic of development and its congruence with Mennonite theology. On the other hand, the title and introduction purport to address contributions of Anabaptists/Mennonites to the debates and issues of development. If the authors truly believe that Mennonites have a unique perspective and experience to offer, it would seem appropriate to present these to a broader audience and to engage more thoroughly with existing development literature.

Several unanswered questions remained, which highlight the interplay between Mennonite theology and its application. I wished for a deeper exploration of the authors' implicit critique of the "two-kingdom theology" that has traditionally guided Mennonite involvement in the secular world, and how more engagement at the public policy level suggests a redefinition of this division.

I also wondered, as the authors did, about the wider applicability of their articulation of a Mennonite ethic of development. All of the featured testimonies were by individuals well-established in their careers, most of whom had worked for MCC at some point. This raises the question of the extent to which individuals are socialized into a Mennonite ethic of development through their MCC experience as distinct from their Mennonite faith and beliefs. Would this ethic hold for a Mennonite just beginning his or her career? For one who began that career working for a non-MCC or non-Mennonite organization or institution? For a Mennonite raised outside North

America? Expanding the study to a more diverse Mennonite population would likely yield fascinating insights, and would demonstrate whether the values inherent in their ethic of development derive from Mennonite teachings or from socialization within Mennonite development institutions.

Despite these questions, Yoder, Redekop, and Jantzi's articulation of a Mennonite ethic of development is a welcome first step in the right direction.

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Roman J. Miller, Beryl H. Brubaker, and James C. Peterson, eds. *Viewing New Creations with Anabaptist Eyes: Ethics of Biotechnology*. Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2005.

Since social location shapes perspective, some personal disclosure is in order. I am a farmer growing 35 varieties of vegetables, rice, wheat, and soybeans for 65 families and selected markets at a farm called Menno Village in Hokkaido, Japan. I am also a leader in the Menno Village Church community and have been involved in public policy discussions on biotechnology in Japan for seven years. Japan has a four-thousand-year history of agriculture, so I am familiar with the complexities of traditional agriculture and how it differs from the monocultures of North American agriculture. I am also a seminary student dealing with biotechnology for thesis work in Peace Studies.

This volume offers papers from a conference held at Eastern Mennonite University in 2005. The first part lays out the foundations of medical and agricultural biotechnology. The second outlines differing perspectives on biotechnology, and the third provides a critique and synthesis of the conference presentations.

The book's strength is its multi-disciplinary treatment of biotechnology. Twenty-two speakers represented 14 different disciplines ranging from theology, ethics, and philosophy to the sciences, public policy,

history, medicine, social work, and agriculture. The editors helpfully include photos and short biographies of the speakers, but I wish the biographies would outline what industry organizations and lobbying bodies the speakers were part of, and how much of their income comes from the biotech industry. (There appears to be a high correlation between favorable views and financial benefit.) Two chapters are dedicated to questions and responses. Joseph Kotva, Jr. and Stanley Hauerwas provide excellent analysis and rhetorical responses to the worldviews represented at the conference.

The “Anabaptist eyes” are virtually all North American. In the third world, around 80 percent of the people are farmers; what do *they* think of biotechnology? Also, very little attention is given to the politics of biotechnology. Those who do raise this issue are from outside the US: Kabiru Kinyanjui from Kenya, Conrad Brunk from Canada.

All of us are involved in the process of ‘world making.’ Good intent is not an adequate measure of ethical behavior. Who we belong to and the beliefs we hold shape character and literally create a world. Why is biotechnology so important? John Gearhart “believes” in his work, and government funding and policy supporting biotechnology is critical (33). Why? “A lot of intellectual property is to be gained” (33). Is this the kind of world we want to create? Who will own the world? Who will decide how life as patented commodity will be used? He assumes that we can control and manage the science (34); but as Brunk points out, many instances produce unintended and unforeseen consequences (111).

Emerson Nafziger, an agriculture scientist, believes opposition to bio-engineered grains is unethical: “Given the evidence that [biotechnology is] no threat to the environment or to consumers, opposition to them seems to be paternalistic and unethical” (212). Graydon Snyder, a theologian, writes, “The rejection of genetically altered grains by Europe seems like the sin of political pride” (220). Has anyone asked third world farmers why they do not want biotechnology? Kabiru Kinyanju says, “Biotechnology is driven in the U.S. by the profit motive, which in my African context distorts our ability to feed ourselves and to deal with hunger on the continent.... The technology will not rid us of hunger and poverty” (168, 169).

Biotechnology is a solution in search of a problem, much like “atoms for peace.” No one bothers asking if there are other ways of answering the

problems we are facing without resorting to biotechnology.

Conrad Brunk shows how traditional ethical frameworks are inadequate when confronting biotechnology, where we are dealing with living organisms and uncertainties making it imperative to exercise precaution. There is no recalling genetic modifications once they have been done. I resonate with his warning to North American Mennonites that the unconditional commitment to helping feed the hungry and to promote health may blind us to the ideological commitments of biotechnology (258). Brunk invites us to consider that biotechnology is essentially an issue of power and control.

This book will be helpful for people who want to understand Anabaptist/Mennonite deliberations on biotechnology in North America. It is not the whole story, as many other voices “from below” need to be heard. The shape of our legal system, research priorities, and political and economic ideologies shape North American perceptions. Over 50 percent of the world’s genetically modified crops are grown in the U.S. Are bio-engineered seeds a new form of feudalism? U.S. corporations control over 90 percent of the genetically modified crops grown in the world, and 80 percent of farmers in the world still save their own seeds. Are third world farmers justified in their political skepticism of patented seeds? Genetic modification cannot be separated from the legal constructs of intellectual property law and the logic of the marketplace. Biotechnology and the ideological constructs that have led to its creation must be critically engaged to keep it from becoming an idolatrous power. It will be one of the most important peace issues in the twenty-first century.

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David L. Weaver-Zercher, ed. *Writing the Amish: The Worlds of John A. Hostetler*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005.

What is the relationship—professionally, personally, ethically—of a scholar and the subject she or he studies? What public responsibility does expertise bestow or preclude? What role does advocacy play among academics? Such questions emerge in virtually every discipline but were unusually focused in the life of John A. Hostetler (1918-2001), an Old Order Amish-reared man who opted for Mennonite Church membership and taught anthropology for many years at Temple University. He produced groundbreaking studies of the Amish, and from the early 1960s to the 1990s was the leading authority on their culture. His academic acclaim rested uneasily with his shy, unassuming personality, even as he became the public spokesperson for a people who preferred not to speak publicly. (Hostetler's teaching at the University of Alberta and his important work in Hutterite studies receives minimal attention in this volume.)

Hostetler was not only a scholar who documented culture but an activist who tried to shape and protect it. Sometimes he chided and sought to reform the Amish; more often he urged mainstream society to leave the Amish unmolested, as he did as an expert witness in a 1972 U.S. Supreme Court case legitimating Amish exemption from high school. In later years Hostetler became an outspoken critic of urban sprawl. Along the way, his writing used the Amish as a window and mirror, reminding modern readers of values they had lost in the rush to stay relevant.

Advocacy was not without controversy. When Hostetler denounced commercial exploitation of the Amish, critics retorted he had made a career of public interpretation. And in the early 1980s when he tried to derail production of the Amish-themed Hollywood movie *Witness*, the director fought back, pointing out Hostetler had once helped create a documentary on Amish life that was shot surreptitiously with hidden cameras.

*Writing the Amish* celebrates and analyzes Hostetler's work, focusing on the complex insider-outsider status he balanced. Part I includes assessments from a daughter, a colleague, and two scholars—Simon Bronner

and David Weaver-Zercher—who skillfully interpret Hostetler as a man who moved in multiple worlds. It also includes a revealing autobiographical essay in which Hostetler describes his father’s painful excommunication from the Amish. Part II reproduces 14 of Hostetler’s writings, from 1944 to 1989, which editor Weaver-Zercher believes illustrate the development of Hostetler’s thought and activity. The book concludes with a comprehensive bibliography of his publications.

Perhaps most obviously, this book is of interest to academics studying the Amish. The materials included in Part II document the emerging, evolving interpretations of a pioneer in the field, reminding a later generation of scholars of their intellectual roots and debts. Two other audiences would benefit from this volume as well. Readers of *CGR* who are Mennonites should know more about Hostetler simply because he was undoubtedly the Mennonite most widely read by non-Mennonites. His influence and significance were different from, say, those of John Howard Yoder. But sales of Hostetler’s books outpaced those of any other Mennonite author during his life and included both popular works and renowned academic publications. If Hostetler rarely wrote *about* Mennonites, *Writing the Amish* makes clear that he wrote *as* a Mennonite, interpreting the Amish in ways that also created, even if unintentionally, associated images of Mennonites in popular and scholarly minds. Although Hostetler cast a low profile in Mennonite institutional circles (a term as chair of the Historical Committee of the former Mennonite Church was as close as he came to denominational work), he played a remarkable role in how millions of North Americans—from tourists to tenured professors—understood later-day Anabaptists and their relationship to modernity. Mennonites would do well to understand his role in mediating them.

Second, academics of any faith or tradition will find Part I of this book a thought-provoking tour of questions about professional relationships and responsibilities. How is one’s background a resource and a hindrance to engaging certain topics? What does it mean to research the “Other” when one recognizes one’s connection to it? How are insiders simultaneously outsiders? I can imagine Weaver-Zercher’s essay, for example, or Hostetler’s autobiographical piece serving as a useful discussion tool in an undergraduate seminar or a graduate course exploring professional formation and ethics.

John A. Hostetler spent a lifetime wrestling with the meaning of community and the individual's place in it. If the scholarly community is to be a community, it must attend to the questions this book explores.

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Mark Thiessen Nation. *John Howard Yoder: Mennonite Patience, Evangelical Witness, Catholic Convictions*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Mark Nation's exposition of the theology of John Howard Yoder is a clear and nuanced introduction to the thought of this provocative, "patient Mennonite who provided an evangelical witness" to the church catholic (202). Not so much a critical evaluation as a valuable overview of Yoder's work, the book will benefit both church and academic communities, Mennonite and beyond.

The main chapters interpret Yoder's writings on Anabaptism and neo-Anabaptism, ecumenism, peace theology and just war, and Christian social responsibility in light of the cross of Jesus, and the book concludes with a brief chapter summarizing and commenting on Yoder's contributions to the church and academy. The book also includes the only available biographical essay, slightly revised from Nation's previously published essay in the Festschrift for Yoder, *Wisdom of the Cross*. Nation is currently gathering material for a full biography.

Chapter 4, focusing on "The Politics of Jesus, the Politics of John Howard Yoder" explains why Yoder's *Politics of Jesus* had such a profound impact when published in 1972 and why the politics of Jesus remain particularly challenging to U.S. Christians today. Nation quotes Stanley Hauerwas, who said that "prior to Yoder the subject of Christian ethics in America was always America." Nation underlines that for Yoder the confession that Jesus is Christ—and the Trinitarian God this confession assumes—must be kept in sharp focus in thinking and living ethically. Loyalty to this God directs humans toward a transnational community in Christ. And it is the politics of Jesus and the gospel of Christ that are the



basis for “the pacifism of the messianic community” that Yoder passionately defended throughout his life.

Nation’s chapter on “‘Social Irresponsibility’ or the Offense of the Cross: Yoder on Christian Responsibility” emphasizes that the ecumenical contexts in which Yoder wrote about Christian social responsibility are key to interpreting his statements accurately. Yoder argued that Christians can be pacifist, faithful, and socially responsible in an ecumenical context where many assumed with Reinhold Niebuhr that to be faithful to the nonviolent teaching and cross of Jesus and also “responsible” for one’s neighbors was impossible. In response Yoder made the occasional and ambiguous claim that being “irresponsible” [in the eyes of political realism] was truly being “responsible” [in the eyes of God].

Key to Yoder’s understanding of social responsibility was a strong ecclesiology. Nation argues that Yoder’s central theme regarding Jesus’ relevance for social ethics, and the call to the church to be a new social creation in Christ that is actively and peacefully engaged in the social world, remained quite consistent throughout his life with only minor changes in nuance.

While Yoder is readily identified with peace theology, his work on church unity as an expression of the gospel of peace is less well known, even among Mennonites. Nation notes that Yoder’s lifelong commitment to building interchurch relationships stemmed from his involvement in ecumenical conversations in Europe in the 1950s and was undergirded by his doctoral work on sixteenth-century Anabaptist disputations with the Reformers. The Swiss Anabaptists, Yoder held, remained open to conversation with fellow Christians at points of difference; it was the others who withdrew from and eventually persecuted them. This heritage and the New Testament call for unity in Christ, the inadequate witness of a divided church, the responsibility to testify to one’s faith, and the potential for learning from Christian brothers and sisters motivated Yoder’s significant engagement with both mainstream and evangelical Christians in many countries. Coming from a minority peace church tradition, Yoder brought particular sensitivities to issues of leadership, agenda formation, power, and process in discussions hosted by ecumenical organizations.

Nation’s familiarity with Yoder’s unpublished work, a number of his

personal papers, and his published writings, give his articulation of Yoder's intentions scholarly depth. The text is rich with footnotes that help readers navigate the maze of Yoder's essays, some of which were published, revised, and republished in various collections later in his life. The main drawback of this book is its lack of a full bibliography, something that makes it awkward to recover sources cited in short footnote form.

Nation's concern to correct common misunderstandings of Yoder's work, while a significant contribution, has led him to bend over backward to give as empathetic a reading of Yoder as possible. Nation barely mentions the church discipline process Yoder faithfully but unfortunately faced and its possible implications for some aspects of his thought. In his concluding chapter Nation notes that Yoder "covered the various angles of most of the subjects he cared about" and did "such a thorough job in this regard" that Nation gave "no substantial criticisms" of his work (197). He rather offers a gentle, thoughtful defense of this frequently misunderstood, gifted theologian and witness to Christ.

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Geffrey B. Kelly and F. Burton Nelson. *The Cost of Moral Leadership: The Spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

I was at Saint John's Abbey as the U.S. prepared to invade Iraq on pre-emptive pretense. One morning a monk shared an e-mail he had just received from a monk in Belgium, asking, "What is happening to your country? It is frightening how much your president sounds like Hitler did in the 1930s. What is even more frightening is how much the American people sound like the German people of the 1930s." This monk saw in America what Dietrich Bonhoeffer saw in Nazi Germany and the German church.

Soon after hearing the monk's question, I was in Baghdad with Christian Peacemaker Teams as bombs bought with our tax dollars exploded around us. Words from Bonhoeffer rang harshly true, "How can one close one's eyes to the fact that the demons have taken over the world? It is the powers of darkness who have made here an awful conspiracy."

Few people have confronted Western Christians with a more radical call to follow Jesus than Bonhoeffer. He was his era's most radical pastor-priest-prophet, a rare moral Christian leader who spoke and lived his faith in the face of death.

I came to *The Cost of Moral Leadership: The Spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* wondering what more can be written about him. I found an answer in this poignant volume, a powerful book that "reflects the major dynamics of Bonhoeffer's spiritual life: following Jesus Christ and embracing the cross in his efforts to liberate his nation and oppressed peoples from the yoke of Nazism" (xvi).

For all Bonhoeffer's brilliance as a theologian, ethicist, and pastor, his greatest gift was his personal faith and pastoral commitment to Christ. At an early age he told a friend that his one desire was "to have faith." At the end of life, in a letter from prison to Eberhard Bethge, he confessed, "For a long time...I thought I could acquire faith by trying to live a holy life....I discovered later, and am still discovering right up to this moment, that it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith" (1).

Bonhoeffer's faith was immersed in prayer as "the purifying bath into which the individual and the community must enter every day" (234).

Prayer connected him to the “other,” including the enemy. In the end in a Nazi prison, prayer sustained him.

Truth and freedom must go together, Bonhoeffer insisted. To be Christian is to stake one’s life on the living God as truth. The powerful shield themselves from truth by refining their lies and polishing their appearances. “They take their lies for truth” and cleverly manipulate the masses, trading on fear and hatred (206). To be free is not to be free from God but from ourselves and our untruth (207).

How do we reconcile Bonhoeffer’s Christian pacifist commitment to the way of the cross with his participation in the plot to assassinate Hitler? I did not find an explicit answer in this book. But I did find an insight into how he embodied and even embraced the tension of the cross and the plot to kill Hitler. Especially revealing was a section on “Bonhoeffer’s Pacifism and the Political Conspiracy” (112-15). Bonhoeffer embraced a deep sense of personal responsibility for victims of Nazi atrocities and an equally deep “trust in the incarnate presence and forgiving power of Jesus Christ” (112). He lamented the pervasive willingness of German Christians to condone Nazi violence and let Hitler be their conscience. He agonized over taking up violent measures even in this desperate “last resort.” He refused to justify “deeds of free responsibility that could include violence” on grounds of convenience or pragmatism (113). “In no way did Bonhoeffer concede that the violent deeds planned by the conspirators escaped the guilt for what they had to do in attempting to free the world from the sinister, lethal grip of Adolph Hitler” (115).

On April 9, 1945, Bonhoeffer’s life was tragically ended on a Nazi gallows. He was 39 years old. Reinhold Niebuhr paid tribute to him as “A Martyr....[who] belongs to the modern acts of the apostles” and who dared to “overcome the dichotomy between faith and political life” (2).

With eyes of faith, Bonhoeffer saw the victims of the Nazi regime and complicit Christians. As a follower of Christ, he felt compelled to get in the way of both. He relentlessly pursued that Lenten journey to the cross, spending his last two years in prison. His final words are those of one who gave his life to find it: “This is the end; but for me, also the beginning of life” (137).

Bonhoeffer knew Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and the cross to be *The Cost of Moral Leadership* and central to his spirituality. Our question is: Who is Bonhoeffer today?

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Geoffery Dipple. *'Just as in the Time of the Apostles': Uses of History in the Radical Reformation*. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2005.

In this volume Geoffery Dipple examines, critiques, and ultimately revises the conventional understandings promoted and inherited by past generations of Reformation historians. Anabaptists and others belonging to the 'radical' wing of the Reformation were presumed until now to have shared a foundational, if not naïve, conviction or project of restoring the Church to its primitive state, which is called "restitutionism." Although various stages of revisionist scholarship challenged who was part of the original, genuine core of the Anabaptist movement, and who was to be excluded from that core, scholars generally accepted the claim that the Radicals were New Testament primitivists (25).

Rather than viewing the Radicals as blatant restitutionists, Dipple's research qualifies such general understandings. The Radicals can be viewed more adequately as having developed historical visions, not as the basis for their reform agenda but as a later stage in the argumentation and defence of the visions for the Church they had already set forth on other grounds. Although the Apostolic Age was exalted as glorious by most, no one saw it as a complete model for reform (57).

The study begins by outlining and critiquing the dominant view of the Radicals' primitivism, whereby Frank Littell (1964) had made a distinction between the Radicals' use of history and that of the other major reformers. Dipple contends that a closer examination of Erasmus shows that his call to return to primitive sources was not as extreme as Littell and others depicted, nor did it establish a basis for Radicals to build extreme views of restitutionism. For Erasmus, Christ and the Apostles did not establish a Golden Age but merely laid the basis for the Church's development (35).

Also for Luther, no period is considered normative since apostasy is constant throughout Church history (45).

After setting the stage for how the Radicals both shared and departed from approaches taken by Reformation humanists and Magisterial Reformers, in chapter 2 Dipple examines Thomas Müntzer and Andreas Karlstadt as transitional figures essential to understanding the origins of radical traditions; they looked to the early Church primarily, if not solely, as the model Spirit-filled Church. For Müntzer the Spirit had ultimate authority in identifying the true nature of the Church (87). After more assessment of prior historiographic claims about the early movement, Dipple delineates in chapter 4 the so-called Evangelical Anabaptist vision and use of history. He also attempts to offer nuances in his account of Anabaptists and Spiritualists, where earlier historiography may have made sharper distinctions.

In chapter 5, Dipple compares Caspar Schwenckfeld and Sebastian Frank, demonstrating the wide gulf in how these two exemplary Spiritualist leaders portrayed history. Due to the difficulty of finding much common ground among Spiritualists themselves, distinctions between Anabaptists and Spiritualists appear even less tenable. Next comes a comparative assessment of key leaders, in which Dipple qualifies the element of Spiritualism in key centers of the Anabaptist movement, particularly through the Melchiorites. The last chapter analyzes conflict and ‘dialogue’ in the formulation of the Radicals’ historical vision as the movement progressed into the seventeenth century confessional period.

Although Dipple’s usual rigor and thorough analysis of primary texts approaches the topic with careful, balanced argumentation, there is one point where closer analysis would have produced a different conclusion. Within his description of the movement following from Hut, Dipple compares Schiemer and Freisleben, but he seems not to have given direct attention to Freisleben’s tract, *On the Genuine Baptism of John, Christ and the Apostles* (1528), and assumes that Freisleben sought a “transition to a more Swiss brethren ecclesiology” (140-41). However, Freisleben, rather than following Schiemer’s supposedly sectarian ecclesiology, was continuous with the more provisional attitude among early Radicals who held the sort of non-sectarian, restitutionist convictions that historians like Stayer and Goertz believed were predominant in the proto-Anabaptists’ use of history (120).

Freisleben's abandonment of Anabaptism shortly after writing his tract was due to his disagreement with those wanting the movement to wend toward a sectarian ecclesiology.

Dipple offers an important corrective to a widely held view in the field of Anabaptist and Radical Reformation studies. It dovetails nicely with other similar studies of the use of history within Reformation-era traditions. While it remains focused on the central question of the Radicals' vision and use of history, it does not include significant analysis of the Radicals' use of patristic writers for arguments of doctrine or ordinances. In this sense it serves as a helpful point of departure for further studies that may emerge on the path Dipple has cleared. It may even shed light on future studies that would seek to clarify the Radicals' view and use of Scripture. In an era all too gradually recovering from the use and abuse of history under the 'Anabaptist Vision,' this study is also a reminder of the dangers of using historiography as the basis for promoting a contemporary ideological agenda.

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Ivan Kauffman, ed. *Just Policing: Mennonite-Catholic Theological Colloquium*, 2002. Telford, PA: Cascadia, 2004. Duane K. Friesen and Gerald Schlabach, eds. *At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security, and the Wisdom of the Cross*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005.

The premise of *Just Policing* is simple enough: Mennonites and Catholics accept the police as an institution that at times must use violence, even killing, to maintain some semblance of order. The police, Gerald Schlabach claims, are accountable and restrained in using violence. This notion of “policing” is what the just war tradition was intended to be about in the first place. So Schlabach believes that rethinking “war” in terms of “policing” will help reinvigorate a more consistent and applicable ethic for all Christians, and bridge the divide between Mennonites and Catholics on the question of war.

The strength of Schlabach’s “thought experiment” is that it aims to hold the just war tradition accountable by seeking to help those convinced by that tradition to be more credible and less violent. Joseph Capizzi and J. Denny Weaver respond to Schlabach’s essay, and Schlabach replies to them. It is a good example of Mennonite-Catholic dialogue.

Many questions remain about “just policing.” The concept remains most at home within the just war tradition, and its usefulness in our modern context is limited. The just war tradition was most comfortable in Christendom, where people believed they had divine obligations and duties toward one another. Today on the international scene there is no recognition of an *overarching* entity to which any ruler is accountable. International law has dull teeth, and the U.N. is unable to prevent conflict. Even if the U.N. could be such a police force, who would police the U.N.? Our world is very different from that of Christendom, and I doubt that “policing” will do much to invigorate just war thinking.

Similarly, the term “just policing” seems like a semantic game. Is killing more acceptable if we call it “policing” rather than “war”? Schlabach does not give much scope to the place of suffering and the cross; police are not paid to love enemies, nor do suffering and the cross seem relevant to people with guns.

*At Peace and Unafraid* represents a fundamental shift in Mennonite social ethics. This work questions the “two kingdom” theology and provides a more systematic underpinning for just policing. It focuses both on policing and on how to develop public order policy in ways that do not bless the status quo. Duane Friesen’s essay, for example, explains that policing is only one way to work nonviolently for an ordered society.

Yet some essays point to problems with the attempt to join in government and policing. Alfred Neufeld examines how Mennonites in Paraguay have been invited into the national government, and ends with a sobering assessment: “Two years in, the present administration, with a considerable Mennonite presence, is under attack from left and right, from rich and poor” (229). Paulus Widjaja assesses Indonesian Christians’ desire to enter politics as a self-interested move to set themselves against their Muslim neighbors. Most strikingly, John Rempel examines previous Mennonite attempts to become more engaged in the political and economic fabric of society, ending with a deep ambivalence about the ability of rich Mennonites to live out the Gospel.

Even so, major questions must still be addressed. Jeff Gingrich contends that historically the American police arose as a necessary force to combat a rise in violent crime (393). The evidence, I believe, points to another story. When modern police forces arose in America, they did not do so from the need to combat crime. Instead they arose out of the slave patrols of the south and, in the north, out of both wealthy urban elites wanting more control over poor immigrant populations and city party machines using the police to maintain their power. The police historically have not been a tool for reconciliation; they have, however, served certain interests and have been a tool for class conflict.

This brings up serious issues not touched upon in either volume. Nonviolence in the hands of the police is simply a tool for power. Absent a commitment to nonviolence as a life and theology, nonviolence becomes a terrifying technique that is manipulable and malleable by whatever interests might employ it. Urban police forces have indeed developed less-than-lethal weapons, but this makes officers more violent, not less violent. Police use non-lethal weapons to repress the poor and political radicals.

Even more basic is the ecclesiological problem the police represent. Every police person must swear allegiance to the state. In their loyalty oath they form a secretive cult, and the primary value they revolve around is “order,” a subjective, fragile concept. They end up seeing themselves over against the rest of society, which is always threatening to fracture the order they have sworn to uphold. The police also undermine the Christian virtue of truth-telling. Officers are officially taught to lie, e.g., by creating false identities in undercover work, making false promises in negotiations, and inflating initial charges. This catechetical training runs against the grain of Christian catechesis, which is to make the believer a reflexive truth-teller.

Neither book focuses very well on the locus of God’s redemptive action in history in the church. Generally the two books present an incomplete view of the police, do not ask crucial questions, and move from the local (police) to the universal (international conflict) too easily without first critiquing the local. Still, they do have value in raising issues that Mennonites have left out of the picture altogether. Perhaps it would have been even more valuable if these books set a goal of helping congregations lessen their dependence upon the police.

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