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WONDERS AND DRUDGERY: THE DIARIES OF MENNONITE MIGRANTS, 1857-1879¹

Здійснений аналіз спогадів менонітів – переселенців з України до Північної Америки в 1870-х рр. Для характеристики особливостей викладення матеріалу в даних мемуарах застосований метод порівняння із щоденниками менонітів 1860-х рр., написаних за десять років до переселення.

Mennonites and Diaries

The story of the 1870s migration of Mennonites from the Russian Empire to the grasslands of North America has become standardized. Czar Alexander II, having embarked on a program of modernization, planned to abolish the social privileges accorded to Russia's foreign colonists, including their military exemptions. The pacifist Dutch-North German Mennonites, thus, were compelled to reevaluate their sojourn on the Ukrainian steppe, their home since the late 1780s. In 1873 twelve Mennonite and Hutterite delegates visited North America and having examined lands in the western interior they negotiated with Canadian and American governments and land owners and procured the lands that allowed for the compact resettlement of Mennonites. In both Canada and the United States, too, Mennonites secured some kind of exemption from military service. The sources for this story are many: they include records of government debate, church correspondences, newspaper reports, denominational histories, and personal memoirs².

In the quest of the historian is to know the details of this migration, these public and published sources are crucial. If, however, the project is to know the mindsets and worlds of the ordinary Mennonite migrant these sources are less helpful. Often such writings emphasize the elders' failed negotiations with the Russian government, the delegates' land scouting and land dealing, some of the migrant groups' limited financial resources, of the leaders' skill in attaining institutional completeness in North America. Since the 1970s historical researchers have discovered a set of documents that illuminate important aspects of the way that Mennonites saw, felt and thought about their worlds. Those documents are private diaries. They are extraordinary accounts, even if many do not make for fascinating reading for the generalist. Admittedly, they

are often documents of daily behaviour, void of emotional outbursts and introspection. In fact, the diaries, written in German and in the Gothic handwritten script, have often survived only because they were family treasures. Most of the six premigration Mennonite farm household diaries available for this study record daily acts of work and they map the social contours of the typical Mennonite's world – household, kin group, village domain, congregation, and market. Most of the dozen or so travelogues examined for this study describe aspects of the migration to North America in the 1870s focus on the passage of time and the crossing of space.

This may be the reason that immigration historians have not often written about the daily diary. Their preferred sources of everyday life and the subject of literary analysis have been folklore, autobiography, letters, fiction, and even song lyrics³. These are the works of cultural vitality, dramatic interaction, and an intense dialectic. They are analytical materials that register the paths of immigrant integration. In a representative work on immigrant writings, Mario Maffi has analysed a variety of artifacts, including novels, newspaper reports, paintings, songs, histories, photograph collections, even graffiti and especially the multi-lingual proletarian theatres of the Lower East Side in New York City. These sources, Maffi argues revealed that neither linear assimilation nor static continuity occurred. Indeed, the Lower East Side's "closely-knit social texture, the variety of cultural influences, the daily struggle for survival, the many-folded stories of success and failure, the lingering, vivid memories of the Old World, the complex experience of coming to terms with America – all this required, stimulated and moulded specific verbal and literary expressions that were due to have consequences of the utmost importance"⁴. In her analysis of similar writings in Western Canada, Tamara Palmer has noted a similar pathos and intense analysis: "The struggle with nature receives particular emphasis in novels dealing with [the rural] ethnic experience, perhaps reflecting the intensified sense of being alien which has been an intrinsic part of being 'ethnic' in Canada. The vast emptiness of the prairie landscape may seem doubly hostile and forbidding to one who has moved into a world that is not only unfamiliar physically, but also culturally, with each type of alienation feeding on the other"⁵.

The daily diary does not possess this level of literary consciousness. The argument of this chapter, however, is that its literary content promises to do much more than illuminate everyday routine. Indeed daily diaries can serve several purposes for the student of the Mennonite migration of the 1870s. First, they can stand as an invaluable description of the oft-times hidden social contours of Mennonite life in the province of New Russia just before the migration, revealing a social dynamic at which church rosters, newspapers, and institutional reports can only hint. Second, by juxtaposing these diaries of everyday life in New Russia to the accounts of the relocation to North America,

the massive expansion of the migrants' personal worlds can be documented. It is the travelogue, usually preoccupied with the passage of time and space, that nevertheless presents a mind actively analysing and evaluating old ties and new sights, and much more expressive of feeling, of joy, fear and hope. Third, a study of the daily diary allows the student of the migration to see minds working to order life in both the Old and the New Worlds, that is, making sense of the drudgery of life before the storm of migration and grasping the extraordinary wonder of the relocation itself. Echoing ethnologist William Hanks, the very act of keeping this kind of diary, this "discourse genre", is an act of imposing an order on an otherwise chaotic world⁶. Diary-writing for the farmer of the pre-migration Mennonite colonies, thus, was a subjective enterprise, but one without much contemplation, confession, or boast. The diaries of this study suggest that only by being dislodged from the established patterns of everyday life did the ordinary Mennonite begin using the diary as an instrument of self-analysis and evaluation. During the migration descriptions of drudgery were exchanged for portraits of wonder.

Daily Drudgery on the Ukrainian Steppe

The extant diaries describing life in New Russia were each kept by an adult married man, and as such provide a gender-specific perspective (no women's diaries were available for this part of the study). Moreover, each of the men lived in either Molochnaia, Bergthal or Borosenko Colonies during the 1860s and 1870s, and as such provide the perspective of a member of a cohesive, communitarian settlement. It did not matter that Molochnaia Colony founded in 1804 was the largest and most prosperous of the colonies, or that Bergthal Colony founded in 1836 was the first of many daughter colonies of Khortitsa, the original or "old" colony settled in 1789, or that Borosenko was a small and freshly founded colony, dating only to 1865. The concerns of the men from these three colonies were similar. Each of the writers focused on the daily rhythm of life. Their diaries reveal a closed society, a mindset constantly concerned with agriculture and cognizant of the rich social textures of the community. They illustrate the very nature of personal relationships in rural Mennonite society, especially the structures of those encounters within the farm household. This preoccupation with household and community may reveal a lack of sophistication; but it also reflects an absence of individualism in a society that venerated communitarian values and in an economy that demanded corporate effort.

The first feature of most of these Old World diaries was a record of weather, the element most capricious and most unanswerable to human effort. Each of the writers seemed aware that weather and season were the cornerstone

of agrarian existence in the continental climate of New Russia. The fixation with matters of temperature, wind and precipitation, thus, was not a sign of languidness. Clearly when elderly Abraham Reimer of Steinbach, Borosenko Colony, noted the first sign of seasonal changes he did so to remind himself of what could be predicted⁷. It was not unusual for him to record the first frost (for 1870 this occurred on September 23, that is on September 11 in the Julian calendar) or the first heavy snowfall (on November 18 in 1870) or the first "frost on the door window" (in 1870 on December 17). But there was also a stoic resignation to the constraints and possibilities that weather changes brought.

Weather aberrations could only be recorded, not altered. The cold snap of February 1871 was so severe that the temperature dropped to -25 *Reaumur* [the French temperature system used in Russia, in which water freezes at 0 and boils at 80] and this in turn soon brought news of tragedy, "some forty Russians and forty horses" frozen near Nicopol and another "seven Russian workers" near Katerinoslav. The thunderstorm of July 1872 was so heavy that the water in the "river rose twenty one inches" and "went over the dam". The snowfall of January 1874 was so intense that "Machlin's sod house and hog barn were nearly covered". But if the constraints of bad weather had to be accepted, the promises of good days could be celebrated. The entries recording severe weather patterns were written with the same stoic resignation as the more serene records of dust-settling "rain in the afternoon" or the life giving "beautiful sunny day"⁸.

The preoccupation with weather was illustrated not only by descriptive phrases, but also by the frequency with which weather entries were recorded. During the early 1870s elderly farmer Abraham Reimer recorded the temperature twice a day – at sunrise and at noon; in the late 1870s he did so four times a day⁹. Significantly, too, half of the eight entries of Bergthal Colonist David Stoesz's very sketchy diary for 1872 were related to season's changes: the March 12 frost that "stayed in the shade all day", the March 16 drive of cattle and sheep to the pasture, the March 17 seeding of the first *desiatina* [one *desiatina* equals 1.09 acres or .44 of a hectare], and the April 9 release of the village stallion, were the statements that announced the passage of one agricultural season to the next¹⁰.

Those announcements had social implications. Records of season were closely linked to accounts of work routine, that is, the efforts of all members of the farm household to secure its own reproduction. The richly detailed 1874 diary of Dietrich Gaeddert, a thirty seven year-old farmer of Alexanderwohl, Molochnaia Colony, has been described by his biographers as a "valuable record pertaining to the coming of the Mennonites to America"¹¹. In fact, the diary stands as the richest known source documenting the everyday life of

a landowning Mennonite farmer in New Russia¹². During the years between 1857 to 1874 Gaeddert recorded unusual events – a fire that destroyed half of a village, a visit from a missionary to Indonesia, a trip to the Crimea, and crises in the congregation – but mostly his was an account of a farmer in tune with nature's rhythms. Reflecting Russia's Gregorian calendar, Gaeddert's diary documented January as the month of intermittent frost, a month when regular times of thawing weather forced farmers to capitalize on the cold days by taking out the sleighs and hauling grain to market. In February spring was present everywhere; cows and sheep gave birth, cattle were released onto pasture land and by the end of the month there was news of the first settler who had plowed his land. By the end of March, Gaeddert and all of his neighbours were on the land; in 1872 it was at 9 a.m. on the 21st of March, to be precise, that Gaeddert "started working the land [by] plowing the back steppe with a three-share plow" and soon he had planted the first wheat, followed by oats, barley and corn. In early April as Gaeddert observed that "in the meadow the cowslips, violets and may lilies are blooming", there were other signs of new life on the farm, that is, reports that "the brown mare" gave birth to a "brown male" and that the "Waldheim sow farrowed nine piglets". In May the sheep were sheared and sent to summer pasture, the winter's manure was spread on the summer fallow, the hay harvest was begun and the first promise of a good harvest could be seen. Such a promise, of course, came with a hint of envy, for while Gaeddert noted that the rye on village land came "up to under my arms, the highest up to my chin", he had to admit that "mine is shorter". June was the "heavenly month" when the weather was perfect with "everything very green".

The first of July marked a change of focus, one from planting to harvest. It was time now for Gaeddert to hire the "Russian" teenaged male and female reapers from the nearby market centre Tokmak, and begin cutting the wheat, barley and rye, and start hauling the grain to threshing floors on the farmyard. The crops were taken in succession, with the "new steppe land" first, followed by the "front boundary field", "the back border field", the "hilly field", and the "rented land". Frequently, too, there were side trips to the "melon patch". During the hotwindy days of August, Gaeddert put horsepower to the tread mill and began separating the layers of grain, cleaning them of chaff and manure, bagging the clean grain, and carrying it upstairs in the dwelling house. Now, too, hoping for the right number of rubles per *chetvert* [one *chetvert* equals 5.95 bushels or 2.1 hectolitres], he brought some wheat and rye to the local mill, and prepared to join a convoy of farmers to begin taking the real fruit of the harvest, cleaned wheat for export, some sixty dusty kilometres away in Berdyansk, the port on the Sea of Azov. During September, if the right rains came to soften the earth, the stubble was plowed to prepare for the fall seeding

of rye. October and November were the months to fill the larder with successive days of hog and cattle butchering. The fatter the pig the better; three and a half inches of fat on the pork belly was an especially good kill. The cold days of December signalled to farmers that the time had come for the settling of accounts in time for the holiday season of Christmas¹³.

If the first concern, weather patterns, marked the limits of human agency, the second concern, the economy of the household, marked the art of turning nature to human advantage. Interwoven in the descriptions of seasonal work routines and weather patterns were records of yield and consumption. Both the elderly Abraham Reimer and the younger Dietrich Gaeddert's diaries offer rich descriptions not only of weather and work, but also of food ways and consumption. Pork and flour were the staples, but they were enriched with a diet of fruit – apples, grapes and raisins – and vegetables. And there were special meals of fish and geese. Jewish peddlers or Ukrainian merchants in Nicopol, Prischib or Tokmak also provided speciality items of coffee, sugar, vinegar, brandy, wine, pepper, syrup and honey. Pork, of course, was produced each fall, and most of it smoked to last the winter and spring. Flour was ground at the local village mill whenever the farmers brought in their *pud* [16.38 kilograms, probably one bag] of wheat, but for "white wheat flour" trips to larger mills were required. Families of course were self-reliant for butter, and even elderly Abraham Reimer had enough arm power to "butter ten times" in a single day in January 1873, producing an unknown amount of butter. As soon as the ice left the rivers in March, the villagers descended to the water's edge with nets and began the "fishing" season that could last till June; others bought their fish from Jewish peddlers. By the end of June the season's first cucumbers and "green" potatoes could be harvested and by mid July the family added "fresh" potatoes and green beans to their diet. By 1 August one was almost ensured the first large watermelons. Finally, in early September the last of the vegetables – carrots and cabbages – were taken from the gardens. October once again introduced the hog butchering days – with up to five pigs processed per day – and the seasonal cycle of filling the household larder began again¹⁴.

Although few farmers were as mindful as Reimer or Gaeddert of foodways, all emphasized the numbers that recorded the health of the household economy. Wage labour costs, consumption rates, yields of produce, market prices, and interest rates all marked an effort to obtain a sense of control over the fortune of the household." Of special interest to each of these farmers was the booming wheat economy of the 1860s and 1870s. The farm's wheat sector, for example, was constantly monitored in Abraham Reimer's diary. Reimer carefully noted all the events of the harvest in the extended Reimer clan: the first cutting of the grain, the first harvest, and the first marketing. In

1873 son Klaas Reimer was first at everything, the first wheat was cut by July 11, the first threshed and clean wheat was carried upstairs to the house's wheat storage chamber by August 1, the first wheat was taken to market by August 4 at 6:30 a.m., and Klaas's entire wheat harvest was completed by August 9, on a partly cloudy day with rain at that. In comparison son Peter and Johann and sons-in-law Abraham Penner and Abraham Friesen were still harvesting in mid August and on August 18, when son Klaas was already harvesting his rye, hapless son-in-law Peter Toews was just beginning to use the treadmill to clean his wheat. Abraham Reimer also kept prodigious record of the wheat yield for each of the households of the Reimer clan and some records even among villagers: from twenty *desiatini* Johann got fifty four *chetvert*; from twenty *dssiadini* neighbour Heinrich Brandt received fifty eight *chetvert*. And always, Reimer kept an eye on the market, regularly recording the price that a son, son-in-law or neighbour received for wheat at the Dnieper River port of Nicopol. On 16 July 1871 farmers from Rosenfeld, the village of son-in-law Abraham Penner, received merely six rubles a *chetvert*, but on 20 February 1874 another son-in-law Abraham Friesen of the village of Steinbach reported that he had sold wheat for 11.70 in Nicopol and just two days later, neighbour Lemke and Peter Friesen sold wheat at the riverport for an unprecedented 12.80 per *chetvert*¹⁶. Despite the religious foundation of the Mennonite community and teachings against greed and accumulation, farmers also implicitly seemed to evaluate the economies of their own households against those of others. Farmer Peter Fast of Ruckenaу, Molochnaia Colony, had less of an eye for weather and daily work, as he had for measurements of economic well being. On one trip in September 1871 to visit relatives in Zagradovka Colony he recorded both fortune and bad luck. On the 19th he visited the family of Abraham Bose who "have a full establishment [with] very good buildings" and on the 21st the family of Peter Barkman "who have a Dutch wind mill and also good buildings". But in between the visits to Bose and Barkman, that being on the 20th, Fast visited the family of "my cousin at [lot] number five" who "has only half an establishment [where] everything is rather small" and then proceeded to "my cousin Peter Isaacs at [lot] number one where the bread basket was apparently empty". Occasionally this concern with wealth could be riddled with conflict. When Fast applauded preacher Dietrich Gaeddert's April 1873 sermon, "Silver and Gold Have I None" as "wonderful", he was aware of the social pitfalls of the booming wheat economy that increased property values beyond the reach of many and sometimes skewed trusted relationships. Among Fast's pointed observations in 1873 was that the marriage of "Widow Franz Kroeker" and "Old Franz Wiens" may have been premised on the fact that "she owns a lot of property and he uses a lot". He also noted that the only way in

which schoolteacher Kornelius Penner could afford to farm was by buying one for 2000 rubles and then at once "selling half of it to his brother Johann Penner". Here was a mind working to evaluate every aspect of community economics.

Social Contours in New Russia

The personal interest in matters of the weather and the household economy could easily extend into the wider Mennonite society. And just as notes on climate and economy seem to have brought a sense of control over the immutable forces, notes on social networks seem to have lent a sense of predictability to social encounter. The diarists' perspective of society differed, of course, depending on their age, that is, their place in the life cycle. But for each diarist, society presented itself in different layers: the family-based household came first, and then sequentially the extended family, the wider kin group, the congregation, the village, the colony and then non-Mennonites in the region presented themselves.

The 1872 diary of thirty year-old Dietrich Friesen, a schoolteacher of Rosenfeld, Borosenko Colony, indicates the perspective of a young married man with, it seems, one small daughter, Trienche¹⁷. This was a time in the life cycle when most activity was intricately interwoven with the households of both sets of parents: Friesen alluded to weekly visits to wife Katherina's parents in Annafeld or to encounters with his own parents in Nicholaithal. Then, too, Katherina maintained an intimate tie with her older sisters, Elisabeth Friesen Penner, age 31, and Justina Friesen Unger, age 36, both neighbours in Rosenfeld. And reflecting the relatively young age of the Friesens were the frequent visits either by Katherina's or Dietrich's unmarried sisters: by coincidence both Dietrich and Katherina had sisters named Maria Friesen, Margaretha Friesen, and Susanna Friesen, making it difficult to determine the visitor's identity, but making it clear that important components of the young husband and wife's social circle were their single siblings. A central feature, too, of the young Friesen household was an almost endless parade of uncles and aunts, fellow church members and neighbours: during the first week of his diary, 20-27 October 1872, Dietrich named a social encounter for each day: on the 20th "J.Penner of Friedensfeld" loaned Dietrich ten rubles; the 21st saw Gerhard Rempel and his wife drop by for a visit; on the 22nd, following the church service, lunch was taken at Jacob Friesen's in Blumenhof; on the 23rd Dietrich's father Jacob Friesen stopped by and together they drove to Annafeld to discuss an issue about a Mr. Wohlgemuth; the 24th brought a visit from the Schellenbergs; on the 25th Dietrich and Katherina helped at the Schellenbergs' own butchering bee; on the 26th came a visit from friends

Peter and Justina Unger; and on the 27th Katherina's parents, Cornelius and Maria Friesen from Annafeld, visited.

The 1872 diary of sixty four year-old Abraham Reimer of Blumenhof, Borosenko Colony, represents a different view of family. His world comprised regular encounters with married children. Abraham wrote most often about the affairs of his son Johann and his wife Anna of Steinbach, indicating that the elderly couple probably lived on Johann and Anna's yard. But Abraham also regularly wrote about the households of his other married children in Steinbach: blacksmith, sheep and wheat farmer son Klaas and his mentally-ill wife surnamed Willms; daughter Katherina and her blacksmith husband, Abraham S. Friesen; and daughter Margaretha and her husband, Peter Toews, the teamster. The elderly Reimer also made biweekly observations about the activities of his married sons, Peter and Abraham, who lived in the large village of Blumenhof, twelve kilometers south; they came regularly to help father or brother shoe horses, set up a barn, return a borrowed cleaning mill, and on Sundays they came with their wives and children for *Faspa*, the light meal served in the late afternoon. And there were weekly entries too about the youngest daughter, Margaretha, and her husband Abraham Penner of Gruenfeld. Despite the distances the Reimers clearly were a close knit clan. Abraham not only recorded the activities of his grown children, he frequently visited them, even those a multiple-hour walk away¹⁸.

While no diaries of Mennonite women in New Russia before 1874 have been located thus far, men's diaries reveal a perspective that placed great importance on issues of birth and death in the family. Diaries kept by men cannot, of course, fully illustrate a woman's life. In fact births were often recorded in men's diary without mentioning the mother's name¹⁹. The diary of Dietrich Gaeddert of Molochnaia Colony was unusual in its record of the intense emotional qualities of an enterprise that mixed the joy of new life with the fearful threat of death. Indeed, Gaeddert turned his attention to his wife primarily during the very difficult times of childbirth. The birth itself could receive short shrift. On 31 January 1872 when Gaeddert summoned the neighbourhood's midwives, "Frau Baergen and Frau Balzer", to his wife Maria's side for the birth of a son, Johann, her twelfth child, the entry was short: in fact Gaeddert gave no more coverage to this event than to the incident on the same day when "the cow from brother-in-law Franz Martens had a female calf [bearing a] four pointed star [forehead]". The physical hardship that came after the birth of son Johann, however, received much attention. Gaeddert recorded a round of fever, diarrhoea, bad cough, and "anguish" that solicited treatments of warmed brandy, melted white honey, and almond oil. Finally on February 7, Gaeddert noted that "today my wife is, God be praised, quite a bit better, [having] slept quite well last night, and [having] bathed in Janzen's... bathtub this afternoon". Still his wife languished, and

when on Sunday, February 27th, the Gaedderts hosted six couples, Maria suffered depression; Dietrich reasoned it must be "because of so much company". Another sign of a slow recovery came with Dietrich's admission in April that "this year my servant Klaas did all the seeding, I [did] none at all [as] my wife's illness and my injured foot prevented it". Still, the difficulty was no guarantee of relief from child bearing; in fact in August of the very next year, Maria gave birth to her thirteenth child and although Dietrich seemed delighted at the fact that "the little girl [is]... an unusually white, heavy, fat, big child", he also recorded a very difficult birth and yet another round of fever, chills, and depression²⁰. The diaries of Mennonite men capture the immediate world of the Mennonite farmers, the family-based household and the wplier kin group.

The family, however, was linked to the Mennonite congregation and village domain. Each of the diaries was a veritable road map of these social networks: each recorded the variety of church gatherings, the brotherhood meetings and the many religious holidays that bound together the Mennonite community. Usually these social interactions were recorded as a matter of fact. Visits were noted but not described; travels from afar registered but not evaluated. What the diaries did, however, was to witness the richness of social interaction. Consider David Stoesz's eight-entry diary for 1872; it had four notes on weather, but four others describing the social network of Bergthal Colony – a March funeral that drew people from other villages despite snow, an April trip with mother as company to village Heuboden, an April letter to brother Peter and a farewell to son Johann as he went to work in village Schoenthal²¹. The diary of Abraham Friesen of Moiochnaia Colony in 1872 revealed in more detail the constant movement of Mennonites between colonies and among villages; on September 5 Abraham recorded a visit from the Friesens of Borosenko; on the 9th a visit from the Ennses of the Crimea; and during a four week period in September visits by himself to other Molochnaia villages, including Ruckenau, Muntau, Halbstadt, Tiege, and Fischau²².

Overlapping the village and colony interactions was the congregational network. But it was a society in which church attendance could be sporadic. In Molochnaia Colony Dietrich Gaeddert, who had been elected a preacher in 1867, not only attended service each Sunday, he summarized the contents of the sermons. It was a different matter with lay members. On three consecutive Sundays in October 1872, for example, young Dietrich Friesen of Borosenko Colony travelled to the specific village that was hosting the rotating church service. But then in mid November Dietrich missed church on Sunday to visit Nikolaithal, the village of his parents, and missed it also on the next Sunday when he drove to Annafeld, the village of his wife's parents. In December he attended church services on three consecutive Sundays, but then

missed the next two Sundays, attended the next, and was absent for the next three²³. The sporadic attendance is also apparent in Abraham Reimer's diary which indicates that he attended church services on about two thirds of the Sundays. Not atypical were Abraham Reimer's statements for three consecutive Sundays in early 1876: the entry for January 18 read, "the service was in Rosenfeld... [but] no one from [our] village was in the service"; the note for January 25 read, "Sunday, -21 degrees in the morning... [and thus we] had no service today"; and the entry of February 1 indicated that we "had a service here [in Steinbach, but] just a few [were] in the service [and] no song leader was present"²⁴. Next in importance to village and congregation were the village and district political units. The diarists made references to picking lots to divide the hay commons, electing village mayors, impressing regional district officials, attending schoolteacher conferences, observing the end-of-year public school examinations, and providing information to provincial census. But these encounters seem to be of tertiary concern for the Mennonite householder.

Indeed, more important than Mennonite village mayors or district officials in the everyday life of the Mennonite farmer were members of other ethnic groups. The rising capitalist wheat economy in the Mennonite colonies, made the work of Jewish peddlers and craftsmen, German Lutheran or German Catholic neighbours, and Ukrainian labourers especially relevant to the daily life of Mennonites. This was true for both the members of the main colonies, such as Molochnaia and Bergthal, and for those of the new colonies, such as Borosenko. Molochnaia farmer Dietrich Gaeddert made annual notes in his diary of hiring Jewish cobblers; in September 1873 it was to make "boots" for sons Jakob, David, and Johann, sew "four pairs of half boots for the girls", mend "my wife's cork boots", and make "slippers for myself"²⁵. The elderly Abraham Reimer of Borosenko made regular references to the presence of German Lutherans. There were the travelling doctors who visited the colony and stayed over night several times during the early 1870s. Then, too, the Lutheran neighbours, Machlin and Lemke, seem to have rented land from Abraham's son Johann and become close neighbours; there were purchases of piglets, sales of wheat and even a reliance on Abraham's wife Elisabeth in attending the birth of Lemke's daughter one midnight. Indicative of increasingly close ties was the note in November 1873 that two Lutheran families had joined the local Mennonite congregation²⁶.

The richest description of inter-ethnic relations within the Mennonite villages, however, often involved Ukrainian neighbours. Both Abraham Reimer of Borosenko and Dietrich Gaeddert of Molochnaia made frequent mention of these associates. Reimer notes how Ukrainian farmhands could easily be found at the "annual market" at Scharbach where "many workers were available at low wages"²⁷. Gaeddert noted regular trips to nearby Tokmak; on one such a visit in July 1871 he successfully employed "three reapers at 425 kopecks" and "three binders at

375 kopecks". Later that year he also hired two servant girls and two "Russian threshers".

Relationships between Mennonite owner and non-Mennonite worker were a mix of cordiality and conflict. There were moments of hostility, arising from broken labour contracts, thefts, vandalism and inter-ethnic premarital sex. Gaeddert was clearly apprehensive when one day in June 1871 "our Russian servant feigned illness [and] when I went out to the pasture he left" or when in July 1872 "Kause's Kornelius [had to be] banned by the congregation because of ad".

Notes

¹ This article appeared as chapter one in: *Loewen R. Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s.*—Winnipeg, 2001.—P.9–32. It was originally given as a paper at the Khortitsa-99 conference in Ukraine in May 1999.

² See for example: *Epp F.H. Mennonites in Canada, 1786–1920.*—Toronto, 1974; *Hiebert C. Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need: A Scrapbook About Mennonite Immigrants From Russia, 1870–1885.*—North Newton, 1974.

³ For the example see: *Swyrypa F. Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity, 1891–1991.*—Toronto, 1993; *Hoerder D. Creating Societies: Immigrant Lives in Canada.*—Montreal-Kingston, 1999; *Zempel S. In Their Own Words: Letters from Norwegian Immigrants.*—Minneapolis, 1991; *Kamphoefner W. News From the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home / Trans. S.Carter Vogel.*—Ithaca, 1988; *Sanchez G.J. Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900–1945.*—New York, 1993. Many of the ideas of this chapter are also suggested in: *Loewen R. From the Inside Out: The Worlds of Mennonite Diarists, 1850–1930.*—Winnipeg, 1998.

⁴ *Maffi M. Gateway to the Promised Land: Ethnic Cultures in New York's Lower East Side.*—New York, 1995.—P.187.

⁵ *Palmer T. Ethnic Response to the Canadian Prairies, 1900–1950: A Literary Perspective on the Physical and Social Environment // Prairie Forum.*—1987.—N12.—P.59.

⁶ *Hanks W. Discourse Genres in a Theory of Practice // American Ethnologist.*—1987.—N14.—P.19. For arguments that literacy in general creates this perception see: *Ong W. Orality and Language: The Technologizing of the World.*—New York, 1982.—P.42. For a critique of this reasoning see: *Innes M. Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society // Past and Present.*—1998.—N77.—P.3–36.

⁷ *Reimer A. Tagebuch, 1870–1874, 1879–1889 / Trans. by B.Heppner // Evangelical Mennonite Conference Archive.*—Boxes 10, 14.—Later: EMCA.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Stoesz D. Diary. 1872–1896 // Historical Sketches of the East Reserve.*—Steinbach, 1994.—P.400–455.

¹¹ *Dyck A.J., Gaeddert G.R. Dietrich Gaeddert // Mennonite Encyclopedia.*—Vol.II.—P.430.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Gaeddert D. Diary 1871–1874 // Mennonite Library and Archives.– North Newton.– Hereafter: MLA.*

¹⁴ *Reimer A. Tagebuch; Gaeddert D. Diary.*

¹⁵ For example see: *Loewen C. Tagebuch // Mennonite Heritage Village.– Steinbach.– Hereafter: MHV; Friesen A.R. Tagebuch, 1870–1873, 1876–1884 // EMCA.– Boxes 4, 29.*

¹⁶ *Reimer A. Tagebuch.*

¹⁷ *Friesen D. Tagebuch // EMCA.*

¹⁸ *Reimer A. Tagebuch.*

¹⁹ *Friesen A.R. Tagebuch.*

²⁰ *Gaeddert D. Diary.*

²¹ *Stoesz D. Diary.*

²² *Friesen A.R. Tagebuch.*

²³ *Friesen D. Tagebuch*

²⁴ *Reimer A. Tagebuch.*

²⁵ *Friesen A.R. Tagebuch.*

²⁶ *Reimer A. Tagebuch.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

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РЕЛИГИОЗНЫЕ КОНТАКТЫ КОЛОНИСТОВ- НЕМЦЕВ И МЕННОНИТОВ УКРАИНЫ С ИХ ПРАВОСЛАВНЫМИ СОСЕДЯМИ (КОНЕЦ XVIII в. – 1917 г.)

На основі аналізу неопублікованих архівних джерел та різноманітної літератури проаналізовані основні форми та наслідки релігійних контактів між різними конфесійними групами українсько-російського та німецько-колоністського населення Півдня України. У результаті автором зроблений висновок про те, що вони мали різні форми та інтенсивність, що найбільший релігійний вплив на своїх інонаціональних та іноконфесійних сусідів справляли меноніти.

Территория современной Украины изначально заселялась разными по своей этнической и конфессиональной принадлежности народами. Поэтому построение гармоничных межэтнических и межконфессиональных