Mennonites, Anthropology, and History: A Complicated Intellectual Relationship[1]

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> If the aim of anthropology is to ascertain the processes of change or dynamics in human societies and cultures, why this timorous sticking to the primitives whom we can observe only in an instant, while rich data on change for centuries back are available on our own and other lettered civilizations?[2]

Before I retired from my university, an anthropological colleague remarked that I was not really an anthropologist, but a historian. A reliable source has informed me that a certain Canadian historian of Mennonite descent has declared that my problem is I am not really a historian, but an anthropologist. Additionally, a historian of Mennonites in Russia cannot mention my work without first reminding readers that they are referring to "the anthropologist James Urry."[3] Of course both history and anthropology are merely disciplinary labels for subjects whose exact boundaries have never been clearly defined. There are so many varieties of history and anthropology that it is impossible to talk about either in the singular. Indeed, one might suggest that there are as many varieties of history and anthropology as there are, or at least have been, Mennonites and related groups. And this is not counting all the global Mennonites who have been added since the nineteenth century mainly through mission outreach and church planting.

Until recently, anthropological studies of Mennonites by either Mennonites or non-Mennonites have not been as prominent as historical studies. Academic studies of contemporary Mennonite communities written by sociologists and human geographers easily outnumber those of anthropologists. Mennonites, or those of Mennonite descent, have written many of these studies. Entries for each subject in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* offer confirmation. The entries under "Sociology" and "Geography" not only have more text with references than the entry under "Anthropology," but in the online version (GAMEO) they have also been updated. The entry under anthropology has merely been transferred from earlier printed editions of the *Encyclopedia* and contains no references to guide a reader despite an early anthropological interest in Mennonites in the evolving discipline.

A Pioneer Anthropologist and a Mennonite Connection

In October 1884, an English academic delivered an address to the Anthropological Society of Washington on the subject of "How the Problems of American Anthropology Present Themselves to the English Mind."[4] The academic was none other than Edward Burnett Tylor, regarded by many as the father of British anthropology. Indeed, during the latter part of the nineteenth century anthropology in Britain was known as "Mr. Tylor's Science".[5] The author of many books and articles, Tylor had recently been appointed Reader in Anthropology at the University of Oxford, the first academic post in anthropology established in Britain.

A newspaper account of Tylor's address reported that he said, "America was interesting to anthropologists in preserving old-fashioned life." As an example, he spoke of the Pennsylvanian Mennonites, "the spiritual ancestors of the Quakers," who "still live in their Puritan simplicity." He claimed that "the manner" in which Mennonites lived "represent past stages of civilization" only to be found among contemporary non-European tribal peoples and peasant communities in France and Italy.[6]

In the published version of his address, Tylor said that what interested him most was "a certain element of old-fashionedness" in America.[7] Away from centres of population in the areas first colonized by Europeans, old-fashioned customs still "held their own with a tenacity somewhat surprising," especially in comparison to modern Europe. He noted the continued use of the spinning wheel, "now scarce in England" but still present in Pennsylvanian Quaker households. This reminded him of his own youth, for Tylor had been

born into a London Quaker family of brass founders and educated in a Quaker school. Coming to America, Tylor obviously had taken the opportunity to visit Quaker relatives in Pennsylvania where he had encountered Mennonites.[8]

Unlike Quakers, who Tylor suggested had "undergone much modification as to theological doctrine," in America he found Pennsylvanian Mennonites the "least changed from their original condition." For him, Mennonites represented a "very striking instance of the permanency of institutions" where a "society can get into prosperous conditions in a secluded place, cut off from easy access of the world." He noted that some Mennonites dissented "from modern alteration and changes by a fixed and unalterable resolution that they will not wear buttons, but will fasten their coats with hooks and eyes, as their forefathers did." This, he concluded showed "what tenacity custom holds when it has become [a] matter of scruple and religious sanction." He admitted, however, that some Mennonites had conformed "more and more to the world" especially in "their dress and habits" and showed "symptoms of melting into the general population."

Tylor found American Mennonites an extremely interesting case as they offered "the spectacle of a phase of religious life, which, though dwindling away in the old-world region where it arose, is quite well preserved in this newer country, for the edification of students of culture." He was impressed that with "such plain traces of connection with historical Anabaptists . . . they may be taken as their living representatives." This was illustrated by a copy of a hymnbook "anterior to 1600, but still in use," that was presented to him and which contained a hymn "commemorative of the martyr Haslibach," who had died in the sixteenth century.[9]

Tylor, however, was not surprised to discover, as he put it, "in a secluded district, an old state of society resisting for a time the modifying influences which have already changed the world around." Instead, he suggested this showed "the very processes" of resistance to "prevailing alteration which anthropologists have to study over larger regions of space and time in the general development of the world." But while Tylor reported that the Mennonites he encountered found it strange that he should visit and wish to study them, they expressed even greater surprise that he intended to travel further west and visit the Zuni. In response, Tylor reported that he had found:

> it hard to refrain from pointing out that, after all, there is a community of purpose between studies of the course of civilization whether carried out among the colonists of Pennsylvania or among the Indians of New

> Mexico. . . . Investigation of the lower races is made more obscure, and more difficult through the absence of the guidance of written history, but the principle is the same.

This relation between histories written and unwritten informed German eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century studies where the terms *Ethnographie* and *Ethnologie* were in use long before they, and the project of anthropology, were taken up in Britain.[10] So it is unsurprising that Tylor's passing anthropological musings on Mennonites has a link to a German Mennonite intellectual with a background in this older tradition. This was Wilhelm Mannhardt, born into a Mennonite family in Friedrichstadt and whose father Jakob was the founder and editor of the influential *Mennonitische Blätter*.[11] Wilhelm was a leading German folklorist and ethnologist whose concept of "survivals" influenced Tylor and other important writers in anthropology, folklore, and religion such as Sir James George Frazer.[12]

Survivals, Mennonites "Out of Time," and Ethnographies of Peripheries

The idea of "survivals" is key to understanding Tylor's view of Pennsylvania Mennonites, as it was a concept common to nineteenth-century thought—in anthropology, history, and general science.[13] In spite of his Quaker origins, by 1884 Tylor was a convinced follower of Charles Darwin and his ideas on evolution through natural selection. Evolution had occurred over an immense period, much longer than had previously been thought, especially by theologians. Species had evolved gradually inhabiting the earth for long periods before becoming extinct. The discovery of fossil remains, including those of earlier humans, added additional confirmation of Darwin's ideas. But living species carried signs of earlier life forms and if studied scientifically they could provide vital clues to evolution and the stages through which life had developed. Such features were thought of as survivals, still existing in the contemporary world and ranging from the most simple and primitive to the most complex and advanced. As in the natural world, human biology and culture revealed similar evidence of evolution. Modern humans were the most advanced living species on earth but could also be ranked by their biology and culture. Scientific racism was one consequence of such thinking with, not surprisingly given the times, white, Europeans ranking above other "coloured races" and, if further refined, Englishmen higher than most other Europeans.

Tylor was more interested in culture, or as he put it "custom," than in biology. In 1871 he wrote, "evidence aiding us to trace the course which the civilization of the world has actually followed is that great class of facts to denote which I have found it convenient to introduce the term 'survivals.'" These facts included "processes, customs, opinions, and so forth, which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society." Although "different from that in which they had their original home," such survivals remained "as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer has been evolved." Tylor also suggested that although such proofs "in themselves" might be insignificant, their study was "effective for tracing the course of the historical development through which alone it is possible to understand their meaning." This was a factor vital in "ethnographic research to gain the clearest possible insight into their nature."[14]

Later anthropologists would be highly critical of nineteenth-century ideas of biological and cultural survivals, often rejecting them completely. The noted American anthropologist Robert H. Lowie suggested that whenever an ethnologist of his generation heard the term survivals, "he crosses himself four or five times and mutters some cabalistic phrase such as 'historical method' designed to ward off the noisome influence."[15] The problem was that while there may be differences in the size and complexity of different social groups in the present, all have existed for exactly the same time. No human group stopped or fell out of the historical processes of production and reproduction. Moreover, none have stayed exactly the same; all have been involved in processes that nowhere have resulted in exact duplication of their way of life through time. Every group, in itself, is non-replicatory. No group is situated out of time, lost in total isolation, and waiting for history to begin.

Many years ago, I suggested that when considering contemporary Australian Aborigines, the use of the term "traditional"—to describe people living "a traditional way of life"—was best avoided.[16] In terms of Mennonites, I have discussed similar terminological problems, explaining why I preferred "conservative" or conserving" for those groups who appear to have resisted change mainly on religious grounds.[17] Historian Royden Loewen, however, equates "conservatism" with fundamentalist/evangelistic groups in North America and prefers to speak of "traditionalist" communities, although he too recognizes that his choice of term has problems.[18]

Popular discourse and news reports, however, continue to suggest that there are still "isolated" peoples living totally changeless lives. Accordingly, colourful accounts regularly appear of previously uncontacted "tribal" peoples in the Amazon, the Highlands of

New Guinea, or more recently the Andaman Islands who apparently are still living in the "Stone Age," "untouched" for "30,000" years. Clearly, they are "survivals" living in the present. In media reports, Amish and Old Order Mennonites are frequently described as living "survivals" of a way of life that elsewhere has passed. These too are a people "out of time" who remain separate from the modern world. Naturally, contemporary scholars do not conceive of other cultures, including Amish or Old Order Mennonites, in such ways. Or do they?

It is interesting that ethnographic research and published accounts of Mennonites and related groups have tended to concentrate on "Plain Peoples" such as Amish groups, conservative Mennonites, and to a lesser extent, Hutterites. The Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies Association (APASA) announces itself on its website as "a network of scholars, service providers, instructors, plain people, and others interested in the study of the Amish and plain Anabaptists."[19] Its open-access journal publishes almost exclusively in this area. As well as Amish and "Plain Peoples," conservative Mennonites in Latin America, or immigrants from these communities who have resettled in North America, are also included. The term "plain Anabaptists" is a little vague on the APASA website as it relates to people in the present rather than in the past, least of all to the Anabaptists of Reformation Europe.[20] While they may have appeared rather "plain" in their religious practices when they first settled in North America, at that time their dress and use of technology, at least until the middle of the nineteenth-century, was not very different from that of their neighbours. In 1884 Tylor might have viewed their ways as old-fashioned but even he could still connect them with aspects from his own immediate past.

As I have indicated, human geographers and sociologists pioneered academic studies of contemporary Mennonite and related groups in the United States, Canada, and Latin America.[21] A number of these studies used what were claimed to be "ethnographic" methods.[22] More recent studies of Mennonite groups in South America have been written mostly by anthropologist-ethnographers, although the majority are devoted to conservative, Old Colony Mennonites.[23] Such studies, however, only cover a small fraction of Mennonite communities in the Americas. Long ago the anthropologist-sociologist Roland Frankenberg criticized ethnographic research in Britain because it over-concentrated on remote, mostly rural "Celtic" communities of Britain. Such work he suggested produced quaint studies of what he termed the "tassels," peoples on the fringes of Britain's more populated mostly urban areas.[24] The same could be said of much of the anthropological-ethnographic research on Mennonite communities. Mennonite "tassel" communities exist

on the peripheries of a much larger Mennonite world. Strangely, however, these fringe groups have been more thoroughly researched than the many other Mennonite groups also connected historically with an Anabaptist ancestry and those in the contemporary, wider global Anabaptist world.[25]

When I began my own Mennonite research, I originally had intended to study a community in Belize but only to show that they could not possibly have remained "out of time" just because they were isolated and appeared to reject change. Early on, I came to realize that first I needed to understand what had happened to Mennonite communities in nineteenth-century Russia before their ancestors had immigrated to Canada in the 1870s. I never got to Belize. My perspectives changed as I began to further explore Russian Mennonite history and communities in Canada who arrived after the Russian Revolution. The rest, as some say, is history. My history.

In contrast, many studies by anthropologists, human geographers, and sociologists lack original or detailed historical analysis. Instead, the complex pasts of the communities under study are dispensed with in a brief paragraph or, in the case of monographs, in an opening chapter. These depend on secondary sources and are usually shallow or generalized and often contain errors. Furthermore, the ensuing discussion, with some exceptions, appears only slightly to be informed by the historical prologue.[26]

Some anthropologists have made efforts to connect their ethnographic research with historical sources even if these are secondary.[27] In other cases, a historian has attempted a form of "ethnographic" research directly within a Mennonite community or communities, combining historical methods with material collected through contemporary interviews, as in the recent work of Royden Loewen.[28] Loewen, a Mennonite with connections within conservative communities, brings to his work a rather different understanding than research conducted by a non-Mennonite. But such a connection can be both an advantage and a disadvantage.[29] While Mennonite and Amish researchers occasionally claim a "sympathy" with close-knit conservative communities, this is often expressed implicitly rather than explicitly. In some cases, it can result in the communities under study being projected as somehow "closer" to an idealized Anabaptist past or way of life. Other Mennonites living in modern, industrialized society are portrayed as having strayed from the path of righteousness. At the same time, certain aspects of life in conservative communities might be avoided if they threaten to cast an unfavourable light on all Mennonites.

Ethnology, Ethnography, and History

Tylor's greatest work is perhaps his two-volume *Primitive Culture*, published in 1871. It begins with what many still consider one of the most foundational definitions in anthropology. Unfortunately, it has often been misquoted and misunderstood. Tylor wrote:

> Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.[30]

The "definition" is misquoted when the phrase "or Civilization" is omitted. Sometimes the omission is indicated, sometimes not.[31] So what did Tylor mean by "Culture or Civilization" and why is it significant?

For Tylor, "Culture" was not a variety of "cultures" frequently spoken of today. It was singular. Linked with "Civilization," it indicated the process through which all humankind became "civilized." Some societies were more "civilized" than others but all could be arranged along a continuum from the most primitive to the most advanced. This continuum included biological differences identified in his time as a variety of "races," although Tylor did not dwell on such matters. He preferred to concentrate on other human activities and customs that had survived in more advanced societies. These, he argued, showed how progression had occurred through various earlier cultural stages. His interests included folklore, children's games, and local folk celebrations, matters that today are of little concern to anthropologists in Britain and North America.[32] Franz Boas, undoubtedly the most influential anthropologist of the first half of the twentieth century, continued to show an interest in such matters, though for very different reasons.[33]

Boas's anthropology took a radical turn from most nineteenth-century evolutionary anthropologists and, although not entirely rejecting the idea of evolution, he challenged many of its assumptions. This especially involved the idea that peoples could be ranked as backward and more advanced on the basis of biology and culture. His thinking drew in part on a much older German philosophical tradition when he argued that anthropologists needed to understand the different *historical* trajectories of human groups. In 1888, just four years after Tylor's address, Boas suggested the aim of ethnology was to study "the history of mankind." This included "language, customs, migrations, [and] bodily characteristics" through a study of the "whole of mankind" from "its earliest stages . . . up to modern

times."[34] He later wrote that by adopting such a historical approach other cultures soon lost the "appearance of absolute stability," a problem he attributed to the time limits imposed by ethnographic research. Boas's historical approach showed that all cultures were "in a constant state of flux and subject to fundamental modifications."[35]

Many among the generation of British anthropologists who followed Tylor adopted approaches similar to Boas involving a combination of ethnology and ethnography. Ethnological research in a limited culture area was viewed as "survey" research but this also involved "intensive" ethnographic research of particular groups. By the early twentieth century, however, British anthropology began to focus more on ethnography than on ethnology. In Britain, this shift in focus is primarily attributed to the influence and writings of the Polish/British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. Malinowski's major fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands resulted in several detailed ethnographic monographs. His methodology, outlined in his first ethnographic study, stated that an ethnographer was "to grasp the native's point of view, his [*sic*] relation to life, to realize *his* vision and *his* world".[36] Malinowski's "method" later became known as "participant observation," although it is unclear whether he ever used the phrase. His method was to have profound consequences beyond mere methodology. As a prerequisite to pursuing a career in anthropology, a person first was required to conduct ethnographic fieldwork with a particular group of people using participant observation.[37]

After the United States became a global power following the end of the Second World War, a new generation of anthropologists added further research regions to the earlier generation's primary focus on the Americas. In the process, they adopted similar ethnographic research strategies to that of British anthropologists although they retained a concern with "culture," a term that subsumed and expanded the more limited emphasis of British "social anthropology." As "ethnography" transmuted into a methodology central to the discipline of anthropology, it was stripped of part of its meaning. An anthropologist was originally an ethnographer not just because they followed a specific research methodology, but also because "field work" resulted in the writing of an account of another culture. The term "ethnography" contains the suffix *graphy*, Greek for a text, revealing this wider meaning.[38]

In the work of anthropologists, however, and increasingly among a wide range of people who are not anthropologists, the term "ethnography" has become associated with "doing research" using a face-to-face methodology. For many, ethnography has been reduced

merely to research that involves "speaking with people and recording what they say."[39] This confuses "oral history" with ethnographic research while muddling ethnography with anthropology as if they involve identical methods and the same outcomes. It does not help that even anthropologists often use the terms ethnography and anthropology interchangeably. One anthropologist, Tim Ingold, has criticized this confusion. Ethnography, he suggests:

> aims to describe life as it is lived and experienced, by a people, somewhere, sometime. Anthropology, by contrast, is an inquiry into the conditions and possibilities of human life in the world. Anthropology and ethnography may have much to contribute to one another, but their aims and objectives are different. Ethnography is an end in itself; it is not a means to anthropological ends.[40]

In addition to this confusion is that "ethnology" has largely vanished from the anthropological agenda in the English-speaking world and with it the link between ethnography, anthropology, and history. Indeed, there is little connection left between an ethnographic study of a specific socio-cultural community carried out through participant observation within a limited period of time, and the positing of grand, and sometimes grandiose, anthropological "theories." This has occurred more by default than by design. However, a British contemporary of Malinowski, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown, viewed all attempts to reconstruct the pasts of non-literate peoples as speculative, "unscientific" and unworthy of the discipline. In America, "ethnology" survives in the titles of two major academic journals although the articles published rarely focus on ethnological issues as Tylor and others once conceived these. Some aspects of ethnology in North America have been transformed into "ethnohistory," a specialized subject with its own journal that initially focused on interactions between Europeans and the peoples of the Americas.

In France, however, anthropologists have maintained a broader perspective. As one noted French anthropologist has stated, anthropology as a discipline "starts with ethnography, goes on to ethnology" and only then "ends in anthropology." Ethnography involves "the collection of data," ethnology its analysis in "a comparative framework" out of which models are constructed," and finally anthropology, "which is a project more than a science." It addresses the older "philosophical" issues of anthropology by attempting to make sense of general problems "in social life such as cultural variability."[41]

The idea of a "comparative framework "in anthropology has been a sensitive issue since nineteenth-century anthropologists used the

term "comparative method" to describe their ideas of different evolutionary outcomes. As later anthropologists distanced themselves from such views some even claimed that comparison was impossible or at least best avoided. A solution was suggested many years ago by Fred Eggan, an American anthropologist influenced by both American and British anthropology who proposed that comparisons should be "limited" to peoples who live in proximity and have historical connections, in other words, by considering time and space within a specific framework.[42]

My own Mennonite research and publication have been more ethnological than strictly ethnographic or anthropological. I certainly have used ethnographic methods in my research with various Mennonite communities. Whether this constitutes "participant observation," I will leave the Mennonites involved to decide. My research has also involved intensive research into Mennonite publications and archival collections including non-Mennonite records. As Mennonites are a diverse people with a complex history of interactions with other Mennonites and non-Mennonites, it has necessarily involved limited comparisons in Eggan's sense.[43] In more recent years, other writers have considered similar matters in a wider framework using the concept of "transnationalism" in their discussions of contemporary and past Mennonite communities.[44]

Working with oral history, Royden Loewen offers a "limited" comparative approach involving groups who allegedly share "conservative" views, such as Mennonites in North and South America and groups not directly related such as the Amish.[45] His approach appears to be informed, in part, by the idea that some Mennonites and related groups are closer to a line of continuity with fundamental Anabaptist ideas and values than others. This is because they appear to have maintained a certain "traditionalist" way of life whereas others have surrendered to the modern "world." The notion is that in all these "conservative" groups there have been similar continuities of tradition in their rather different pasts and lack of contact. This implies that they are inappropriate for the kind of "limited" comparison advocated by Eggan. It has long been suggested that Amish have not maintained traditions without compromises but instead they have strategized their interaction with the larger American society. Such claims have been subject to criticism on methodological and theoretical grounds as they are based on a paradigm of "negotiating with modernity."[46] However, the comparative study of Amish and more distant Old Colony Mennonites has not yet been subjected to similar critical examination.

Previous comparative studies for Hutterites and Amish have used the idea of acculturation when discussing similar issues.[47] This

was a term coined in American anthropology to refer to "culture change" in "contact" situations. British anthropologists preferred the term "social change" to acculturation. But neither approach required consideration of the extended history of those peoples under discussion. To varying degrees both assumed that "change" was the opposite of "continuity." In other words, continuity was the presumed norm and people simply replicated their ways of life over long periods of time until forces, usually external, came to disturb their reveries.[48]

Another result of the ethnographic approach has been the use of collective names for quite diverse groups. The term "Amish" conceals considerable variations especially when viewed in historical terms. The approach has also involved the invention of new collective identities. Research into "transnational" Mennonites in Latin America has seen the creation of a new ethnic identity in the form of the term "Low German Mennonites," sometimes abbreviated to LGM. Earlier writers spoke of "Low German–*speaking* Mennonites" but this new identity, stripped of a direct linguistic connection, has been widely adopted by anthropologists and non-anthropologists, Mennonite and non-Mennonite alike.[49] Many who have adopted this term claim to use an "ethnographic" approach in their research, but the differences contained in the term LGM remain unanalyzed.[50] Such a criticism is not new. In 1970, in reviewing Calvin W. Redekop's book on Old Colony Mennonites, the anthropologists Jaquith and Pennacchio expressed puzzlement at his "insistence on regarding the extended and structurally differentiated 'Old Colony' as though it were still one unified corporate group."[51]

Tradition, Transition, Transformation

Many nineteenth-century intellectuals, like Tylor, were aware that they were living in an age of material, social, and intellectual change even if they frequently disagreed on its causes, or where these might lead to positive or negative change. They could, however, generally agree that transformations were the result of human not divine action, as this was an increasingly secular age. Karl Marx believed history followed scientific laws and proposed that primitive communism had been succeeded by feudalism and then capitalism. Eventually the contradictions implicit in capitalism would also result in its collapse, to be succeeded by a new, and hopefully better, way of life.

Other nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers proposed in their own terms the causes, conditions, and processes of

transformation underway. Émile Durkheim suggested that societies were founded on different forms of solidarity, with organic solidarity, based on kinship connections and religious ritual, giving way to a society free of superstition. In this form of society, organized around what he termed mechanical solidarity, kinship declined in significance as its dominant role was succeeded by a division of labour based around status and role. Another sociologist, Max Weber, also recognized that modern society was different from earlier forms in the rationalization of its systems. Ferdinand Tönnies argued that community (*Gemeinschaft*) was succeeded by society (*Gesellschaft*).

The ideas of Marx and Durkheim have not been particularly influential in American Mennonite studies. However, Tönnies's terms have been adopted, especially among sociologists, Mennonite and non-Mennonite. *Gemeinschaft* is mostly identified with conservative Mennonite groups, usually sympathetically, while *Gesellschaft* is associated with "worldly" Mennonites who have "assimilated" into larger, often non-Mennonite society. It is perhaps no coincidence that the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* has an entry under "Community" that mentions Tönnies but no entry under "Society." The ideas of Marx, along with his fellow author Engels, are usually considered in the context of their discussions of "revolutionary" Anabaptists and how their ideas were later appropriated by Communist historians.[52] Weber's sociological contributions are better recognized in the new online German *Mennonitische Lexicon* than in the North American online *Encyclopedia.*[53] His argument, that in the development of Western society there is a connection between the emergence of Protestantism and the rise of capitalism, is a subject over which much ink has been spilt, but it remains highly relevant for Mennonite studies even if the identification of Anabaptism with Protestantism remains problematic.[54] As the issue is best considered in a historical context, discussion of Weber's ideas have tended to be written by Mennonite historians rather than by either Mennonite anthropologists or sociologists .[55]

It is not, however, a matter of favouring one intellectual and their ideas over another. Instead, like many intellectual issues, it is the relationships within the ideas they proposed that are important. In the case of Marx his distinction is *between* pre-capitalist *and* capitalist forms; in Tönnies's the relationship is *between* community *and* society; in Durkheim's, it is his ideas of the contrast *between* organic *and* mechanical solidarity; and finally for Weber it is *between* Protestantism *and* capitalism. I would suggest, however, that all these intellectual ideas are best considered in historical contexts.

The reality is that in the long term all human societies have undergone transformatory processes. Such changes involved not just major revolutions in forms of production, distribution, and labour but also changes in social and political organization. In turn, the shift from agricultural to predominantly industrial production is associated with the increased use of technology, commercial practices, the rise of nation-states, and a decline of local, kinship-based societies along with the expansion of education, widespread literacy and, as Weber suggested, increased rationality in human affairs.

In my senior years at school, I was taught economic history instead of political history. Before I became an anthropologist, I was interested in archaeology and my first degree included physical anthropology, human evolution, and material culture alongside social anthropology. It was inevitable, I suppose, that my Mennonite writings often pay attention to social, economic, and material issues in the context of the emergence of modern industrial society. This began with the commercial revolutions of the late Middle Ages, later European expansion overseas, and technological changes in agriculture and industry. As their history dates from the Reformation period of the sixteenth century all Mennonites have lived through these major economic and social transformations.

In some of my writings I have adopted the terms of another intellectual to discuss this transformation. These are "Agraria" and "Industria," terms proposed by the philosopher, sociologist, and anthropologist Ernest Gellner.[56] By capitalizing his terms Gellner indicated they were more ideal types in the tradition of Weber rather than actual states. For Gellner, Agraria and Industria indicated more than just economic modes of production. They involved successive stages in the transformation of society and culture. Industria relates to developments in society involved in the economic transition that first began in earnest in eighteenth-century Britain followed by other areas in Europe and North America. Such developments have long been recognized, particularly by economic historians.[57]

Gellner, however, was neither a historian nor an economist. His argument for a transition from Agraria to Industria centred on the crucial social and cultural consequences connected with the deveopment of Industria. These concerned the formation of nation-states and nationalism, the learning of new skills not "on the job," but through formal education in state-sponsored schools and universal literacy. People in Industria were no longer tied to local rural communities nor dependent on kinship networks. Instead, they were made mobile, free to seek opportunities and employment in new occupations and industries. These were usually located in rapidly

developing urban centres, where new factories and offices were located. This permitted them to take advantage of skills learned in the classroom and not in the home, farmyard, or field. But the other aspect of Industria, and its connection with nationalism, is that ultimately a person's allegiance was to a secular nation-state, no longer to kin, community, or church. While people were to serve the state by becoming economically productive, they were also required to defend it through armed service.

It should be obvious now why I find Gellner's ideas relevant to the study of Mennonites. Since the late eighteenth century disagreements over state education and military service have been among the major issues dividing Mennonites from the governments of the lands in which they have settled. They have also divided Mennonite communities over which action to take in response to government policies. Such factors, combined with the need to sustain expanding Mennonite populations, have been a major cause of Mennonite migrations to new lands. State-sponsored education has also challenged the authority of religious leaders whose power is derived from their ability to interpret the Bible drawing on its agrarian imagery and to insist on a particular form of economy and community. The rejection of military service is based on religious non-resistance and can involve a wider rejection of state service. As a result, modernism is resisted and agrarian conservatism is championed to maintain continuity linked to an often imagined past.

For conservative Mennonites this also has resulted in a rejection of ideas of progress. Those Mennonites who favour progress have championed a discontinuity with past ways and interpreted history as a story of development and an abandonment of archaic ideas and practices.[58] These very different attitudes to progress and modernization have had profound consequences for different Mennonite communities.

Progress, Modernization, Degeneration

Like most nineteenth-century anthropologists and other secular writers of his age, Tylor strongly supported the idea of progress.[59] He believed advances in scientific knowledge and technology could only lead to a better future for all humankind. In his consideration of progress, however, Tylor also noted that earlier religious views—he refers to them as "theological"—stressed degeneration over progress. As outlined in the Old (Hebrew) Testament, humankind's "fall" and expulsion from the Garden of Eden was the initial indication of degeneration. Although Christ came into the world to save

humankind, the Book of Revelation spoke of a final reckoning when the degenerate would be eternally damned and only the righteous "saved."

Most early Anabaptists believed the end times were imminent.[60] When this proved to be not as close as predicted, such beliefs faded although not always entirely. In their place new dangers were identified. These included a belief that through association with the evil "world" a person's salvation would be at risk. To ensure the possibility of salvation for themselves and their descendants communities needed to separate themselves from non-believers and degenerative forces. By forming such communities, Mennonites stepped outside the world and its downward path that ultimately could only lead to damnation in the final days. Any idea of "progress" was therefore a delusion of the damned.

Mennonite reactions to later developments created by the transition to Industria have varied and continue to do so as the global impact of industrialization intensifies. As we live in less optimistic and more uncertain times than Tylor, it is perhaps unsurprising that Mennonite and related communities who appear to have rejected progress and apparently attempted to maintain a "traditional" way of life are idealized by outsiders. In popular accounts conservative Mennonites and Amish appear to live a better way of life than people in the industrial, consumer world of modernity.

Academic studies written by Mennonites and non-Mennonites often lack a material focus except for discussions of the problems conservative groups have experienced with adoption of new technologies. Beyond this, conservative Mennonites and related groups are often seen as the legitimate inheritors of Anabaptist traditions. This promotes the view that throughout history Mennonites and related groups have favoured a rural, agrarian lifestyle. A consequence of this view, especially in ethnographic studies where an understanding of history is rarely considered, is that one section of the contemporary Mennonite world is more closely studied than the other. There has also been a tendency by Mennonite researchers with connections to the conservative Mennonite world to favour one version of the story of their past over another. Connections that link Mennonites with commerce and proto-industry before industrialization, often associated with pre-modern urban centres, have been neglected.[61]

Although the ideal for many Mennonite communities might have been to remain separate from the world, there have always been problems in maintaining such a stance. Even before the beginnings of industrialization, Mennonites have needed to deal with external markets and the non-Mennonite world. Expanding populations have

required new settlements to be established and when lacking land to pursue farming, new occupations were found. Certain goods and services essential to the maintenance of community have had to be obtained from non-Mennonite suppliers. This has always proved easier for some Mennonites than others. Those Mennonites in the Dutch Republic and their fellow brethren settled in and around northern ports such as Hamburg, Altona, and Danzig combined commerce with market-based agriculture early in their histories. Unsurprisingly, Mennonites from Danzig and the Vistula region, who from the end of the eighteenth century onwards established communities in Russia, were therefore well primed to benefit from Russia's agricultural and industrial progress during the nineteenth century.

Far from being a continuity with the past, ideas and practices associated with modernization have their origins in the nineteenth century. During this century, some Mennonites became increasingly willing to adapt to new conditions and seize new opportunities. Others, in response to both external pressures from outside the Mennonite world and internal influences from within, reacted less positively. These Mennonites in Europe, Russia, and North America, often independently, developed strategies to "conserve" what they saw as essential religious values and practices threatened by modernization. In a sense, therefore, *both* "conservative" *and* more "progressive" Mennonites underwent social, cultural, and religious transformations. Some became more conservative and others more progressive and accepting of modernization, including advanced education. The forces involved in this polarization could stem from the transition from Agraria to Industria; those who followed the path of conservation favoured aspects of Agraria while progressives preferred Industria.

If, from the outset of settlement in Russia Mennonites were market-oriented, as the nineteenth century advanced, production soon shifted from local to global markets, first in the production of sheep wool and later grain. To expand agricultural production, prosperous Mennonites purchased private estates, employed non-Mennonite labour, and increased their use of modern farming technologies. Some agricultural machinery was made in Mennonite-owned factories and agricultural products were processed in Mennonite-built and -operated establishments, at first such as a woollen cloth factory and later numerous flour mills.[62] Such economic expansion needed capital and as differences in wealth increased so did inequalities within Mennonite communities and between Mennonites and their largely peasant labour force. In this way, in the transformation from Agraria to Industria, Russian Mennonites became part of not only

industrialization but also of capitalism, with all its structural and moral contradictions.[63]

Similar transformations were underway among some Mennonite and related groups in North America even before the first immigration of Russian Mennonites. Responses to modernization varied from group to group, especially for those who followed a path of conservatism. For a number, the full effects were often not felt until the twentieth century.[64] Among Amish and related groups the process was less sudden than for Mennonites from Russia who immigrated in the 1870s and settled in frontier regions. The challenges intensified, however, as internal pressures caused by demographic factors and external pressures, from growing participation in a capitalist market economy, increased. The majority of Amish and related conservative groups have remained in Canada and the United States and adapted to many of the challenges of the modern world while maintaining a degree of distance from the larger society. For the descendants of Russian Mennonites, the challenges were met rather differently by those who settled in Canada and others in the United States.[65]

Not all Mennonites were entirely comfortable with the benefits afforded by economic progress and modernization. The association of modernization with an increased influence of the state, nationalism, militarism, and educational reform in the name of progress became matters of concern. Some Mennonites developed strategies to avoid these external threats, but they also had to resist moves by other Mennonites keen to take advantage of the benefits of progress and modernization. As in Russia, communities became polarized and divided; "true" believers frequently chose to separate themselves from other Mennonites and the lands their predecessors had pioneered. As governments became more persistent in their demands for immigrant communities to integrate into modern society and the nation, conservative communities were forced to choose between either submitting or following a different path. Once more in their history this involved following the path of emigration.[66]

Conservative religious leaders in Canada rejected attempts by provincial and national governments to impose their will, especially in terms of education, and on religious grounds encouraged emigration to Mexico and Paraguay.[67] This option arose when new land became available and governments were willing to accept immigrants with their "special" requirements. These centred on freedom of religion, exemption from military service, and control of their own schools. Often emigration meant moving to new frontier areas located in consolidating states, with different climatic conditions, an absence of established markets, and undeveloped economies still

largely dependent on agriculture. In time self-sustaining, viable communities might be established, lands cultivated, and markets developed as governments strengthened and stabilized. But resettlement under such conditions often proved difficult. Settlers had moved from Industria back to Agraria. Attempts to develop more prosperous communities saw a re-emergence of the old struggles between progressive and conserving forces, especially in Latin American communities.

Anthropologists, sociologists, and historians, especially those of Mennonite descent, have not always been forthcoming about the consequences for some Mennonite communities of the combination of conservatism and emigration. In 1970, two reviewers of Calvin Redekop's *The Old Colony Mennonites* criticized Redekop for his statement that a visiting anthropologist, while he had been in the field, had commented that he had discovered the "closest thing to Shangri-La" among Old Colony Mennonites. The reviewers, who had conducted anthropological research among Old Colony Mennonites in Mexico, pointed out that this did not correspond with their own experience. Instead, during their research they had discovered, "among other things . . . dissension, poverty, defection, disease, divisive internecine struggle, gross economic exploitation, filth, disastrous drought, murder, robbery, ignorance, repression, and incest."[68]

In the almost fifty years that have passed since this statement of doubt on the utopian state of Old Colony Mennonite communities in Mexico was made these comments have attracted little attention. One of the reviewers, James Jaquith, was particularly concerned with increasing illiteracy among Old Colony Mennonites and proposed that Mennonite Low German be transliterated into a written language and reading material be made available.[69] While others have followed this initiative, without adopting Jaquith's proposed system, and a translation of the Bible into Mennonite Low German has been made available, it has not prevented some Mennonite communities from sliding further into illiteracy. This is somewhat ironic as one of the central tenets of the first Anabaptists was to promote literacy among its followers and an emphasis on literacy was continued throughout the history of Mennonites. Anthropologist-ethnographers have in the main left the task of revealing such problems to Mennonite writers of fiction. These writers have produced what might be called examples of in-house "literary ethnographies" that, while lacking detailed historical analysis, have promoted discussion and debate within and outside the Mennonite world on these issues.[70]

Conclusions

Anthropologists often identify ethnographic accounts as "being in the ethnographic present."[71] This is because the research on which they are largely based is conducted within a limited framework of time. Ethnographic accounts of cultures other than their own also require a subtle translation into the language, ideas, and practices of their own world. Historians, while discussing a past very different from their own, also write their accounts in the present. This too involves translation not just because the language of the past can be different from the present, but also because language itself is constantly in flux. But the focus of historians in many ways is different from the interpretations and explanations of anthropologists working as ethnographers. History as narrative involves an understanding of the past in terms of processes and sequences whereas ethnography does not.[72]

I have often been asked by Mennonites why I, a non-Mennonite, chose to study Mennonites. The question involves an unspoken assumption that Mennonites should study Mennonites because, as one Mennonite expressed it, ultimately, they are all members of the same tribe. The unspoken corollary is that I am not a proper member. I study Mennonites not just because I find them interesting and intellectually challenging, but because I also know, as an anthropologist, Mennonites might not always be best at studying Mennonites. People live their lives, but they do not usually reflect upon them. What is commonplace for Mennonites is remarkable to me and so calls for interpretation and explanation.

As a historian I am aware that Mennonite writers of their own past often lack perspective, a proper consideration of the broader context that situates them as part of a larger pattern of events. Too often Mennonites seem convinced that their predecessors lived lives separate from the wider world and only terrible external events forced them to seek refuge in other lands and re-establish communities.

For instance, non-academics, and even some academics, state that Mennonite immigrants from Russia in the 1870s and the 1920s departed due to state persecution of the beliefs. In fact, the 1870s emigration was initiated by proposed law changes associated with wider reforms that required all Russian subjects to be conscripted into the military, reforms that were contrary to earlier agreements with Mennonites and a challenge to their beliefs. Other changes involved education that in future would be conducted mainly in Russian, not German. Conservative Mennonites rejected these reforms but others, a majority, negotiated a compromise to military service

and accepted Russian language teaching. Behind the divides that led to emigration, especially to Canada, were much deeper, long-standing disagreements between different Mennonite congregational communities over previous decades. Immigrants from Russia to the United States, often more recent immigrants from Prussia to Russia, were in part driven by hopes of taking advantage of new opportunities in a new land to which other Prussian immigrants had immigrated earlier. Similar arguments could be made for later immigrants to Canada in the 1920s, often cited as people "escaping" the Soviet Union. The 1870 immigrants departed the Old World on tsarist passports; the 1920s immigrants on Soviet passports.

It might be useful here to apply a concept popular among anthropologists and historians in recent years and suggest that Mennonites have possessed more "agency" than some believe. This applies not just to issues regarding decisions to emigrate, as in the examples noted above, but also the increasing participation of many Mennonites in the political life of the lands in which they have settled.

My personal experience, after almost fifty years of researching and writing about Mennonites, is that Mennonites have been active participants in the world and, as such, they have contributed to change and not just been victims of it. Trying to show this has involved me, as an anthropologist and as a historian, in efforts to bridge the rather complicated intellectual gap between the past and the present, between history and anthropology.

Notes

1 Keynote address for the conference on "Mennonites and Anthropology: Ethnography, Religion and Global Entanglements" at the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg, October 25, 2019.

2 A. L. Kroeber, "History and Science in Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 37:4 (Oct.-Dec. 1935): 548.

3 While both my degrees are in anthropology, I have published widely on the history of anthropology; see, for instance *Before Social Anthropology: Essays on the History of British Anthropology* (Chur/Reading: Harwood, 1993). While in Australia I was a joint editor of the journal *Aboriginal History*; see Bain Attwood, "The Founding of *Aboriginal History* and the Forming of Aboriginal History," *Aboriginal History* 36 (2012): 119–171.

4 The Anthropological Society of Washington was the precursor of the American Anthropological Association, central to the development of anthropology in America.

5 The best introduction to Tylor, his ideas, and role in the development of anthropology is George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York/London: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1987).

[6] "Addressed by a British Scientist. Prof. Tylor of Oxford appears before the Anthropology Society," *Washington Post*, Oct. 12, 1884.

[7] The full address was published with a slightly different wording from the newspaper report in the newly established journal *Science*, 4:98 (Dec. 19, 1884): 545–551, and in the *Transactions of the Anthropological Society of Washington* 3 (1885): 81–94; all quotations given below are from the latter source, specifically pages 82–84.

[8] In 1879 a delegation of two Quakers visited St. Petersburg and Berlin to plead the case of Mennonites in Russia and Prussia with regard to their objection to military service; one was American, B. C. Hobbs, and the other English, Charles Tylor, most likely a relative of E. B. Tylor; see their extensive report in *Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London, 1879*, 73–89.

[9] Hans Haslibacher (c. 1500–1571); the hymn was published as a six-page pamphlet and later bound into the *Ausbund* of the Pennsylvanian Mennonites and Amish; see *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (GAMEO), s.v. "Haslibacher, Hans (d. 1571)," by Harold S. Bender, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Haslibacher,_Hans_(d._1571)&oldid=145425.

[10] See Han F. Vermeulen, *Before Boas: The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015).

[11] GAMEO, s.v. "Mannhardt, Wilhelm (1831–1880)," by Mark Jantzen, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Mannhardt,_Wilhelm_(1831-1880)&oldid=162990.

[12] In German, "Uberlebsel"; Tylor acknowledged in Wilhelm Mannhardt, *Wald- und Feldkulte. 2: Antike Wald- und Feldkulte aus nordeuropäischer Überlieferung erläutert* (Berlin: Gebr. Bornträger, 1876), xxii-xxiii, cited by Tove Tybjerg, "Wilhelm Mannhardt: a Pioneer in the Study of Rituals," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 15 (1993): 28; on Frazer and the influence of Tylor and Mannhardt see Robert Ackerman, *J. G. Frazer: His Life and Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), especially, 77–79, 81–82.

[13] Margaret T. Hodgen, *The Doctrine of Survivals: A Chapter in the History of Scientific Method on the Study of Man* (London: Allenson & Co., 1936); see also Joan Leopold, *Culture in Comparative and Evolutionary Perspective: E. B. Tylor and the Making of Primitive Culture* (Berlin: Reimer, 1980), chap. 4.

[14] Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1871), 14–15.

[15] Robert Lowie, "Survivals and the Historical Method," *American Journal of Sociology* 23:4 (January 1918): 529.

[16] James Urry, "Beyond the Frontier: European Influence, Aborigines and the Concept of Traditional Culture," *Journal of Australian Studies* 5 (1979): 2–16.

[17] James Urry, "'All That Glisters . . .' Delbert Plett and the Place of the Kleine Gemeinde in Russian Mennonite History," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 4 (1986): 242.

[18] Royden Loewen, *Village among Nations: "Canadian" Mennonites in a Transnational World, 1916–2006* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 238n20.

[19] http://www.amishstudies.org/

[20] In certain sections of the Mennonite world there was, and still is, an effort to "rediscover" an Anabaptist theology or an Anabaptist faith in the present,

with or without detailed examination of the often varied historical contexts of the terms or of the peoples and writers in the past to which the terms apply.

[21] Such as sociologists E. K. Francis, Joseph Winfield Fretz, Leo Driedger, Howard Kaufman and Calvin Wall Redekop, and the geographer John Warkentin.

[22] John Hostetler, Donald Kraybill, and others; many of their works have been published by Johns Hopkins University Press. For a critical examination of studies of the Amish see Cory Anderson, "Seventy-Five Years of Amish Studies, 1942 to 2017: A Critical Review of Scholarship Trends (with an Extensive Bibliography)," *Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies* 5:1 (2017): 1–65.

[23] Royden Loewen, *Horse-and-Buggy Genius: Listening to Mennonites Contest the Modern World* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016), 232–233, provides a useful listing of many of the recent studies written by anthropologists.

[24] Roland Frankenberg, *Communities in Britain: Social Life in Town and Country* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 45; the word "tassels" is more commonly associated with furnishings and clothing than with human groups.

[25] Efforts to be more inclusive have been proposed by a historian, John D. Roth, not an anthropologist. Roth helped establish an "Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism" at Goshen College; see John D. Roth, "The Emergence of Mennonite Peacebuilding in an International Perspective: Global Anabaptism and Neo-Anabaptism," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 89:2 (April 2015): 229–252.

[26] Austrian sociologist E. K. Francis wrote on Mennonites in Manitoba, placing them in a wider context based on his original ethnographic and historical research. See his *In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites in Manitoba* (Altona: D. W. Friesen, 1955). Francis published a number of important theoretical papers in sociology and history in Mennonite and non-Mennonite journals based on his research; see my discussion of his work in "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Imperial Russia revisited," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 84:2 (2010): 227–247.

[27] See for example Lorenzo Cañas Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites: The Making of a Trans-statal Community," *Global Networks* 8:2 (2008): 214–231.

[28] Good examples of Loewen's work using this approach are his *Village among Nations* and the accounts contained in his *Horse-and-Buggy Genius*.

[29] See the comments of Lorenzo Canas Bottos, "Distorting Mirrors: Mutual (Mis)interpretations of Old Colony Mennonites and the Modern World," in *Metamorphoses of the World: Traces, Shadows, Reflections, Echoes and Metaphors*, ed. Daina Teters (Riga: Riga Technical University, 2010), 206–224.

[30] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 1:1.

[31] See James Urry, "The Politicization of 'Culture," *Anthropology Today* 14:2 (1998): 23.

[32] Such matters, however, are still of interest to anthropologists and ethnologists in Germany and other areas of central, eastern, and southeastern Europe, where they are often connected with nationalistic and regional sentiments. Since the end of Communism, the focus of a new generation of scholars has shifted and today there is increased interaction with Western scholars and scholarship.

[33] Boas established a network of scholars later collectively identified as Boasians, although individually they expressed a wide range of different ideas and emphases.

[34] Franz Boas "The Aims of Ethnology" (1888), reprinted in his *Race, Language and Culture* (1940; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 626–627.

[35] Boas, "The Methods of Cultural Anthropology" (1920), in his *Race, Language and Culture*, 284.

[36] Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922), 24–25; on Malinowski see Michael W. Young, *Malinowski: Odyssey of an Anthropologist, 1884–1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

[37] The term "fieldwork" was derived from research strategies pursued by natural scientists, some of who became anthropologists, the most prominent of which was Alfred Court Haddon; see Urry, *Before Social Anthropology*, chap. 3.

[38] German-speaking historians in Germany and Russia introduced the term in the eighteenth century to denote the German *Voelker-Beschreibung*; see Vermeulen, *Before Boas*.

[39] For a critical analysis of these later changes in the meaning of ethnography in anthropology with particular reference to the history of American, British, and French anthropology, see James Urry, "The Ethnographicisation of Anglo-American Anthropology: Causes and Consequences," *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology & Cultural Studies*, n.s., 3:2 (2006): 3–39.

[40] Tim Ingold, "Anthropology Contra Ethnography," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7:3 (2017): 21; see also his earlier statement, Tim Ingold, "Anthropology is not Ethnography (Radcliffe-Brown Lecture 2017)," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 154 (2008), 69–92, reprinted in his *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London: Routledge, 2011).

[41] Philippe Descola in J. Knight and L. Rival, "An Interview with Philippe Descola," *Anthropology Today* 8:2 (1992): 9; see also Philippe Descola, "On Anthropological Knowledge," *Social Anthropology* 13 (2005): 65–73.

[42] Fred Eggan, "Social Anthropology and the Method of Limited Comparison," *American Anthropologist* 56:5 (October 1954): 743–763.

[43] Such as Mennonite involvement in politics and the challenge of wealth and poverty for Russian and Dutch Mennonites; see *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood: Europe – Russia – Canada, 1525–1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006), and "Wealth and Poverty in the Mennonite Experience: Dilemmas and Challenges," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 27 (2009): 11–40. See also Royden Loewen, *Diaspora in the Countryside: Two Mennonite Communities and Mid-Twentieth Century Rural Disjuncture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) for a limited comparison of two North American Mennonite communities.

[44] For instance Loewen, *Village among Nations*, and Troy Osborne, "The Development of a Transnational 'Mennonite' Identity among Swiss Brethren and Dutch Doopsgezinden in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 88:2 (2014): 195–219.

[45] Loewen, *Horse-and-Buggy Genius*.

[46] Cory Anderson, Joseph Donnermeyer, Jeffrey Longhofer, and Steven D. Reschly, "A Critical Appraisal of Amish Studies' *De Facto* Paradigm, 'Negotiating with Modernity,'" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 58:3 (Sept. 2019): 725–742.

[47] Joseph W. Eaton "Controlled Acculturation: A Survival Technique of the Hutterites," *American Sociological Review* 17:3 (June 1952): 331–340; Peter C. W. Gutkind, "Amish Acculturation" (Letter to the Editor), *American Anthropologist* 60:2 (1958): 376–278; Russel E. Lewis, "Controlled Acculturation Revisited: An Examination of Differential Acculturation and Assimilation Between the Hutterian Brethren and the Old Order Amish," *International Review of Modern Sociology* 6:1 (Spring 1976): 75–83; Jerry Savells, "Economic and Social Acculturation among the Old Order Amish in Select Communities; Surviving in a High-Tech Society," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 19:1 (Spring 1988): 123–135.

[48] Anthropologists and others often like to divide the peoples of the modern world into the Indigenous and others. Apparently Indigenous people once lived a timeless existence before the arrival of unwelcome outsiders. The truth is otherwise. All peoples have been subject the processes of transformation while interactions with others through trade and exchange, invasions, colonization, and migration were commonplace long before European expansion began from the end of the fifteenth century onwards.

[49] The Mennonite Central Committee's assistance programmes in Latin America and for immigrants from these areas in North America have also indirectly helped the formation of a common "identity."

[50] Loewen, *Village Among Nations*; Rebecca Janzen, *Liminal Sovereignty: Mennonites and Mormons in Mexican Culture* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2018); Judith C. Kulig, *Caring for the Low German Mennonites: How Religious Beliefs and Practices Influence Health Care* (Vancouver: Purich Books, 2018); Luann Good Gingrich and Kerry Preibisch, "Migration as Preservation and Loss: The Paradox of Transnational Living for Low German Mennonite Women," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36:9 (2010): 1499–1518. Gingrich discusses the problems of choosing a common name for such Mennonites without questioning the use of Low German Mennonites; see her *Out of Place: Social Exclusion and Mennonite Migrants in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 227–228.

[51] James R. Jaquith and Constance Pennacchio, review of *The Old Colony Mennonites: Dilemmas of Ethnic Minority Life*, by Calvin W. Redekop, *American Anthropologist* 72:4 (1970): 890.

[52] Abraham Friesen, *Reformation and Utopia: the Marxist Interpretation of the Reformation and its Antecedents* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1974). The article on "Marxism" by Walter Sawatsky in GAMEO is more broadly focused on the political consequences of Marx's ideas especially in previous Communist states, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Marxism&oldid=134195.

[53] *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, s.v. "Weber, Max," by Michael Driedger, https://www.mennlex.de/doku.php?id=art:weber_max. The other sociologist widely discussed by Mennonites is Ernst Troeltsch but he is not considered a major figure in non-Mennonite circles and is rarely, if ever, discussed by anthropologists.

[54] See Walter Klaassen in his classic study *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant*, 3rd ed. (Kitchener: Pandora, 2001).

[55] The one exception is the essay by E. Wayne Nafziger who was an economist; see his "The Mennonite Ethic in the Weberian Framework," *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History* 2:3 (Spring/Summer 1965): 187–204, reprinted in his *Essays in Entrepreneurship, Equity and Economic Development* (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1986). Among the numerous historical studies, see Katherine George, "The Mennonites and the Protestant Ethic," *Transactions of the Manitoba Historical Society*, 3rd ser. (1964–65); Jean Séguy, *Les Assemblées Anabaptistes-Mennonites de France* (Paris: Mouton, 1977); Jean Séguy, *Conflit et utopie ou réformer l'Eglise. Parcours wébériens en douze essais* (Paris: Cerf., 1999); Michael Driedger, "Crossing Max Weber's 'Great Divide': Comparing Early Modern Jewish and Anabaptist Histories," in *Radical Reformation Studies: Essays Presented to James M. Stayer*, ed. Werner O. Packull and Geoffrey L. Dipple (London: Routledge, 1999), 157–174; Frank Konersmann, "Studien zur Genese rationaler Lebensführung und zum Sektentypus Max Webers: Das Beispiel mennonitischer Bauernfamilien im deutschen Südwesten (1632–1850)," *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 33:5 (2004): 418–437; Mary S. Sprunger, "A Mennonite Capitalist Ethic in the Dutch Golden Age: Weber Revisited," in *European Mennonites and the Challenge of Modernity over Five Centuries: Contributors, Detractors, and Adapters*, ed. Mark Jantzen, Mary S. Sprunger, and John D. Thiesen (North Newton, KS: Bethel College, 2016), 51–70.

[56] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); his ideas have been developed in more sophisticated ways by others including by the historical sociologist Michael Mann. See his *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1, *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); vol. 2, *The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760 -1914 (*1993); vol. 3, *Fractured Globalization* (2012); vol 4, *Universal Globalizations* (2013).

[57] One economic historian has suggested that similar transitions began earlier and independently in other parts of the world, but all failed to be sustained; see Eric L. Jones, *Growth Recurring: Economic Change in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) and his *The European Miracle: Environments, Economies and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[58] This does not involve a complete disconnection, however, as local museums, historical societies, the publishing of books and journals on regional history—not to mention considerable interest in genealogical research—remain extremely active and popular.

[59] The classic study of the idea is Robert Nisbet's *The Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

[60] Walter Klaassen, *Living at the End of the Ages: Apocalyptic Expectation in the Radical Reformation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992); ideas on the end times varied among different Anabaptist groups and thinkers, especially in the formative period.

[61] Mennonite historians of European communities often have been more willing to address these issues than their North American counterparts; see Cor Trompetter, *Agriculture, Proto-industry and Mennonite Entrepreneurship: A History of the Textile Industries in Twente, 1600–1815* (Amsterdam: NEH, 1997), Peter Kriedte, *Taufgesinnte und grosses Kapital: die niederrheinisch-bergischen Mennoniten und der Aufstieg der Kefefelder Seidengewerbes* (Goettingen: Vandenbach & Ruprecht, 2007).

[62] See my "Mennonite Economic Development in the Russian Mirror," in *Mennonites in Russia: Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz*, ed. John Friesen (Winnipeg, CMBC Publications, 1989), 99–126.

[63] It is interesting that American Mennonite scholars avoid any discussion centred on "capitalism" and "capitalists," instead preferring to talk about "entrepreneurship" and "entrepreneurs." See Calvin Redekop, Steven C. Ainlay and Robert Siemens, *Mennonite Entrepreneurs* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[64] Steven M. Nolt, *A History of the Amish*, 3rd ed. (New York: Good Books, 2016); Martin Lutz, "Mennonite Entrepreneurship in the United States: Adapting to the Industrial Economy in the Late 19th Century," *Entreprises et Histoire* 81:4 (2015): 29–42.

[65] Loewen, *Diaspora in the Countryside*.

[66] Some Mennonite accounts, even by historians, are occasionally too eager to attribute emigrations to external forces without acknowledging the influence of internal factors.

[67] William Janzen, *Limits on Liberty the Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) and Adolf Ens, *Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870–1925* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1994).

[68] James R. Jaquith and Constance Pennacchio, review *American Anthropologist* 72:4 (1970): 892.

[69] James R. Jaquith, "Ayn Plotdiytshet Obaytsay: A Practical Alphabet for Plattdeutsch in Spanish-Speaking Areas," *Anthropological Linguistics* 12:8 (November 1970): 293–303; Jaquith also published a number of articles on Old Colony Mennonites in *Mennonite Life*.

[70] The most notable recent contribution is of course Miriam Toews's *Women Talking* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018). Further consideration of such genre is outside the scope of this paper but the tradition extends back at least as far as Rudy Wiebe and his *Peace Shall Destroy Many* (1962; repr. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989), now recognized as a classic in Mennonite literature.

[71] For analysis see John W. Burton, "Shadows at Twilight: A Note on History and the Ethnographic Present," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 132:4 (December 1988): 420–33, and Roger Sanjek, *Ethnography in Today's World: Color Full Before Color Blind* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), chap. 6.

[72] The trend towards cultural history in some circumstances is less clear with regard to such matters.