Low German Mennonite Migration: A Geopolitical Framework and History

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Over five hundred years, Mennonites and their Anabaptist antecedents have repeatedly fled persecution, bargained for toleration, and sustained an existence beyond the purview of any one nation. Conservative Low German Mennonites[2] have achieved this by migrating from one "host state" to the next and receiving special privileges from each. Why do host states grant Mennonites privileges and then rescind them? How do Mennonites fit into the broader political agendas of their host states and sustain their privileges in other contexts? What benefits do host states receive in exchange for tolerating Mennonites?

While James Urry has established that Mennonites have actively engaged with political processes of the state to advance their interests,[3] the reverse is also true. States engage with Mennonites in order to advance their interests. Accordingly, Mennonite migration is best viewed as a negotiated relationship where the host state grants Mennonites special privileges in exchange for Mennonite settlers acquiescing to, and serving as agents for, the host state's geopolitical agenda. The focus of this article is the wider geopolitical context in which Mennonite settlement occurs, rather than Mennonite settlement itself.

This article examines statecraft as a determining factor in the historical patterns of migratory conservative Low German

Mennonites. It describes the geopolitical motivations of successive host states that granted privileges to conservative Mennonites and allowed, even encouraged, them to immigrate en masse. This article asks why host states accept and tolerate Mennonites rather than why Mennonites chose to migrate to a certain state. It studies factors that tend to repeat themselves over successive migrations and thus outlines a general framework of conservative Mennonite migration. The article then proceeds to survey the political circumstances behind acceptance of conservative Mennonite migration in a series of host states, and demonstrates how each state utilized Mennonites in their respective geopolitical agendas. Accordingly, this article contributes to a better understanding of Mennonite-state relations and the role of Mennonites in settler colonialism.

Framework and Theory

Building States, Forming Nations: Territorial and National Consolidation

The distinction between state and nation features prominently in this article's analysis. A state is a territory over which a government exercises sovereignty. Max Weber's definition of a state is "a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory."[4] The definition of state is preoccupied with geographic territory, whereas a nation is concerned with common characteristics that qualitatively link a population. A nation has been variously described as an "imagined political community" with "invented traditions" and mutual "convictions, loyalties and solidarities."[5] A nation typically has a shared "culture," which is "a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating."[6]

States are territorially based and nations are communities of people, but not all states form nations and not all nations have states. As Massimo d'Azeglio declared after the formation of the Kingdom of Italy, "We have made Italy; now we have to make Italians."[7] Conversely, nations without a state do exist, for example, the Kurdish people, whose homeland spans Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. States can also encompass multiple nations. For example, the Austro-Hungarian Empire broke up into new states based on national lines. Thus, states may create nations, nations may create states, or states and nations may exist independent of each other. In a nation-state, the population of a nation coincides with the territory of the state,

realizing a core principle of nationalism, "which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent."[8]

Conservative Mennonite migration has often been intertwined with processes of state- and nation-building. Mennonites migrate to a new territory with a mandate to engage in agricultural transformation. In exchange, they are granted special privileges. Mennonites thereby contribute to the host state's agenda of territorial consolidation, defined by Lorenzo Cañás Bottos as "settling would-be loyal subjects in marginal unpopulated areas, or in areas with uncertain or contested sovereignty" for "economic, political and military advantages."[9] In each host state where large groups of conservative Mennonites have migrated, they have settled in such locales.

By strategically situating Mennonite settlement on the frontier where sovereignty is threatened by external neighbouring states and/or by internal dissident elements, host states extract maximum utility from the Mennonites' ability to consolidate territory. This phenomenon is known as demographic engineering. Lachlan McNamee and Anna Zhang define demographic engineering as "state-sponsored resettlement and expulsion of people to alter the ethnonational composition of a region" employed by states "to forestall secessionist minority mobilization and cross-border insurgencies," particularly "at contested borders with hostile powers."[10] Demographic engineering has regularly been a feature of Mennonite migrations, and their amenability to it is a reason why host states have tolerated their presence.

Once a territory is consolidated by the host state to the extent that it is militarily secure and sufficiently developed economically to be accessible to other settlers, territorial consolidation habitually gives way to nationalist impulses and to a policy agenda of what can be called "national consolidation." National consolidation involves securing cultural and linguistic conformity (and often universal military service) from the land's established population. It is an attempt at attaining cultural homogeneity through assimilation and the imposition of an official nationality.[11] According to Harris Mylonas, political elites are driven by a "homogenizing imperative," and to them, "nation-building is not considered complete until there are no threatening non-core groups within their state."[12] To conservative Mennonites, national consolidation is unacceptable, as it leads to a revocation of their privileges and erasure of their distinctiveness. This, in turn, necessitates migration to another state. Having helped to make the proverbial Italy, conservative Mennonites have no desire to become Italian.

Mennonite Privileges, "Loyalty," and Industriousness

The Dutch-North-German-Russian branch of Mennonites (whose descendants came to be known as Low German Mennonites) has a history of negotiating for tolerance by means of special rights and privileges. At first, these special rights were granted in agreements with local authorities and, later, in special charters from sovereign rulers. These were referred to as a *Privilegium*.[13] The feudal practice of rulers granting special privileges to distinct classes of people, once common in Western Europe, waned with the rise of modern nation-states and liberal notions of equality through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[14] However, Mennonites who migrated eastward to the Russian Empire and then to North and South America placed increasing importance on obtaining a *Privilegium*, and came to see it as a pre-condition for migration to a new host state.[15]

Mennonites' *Privilegia* initially granted freedom of worship as well as exemptions from military service and swearing of oaths.[16] Later, they also included tax benefits, customary practices (such as separate cemeteries, educational systems, and institutions of mutual aid), and exclusive self-governing colonies with a concentrated village structure.[17] Mennonites tend to view any document that offered terms of settlement as a *Privilegium*, even though in modern states they were no longer royal charters. Sometimes, these modern *Privilegia* were documents of questionable legal standing.[18]

In exchange, Mennonites provided benefits and utility to the state, sometimes explicitly, in the form of direct payments, or implicitly, by developing and consolidating territory. In this way, Mennonites leveraged political loyalty and their economic industriousness in contested, marginal borderlands. Industry and "industriousness" are recurring adjectives that have been invoked and used to justify Mennonite migration over the centuries.[19] But for conservative Mennonites, "loyalty" to the state corresponds to the extent that their religious practices—notably nonresistance and separation from the world—are respected. They are industrious subjects more than they are loyal patriots or dutiful citizens.[20] Mennonites demonstrate a limited scope of loyalty that is better described as a "qualified allegiance." This has been the impetus behind repeated migrations, because it has forced Mennonites to seek marginal land on a contested frontier where even such qualified allegiance is valuable to the state. Host states tolerate conservative Mennonites when "geopolitical considerations outweigh . . . civic equality."[21]

Consolidating Territory, Displacing Indigenous Peoples

Despite the community's relatively small population, the process of territorial consolidation by Mennonites is considerable on a global scale. Though frequently described as a people without a homeland, Yann le Polain de Waroux et al. have noted that Mennonite colonies in Latin America paradoxically cover a total land area larger than the Netherlands (which may be called their original "homeland"). This figure excludes several hundred thousand hectares of land privately owned by Low German Mennonites in the Chaco.[22] Although the industriousness of Mennonites has brought economic benefits to host states, it has come at the cost of negative environmental impacts, as short-term toleration has taken precedence over long-term sustainable practices.[23]

Consolidating territory also meant that, as expedience dictates, Mennonites have settled in and furthered the aims of states on different sides of conflict. For example, Mennonites migrated from the Vistula Delta to Russia after Russia contributed to the dismemberment of Poland. In Russia, Mennonites contributed to the Crimean War, in which Great Britain was an adversary, only to reach out to British officials sixteen years later to inquire about North American immigration. In the 1870s, Mennonite settlers aided Canada in consolidating its northwest frontier, thereby guarding against the United States' perceived expansionist tendencies, yet Mennonites also settled in the United States. Most notably, a generation after Mennonites contributed to Paraguay's victory over Bolivia in the Chaco War, a migration from Paraguay to Bolivia occurred.

Through their process of migration and territorial consolidation, Mennonites have been involved in the displacement of other peoples. This holds true for, among others, Cossacks and Tatars in South Russia, Métis and First Nations in Western Canada, and Enlhet in the Chaco. While Mennonites believed they were settling beyond the reach of the state, the state sought to extend its reach by way of Mennonite settlement.[24] Consider the following summations of Mennonite migration to Russia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Bolivia, by scholars David G. Rempel, Martina Will, Esther Breithoff, and Lorenzo Cañás Bottos, respectively:

> The country's security in the areas in question and their economic needs required in both of them a more stable and reliable colonizing element than that which hitherto had been furnished largely by her native sons, most of whom, in the first place, had fled to them because of their hatred of the government and their dislike for the social, economic and religious order which this government promoted and defended. Moreover, if the great potentials of these territories were to be developed and fully

> utilized, it seemed essential that a people of a higher cultural level be brought in to serve as model settlements for the indigenous population as well as the Russian peasant who in due time might be established there.[25]

> Overlapping goals of pacification, restoration of economic and population resources, and the pursuit of a European ethnic ideal were all furthered by the federal government's decision to permit the Mennonites to migrate to Mexico.[26]

> The newly arrived Mennonites had done their share by materialising their host country's vision for the Chaco: establishing a firm human presence, exploiting the land in the western understanding of the term and reconnecting it with the rest of the *patria*.[27]

> From the perspective of the state, the Mennonites seemed to provide several benefits. First, they would recognize the legitimacy of the Bolivian state. Second, their sedentary character was more compatible with the way states "act, think and see" than the transhumant indigenous hunter-gatherers, and it was expected that the former would have an influence on the latter to settle. Third, the state valued the Mennonites' contribution towards the economic development of the area through putting previously "unused" land into production.[28]

Across time and space, the motivations behind host states welcoming Mennonite settlement have not changed. Mennonites have been repeatedly utilized to settle and develop territory in the wake of conflict. While history offers many examples of state-sponsored demographic engineering of territories, Mennonites are a unique example of how one group of people has been repeatedly utilized in that process.[29]

The Cyclical Nature of Mennonite Migration

Conservative Mennonite migration is inherently cyclical because it is a transitory process. The granting of privileges is dependent on the ability of Mennonites to consolidate territory that, from the perspective of the state, is inaccessible, unproductive, and/or disputed. In so doing, Mennonites lose their desired isolation from the outside world and make it possible "for the state to consolidate its authority over them."[30] The very process of Mennonites' consolidating the frontier tends to extinguish Mennonites' exceptionality and, with it, the state's need (and justification) for granting privileges. Having attained territorial integrity and economic productivity, the state then attempts to transform into a culturally homogeneous nation-

state. Accordingly, Mennonites' privileges can be, and often are, revoked. The exceptions, to date, are host states in Latin America where Mennonite privileges persist because Mennonite settlers retain their demographic, economic, and/or strategic importance.

Although Mennonites are initially utilized by the state to displace or change "undesirable" elements of the population on the frontier, after the frontier is sufficiently consolidated, Mennonites become "undesirables" themselves. Once in consolidated territory, Mennonites become geopolitical liabilities as non-nationalistic, nonresistant, unpatriotic citizens. As Reina Neufeldt notes, "Mennonites occupied an intermediary location in the hierarchy of desired classes of settlers—sometimes lower, sometimes higher depending upon what was most important at the time to those making the judgement."[31]

National consolidation occurs when notions of civic equality and assimilation outweigh other geopolitical concerns. Ironically, these are geopolitical concerns that the Mennonites helped to allay.[32] John Eicher observes that "some Mennonites thus rode a wave of nationalism from borderland to borderland thereby preserving their communities and their cultures even as they literally sowed the seeds of their own dispersal."[33] Similarly, Ben Nobbs-Thiessen describes Mennonites as having "engaged in a historically recurring form of subimperialism," being both "victims and agents of imperial and national expansion."[34]

As the host state embarks on consolidating the nation, it revokes Mennonites' privileges and the process begins anew. Mennonites fall victim to their own success and transform themselves from desirable migrants to expendable, unpatriotic settlers. In essence, Mennonites are utilized by the state as mere interim agents of colonization. They are but the "*pointy tip* of the ploughshare of colonialism."[35] In Cañás Bottos' words, "having initially worked for the state, the Mennonites then attempt through migration to remain separate from the nation by finding a new state that will privilege territorial consolidation over nation building."[36] Thus, conservative Mennonite migration is a pattern marked by privilege-granting to induce immigration, followed by settlement and consolidation of territory, and, finally, emigration spurred either by privilege-revoking by the host state (seen in Europe-Russia-Canada) or by internal disagreement and sanctions over technology and community (seen more prominently in Latin America).

As the granting and revoking of privileges are directly linked to the economic favourability of territory, conservative Mennonites prioritize ethnoreligious values over economic advantages and, therefore, migrate early, often, and voluntarily in situations where

"pull" factors predominate (in the form of *Privilegia* combined with an increased availability of marginal land). Conversely, liberal Mennonites are more reconciliatory toward national consolidation and/or more inclined toward economically favourable land. They migrate later, less frequently, and sometimes as refugees when "push" factors predominate. In such cases, *Privilegia* are rarely granted.[37] This explains Royden Loewen's finding that Dutch Mennonites in the Netherlands (Doopsgezinden) have the weakest sense of a Mennonite identity despite remaining nearest the movement's geographic origins.[38] In contrast, Low German Mennonites in Latin America form what Loewen calls a "village among nations."[39]

While many adjectives are employed in describing conservative Mennonites, I prefer Lorenzo Cañás Bottos's use of "trans-statal" to describe their migration-based external relationship with host states. I propose the term "extranational" to describe their unique internal ethnoreligious characteristics because they remain outside any state-sanctioned nationality.[40] Mennonites sustain their extranational identity through trans-statal migration. Striving to be "in the world but not of it," conservative Mennonites accept the state but reject the nation.[41]

History and Migrations

The Geopolitical Climate of Early Anabaptism

The wider Anabaptist movement arose out of the Radical Reformation in the early sixteenth century. Its core tenets include that baptism should be limited to conscious believers (meaning adults, rather than infants), that believers should remain separate from non-believers and the "evil" of the "world," nonresistance, and refusal to swear oaths.[42]

Early Anabaptism's links—perceived or real—to the German Peasants' War of 1524–25 and the Münster Rebellion of 1534–35 motivated authorities to suppress Anabaptism, for they thereafter associated the movement with "violence, disorder, dubious practices, and the promotion of subversive doctrines."[43] Anabaptism was made a capital offense in the Holy Roman Empire in 1529 at the Diet of Speyer and by the 1535 Imperial Decree of Charles V.[44] Therefore, it became a matter of survival for Anabaptists (including Mennonites) to find toleration by proving their utility to the state. As Eicher notes, one of Mennonites' "most effective strategies for maintaining religious beliefs and close communities was fleeing to marginal lands on imperial borders."[45] The following subsections

demonstrate how states have utilized conservative Mennonite migration as a tool to advance statecraft by consolidating and demographically engineering territory.

The Dutch Republic

The Habsburg Netherlands, which approximate geographically today's Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, were fiefs of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and, later, Philip II of Spain. In 1566, the Dutch Revolt broke out. It was both religious and nationalist in character. The Duke of Alba, known as the "Iron Duke" for his punitive and brutal measures, was dispatched to suppress the rebellion.[46]

Mennonites were persecuted in the northern provinces until William of Orange implemented wider religious tolerance. In 1577, William offered a letter of privileges to Mennonites in Middelburg, Zeeland, and ordered authorities not to punish them for refusing to arm themselves in defense of the city and for refusing to swear an oath of loyalty.[47] He invoked contributions made by Mennonites in support of the war in the form of substantial funds to aid his military campaign.[48] The successful capture of Middelburg by William resulted in the recall of the Duke of Alba and contributed to the consolidation of the nascent Dutch state.[49] Further religious toleration came with the 1579 Union of Utrecht and the 1581 Act of Abjuration, the latter the Dutch Republic's de facto declaration of independence.[50]

Poland, Prussia, and the Vistula Delta

As early as the 1530s, small numbers of Mennonites began settling in the Vistula Delta. The region, including the city of Danzig (now Gdańsk), had been the subject of conflict between Poland and the Teutonic Knights throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Poland claimed the territory by decree in 1454 and, after defeating the Teutonic Order in the Thirteen Years' War, by treaty in 1466. The region was further impacted by the Polish-Teutonic War of 1519–21, formally ending in 1525. Albert, the former Grand Master, withdrew from the Teutonic Order and became of Duke of (East) Prussia while giving fealty to Poland. In Royal Prussia, repeated floods between 1526 and 1543 devastated the low-lying lands.[51]

Dutch-speaking Mennonites in the Vistula Delta and wider Prussia found relative tolerance owing to their ability to drain marshland and turn marginal land productive. The Mennonites' utility to the state, in turn, demanded the state's toleration of them. In Ducal Prussia, throughout the 1530s, 1540s, and 1550s, Duke Albert

repeatedly issued orders expelling Mennonites from the land, but these orders were weakly enforced or altogether ignored. In Royal Prussia, "various authorities," including the Polish king and ecclesiastical authorities, "ultimately permitted Mennonites to settle in most areas of the Vistula Delta."[52]

By 1547, the proficiency of Mennonites in draining land was sufficiently known for Danzig sent Philip Edzema to the Netherlands to entice settlers who could drain the lowlands.[53] In doing so, Edzema became the first in a long line of intermediaries who would facilitate Mennonite migration.[54] Mennonites were no longer merely religious refugees fleeing persecution but desirable settlers worthy of recruitment. Danzig city council stipulated that in exchange for properly draining the land, Mennonites could have local self-government in their villages, pay only "reasonable dues," and have rights of inheritance.[55] In rudimentary form, these are remarkably similar to privileges Mennonites would continue to seek more than four hundred years later.[56]

Larger Mennonite migrations to the Vistula Delta began after 1562 when the Loitz (Loysen) family invited Dutch Mennonites to settle on their large estates at Tiegenhof. The Loitzes received these lands as security for loans extended to the Polish Crown. In exchange for building homes and draining the land to make it arable, Mennonites were given freedom from military service and free use of the land in the form of long-term, hereditary leases.[57] Additional estates were leased to Mennonites beginning in 1565.[58] The utility of Mennonites in developing the land was acknowledged in the first *Privilegium*, a 1642 charter given by Wladislaw IV. *Priviliegia* were issued or confirmed by every succeeding Polish king thereafter.[59]

Despite their nonresistance, Mennonites' civic contributions during wartime continued to demonstrate their strategic utility to Poland (known after 1569 as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). In the early seventeenth century, Adam Wiebe of Harlingen became Danzig's chief of water works, and was later named a Royal Engineer. Wiebe's works included a water system for Danzig's city centre and a suspended cable-car system he used to build and fortify Danzig's walls against Swedish invasion. Ironically, Mennonites were not typically permitted to live behind the protections of these city walls built by one of their own.[60]

As a war tactic during the Swedish Deluge of 1655–1660, King Carl Gustav ordered the breaching of embankments in order to flood the Delta.[61] This necessitated Mennonites subsequently draining the land. Despite the increasingly intolerant Counter-Reformation taking hold in the country (which in 1658 led to the banishment of Polish-speaking, nonresistant Unitarians living further inland),

Dutch-speaking, nonresistant Mennonites were granted royal protection by John II Casimir's 1660 *Privilegium*. Once more, economic and geopolitical factors prompted these privileges. John II's protection was granted to avoid "extreme depopulation and a considerable loss and reduction in [Poland's] income."[62] During the 1733–1735 War of Polish Succession, Mennonites in Danzig served as firefighters and prevented a major outbreak of fire in the city.[63]

From the 1530s to 1795, Poland was in a near-constant state of war. Coupled with its internal political weaknesses, this resulted in its irreversible decline, even after Sweden ceased to be a great power. Once Ducal Prussia attained sovereignty in 1657, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth found itself at a crossroads between three ascendant continental powers in Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Successive partitions of Poland by those three countries in 1772, 1793, and 1795 resulted in the end of Poland-Lithuania as an independent state.[64] Ultimately, Prussia's annexation of the Vistula Delta brought increasing militarism and restrictions on Mennonite land acquisitions, thereby providing the impetus to immigrate to Russia. Yet, Poland's protracted state of conflict also provided a continued need for the Mennonites' economic industriousness and, by extension, a sustained justification for toleration under the Polish crown.

The Russian Empire

Mennonite settlement in the Russian Empire began in 1789 in territory formerly of the Zaporizhian Sich, a semi-autonomous Cossack polity in present-day Ukraine. Just beyond the rapids of the Dnipro River lay the island of Khortytsia, historically significant as an ideal geostrategic location and an important centre for the Cossacks. The region of Zaporizhia stood at the crossroads between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian and Ottoman Empires, and the Nogai Horde. Accordingly, for centuries, Khortytsia Island was used by Cossacks to repel invasions and launch offensives, depending on the loyalties required of the moment.[65]

After rising against Poland in 1648, Cossacks tenuously accepted Russian suzerainty in 1654. Afterward, the territory vacillated between Ottoman, Polish, and Russian control. Zaporizhia came under exclusive Russian control in 1686.[66] Though the Zaporizhian Cossacks generally remained supportive of the Russian Empire, periodically they gave reason for Russia to question their loyalty. For example, after partaking in an unsuccessful rebellion in 1709,[67] Zaporizhian Cossacks fled to the Crimean Khanate until they were

allowed to return in 1734. To Russia, the Zaporizhian Cossacks were a source of "constant instability."[68]

In 1763, amid a series of wars with the Ottoman Empire, Russian Empress Catherine the Great issued a manifesto intended to entice foreign settlement on its southern frontier. In 1764, Catherine established the province of Novorossiya (literally "New Russia," or South Russia). Seeking new sources of revenue, Russian authorities began eyeing the "vast fertile territory" of Zaporizhia. Not surprisingly, in tandem with its expansion to the south, Russia also gradually eroded the autonomy of the Zaporizhian Cossacks.[69]

Following the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774, the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji "radically altered the geopolitical situation in the south by eliminating the endemic threat from the Crimea" which "terminated the historical justification of . . . Ukraine as a borderland," and "made the protection afforded by the Zaporozhian Cossacks seem superfluous."[70] Pugachev's Rebellion of 1773–1775, to the east, also made Catherine determined to impose greater control over the borderlands. Consequently, in 1775, under orders from Catherine and Prince Grigory Potemkin, the Russian army destroyed the Zaporizhian Cossacks' fortress, forced their surrender, and annexed the territory. Potemkin took Khortytsia as his personal estate and distributed other lands amongst Russian nobles. Some Cossacks remained in the region as farmers. Others resettled in Ottoman territory, accepted the Sultan's rule, and established the Danubian Sich.[71]

In 1783, Russia formally annexed Crimea in violation of the peace with the Ottomans.[72] As tensions mounted, Potemkin, realizing the utility of the Cossacks to Russia in the event of conflict, managed to recruit a small number of volunteers. However, in 1784, the majority of the former Zaporizhian Cossacks rejected Potemkin's overtures and demanded the return of their military regalia and their territory in Zaporizhia.[73] In 1785, Catherine, seeking "a more suitable and reliable colonizing element" than the "fickle" and "unreliable" Cossacks, reissued her manifesto.[74] Continued tensions with the Ottomans and a provocative 1787 visit by Catherine to New Russia and Crimea led to the 1787–1792 Russo-Turkish War. The outbreak of hostilities necessitated the re-mobilization of the former Zaporizhian Cossacks, now known as the Army of the Faithful Cossacks. In late 1787, they became "an integral part of the Russian forces."[75]

It was in this context that, in 1786–1787, two Mennonite deputies negotiated their petition for settlement with Potemkin and accompanied Catherine during her triumphal tour of Crimea. The deputies chose a settlement site near Beryslav and close to the naval base at

Kherson. Potemkin approved the deputies' petition in July, and before returning to Danzig, the deputies had the petition confirmed by Catherine and the Russian chancellor in St. Petersburg. The first Mennonite settlers departed for Russia in late 1788. Yet, upon their arrival in South Russia in spring of 1789, Potemkin compelled the Mennonites to settle at the Chortitza colony (named for Khortytsia) rather than near Beryslav as previously agreed.[76]

Ostensibly, Potemkin's reason for the relocation was that Beryslav was too close to military activity, although by 1789, the Ottomans were on the defensive and some distance away, and the construction of Kherson continued unimpeded.[77] Authorities continued to deny Mennonite requests to settle at Beryslav even after Potemkin's death in 1791 and the end of the war the following year.[78]

The relocation of the Mennonite settlement site was linked to the remobilization of the Zaporizhian Cossacks and done to benefit Russian statecraft.[79] The rationale for this was twofold. First, the timing of the Cossack remobilization fell within the brief period between the departure of the Mennonite deputies in the summer of 1787 and the arrival of Mennonite settlers in spring of 1789.[80] Unless Potemkin was being deceitful from the outset (which seems unlikely),[81] some intervening factor in that period must have been the catalyst for moving the settlement. To secure the former Zaporizhian Cossacks' loyalty, Potemkin promised them land in the Kuban—despite their wishes of returning to Zaporizhia. Then, throughout 1788, Cossack forces increased in importance as they fought in Russia's campaigns prior to the Mennonite arrival.[82]

Secondly, Catherine refused to allow the Faithful Cossacks to settle so close to either the Danubian Sich (in Ottoman territory) or in Zaporizhia after the war to "prevent a revival of separatist sentiment that might arise if they were to stay in their home territory."[83] Further, Catherine wanted to erase the Zaporizhian Cossacks from popular memory and, even for the remobilized Cossack army, forbade the use of the name "Zaporizhian" after 1775.[84] Both of Catherine's aims were furthered by Potemkin, who compelled Mennonites to settle at Khortytisa, an area both strategically and symbolically important. The burgeoning Mennonite settlement provided a physical buffer to Cossacks re-establishing themselves in Zaporizhia and, additionally, allowed for a new national vision of "New Russia" to take hold in the symbolically charged land.[85] As Oleh Gerus observes, "the Russian government was able to harness the military capacity of the Ukrainian Cossacks and, at the same time, keep them outside of the traditional Ukrainian lands. This effectively negated their traditional role in Ukrainian life."[86]

From 1792 to 1795, in the wake of the war, 25,000 Faithful Cossacks were resettled to the Kuban region, where they became known as the Black Sea (and later, Kuban) Cossacks.[87] The Cossack resettlement coincided with the second wave of Mennonites, who arrived in Zaporizhia from 1793 to 1796. Again, Russia denied them permission to settle near Beryslav.[88] Better to settle "fickle," militant Cossacks farther away in the Kuban and better to settle Zaporizhia, the fertile heart of New Russia, with loyal, agrarian Mennonites. Admittedly, with an absence of hard evidence, any explanation of Potemkin's motives remains speculative. One cannot say with certainty to what degree these two moves were linked. But both were Potemkin's ideas and done at his behest. Potemkin is described by his biographer "as an outstandingly gifted statesman."[89]

Potemkin's moves would have consequences for both groups. For Mennonites, the change in settlement site resulted in controversy. They protested their relocation to the inland, open, hilly steppes as further removed from markets in Beryslav, Kherson, and Nikopol and a place where their lowland farming methods were not suitable. The resulting discontent contributed to the excommunication of the two deputies who had negotiated with Potemkin. One was tried, convicted, and briefly imprisoned.[90] As for the Black Sea/Kuban Cossacks, they clung to their Zaporizhian heritage and, into the final years of the Russian Empire, attempted to reclaim their former military regalia and traditions.[91] In 1912–1913, entrepreneur Mykola Bohuslavsky proposed forming a Kuban cooperative society in order to buy all land on Khortystia from German (Mennonite) colonists.[92] Other Ukrainians, such as nationalist poet Taras Shevchenko, lamented the German (Mennonite) presence on Khortytsia.[93] Anarchist Nestor Makhno, whose followers terrorized Mennonite colonies during the Russian Civil War, "considered his movement heir to the Zaporozhian traditions."[94] Today, Khortytsia Island houses the Khortytsia National Reserve, a cultural centre, and a museum with a historic replica of a Cossack fortress.

In 1800, Catherine's heir, Paul I, issued his Charter of Privileges, attracting further Mennonite settlement. In 1804, the Molotschna colony, approximately one hundred miles southeast of Chortitza, was founded.[95] In the first years of settlement, the Molotschna colony was still subject to raids by nomadic Nogai Tatars who had been repeatedly resettled by Russian authorities. It was hoped the Mennonites would "civilize" this population and transform them into loyal, sedentary peasant farmers.[96] Mennonite settlers thus aided in consolidating Russia's newly acquired frontier while Russia's military continued expanding it with the Russo-Turkish War of 1806–1812.

Mennonites would later become involved with Russia's war efforts in the 1854–1856 Crimean War, when they were ordered to haul supplies and evacuate soldiers. Russia's defeat in the Crimean War would lead to its period of Great Reforms in the 1860s and 1870s, during which a program of "Russification" and compulsory state service caused one-third of the Mennonite population to immigrate to North America. The fortunes of Russia's nonresistant Mennonites would rise and fall with the successes and defeats of Russia's military.[97]

Canada

After Canada offered generous terms of settlement in an 1873 letter from the Department of Agriculture (viewed as the Canadian *Privilegium*), Mennonites began immigrating to the province of Manitoba in 1874.[98] Manitoba and the North-West Territories had only been legally incorporated into Canada in 1870 after the Red River Resistance, which was mounted by the Métis under the leadership Louis Riel, contested Canadian expansionism.[99] Into the 1870s, Indigenous peoples challenged and disrupted Canadian authority and governance in Manitoba, leading to a marked difference between its claimed legal status by Canada and the reality on the ground. Adam Gaudry refers to this as the creation of a "fantasy of sovereignty."[100] At the same time, the Red River Settlement was also the subject of interest for American annexation.[101] These two factors prompted the Canadian government to dispatch a military force to the area.[102] It is not surprising that one of the two Mennonite land grants in Manitoba was situated directly along the US-Canadian border.

Canada was attempting to consolidate the territory and transform its "paper jurisdiction" into actual authority over the northwest.[103] Mennonites, with their ability to thrive on the open and treeless plain, suited the needs of Canadian statecraft particularly well.[104] Canada, so desperate to attract these agrarian settlers, overlooked concerns about cultural assimilation to permit bloc settlement, amended its homestead legislation to allow for Mennonites' semi-communalist practices, and practiced borderline "subterfuge" with the British government. In turn, this nearly caused diplomatic issues with Russia.[105]

As Canada continued its westward consolidation of the North-West Territories with the Numbered Treaties between 1871 and 1921, Mennonites were at the forefront in settling the land. Although not acting as agents for the Canadian government, Mennonites were what Reina Neufeldt labels "implicated subjects," in that they

nonetheless benefitted from advancing Canadian statecraft.[106] The establishment of Mennonite settlements followed the dispersal of the Métis, who, unlike First Nations, were not in the government-run reserve system and migrated northwest instead.[107] Whether the Métis dispersal was an intentional scheme of dispossession by Canada or not,[108] even the most charitable defense of the Canadian government acknowledges that its "performance in Manitoba left much to be desired," and that the Department of Interior had "special problems of dishonesty and inefficiency."[109] The inefficient and unsatisfactory dealings of the Métis with Canada must be contrasted with the comparatively expeditious and enthusiastic manner of Canada's response to Mennonite requests in the same period.[110] The Supreme Court of Canada would later rule that the Canadian government failed to implement land grant provisions with the Métis as constitutionally required.[111]

In 1891, six years after the North-West Resistance, a new Mennonite settlement was founded at what became Rosthern, Saskatchewan, a short distance from Duck Lake, Fish Creek, and Batoche—all sites of battles in 1885. Other settlements at Hague-Osler, Swift Current, and Carrot River soon followed.[112] Mennonites began settling in what became Alberta in 1901.[113] In the 1930s, Old Colony Mennonites established settlements in northern Alberta, in the Peace River region, and at La Crete—again in the vicinity of Métis settlements.[114]

In the first decades of the twentieth century, and especially after the First World War, the provincial governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta pursued national consolidation by imposing compulsory attendance at accredited, English-language schools. Mennonites perceived this as a violation of their *Privilegium* of 1873. Although they made exhaustive legal appeals and sent repeated petitions to different levels of government, repeated prosecutions and fines led to 8,000 Mennonites emigrating to Mexico and Paraguay between 1922 and 1930.[115]

Mexico

In 1922, Mennonites from Canada began settling in the northern Mexican states of Chihuahua and Durango. These areas had been devastated during the Mexican Revolution of 1910–1920. Chihuahua, subject to multiple American military incursions, was the former base of the revolutionary General Pancho Villa. During the "Punitive Expedition" to capture Villa in 1916–1917, American forces under American General John Pershing and Lieutenant George S. Patton advanced 516 miles into Mexican territory. Pershing

requested, but was refused, permission to capture the city of Chihuahua. Further American cross-border military engagements occurred in 1919.[116]

Mexican Constitutionalist General Álvaro Obregón, who had defeated Pancho Villa's army and forced the withdrawal of Pershing's expedition, became president in December 1920.[117] Obregón then took steps to reconstruct the state and consolidate his grip on power. Less than three months after becoming president, he offered Canadian Mennonites a *Privilegium*, in a letter of concessions, to induce settlement in Villa's former stronghold of Chihuahua. Obregón's offer occurred in spite of revolutionary rhetoric of distributing land among Mexican peasantry enshrined in Article 27 of the 1917 Constitution.[118] Believing it to be suitable for agriculture, Mennonites purchased ranching land at an inflated price. Their purchase meant the land-owning Zuloaga family could profit while avoiding any postrevolutionary expropriation schemes. It also resulted in the eviction of peasant tenant-farmers (*campesinos*) from the land.[119] In order to secure the Mennonite migration, Obregón stationed troops at Cuauhtémoc. The soldiers went so far as to fire at Mexican nationals to protect Mennonites and their property.[120]

Beyond economic development, Mennonite settlement served Obregón's two strategic aims. Firstly, Mennonites would help secure Mexico's northern border with the United States and ensure state sovereignty. Secondly, their capital and food supply would pacify the region, quell revolutionary activity, and undermine Pancho Villa's base of support.[121] Villa was subsequently assassinated in a complex plot in 1923, which Obregón, if not actively complicit in its orchestration, tacitly approved.[122] Mennonites factored heavily into Obregón's agenda of statecraft and indirectly enabled him to eliminate Villa's threat to his hold on power in the early postrevolutionary period.

Today, the estimated number of Mennonites in Mexico ranges between 74,000 and 100,000, with 90 percent of this population in Chihuahua.[123] Other than a brief closure of their schools by the government in 1935, Mennonites in Mexico have generally maintained their privileges. However, tensions have periodically emerged between Mennonite colonies and an expanding Mexican state's reforms to social security, military service, land ownership, and free market economics.[124] In addition, internal debates and schisms within Mennonite colonies have been provoked by the adoption of new technologies.[125] Both factors prompted further migrations to other states in Latin America.

Paraguay and Bolivia

Mennonites from Canada were offered a *Privilegium* by Paraguay in 1921 (Law No. 514) to settle in the Gran Chaco. Colonization of the Chaco commenced with the founding of Menno Colony in 1927. The region was disputed and simultaneously claimed by Bolivia. On the day the first Mennonites arrived in Paraguay, they were welcomed as "the vanguard of a mighty army, come into the land to strengthen our possession" and as "an army of peace which carries the plough as an offensive weapon with it and which presents the cross of Christ as its defensive weapon."[126] Given this rhetoric, it is not surprising that the Mennonite presence in the Chaco helped provoke a conflict between actual armies over a disputed possession. Military skirmishes began at almost the same time as Mennonite colonization. Mennonites first set out to survey the Chaco on February 12, 1927.[127] Fourteen days later, Bolivian forces captured a Paraguayan foot patrol and killed a soldier with "what might be considered the first shot of the Chaco War," which was later fought from 1932 to 1935.[128]

As the magnitude of the dispute escalated, so too did the Mennonites' involvement and the privileges extended to them. Paraguay's Mennonite settlement in the Chaco was bolstered by the arrival of Mennonite refugees fleeing the Soviet Union, who established Fernheim Colony between 1930 and 1932. In 1930, Paraguay extended its *Privilegium* to apply to Fernheim Colony. Unsolicited, Bolivia offered a similar *Privilegium* to Mennonites in the Chaco to guarantee "its respect for Mennonite autonomy in the event of war."[129] Presumably, Bolivia's *Privilegium* would aid in securing loyalty or, at least, neutrality from Mennonite colonists. As Eicher notes, "neither Bolivia nor Paraguay knew how they would exploit the Chaco, but they perceived that the Mennonite colonies were essential to that enterprise."[130] Both states ignored the Indigenous Enlhet population.[131]

Paraguay's colonization of the Chaco using Mennonites was protested by Bolivia. In 1932, they required newly arriving Mennonites to have Bolivian visas. Paraguay responded by breaking off diplomatic relations. In July 1932, Bolivia's foreign minister forbade Mennonite settlement in the Chaco without authorization by Bolivia.[132] Two months later, war broke out and Bolivian soldiers briefly occupied Menno and Fernheim Colonies."[133]

One reading of the conflict was that "Mennonite settlement in the contested Chaco on behalf of the Paraguayan government was the final provocation that led to war with Bolivia."[134] Yet Paraguay did not fail to shrewdly exploit Mennonite settlement to further its aims.

Paraguay protested to the international community Bolivia's "unspeakable acts" of targeting "defenceless Mennonite colonies established in the Chaco, whom they have attacked with particular relentlessness."[135] Despite its rhetoric, Paraguay proceeded to make "intelligent use of local Mennonite communities in the Chaco to help its war effort," for "Mennonite plowshares would function as 'swords.'"[136] For their part, Mennonites profited from selling food to the Paraguayan army and "formed an integral part of Paraguay's war machine"—though the more liberal refugees of Fernheim Colony took a more active role than the conservative migrants of Menno Colony.[137]

The Mennonites' colonization of the Chaco on behalf of Paraguay "was a weapon that Bolivia could not match" and was consequently used as justification for Paraguay's claim to the territory.[138] A report by the League of Nations concluded, "In the colonization of the central Chaco, the most important work is . . . being done by the Mennonites." Despite having offered its own *Privilegium* to Mennonites, Bolivia labelled them "foreign capitalists who, under the protection of the Paraguayan army, exploit the eastern Chaco and help Paraguay to retain a disputed territory."[139] It is deeply ironic that in an attempt to flee "worldly" governments by settling in the isolated Chaco, nonresistant Mennonites were being exploited to secure territory for geopolitical considerations and provoked a war in the process. As a result, their settlement was raised at the League of Nations, then the "worldliest" institution extant. Mennonites were at once pacifists, provocateurs, pawns, and profiters of the Chaco War, in which Paraguay, the smallest and poorest country in South America, prevailed.[140]

In 1939, four years after the Chaco War concluded, historian Harold S. Bender observed that Paraguay exercised no jurisdiction whatsoever over the Mennonite colonies. Bender stated that "Mennonites of the Chaco do constitute an absolutely independent state."[141] The pinnacle of privilege for Mennonites—de facto sovereignty—correlated precisely to their host state having the greatest strategic need for them, and with another state (Bolivia) competing for their loyalty. Aiding the Paraguayan state in the assertion of sovereignty over the Chaco gave Mennonites their greatest degree of self-determination—even more so than during Russia's expansionist wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The end of the Chaco War concluded hostilities between Paraguay and Bolivia but did this not abate either state's domestic unrest. In 1947–48, Mennonite immigrants founded four additional colonies in Paraguay amid a backdrop of a civil war and the fleeing of 400,000 Paraguayans.[142] Today, Mennonites are a demographic and

economic powerhouse for Paraguay. According to Paola Canova, Mennonites dairy and beef production amount to 5 percent of Paraguay's gross domestic product.[143] As of 2022, there are 38,731 Mennonites living in Paraguay. The 18,764 Mennonites in the Chaco comprise 8.8 percent of the region's population.[144] Law No. 514 has not faced any serious threat of being revoked.

When Mennonites settled in Bolivia after the 1952 National Revolution, they did so as part of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement's "March to the East" program of internal colonization. Mennonites, among others, aided the postrevolutionary government's efforts in consolidating the lowlands, attaining territorial integrity, and spurring economic development in the Santa Cruz region. The first Mennonites from Fernheim Colony arrived in 1954. Conservative Mennonites began migrating after Bolivia offered a *Privilegium* (Supreme Decree 4192) in 1955, and came in greater numbers after an expanded *Privilegium* (Supreme Decree 6030) was issued in 1962.[145] Mennonites remain an integral part of the economy in Bolivia, producing a significant amount of soybeans and operating as prominent dairy farmers.[146] In 1975, a decree by President Hugo Banzer revoked Mennonites' privileges, but this legal change was not enforced, and Mennonites successfully negotiated for their reinstatement in 1985.[147]

British Honduras (Belize)

Mennonites from Mexico began settling in British Honduras (now Belize) in 1958 amid a border dispute with neighbouring Guatemala and increasing internal political unrest. A 1948 threat by Guatemala to annex the territory by force had necessitated the deployment of two British military companies and the permanent stationing of one in Belize City.[148] Mennonites first visited British Honduras seeking land in November 1955. In January 1956, a Mennonite delegation visited Belize City to negotiate terms of settlement. However, other than Mennonite delegates surveying land, little transpired over the following two years.[149]

In British Honduras's election of 1957, the People's United Party won all nine seats in the Legislative Assembly under the leadership of George Cadle Price. That December, accusations that Price intended for British Honduras to be annexed by Guatemala prompted swift action from Britain. On December 6, British Governor Sir Colin H. Thornley requested an additional seven hundred British soldiers as reinforcements and dismissed Price from the Executive Council.[150] Twelve days later, Thornley came to an agreement with

Mennonites that concluded the negotiations that had begun nearly two years earlier, in order to induce their settlement.[151]

In March 1958, Price was charged with sedition (for which he was later acquitted). Mennonite migration to British Honduras commenced the same month. That year, three Mennonite colonies were founded in British Honduras. One of them, the aptly named Spanish Lookout, extends to within ten kilometres of the Guatemalan border.[152]

Tensions persisted between Guatemala and Britain.[153] In 1981, Belize became independent, and Britain finally withdrew its major military presence in 1994 (although it continues to maintain a small training force).[154] In Belize, Mennonites constitute 3.7 percent of the entire population, the highest of any host state.[155] According to Carel Roessingh and Amber Schoonderwoerd, Mennonites "are commonly regarded as the economic motor of Belize" and "symbolize soundness and reliability and therefore Belizeans are eager to do business with them."[156] Mennonites' numeric and economic strength, coupled with the fact that Guatemala has not renounced its claim to Belizean territory, provide insight as to why the Belizean *Privilegium* has never been revoked.[157]

Argentina, Colombia, and Peru

The Mennonite migration from Bolivia to Argentina, which began in 1986, appears to be an exception to the general pattern. Mennonites had previously requested, without success, a *Privilegium* from the Argentine government in 1919–1921, and were again unsuccessful in obtaining one in 1986. Moreover, Mennonite settlement in Argentina did not occur along a contested border. However, the Argentine government promised Mennonites would not be coerced into mandatory military service. Mennonites also consulted Argentine lawyers for a report on Argentine laws. The report gave an interpretation of the laws as being broadly compatible with Mennonite customs and past requests for *Privilegia*, insofar as Argentine law provided for freedom of religion, the right to educate their children, and the ability to make a simple declaration (rather than swear an oath) in front of a judicial tribunal. The Mennonite migration occurred amid significant political instability.[158] It was preceded by the defeat of Argentina in the 1982 Falklands War, the withdrawal of the ruling military junta, the staging of democratic elections in 1983, and the prosecutions of the former junta leadership in 1985, and occurred during an economic crisis that led to widespread riots and the early resignation of President Raúl Alfonsín in 1989.[159]

A more recent migration has seen Mennonites from Mexico migrate to Colombia.[160] This movement began in 2016, during a partially successful peace process that sought to resolve a civil war that has raged since 1964, driven by land disputes and highly contested territorial issues.[161] Mennonites began settling in the Altillanura region, an area described as Colombia's "agrarian frontier" but also "an attractive region for various armed groups," where 59,000 people were displaced between 1995 and 2016.[162] Carolina Hurtado-Hurtado et al. observe that land-grabbing has occurred in the Altillanura to the extent it has been brought to "the core of the national agrarian debate."[163] Various legal, judicial, and political processes within the Colombian state have allowed for large-scale land acquisition in violation of laws giving priority to land to low-income peasants.[164]

In 2017, Mennonites from Bolivia and Belize migrated to Peru and founded four colonies.[165] This settlement again coincided with significant political instability. President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski was sworn into office in July 2016, but amid a deteriorating economic outlook in 2017, faced an impeachment vote over corruption, and was forced to resign in March 2018. As of November 2023, Peru has seen five presidents since Kuczynski's resignation.[166] Although no formal *Privilegia* have been granted in Colombia or Peru, governments have made informal commitments to respect Mennonites' customs and ways of life.[167] Continuing into the twenty-first century, Mennonites continue to migrate and settle on marginal, disputed land in the wake of conflict or amid political instability, in exchange for toleration granted by the state.

Conclusion

This article analyzes Mennonite migration patterns through the lens of geopolitics and statecraft. The privileges obtained by Mennonites over the centuries and through migrations were not obtained by accident. From the Polish-Teutonic Wars in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the Chaco War and Colombia's civil war in the twentieth and twenty-first, Mennonites' privileges have been granted, justified, and sustained as a result of geopolitical pressures on the host state—and rescinded in the absence thereof. Most prevalent among these geopolitical factors have been strategic military aims, the need to assert state sovereignty, and the need for economic development. These aligned with Mennonites' ability to settle on the frontier, their provision of "qualified allegiance" to the state, and their overall industriousness. When new geopolitical realities have

taken hold and their privileges could no longer be justified by the state (in part due to the success of their settlement), conservative Mennonites have sought new host states in need of settlers to secure and develop contested, marginal territory. The exception to privilege revocation has been host states in Latin America where Mennonites have maintained strategic, demographic, and/or economic importance to the state necessitating the continuation of privileges.

By placing Mennonite migrations in a wider context, this article has attempted to address two issues. The first is a geopolitical analysis of the Mennonites' conundrum of being "in the world, but not of it." What results from Mennonite migration and who bears the burden? Are Mennonites all that separate from what they seek to avoid? Despite their tenet of nonresistance, Mennonites have indirectly but repeatedly contributed to their host states' military aims. While migration meant Mennonites could maintain their nonresistance and isolation from the world, these benefits to Mennonites paradoxically have arisen from conflict and geopolitical realities on the part of the host state. Are the consequences of migration—namely, the enabling of violence and displacement of their neighbours—consistent with Mennonite theology?[168] It also raises broader questions about nationalism and wider geopolitical pressures, for what does it say if a nonresistant, anti-modernist population is tolerated only where it advances state militarism and colonialism?

Second, and more universal, this article demonstrates that internal narratives do not always hold up to external scrutiny. The popular historical narrative of Mennonites as a persecuted people in constant search of religious freedom is not wholly inaccurate, but nor is it the entire story. Despite persecution and displacement suffered by Mennonites of prior years, their migrations were linked to (and made possible by) the persecution and displacement of other peoples. Generally, the Mennonite experience demonstrates that the line between being persecuted and being privileged is thin and easily transcended. Privilege is contextual and context can change all too rapidly.

Although Mennonites have received *Privilegia* from various host states, they have received them in exchange for contributing to states' geopolitical agendas. Mennonites have been tolerated only so long as they have provided utility to the state. Ironically, nonresistant Mennonites have provided the most utility on disputed frontiers in the wake or midst of armed conflict. In seeking privileges to escape the world, conservative Mennonites have paradoxically reinforced their role within it.

Notes

[1] The author would like to thank Ernest N. Braun, Alexandra O. Zeitz, Rebecca Janzen, James Urry, C. Arnold Snyder, and the anonymous reviewers for their invaluable feedback.

[2] This article adopts James Urry's definition of conservative or conserving Mennonites as those who strive "to conserve and to preserve what is true and established, to maintain basic ideas and practices, to continue traditions unchanged to achieve maintenance, continuity and the conservation of fundamentals." 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. See also James Urry, "Mennonites, Anthropology, and History: A Complicated Intellectual Relationship," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 39 (2021): 18–21.

[3] James Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood: Europe–Russia–Canada, 1525 to 1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006).

[4] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* ed. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London: Routledge, 1991), 78.

[5] See, respectively, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2016), 5–7; Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), 6–7.

[6] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 6–7.

[7] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 44.

[8] Lars-Erik Cederman, *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States and Nations Develop and Dissolve* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 19; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism,* 1.

[9] Lorenzo Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites: The Making of a Trans-statal Community," *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 8, no. 2 (Apr. 2008): 218.

[10] Lachlan McNamee and Anna Zhang, "Demographic Engineering and International Conflict: Evidence from China and the Former USSR," *International Organization* 73, no. 2 (Spring 2019): 292, 295, 320.

[11] E. K. Francis, *In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites in Manitoba* (Altona: D. W. Friesen & Sons, 1955), 6; Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites," 226.

[12] Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 24.

[13] "Privilege" derives from the Latin *privus* meaning private, and *leg* meaning law. In Roman times a *Privilegium* was a private law affecting an individual or a class of individuals rather than the public at large.

[14] Notably, at the outset of the French Revolution, the French National Assembly abolished legal privileges of any sort, including fiscal, geographic, or class-based distinctions. See "The Decree Abolishing the Feudal System (Aug. 11, 1789)" in James Harvey Robinson, *Readings in European History: A Collection of Extracts from the Sources Chosen with the Purpose of Illustrating the Progress of Culture in Western Europe Since the German Invasions* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1906), 435–438.

[15] Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 44–45; Harry Leonard Sawatzky, *They Sought a Country: Mennonite Colonization in Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 39, 332.

[16] Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 42–46.

[17] See the *Privilegia* negotiated in 1958 with British Honduras and in 1962 with Bolivia, reproduced in Sawatzky, *They Sought a Country*, 334–336; and James Walter Lanning, "The Old Colony Mennonites of Bolivia" (master's thesis, Texas A&M University, 1971), 114–117.

[18] The term *Privilegia* is broadly applied herein as any instrument offering special terms of settlement for Mennonites. The Canadian *Privilegium* was a letter written by a public servant. The official legal instrument was a separate order-in-council. The Mexican *Privilegium* was a letter of concessions offered by President Álvaro Obregón that went unpublished in official sources and was arguably unconstitutional. The Paraguayan *Privilegium* was Law No. 514, passed by National Congress, and subsequent Bolivian *Privilegia* were supreme decrees. See Adolf Ens, *Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870–1925* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1994), 17–19; Martina E. Will, "The Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua: Reflections of Competing Visions," *The Americas* 53, no. 3 (Jan. 1997): 357; Jason Dormady, "Mennonite Colonization in Mexico and the Pendulum of Modernization, 1920–2013," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 88, no. 2 (Apr. 2014): 179–180; Martin W. Friesen, *New Homeland in the Chaco Wilderness*, 2nd ed., trans. Jake Balzer (Loma Plata, Paraguay: Cooperativa Chortitzer, 1997), 118–122; Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, *Landscape of Migration: Mobility and Environmental Change on Bolivia's Tropical Frontier since 1952* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 87, 90.

[19] For Poland, see *Privilegia* in Wilhelm Mannhardt, *The Military Service Exemption of the Mennonites of Provincial Prussia*, ed. Mark Jantzen and John D. Thiesen, trans. Anthony Epp and Abraham Friesen (North Newton, KS: Bethel College, 2013), 84–98, 269–277. For Russia, see the 1787 Petition in Lawrence Klippenstein, "The Bartsch-Hoeppner Privilegium," *Preservings*, no. 41 (2020): 37–42; and David G. Rempel's English translation of the 1800 *Privilegium* in James Urry, *None but Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia, 1789–1889* (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1989), 282–284. For Canada, see Ernst Correll, ed., "Mennonite Immigration into Manitoba: Sources and Documents, 1872, 1873," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 11, no. 3 (July 1937): 218, 224, 227. For Mexico, see the English translation of the "Letter of Special Concessions to the Old Colony Church" in Calvin Wall Redekop, *The Old Colony Mennonites: Dilemmas of Ethnic Minority Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 251. For Paraguay, see *El Liberal* (Asunción), Aug. 30, 1920, quoted in Friesen, *New Homeland*, 67; Edgar Stoesz, *Like a Mustard Seed* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2008), 31; and John P. R. Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations: German and Mennonite Mythologies in a Transnational Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 75–77, 83. For Bolivia, see Roberto Lemaitre F. de Córdova, "What Benefits Does The Mennonite Immigration Bring?," trans. Elwood Schrock, in Lanning, "Old Colony Mennonites of Bolivia", 120–129. For British Honduras, see Royden Loewen, *Village among Nations: "Canadian" Mennonites in a Transnational World, 1916–2006* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 122–127.

[20] The tension between being privileged subjects, with a distinct and limited relationship to the state, and being participatory citizens within it, is a

recurring theme in Mennonite historiography. See Ens, *Subjects or Citizens*?; Abe J. Dueck, ed., *Canadian Mennonites and the Challenge of Nationalism* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1994); John D. Thiesen, "First Duty of the Citizen: Mennonite Identity and Military Exemption in Prussia, 1848–1877," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 72, no. 2 (Apr. 1998), 161–187; Lawrence Klippenstein, "Broken Promises or National Progress: Mennonites and the Russian State in the 1870's," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 18 (2000): 106; Mark Jantzen, *Mennonite German Soldiers: Nation, Religion and Family in the Prussian East, 1772–1880* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); and Mark Jantzen, "Equal and Conscripted: Liberal Rights Confront Mennonite Conceptions of Freedom in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 32 (2014): 65–80.

[21] See Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 78. Eicher makes the comment in specific reference to Paraguay, but it is broadly applicable to other Mennonite migrations.

[22] Yann le Polain de Waroux, Janice Neumann, Anna O'Driscoll, and Kerstin Schreiber, "Pious Pioneers: The Expansion of Mennonite Colonies in Latin America," *Journal of Land Use Science* 16, no. 1 (2021): 1–17.

[23] See *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 35 (2017), devoted to the theme "Mennonites, Land and the Environment." For more recent reports, see Jose Luis Gonzalex and Cassandra Garrison, "God's Will or Ecological Disaster? Mexico Takes Aim at Mennonite Deforestation," *Reuters*, July 12, 2022, https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/climate-change-mexico-mennonites/; and David Díaz Gonzales, "Shipibo-Konibo Communities Challenge Mennonite Colony Under Investigation for Deforestation in the Amazon," Pulitzer Center, Oct. 17, 2021, https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/shipibo-konibo-communities-challenge-mennonite-colony-under-investigation-deforestation.

[24] In the words of Leo Driedger, "Mennonites, although historically suspicious of governments" were "able to settle in large concentrations on the Canadian prairies only because the Canadian government had cleared away the Indians and Métis." Leo Driedger, "Native Rebellion and Mennonite Invasion: An Examination of Two Canadian River Valleys," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 46, no. 3 (July 1972): 290. Before migrating to Paraguay, Mennonites asked if the Indigenous peoples would be removed from the land. See Friesen, *New Homeland*, 99.

[25] David G. Rempel, "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Russia: A Sketch of its Founding and Endurance, 1789–1919," *Mennonite Quarterly* Review 47, no. 3 (Oct. 1973): 267.

[26] Will, "Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua," 376.

[27] Esther Breithoff, *Conflict, Heritage and World-Making in the Chaco War at the End of the Worlds?* (London: UCL Press, 2020), 56.

[28] Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites," 221.

[29] Thanks to Jacqueline Miskobineshiikwe Bercier Carter, Melissa Apiscikaakaakees Ikwe Muir, and Marlena Osawey Pinésiw Iskwew Muir of Selkirk, Manitoba, and Sha'koniohòn:kwas Brad Greyeyes-Brant of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory for helping shape this section.

[30] Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 16.

[31] Reina C. Neufeldt, "Settler Colonial Conscripts: Mennonite Reserves and the Enfolding of Implicated Subjects," *Postcolonial Studies* 25, no. 4 (2022): 514.

[32] See Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 78, where he observes that Paraguay accepted Mennonite migration due to "geopolitical considerations outweighing civic equality." Conversely, the opposite is true: Mennonites are not tolerated if civic equality outweighs geopolitics.

[33] Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 16.

[34] Nobbs-Thiessen, *Landscape of Migration*, 70.

[35] Sha'koniohòn:kwas Brad Greyeyes-Brant, personal communication with the author.

[36] Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites," 226.

[37] There is no rigid dichotomy which separates conservative and liberal Mennonites; rather, this distinction falls along a spectrum. Various labels are applied to Mennonites, such as conservative or liberal, subjects or citizens, and separatist or associative, depending on whether one is defining Mennonites relative to other Mennonites, the state, or the nation, respectively. For examples, see Henry Schapansky, *Mennonite Migrations (and the Old Colony)* (self-pub., Rosenort, MB, 2006), 90, 142–154; Klippenstein, "Broken Promises or National Progress," 97–98; Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*; Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 32–83; Henry Paetkau, "Russian Immigrants of the 1920s: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 2 (1984): 72–85; John D. Thiesen, *Mennonite & Nazi? Attitudes among Mennonite Colonists in Latin America, 1933–1945* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 1999), 47–50; and J. Winfield Fretz and Milka Rindzinski, "Uruguay," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (hereafter cited as *GAMEO*), https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Uruguay&oldid=171244.

[38] Jordan Ross, "Book Shows Breadth of Mennonite Farming," *The Carillon*, Dec. 16, 2021, A11, https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/the-carillon/local/2021/12/16/book-shows-breadth-of-mennonite-farming.

[39] Loewen, *Village among Nations*, 230–233.

[40] Cañás Bottos employs "trans-statal" "to refer to practices that cross over the territories of nation-states" and "transnational" for "practices that bring into question the formation and definition of nations." The term extranational denotes "independence from governmental control." Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites," 215; Kjell Skjelsbaeck, "The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organization in the Twentieth Century" *Transnational Relations and World Politics* 25, no. 3 (Summer 1971): 436.

[41] John 17:14–15; Susan Schultz Huxman and Gerald Biesecker-Mast, "In the World but Not of It: Mennonite Traditions as Resources for Rhetorical Invention," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 7, no. 4 (2004): 539–554; Cañás Bottos, "Transformations of Old Colony Mennonites," 215. See also Lorenzo Cañás Bottos, "Negotiating States, Rejecting Nations," in *Old Colony Mennonites in Argentina and Bolivia: Nation Making, Religious Conflict and Imagination of the Future* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 49–70.

[42] See, for example, a translation of the 1527 Schleitheim Articles in John H. Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1973), 34–43. See also Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 18–24.

[43] Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 18–20; Peter J. Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), x-xiii; Jaap Geraerts, "The Prosecution of Anabaptists in Holland, 1530–1566" (master's thesis, Utrecht University, 2010), 15, 22; Jonathan L. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 88–89.

[44] Geraerts, "Prosecution of Anabaptists in Holland," 15, 22.
[45] Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 3.
[46] H. Georg Koenigsberger, "Fernando Álvarez de Toledo y Pimentel, 3er duque de Alba," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fernando-Alvarez-de-Toledo-y-Pimentel-3er-duque-de-Alba.
[47] Thieleman J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theater, or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians*, trans. Joseph F. Sohm (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1938), 1054–1055.
[48] Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 29–30; Mannhardt, *Military Service Exemption*, 31–32.
[49] Koenigsberger, "Fernando Álvarez"; Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, 29–30; Mannhardt, *Military Service Exemption*, 31–32.
[50] Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 15–16.
[51] George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 404; Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 2–4, 29; Hans Werner, "Mennonites and the Vistula: The Land and the Water" *Preservings*, no. 33 (2013): 10–16.
[52] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 404; Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 10–11, 88–91.
[53] Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 29–30; Cornelius Krahn, *Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Life, Spread and Thought* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1981), 217.
[54] Much like how Georg von Trappe facilitated the later migration for Russia, William Hespeler for Canada, Arturo Braniff for Mexico, Samuel McRoberts for Paraguay, and Peter S. Madison for British Honduras.
[55] Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 30–31.
[56] See the 1958 *Privilegium* with British Honduras and the 1962 *Privilegium* with Bolivia in Sawatzky, *They Sought a Country*, 334–336; and Lanning, "Old Colony Mennonites of Bolivia", 114–117.
[57] Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 36; Thiesen, "First Duty of the Citizen," 163.
[58] Abraham Driedger, "Marienburger Werder (Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland)," in *GAMEO*, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Marienburger_Werder_(Pomeranian_Voivodeship,_Poland)&oldid=145846.
[59] See English translations in Mannhardt, *Military Service Exemption*, 84–98, 269–277.
[60] During war with Sweden in the 1650s, Mennonites were temporarily allowed to reside behind the city walls. See Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 105, 168.
[61] Jerzy Cyberski, Marek Grzeğ, Maágorzata Gutry-Korycka, Elzbieta Nachlik, and Zbigniew Kundzewicz, "History of Floods on the River Vistula," *Hydrological Sciences Journal* 51 no. 5 (2006): 814; Schapansky, *Mennonite Migrations*, 99–100.
[62] See John II Casimir's charter in Mannhardt, *Military Service Exemption*, 271–273. For the Counter-Reformation and Unitarians, see W. F. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, Oskar Halecki, and R. Dyboski, eds., *The Cambridge History of Poland: From the Origins to Sobieski (to 1696)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), 340–341; Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change* (London: Routledge, 1998), 152; and Glenn E. Curtis, *Poland: A Country Study*, 3rd ed. (Washington: Library of Congress, 1994), 16.

[63] Klassen, *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia*, 168.

[64] Curtis, *Poland: A Country Study*, 16–22; Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, vol. 1, *The Origins to 1795*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 386–411.

[65] The name Zaporizhia is derived from being "beyond the rapids" (Ukrainian: *za porohamy*) of the Dnipro River, while "Ukraine" is derived from "borderland." See Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, 4th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 3, 109–138; Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 193–195; G. Patrick March, *Cossacks of the Brotherhood: The Zaporog Kosh of the Dniepr River* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1990), 14; G. K. Epp, "Mennonite-Ukrainian Relations (1789–1945)," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 7 (1989): 131–132; John P. Le Donne, "The Territorial Reform of the Russian Empire 1775–1796; II: The Borderlands, 1777–1796," *Cahiers du Monde russe et Soviétique* 24, no. 4 (Oct. – Dec., 1983): 422; John P. Le Donne, *Forging a Unitary State: Russia's Management of the Eurasian Space, 1650–1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 190, 197–198, 249; Arkadii Zhukovsky, "Khortytsia Island," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages/K/H/KhortytsiaIsland.htm.

[66] Serhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 97–118; Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 123–153; Le Donne, *Forging a Unitary State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 200, 203.

[67] Serhii Plokhy, *Poltava 1709: The Battle and the Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Plokhy, *Gates of Europe*, 119–130; March, *Cossacks of the Brotherhood*, 157–172.

[68] Le Donne, *Forging a Unitary State*, 210–211, 242, 249.

[69] Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 160–165; G. K. Epp, "Mennonite-Ukrainian Relations," 132; Alexander Basilevsky, *Early Ukraine: A Military and Social History to the Mid-19th Century* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2016), 358–359.

[70] The Crimean Khanate was to be an independent state, but in practicality, this brought it within the Russian sphere of influence. Le Donne, "Territorial Reform," 419; Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 284; Plokhy, *Gates of Europe*, 140.

[71] Sean Patterson, *Makhno and Memory: Anarchist and Mennonite Narratives of Ukraine's Civil War, 1917–1921* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 79–80; Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 284–285; Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 175–176; Basilevsky, *Early Ukraine*, 361–362; Terry Martin, "The Empire's New Frontiers: New Russia's Path from Frontier to 'Okraina,' 1774–1920," *Russian History* 19, no. 1 (Jan. 1992): 188.

[72] Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 176; Le Donne, *Forging a Unitary State*, 254; Plokhy, *Gates of Europe*, 140.

[73] On the Zaporizhian Cossacks after 1775, see Adrian Kashenko, *Opovidannia Pro Slavne Viisko Zaporozke Nyzove – The Story of the Glorious Zaporizhian Army* (Dnipropetrovsk: 1991).

[74] Subtelny, *Ukraine*, 176; Le Donne, "Territorial Reform," 424; Martin, "Empire's New Frontiers," 183; Rempel, "Mennonite Commonwealth," 266–267.

[75] O. W. Gerus, "Manifestations of the Cossack Idea in Modern Ukrainian History: The Cossack Legacy and its Impact," *Ukrains'kyi istoryk* 19, no. 1–2 (1982): 27; Plokhy, *Gates of Europe*, 140–141; Basilevsky, *Early Ukraine*, 361–363; Kashenko, *Opovidannia Pro Slavne*; Huseyin Oylupinar, "Remaking Terra Cosacorum: Kozak Revival and Kozak Collective Identity in

Independent Ukraine" (PhD diss, University of Alberta, 2014), 43–45; Arkadii Zhukovsky, "Black Sea Cossacks," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages/B/L/BlackSeaCossacks.htm.

[76] The name of the island and settlement is rendered in German as Chortitza, and romanized in Ukrainian as Khortytsia and in Russian as Khortitsa. For the timeframe of the Petition and migration, see Rempel, "Mennonite Commonwealth," 276–293; Urry, *None but Saints*, 50–55; Lawrence Klippenstein, "Four Letters to Susanna from Johann Bartsch, a Danzig Scout, 1786–87," *The Polish Review* 54, no. 1 (2009), 31–59; and Lawrence Klippenstein, "The Mennonite Migration to Russia, 1786–1806" in *Mennonites in Russia, 1788–1988: Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz*, ed. John Friesen (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1989), 13–42.

[77] David G. Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia," *Mennonite Life* 24, no. 1 (Jan. 1969): 18. In December 1788, Potemkin had secured Ochakov to the west of Beryslav and Kherson. By August and September of 1789, the Ottomans suffered defeats in Moldova. See Spencer C. Tucker ed., *A Global Chronology of Conflict: From the Ancient World to the Modern Middle East*, vol. 3, *1775–1860* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2009) 959–960, 963.

[78] S. D. Bondar, *Mennonite Sect in Russia*, ed. Peter Rempel and Glenn Penner, trans. Jacob Rempel (Winnipeg: Mennonite Heritage Archives, 2021), 18; Grigorii G. Pisarevskii, *Iz istorii Inostrannoi Kolonizatsii v Rossii v XVIIIV* (Moscow: Moscow Archaeological Institute, 1909), 335–337; David G. Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia," 23. An English translation of Pisarevskii's chapter on Mennonites is forthcoming from Glenn Penner.

[79] If not for the war, then why was the Mennonite settlement site relocated? Even with access to state archives, late Imperial-era civil servant and historian Grigorii Pisarevskii could not furnish an explanation. Mennonite scholar David G. Rempel suggested that Potemkin relocated the site for personal gain because Potemkin may have benefitted from the settlement being on his personal land holdings at Khortytsia rather than on government land at Beryslav. Rempel uses circumstantial evidence to suggest Potemkin's finances were dire. Yet Rempel's argument fails to explain why Mennonites arriving after Potemkin's death were also refused permission to settle at Beryslav. Paul Magosci and Terry Martin, historians of Ukraine and Russia respectively, do not mention the relocation at all, only noting that Potemkin was "eager to impress" Catherine and so he "sacrificed" Khortytsia to her passion of colonization. This fails to address why Potemkin initially agreed to the Beryslav location only to later change his mind. Pisarevskii, *Iz istorii*, 335; Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia," 17–21, 23; Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 285; and Martin, "Empire's New Frontiers," 188.

[80] Rempel, "Mennonite Commonwealth," 286–288; Peter Hildebrand, *From Danzig to Russia: The First Emigration of Mennonites from the Danzig Region to Southern Russia*, ed. Victor Peters, trans. Walter Toews and Adolf Ens (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications and Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 2000), 18–27; Timothy C. Dowling ed., *Russia at War: From the Mongol Conquest to Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Beyond* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2015), 744.

[81] It is doubtful Potemkin was being deceitful. In 1782, a group of Swedish settlers from Estonia established Gammalsvenksby, a settlement just upstream of Beryslav. If Potemkin wanted Zaporizhia colonized sooner, presumably he

could have compelled those settlers to move some seven years earlier. Russian colonization of Zaporizhia by Germans began in earnest in 1787, when German Lutheran settlers from Danzig (with whom the two Mennonite deputies travelled) arrived in New Russia. Some of these Germans settled at Gammalsvenksby, while others, later that year, established Alt-Danzig, situated west of the future Chortitza colony. See Per Anders Rudling, "Ukrainian Swedes in Canada: Gammalsvenskby in the Swedish-Canadian Press, 1929–1931," *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies / Études Scandinaves au Canada* 15 (2005): 63–65; M. Woltner, *Die Gemeindeberichte Von 1848 Der Deutschen Siedlungen am Schwarzen Meer* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1941).

[82] Kashenko, *Opovidannia Pro Slavne;* Oylupinar, "Remaking Terra Cosacorum," 44–45.

[83] Zhukovsky, "Black Sea Cossacks"; Sarah Christine Moncada, "Kuban Cossack Performance and Identity Negotiation in the Russian-Ukrainian Borderlands," (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2017), 3.

[84] See a translation of the decree in March, *Cossacks of the Brotherhood*, 243–250.

[85] Martin, "Empire's New Frontiers," 187–189; Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe*, 141–142.

[86] Gerus, "Manifestations of the Cossack Idea," 27–28.

[87] Zhukovsky, "Black Sea Cossacks"; Moncada, "Kuban Cossack Performance and Identity," 3.

[88] Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia," 23; Rempel, "Mennonite Commonwealth," 291, 298–299; Bondar, *Mennonite Sect* 18; Pisarevskii, *Iz istorii*, 335–337.

[89] Sebag Montefiore, *Prince of Princes: The Life of Potemkin* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), cover copy.

[90] David G. Rempel and Cornelia Rempel Carlson, *A Mennonite Family in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, 1789–1923* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 5–8, 45–49; Rempel, "Mennonite Commonwealth," 292–293; Urry, *None but Saints*, 67–69; Hildebrand, *From Danzig to Russia*, 31–44; Ken Reddig and Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonites in Tsarist Russia and the USSR, 1789–1989: An Overview," *Mennonite Historian* 15, no. 3 (Sept. 1989): 1.

[91] Oleksandr Polianichev, "Rediscovering Zaporozhians: Memory, Loyalties, and Politics in Late Imperial Kuban, 1880–1914," (PhD diss., European University Institute, 2017), 120–126, 254, 263–330; Grace Ehrman, "Imagined Spaces: Land, Identity and Kuban' Cossack State-Building in Revolutionary Russa, 1917–1922" (master's thesis, Liberty University, 2010), 17–21.

[92] Polianichev, "Rediscovering Zaporozhians," 280–282.

[93] Martin, "Empire's New Frontiers", 194–199; Harvey L. Dyck, introduction to *A Mennonite Family*, by Rempel and Carlson, xxxiii, 305n20.

[94] Patterson, *Makhno and Memory*, 19; Sean David Patterson, "The Makhnos of Memory: Mennonite and Makhnovist Narratives of the Civil War in Ukraine," (master's thesis, University of Manitoba, 2013), 24, 37, 169n42; V. M. Chop, *Problema tradycij zaporozhkoho kozactva v istoriyi makhnovs'koho rukhu," Ukrayins'ke kozactvo u vitchyznyanij ta zahal"noyevropejs'kij istoriyi. Mizhnarodna naukova konferenciya* (Odesa: 2005), 69–70, http://www.makhno.ru/lit/chop/5.php.

[95] Urry, *None but Saints*, 56–57, 282–284;

[96] John R. Staples, "On Civilizing the Nogais: Mennonite-Nogai Economic Relations, 1825–1860," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 74, no. 2 (Apr. 2000), 229–256; G. K. Epp, "Mennonite-Ukrainian Relations," 133–134.

[97] James Urry and Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonites and the Crimean War, 1854–1856," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 7 (1989): 9–32.

[98] Frank H. Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, 1786–1920: The History of a Separate People* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974), 183–202; Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 7–22; Francis, *In Search of Utopia*, 44–45.

[99] See Jean Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Métis Nation* (Toronto: HarperCollins Canada, 2019); note especially p. 134.

[100] Adam Gaudry, "Fantasies of Sovereignty: Deconstructing British and Canadian Claims to Ownership of the Historic North-West," *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 46–74.

[101] Donald, F. Warner, *The Idea of Continental Union: Agitation for the Annexation of Canada to the United States 1849–1893* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1960), 99–142.

[102] Simon James Dawson, *Report on the Red River Expedition of 1870* (Ottawa: Times Printing & Publishing, 1871).

[103] Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 12.

[104] Blake Hamm, "Revisiting the Canadian *Privilegium*: The Lowe Letter, Good Faith, and International Law," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 94, no. 3 (July 2020): 323–324; Francis, *In Search of Utopia*, 78–79.

[105] Alvin J. Esau, "The Establishment, Preservation and Legality of Mennonite Semi-Communalism in Manitoba," *Manitoba Law Journal* 81, no. 1 (2005): 87–93; Kim Korven, "Settling *That Way*: The Canadian Government's Role in the Creation of Communal Religious Settlements on the Prairies," *Saskatchewan Law Review* 73, no. 2 (2010): 254–259; James Urry, "A Matter of Diplomacy: The British Government and the Mennonite Immigration from Russia to Manitoba, 1872–1875," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 87, no. 2 (Apr. 2013): 236–239.

[106] Neufeldt, "Settler Colonial Conscripts," 519–521.

[107] Teilleit, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 291–416.

[108] D. N. Sprague, "Government Lawlessness in the Administration of Manitoba Land Claims, 1870–1887," *Manitoba Law Journal*, 10, No. 4 (1980): 415–441; D. N. Sprague, *Canada and the Métis, 1869–1885* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1988); Nicole J. M. St-Onge, "Metis and Merchant Capital in Red River: The Decline of Pointe à Grouette, 1860–1885," (master's thesis, University of Manitoba, 1983).

[109] Thomas Flanagan, *Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1983), 45–46.

[110] Teilleit, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 268–285; Isabel Klassen-Marshall, "Promised Peoples on Promised Lands: Mennonite and Métis Land Relations and Property Law in Southern Manitoba History," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 41, no. 1 (2023): 43–50; Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 11–47, 86–91.

[111] Manitoba Metis Federation Inc. v. Canada (Attorney General), [2013] 1 S.C.R. 623.

[112] Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 85–95.

[113] Francis, *In Search of Utopia*, 144–148; F. H. Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, 1786–1920*, 307–315.

[114] Redekop, *Old Colony Mennonites*, 21–22; Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 85–103.

[115] Ens, *Subjects or Citizens?*, 105–157, 199–223; William Janzen, *Limits on Liberty: The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 88–115; Francis, *In Search of Utopia*, 144.

[116] Will, "Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua," 354, 363–367; Dormady, "Mennonite Colonization in Mexico," 172–179; John J. Pershing, "Punitive Expedition Report," Oct. 10, 1916, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4013coll7/id/702/; Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 196–203; Don M. Coerver, "Mexican Border Battles and Skirmishes (1911–1921)," in *The War of 1898 and U.S. Interventions 1898–1934: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Benjamin R. Beede (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1994), 325.

[117] Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 188, 198, 203.

[118] Article 27 of Mexico's 1917 Constitution read: "Land and water that are found within national borders, originally belong to the [Mexican] Nation." Translated by Rebecca Janzen in "Whose Land? Conflict between Colonies and Ejidos in the Mexican State of Chihuahua," *Perservings* 37 (2017): 47. For the Mexican *Privilegium*, see Redekop, *Old Colony Mennonites*, 251.

[119] Will, "Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua," 359–362; Daniel Nugent, *Spent Cartridges of Revolution: An Anthropological History of Namiquipa, Chihuahua* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 89–91; Rebecca Janzen, *Liminal Sovereignty: Mennonites and Mormons in Mexican Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018), xxi; Rebecca Janzen, "Land Conflict in Mexico between Mennonite Colonies and Their Neighbors," *Anabaptist Witness* 7, no. 2 (Nov. 2020): 25–44.

[120] Will, "Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua," 353, 362, 368, 376–378.

[121] Will, "Mennonite Colonization of Chihuahua," 356–359, 365, 376–377.

[122] Frank McClynn, *Villa and Zapata: A History of the Mexican Revolution* (Mexico: Jonathan Cape, 2000), 391–398; Jürgen Buchenau, *Plutarco Elías Calles and the Mexican Revolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 102–103; Friedrich Katz, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 761–782.

[123] "Mexico Colony Census Brings Surprises," *Anabaptist World*, Oct. 7, 2022, https://anabaptistworld.org/mexico-colony-census-brings-surprises/.

[124] Sawatzky, *They Sought a Country*, 150–155, 331–332; Redekop, *Old Colony Mennonites* 167–169; Dormady, "Mennonite Colonization in Mexico," 167–194.

[125] Royden Loewen and Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, "The Steel Wheel: From Progress to Protest and Back Again in Canada, Mexico, and Bolivia," *Agricultural History* 92 no. 2 (Spring 2018): 172–189.

[126] Friesen, *New Homeland*, 11; translated article from *El Diario* (Asunción), Dec. 29, 1926, in Martin W. Friesen, *Canadian Mennonites Conquer a Wilderness: The Beginning and Development of the Menno Colony, First Mennonite Settlement in South America*, trans. Christel Wiebe (Loma Plata, Paraguay: Historical Committee of the Menno Colony, 2009), 11.

[127] Friesen, *New Homeland*, 188–189.

[128] Bruce W. Farcau, *The Chaco War: Bolivia and Paraguay, 1932–1935* (London: Praeger, 1996), 11.

[129] Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 125; Breithoff, *Conflict, Heritage and World-Making*, 37–39. For the 1930 Bolivian *Privilegium*, see Decreto Supremo de 27 de Marzo de 1930, in Humberto Delgado Llano, *Complementos de la*

Legislacion Integral del Ramo de Colonizacion 1928–1935 (La Paz: Intendencia General de Guerra, 1938), 33–35.

[130] Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 125.

[131] See Hannes Kalisch and Ernesto Unruh, eds., *Don't Cry: The Enlhet History of the Chaco War*, trans. Nicholas Regan (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2022).

[132] John Phillip Robb Eicher, "Now Too Much for Us: German and Mennonite Transnationalisms, 1874–1944" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 2015), 136n221.

[133] Breithoff, *Conflict, Heritage and World-Making*, 50; Eicher, *Exiled Among Nations*, 145.

[134] Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, "Reshaping the Chaco: Migrant Foodways, Place-Making, and the Chaco War," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 50, no. 3 (Aug. 2018): 15; Roland K. Abercrombie, "Peaceful Pawns in the Chaco Conflict," *The Christian Century* 50, no. 38 (1933): 1173–1175.

[135] Letter from the Permanent Delegate of Paraguay to the Secretary-General, Aug. 6, 1932, in "Documentation Concerning the Dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay," *League of Nations Official Journal* 13 (1932): 1580.

[136] Matthew Hughes, "Logistics and the Chaco War: Bolivia versus Paraguay, 1932–1935," *Journal of Military History* 69, no. 2 (Apr. 2005): 432; and Edgar Stoesz and Muriel T. Stackley, *Garden in the Wilderness: Mennonite Communities in the Paraguayan Chaco 1927–1997* (Winnipeg: MBC Publication, 1999), 22.

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