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# Foreword

It is with some trepidation that we present the *Journal of Mennonite Studies* without the leadership of Professor Harry Loewen. It was through his enthusiastic initiative that the *Journal* was launched 14 years ago. Since that time *JMS* has established itself as a reputable, peer-reviewed interdisciplinary medium, reaching both a Mennonite and wider academic and literary readership. The current editorial team is committed to continuing the *Journal's* high editorial standard and its traditional three-pronged approach, that is, the publishing of article-length academic articles, the reproduction of Mennonite short stories and poetry, and reviewing the best recent Mennonite books.

The articles in this issue reflect the disparate lives of Mennonites over time. John Derksen's article adds to the growing field of social history of Anabaptism by examining the religious struggle of two Strasbourg tailors, Jörg Ziegler and Hans Adam, with city magistrates. Leona Gislason takes us over time to Russia, where the heroic and tragic story of Mennonite Brethren tent missionaries is told in moving detail; more importantly this article adds to the largely untold story of Mennonite cultural border crossings in Russia. Abe Dueck provides the complex final chapter of the history of an interesting and sometimes controversial Russian Mennonite movement, the *Allianz*, tracing the ultimate amalgamation of the churches of this movement with the Mennonite Brethren in the 1930s and 1940s. Leo Driedger reports on a contemporary issue, providing a sociological analysis of Mennonite college attendance; a timely piece for Mennonites as they debate the viability of their institutions of higher learning. Linda Boynton Arthur contributes to the debate of how Mennonite women's dress codes have been sites of contestation within a male-based power structure; in the process she shares with us the rich ethnography of a California Holdeman community.

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In the special *JMS Forum* section we reproduce the proceedings of the 1996 Chair in Mennonite Studies Autumn Symposium held at the University of Winnipeg on November 15 and 16. The symposium focused on Ted Regehr's new book *Mennonites in Canada, 1939-1970: A People Transformed*. This book marks a watershed in Mennonite history in that it tells the hitherto uncharted story of the Mennonite experience in the highly technologized, urban and integrated society of mid-twentieth century Canada. It is also the concluding volume of a three-book series begun in the 1960s. The section begins with historian Ted Regehr reflecting on his methodology of bringing a unifying theme to the story of a complex and heterogeneous community. Seven short papers follow, each offering a review of Regehr's book from a particular perspective: A. Ross McCormack considers the book's contribution to the wider Canadian ethnic historiography; John Friesen, Gerhard Ens, and Mavis Reimer comment on the book's handling of cultural and religious issues; Roy Vogt, Frieda Esau Klippenstein and Gerry Ediger critique the manner in which social issues—economic disparity, gender relations and denominationism—are dealt with in the book. These articles present a dignified and constructive, yet critical and analytical voice to the discussion of Regehr's important book.

This section is followed by *Literary Selections*. Five of these contributions provide a view of Mennonites encountering the politics of the wider world. The first three short stories dramatize three very different responses by young Mennonite men to the vexing issue of Mennonite nonresistance in the years just prior to and during World War II. All three are fictionalized versions of real life situations which young Mennonite men of military age and their families were forced to deal with during that turbulent period. The first story, "I won't take the gun!", is a translation by Harry Loewen of a story written from a hostile, non-Mennonite point-of-view; it depicts quite plausibly how difficult the choices were for young Mennonites in Soviet Russia. The second story, "Honourable Men All" by Ab Douglas Driediger, is a real-life situation set in Canada but again shows quite realistically how complex and ambiguous the issue could become. The third story, written by Al Reimer, is also based on a real-life incident; it shows not only the frequent abandonment of the Mennonite peace position, but how inadequate the responses by the church and community often were to this situation during the last war.

This is followed by a short story by the noted American writer, Warren Kliewer, in which the Mennonite entry into American politics is discussed from the perception of two voices, one of the innocent child and the other by the would-be innocent but, alas, assimilated Mennonite. Vic Doerksen presents a translation of a letter from Winnipeg by Jacob Penner, who shocked his Mennonite kin by not only becoming the city's first Mennonite politician, but doing so as an avowed Communist. Glenn Bergen closes this section with an intriguing parody of the 'rage-filled Mennonite artist' seeking in vain to exorcise the rural ghost.

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We are also pleased to report on some of the best writing on Mennonites during the past year or so. There are two book review essays. Roy Vogt presents a book review essay that critiques the recent intrigue with the Mennonite entrepreneur, especially as reflected in Calvin Redekop's writing. Terry Martin and James Urry review one aspect of Harvey Dyck's and Ingrid Epp's important project of preserving and providing access to Peter Braun's Molotschna Colony Archive. The *Book Review* section covers a variety of books and provides strong examples of the remarkable energy which now propels Mennonite scholarship. The works reviewed include three local, microanalytical histories, three analyses on the experience of Mennonite women, four novels, a video on Mexican Mennonites, six church and church conference histories, two theological works that reflect on contemporary ethical matters, three Mennonite textbooks, five works on aspects of Anabaptist history, and three on research sources. A final submission by Lawrence Klippenstein reports on recent archival finds in the former Soviet Union.

We would like to pay special tribute to Prof. Peter Pauls who provided immeasurable assistance to the editorial team with a final and careful editing of the entire journal manuscript before it went to press. We hope you enjoy this issue.

The Editors