
Foreword

While this year's issue deals with a variety of subjects and themes, the emphasis is on Mennonites and economics, a subject that has caused Mennonites in the past and in recent times concern and even soul-searching. Especially in Russia and now in Canada and the United States Mennonites generally managed their economic affairs well and in the process became prosperous, thus joining the middle classes in their societies. That their economic and social status affected their relationship to others, both Mennonite and non-Mennonite neighbours, and defined their identity within their host societies, are some of the issues dealt with in the articles of this year's issue.

Our lead article "Mennonite Attitudes to Property" by Roy Vogt is a revised paper given at a conference on Mennonite faith and economics held at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, on May 24-27, 1990. The organizers of this conference, which included Vogt, sought to "break the silence" on a subject which had not been dealt with on such a large scale before. In his article Vogt argues that well-to-do Mennonite business people may have wandered from their Anabaptist forebears' sense of justice and settled for mere charity and hand-outs instead.

"The Cost of Community: The Funding and Economic Management of the Russian Mennonite Commonwealth Before 1914" is the title of a paper given by James Urry at the same conference. Subsequently revised, the detailed article with its numerous tables and figures describes and analyzes the enormous financial structures of the Russian Mennonites and the cost of maintaining their various institutions until their world came crashing down in the Revolution of 1917.

The article "Mennonites and their Peasant Neighbours in Ukraine before 1900" by Leonard Friesen, is a revised version of a paper presented at a symposium marking the bicentennial of Mennonites in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, held in Winnipeg in November 1989. Friesen concludes that by 1900, the majority of Ukrainian peasants considered the Mennonites "to be part of a privileged Russia in which peasants had no stake," which explains, in part, the acts of terrorism against Mennonites two decades later.

"Mennonite Revolutionaries in the Khortitza Settlement Under the Tsarist Regime as Recollected by Johann G. Rempel" was translated from the German and annotated by David G. Rempel. The subject of this article may come as a surprise to readers. Mennonite revolutionaries in Tsarist Russia? they may ask. Yes, indeed, there were not only those Mennonites who sympathized with the socialist-communist ideology but also those who actively sought to bring about the "new order." We are grateful to David Rempel for preparing this article for *JMS* and allowing us to adapt it to our format.

With Ted Regehr's "Canadian Mennonites and the Japanese Berry Farmers in British Columbia After the Evacuation of 1942," we turn from Russia to Canada. Both the Japanese and the German-speaking Mennonites were in a sense "enemy aliens" during the Second World War. However, as this article demonstrates

Japanese Canadians lost and suffered more during the war than did Mennonite Canadians, who sometimes benefitted from the displacement of the Japanese.

Adolf Ens and Leonard Doell have written an interesting article on "Mennonite Swedenborgians" existing in Canada and the United States. In connection with the apocalypticism of Claas Epp and his followers in the 1880s, C. Henry Smith moralized some time ago that "Mennonites have been unusually susceptible to unwholesome influences." Perhaps it would be more useful to ask, as this article does, why some Mennonites find other, non-Mennonite, theological views more attractive than their own.

In "Traditional Customs of Remarriage Among Some Canadian Mennonite Widow(er)s" John F. Peters finds that while Mennonite widows and widowers never really lose their "first love," they nevertheless "can love more than once." The sample used here may be small, but the findings and conclusions are no doubt representative of Mennonite remarriage patterns.

"Menno Simons on the Lord's Supper" is the fifth article by Egil Grislis on this early Anabaptist elder and leader to appear in this journal (for the other four, see *JMS*, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1991). Grislis' work on Menno Simons was encouraged, in part, by a series of papers he had been invited to deliver in the Chair of Mennonite Studies lecture series.

We conclude this issue with a literary section, an article by Al Reimer and a story by Peter Epp. Reimer's article on Canadian-Mennonite literature was part of a lecture series Reimer had been invited to deliver at Bethel College in the fall of 1991. Other papers in the series are scheduled to appear in *Mennonite Life* and later all the papers will be published as proceedings by Bethel College.

Peter Epp's story *Deliverance* was originally published in 1930 by the Libertas Verlag in Bluffton, Ohio. Translated by Elmer Suderman, the story is a vivid portrayal of the end of the Mennonite world in Russia after the First World War. Pastor Harder's loss of his wife, two sons, possessions, and even his memory, and his eventual death at the hands of the Soviets, symbolize the destruction of Mennonite existence in Russia. Harder's death comes as a deliverance from a world he no longer understands nor cares to live in.

Our book reviews in this issue are numerous and varied. To all contributors of articles and reviews, our heartfelt thanks.

The Editors