
Foreword

1989 marks two-hundred years since Prussian Mennonites settled on the southern steppes of the Ukraine (Hutterites settled near Kiev as early as 1770). The bi-centennial is being celebrated both in Canada and abroad with academic symposiums and commemorative gatherings. These events are occasions for serious studies of the "Russian-Mennonite experience" and meditative reflections on the role the Prussian-Russian Mennonites have played within the larger Mennonite community and throughout the world.

In keeping with the bi-centennial of Russian Mennonitism, this issue of the *Journal* is devoted exclusively to the history and life of the Russian Mennonites. The first three articles deal with war and Mennonites' involvement in it. James Urry and Lawrence Klippenstein show in considerable detail the extent to which Mennonites were drawn into the Crimean War (1854-56) and with what results. Harry Loewen in his translation of and introduction to Barbara Böhr's recollections of the Alsatian Mennonites' experiences of the Franco-German War (1870-71), establishes links between the Swiss and Russian Mennonites and shows how the Franco-German conflict affected Russia's domestic and foreign policies. In his article on Judge Adamson and the Mennonites of Manitoba, Ken Reddig deals with the difficulties Canadian Mennonites and conscientious objectors faced during World War II. The article grew out of Reddig's M.A. thesis at the University of Manitoba.

The following three pieces are literary selections from the pen of Russian Mennonites. In "Koop and Bua Go Travelling" by Arnold Dyck we present two chapters of the Low German *Koop enn Bua opp Reise* in English translation. Translated by Al Reimer and published here for the first time, these chapters may be considered a pilot project for the rest of Dyck's Low German stories. Readers' responses to "Koop and Bua" in English would be greatly appreciated. In "The Purple Pulpit," a previously unpublished prose text by Fritz Senn appears here in Gerhard Friesen's translation. An appended letter written by Fritz Senn, hints at Nestor Makhno's motives for his destructive activity in southern Russia. Well-known American-Mennonite poet Elmer Suderman presents a series of new poems on the theme of a Mennonite father.

Canadian-Mennonite literature is increasingly taken seriously by both readers and literary critics in North America and Europe. English departments include Mennonite novels and poetry in their programme and essays and dissertations on Canadian-Mennonite literature are beginning to appear here and there. In this issue Frank Michael Strauss of Bonn, West Germany, discusses Armin Wiebe's novel *The Salvation of Yasch Siemens* as a picaresque work, a type of fiction dealing with the episodic adventures of a roguish "hero." Paul Tiessen of Wilfrid Laurier University writes a perceptive article on the well-known Canadian novelist Rudy Wiebe.

Mennonites in Russia prided themselves on their good relations with the tsars and their government officials, their favoured position within the empire, and their model roles they were expected to play in Russian society. That the government was well pleased with its Mennonite subjects is shown by the visits of high-ranking officials and the tsar himself to the Mennonite colonies. Reg and Kathryn Good of Waterloo, now studying at the University of Saskatchewan, have translated a relatively unknown eye witness account of the last visit of Tsar Alexander I to the Mennonites in 1825. George Epp shows in his article that while relations between Mennonites and the Ukrainian people were generally positive, there were problems with regard to their different cultures and ways which later led to tragic consequences.

When during the Revolution of 1917 the Russian Mennonites lost their homes and ways of life and then emigrated to Canada, they were thrown into a foreign world whose language and customs they did not know. Trying to establish themselves in a new country and driven by economic necessity, many families decided reluctantly to send their young daughters to find employment in the large Canadian cities. Frieda Esau Klippenstein in her article on Mennonite domestic servants in Winnipeg between the 1920s and 1950s, deals with the problems and importance of these Mennonite pioneers in Canadian cities. Eventually Mennonites adjusted to many modern ways. Sociologist Jacob Peters in his article, originally presented as a paper at symposiums in Waterloo and Winnipeg in 1988, analyses the changing leadership patterns among the Conference of Mennonites in Canada after World War II, concluding that in an attempt to become administratively more efficient, Canadian Mennonites may have given up some important traditional values and principles.

The last piece in this issue, edited by Werner Packull and Bruno Fast of Waterloo, is a hitherto unpublished letter by Peter Riedemann, an early Anabaptist-Hutterite leader, to a suffering brother in prison. The letter may be taken as a reminder to Hutterites and Mennonites, who in Russia and North America have existed side by side, that the faith and values which form the bases of their traditions must not be forgotten or disregarded in times of affluence and relative ease today.

This issue concludes with several book reviews, a list of authors of articles and reviews, and a slate of titles published by Hyperion Press for the Chair in Mennonite Studies and the Mennonite Literary Society.

As editor I wish to express by thanks to my colleagues, many of whom are on the Editorial Committee, and to the contributors of articles, literary selections, and book reviews. Without their hard work, dedication and support the *Journal* would not exist.

Harry Loewen, Editor



Pen-and-ink sketch for the *Koop em Bua* stories by Arnold Dyck (1889-1970).