MENNONITE LIFE

SEPTEMBER 1988

In this Issue

This issue features four articles, beginning with Marlin Adrian's study of the theology of General Conference missions among native Americans during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He focuses on the religious paradigms and motivations of missions primarily as developed by Samuel S. Haury, the first missionary sent out by American Mennonites. Adrian, a graduate student in history at the University of Virginia, is completing a dissertation on the beginning of Mennonite missions among native Americans.

The theology of martyrdom and suffering which Adrian found in the Mennonite motivations for missions is also present in an 1878 treatise on nonresistance probably authored by Leonhard Sudermann. Theron Schlabach, professor of history at Goshen College, introduces Sudermann's manuscript (Mennonite Library and Archives, Collection 65), which seems never to have been published. Sudermann fears that Mennonite adherence to nonresistance is eroding and expresses the centrality of the "gospel of peace" and importance of discipleship for followers of Christ.

Nonresistance was a more immediate concern for American Mennonites forty years after Sudermann's writing when the United States entered World War I and Mennonites again had to define and defend their beliefs. The historical and biblical bases of nonresistance were affirmed. Susan Schultz Huxman presents her analysis of the Mennonite rhetoric of nonresistance during World War I. In 1987 Huxman completed her dissertation, "In the World, But Not Of It: Mennonite Rhetoric in World War I As An Enactment of Paradox," at the University of Kansas, and she is currently on the faculty of the University of North Carolina, Winston-Salem.

Reinhild Janzen, curator of the Kauffman Museum, concludes the issue with her study of the figurated linen damask napkins from two prominent Mennonite families, the Linnichs and the van der Smissens of Altona in Northern Germany. The napkins reveal much about northern European life and culture in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

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MENNONITE LIFE

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Front. One of the approximately twenty picket houses at Ft. Cantonment turned over to the General Conference Mission Board in 1882. Back. Ft. Cantonment in the 1880s with the Mennonite school at the far left, government school in the center, and hospital at the far right.

Photo Credits

Mennonite Library and Archives, pp. 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 17, 32. Kauffman Museum (Jon Blumb), pp. 23-28.

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"In Like Manner:"
Religious Paradigms and the Motivations for General Conference Mennonite Missions among Native Americans

by Marlin Adrian

When Heinrich R. Voth arrived at Indian Territory in 1882, he was placed in charge of a new General Conference Mennonite mission station among the Cheyenne at Cantonment. The Cantonment mission was established in an abandoned military installation that the United States government made available for the use of the Mennonite missionaries. Modern scholars may see irony in this turn of affairs, pacifist Mennonites using a miliatry facility, but for Voth and his contemporaries this situation fit perfectly into the belief that God had called missionaries to the mission field among the American Indians to replace the military. Soon after his arrival, Voth reported:

> I can affirm, that this turn of events has given rise within me to serious reflection. In like manner as (this post) was built here to hold the red man in order through the sword, it now must serve to proclaim to the very same red men the salvation, that alone can give them peace. Here, where drum and bugle called the soldiers together to drill the art of weapons, shall in the future ring out with the sound of songs of praise to the Lord and his gospel, and an unfortunate race will be led to the Lord.[1]

Voth soon learned that the victory sought by the missionary would prove to be significantly more difficult to achieve than that gained by military means. American mission literature often pictured Native Americans anxious to receive the gospel, but disappointed by the unwillingness of whites to undergo the hardships of bringing it to them. Although this drama may have taken place at one time or another, it is certain that Indian enthusiasm for the white man's religion was the exception rather than the rule. The mission stories were accurate in that American Christians did not flock to the Indian reservations in any appreciable numbers to preach the gospel. Even among religious groups who exhibited a marked enthusiasm for the missionary enterprise, the actual number of members willing to become missionaries was quite small. Considering the hardships encountered by missionaries, however, the question is not why so few American Christians chose this life, but why any became missionaries at all. This was especially true after 1875, when the character of missionary work among the Indians, with its discouragingly few successes was well known. Why would Mennonites choose to join this mission after so many efforts had ended in disaster?

One explanation is that Mennonites were simply caught up in the enthusiasm and confidence of "American" culture and society. Mennonites in Antebellum America were influenced by the exuberance, enthusiasm, and confidence of a Euro-American society sweeping westward. American Mennonites did enter the arena of missions during the "heyday" of the foreign mission enterprise in America. The appearance of a Mennonite interest in missions, however, was not merely a response to a general American atmosphere. American Mennonite interest in missions grew out of profound social and cultural changes occurring among American Mennonites during the second half of the nineteenth century. Large immigrations from Europe brought Mennonites enthused with the spirit of European Pietism to America. These Europeans expressed their religious enthusiasm in a fervor for missions. Many of these new arrivals showed impatience with the quietistic spirit prevalent among American Mennonites.

This missionary movement among Mennonites posed a challenge to the conservative American Mennonites. Mennonites interested in missions sought to convince the majority of Mennonites of the validity of the missionary enterprise through the reinterpretation of certain core symbols of Mennonite religious piety. Mission-minded Mennonites presented this reinterpretation as a restoration of the "original teachings" of the Bible and of historic anabaptism which the present Mennonite communities had forgotten. Mennonites who advocated this "return" to involvement in missions redefined for American Mennonites the "heroic prototype" of anabaptism. Franklin Littell offers a modern description of this redefined hero, a figure which sixteenth-century anabaptists had resurrected from their understanding of the early Christian community.

> In the life of the Anabaptist congregations the man of the Early Church reappeared. He was a hero with one supreme loyalty, to Christ his Master. He performed miracles. His persecutors sometimes died terrible deaths. He strove to obey literally the counsels of perfection which were now binding upon every believer, and he lived "loose from the world" as a pilgrim, missioner, and martyr.[2]

The figures of the martyr and the pilgrim had retained their popularity and power among American Mennonites, but the figure of the "missioner" had faded from view. Nineteenth-century Mennonite missionaries and mission publicists sought to identify contemporary mission activity with the activities of the sixteenth-century (and first-century) "missioner." They believed that it was crucial to restore the missionary emphasis to the figures of the martyr and the pilgrim.

The significance of this association of the martyr and pilgrim with the missionary was evident in Mennonite mission rhetoric. The elements of "success" and "conquest" so prevalent in American mission publications, were conspicuously overshadowed in Mennonite mission materials by a strong emphasis on the "sacrifice" and "suf-

fering" of the missionaries. Mennonites believed in the axiom, "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," and the suffering of missionaries was far more convincing evidence of the legitimacy of their endeavors than stories of huge numbers of natives professing Christianity. In fact, when Mennonite mission mythology did include stories of native converts, often the emphasis was on the suffering of the new Christian because of his or her conversion to Christianity. The sincerity of new converts, like that of the missionaries, was measured by their willingness to suffer.

Samuel S. Haury, the first missionary sent out by American Mennonites, became one of the first Mennonite mission publicists in North America. The first of seven "letters" written by Haury was published in the February 1876 issue of *Der Mennonitische Friedensbote*. These letters were actually articles written in the form of letters to a critic of the mission enterprise. Each letter answered one or more questions raised by this fictitious opponent, creating a dialogue. All seven articles were published as a booklet, *Briefe über die Ausbreitung des Evangeliums in der Heidenwelt (Letters Concerning the Spread of the Gospel in the Heathen World)*, in 1877.[3]

The purpose of Haury's tract was to motivate Mennonites to support the cause of missions. He offered to answer questions he had heard voiced among American Mennonites. Haury's task was not an easy one. Mennonites had lived in America since the 1640's, and had established their first congregation in 1683 at Germantown, Pennsylvania. In over 200 years of living in America, Mennonites had never engaged in mission efforts among the American Indians. Mennonite existence in America was marked by a sectarian quietism, *"die Stillen im Lande"* (the quiet ones in the land). Those Mennonites lured by the enthusiasm of Pietism in America were often forced to leave their Mennonite churches.[4]

Haury's booklet reflected American as well as European mission thought. Haury alluded to many of the motives which were prominent in nineteenth-century America: compassion for the heathen, obedience to the Great Commission, fulfillment of prophecy, indebtedness to the heathen, and love of God. The core of Haury's appeal, however, was the sense of "duty"

Briefe

über die

Ausbreitung des Evangeliums

in der

Heidenwelt.

Allen Mennoniten in Nord-Amerika

dargeboten von

Samuel S. Haury.

„Gehet hin in alle Welt und prediget das Evangelium aller Kreatur." Marcus 16, 15.

Halstead, Kan.

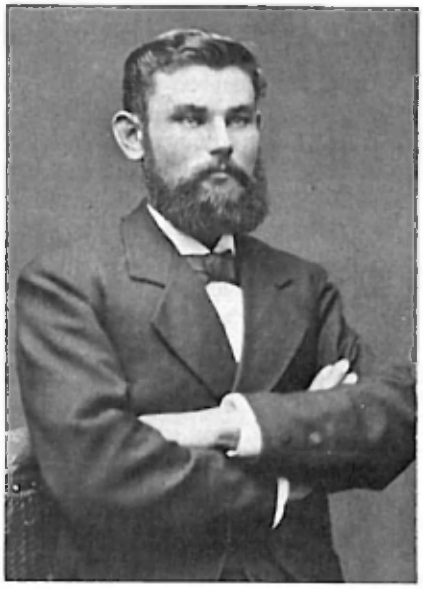
1877.

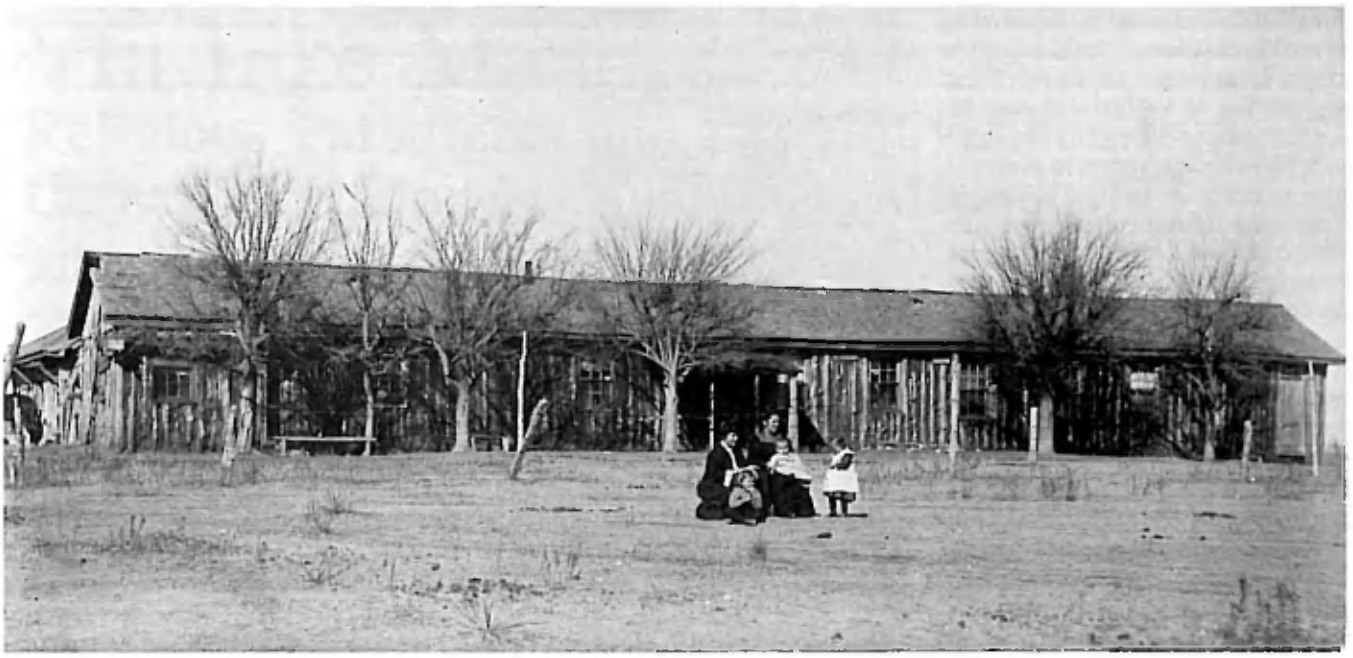
Above. Samuel S. Haury while a student at the Wadsworth Seminary.
Right. Title page of Haury's Letters *(1877).*
Below right. Heinrich R. Voth in 1881.

which follows from the need to be obedient to the commands of Jesus. Compassion for, and indebtedness to the heathen served to heighten this sense of duty, but obedience was the key. This emphasis on obedience appealed to Mennonites because of their historic belief in "discipleship," grounded in their strong attachment to the concept of *Nachfolge Christi* (following after Christ).

> First and fundamental in the Anabaptist vision was the conception of the essence of Christianity as discipleship. It was a concept which meant the transformation of the entire way of life of the individual believer and of society so that it could be fashioned after the teachings and example of Christ . . . The great word of the Anabaptists was not "faith" as it was with the reformers, but "following *(Nachfolge Christi)*."[5]

The concept of "following after" Christ contained two dimensions, obedience and imitation. Mennonites taught that the teachings of Jesus were not simply broad principles to live by, but commands to be obeyed. Therefore, because Jesus is quoted as saying "swear not," Mennonites rejected all oath taking. The Mennonite stand on military duty (non-resistance), at times an obstacle to acceptance in the main-





One of the approximately twenty picket houses at Ft. Cantonment turned over to the Mission Board in 1882.

stream of American life, was also a part of this concern with obedience. Haury pointed to the Great Commission as a commandment of Christ which Mennonites had chosen to ignore. He called his fellow Mennonites to be obedient to this commandment, even if this obedience brought them into conflict with the biblical command to "come out from among them, and be ye separate."

Obedience to the commands of Christ existed for Haury within an apocalyptic framework. Apocalypticism was also a strong element in the history of Anabaptist/Mennonite theology and life. Through the influence of South German and Dutch anabaptists such as Hans Hut and Melchoir Hoffman, Mennonites had lived with a strong tendency toward, and attachment to apocalyptic schemes since the early 16th century. Haury used this interest in the apocalyptic in his attempt to spur Mennonites to support missions.

> . . . the life of the present age, the whole history of the world and the kingdoms of this world, can reach its consummation only after the Christian world has fully carried out its missionary calling. And this is fulfilled only then when the gospel has been preached to all the world.[6]

This particular apocalyptic scheme, prominent among mission publicists in Haury's day, existed only on the periphery of Mennonite thinking. Mennonite eschatology affirmed the eventual victory of Christ over the forces of evil in this world, but, according to Anabaptist/Mennonite theology, "suffering" marked the role of the Church in this victory.

> This conflict means suffering, and accordingly the doctrine of the suffering church is vital in Anabaptist theology. But the victory will come through suffering, and suffering is accordingly a testimony to the martyr that he is part of the true church and a true child of God. This is the hope of the Anabaptist, a sure and confident hope in ultimate victory in union with Christ, in spite of and even because of present suffering.[7]

Haury demonstrated in his articles that Mennonite mission rhetoric during its infancy in America embraced a rich syncretism. For example, Haury grounded his contention that mission work is a Christian duty on the theological tenet that "Man is created in the image of God, and therefore belongs to God." His bases were two—"man is God's offspring and Christ is the head of all humanity" and Jesus "acquired the entire sinful world as his own through his blood."[8] The time would soon come when these two bases would become the central beliefs of opposing factions (modernism and fundamentalism), not only within the Mennonite community, but throughout much of the American Protestant community. Neither tenet accurately reflected the profound separation between the church and the "world" central to the Mennonite theology of "two kingdoms."

Having attempted to appeal to the positive side of their relationship to the world, Haury next challenged Mennonites to accept their responsibility and guilt for the treatment of natives by Christians. This position as debtors toward the non-Christian world was, according to Haury, a post-biblical phenomenon.

> Yes, dear friend, we are debtors of the heathen in a completely different way than Paul was who was urged by love. We are debtors of the heathen also because of the many crimes which the Christian world has committed against the heathen world and is still doing it daily.[9]

The message which Haury was sending to Mennonites could be called "the gospel of involvement," as opposed to the gospel of isolation and separation. His contention was not only that Mennonites should involve themselves, but that they were already involved. In spite of their attempts to disassociate themselves from the processes of violence, oppression, and persecution around them, Haury insisted that Mennonites were guilty through an association beyond their power to deny.

The problem with Haury's appeal was that, except for the appeal to obedience and discipleship, these arguments were foreign to the core of Mennonite thinking. Mennonites believed in obeying the commands of Christ, but belief in the necessity of missionary work to the consummation of history, the brotherhood of man, and guilt for the state of the heathen, were not part of the historic teachings of Anabaptist/Mennonite theology. Mennonites read-

ily accepted the Great Commission, but were not convinced that nineteenth-century missionaries were legitimate examples of obedience to this command of Christ. In fact, Mennonite commitment to separation from the world contradicted each of these arguments presented by Haury.

It was necessary for Haury to address the issue that lay at the heart of Mennonite reluctance to involve themselves in the enterprise of missions—the quest for purity through separation from the affairs of "the world." Many American Mennonites believed that involvement in missions would not only require that they cooperate with other Christian groups whose spirituality they questioned, but would also implicate them in the entire process of colonialism and conquest. Haury's fictional opponent complained that "the missionaries went out with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other." To combat this fundamental objection, Haury called upon the root paradigm of Mennonite spirituality—the paradigm of the martyr.

The paradigm of the martyr was not only a root paradigm of Christianity, it was *the* root paradigm of the Mennonite religious perspective. Root paradigms are "certain consciously recognized (though not consciously grasped) cultural models in the heads of the main actors." The power of such paradigms to motivate humans to action is confirmed by anthropological studies. Victor Turner writes that root paradigms:

> . . . go beyond the cognitive and even the moral to the existential domain, and in so doing become clothed with allusiveness, implicitness, and metaphor—for in the stress of vital action, firm definitional outlines become blurred by the encounter of emotionally charged wills. Paradigms of this fundamental sort reach down to irreducible life stances of individuals, whether institutionalized or compelled by unforeseen events. One cannot then escape their presence or their consequences.[10]

The paradigm of the martyr was "anti-structural" in the sense in which Turner uses this term. That is, this paradigm represented the "generative center" of Mennonite religious culture, around which the "circumference" of structure developed.[11] Ethelbert Stauffer has called the "theology of martyrdom" the "crypt or hidden sanctuary of Anabaptist Christianity."[12]

This assessment is clearly supported by study of the collection of Anabaptist/Mennonite hymns in the *Ausbund*, "undoubtedly the only Protestant hymnbook in continuous use from the period of the sixteenth century Reformation to the present time."[13] After the first two introductory songs in the *Ausbund*, the next forty-three concern martyrdom. These include an historical account of Christian martyrdom, poems by martyrs, martyr ballads depicting particular executions, and songs about persecution and martyrdom in general. The message of these hymns informs Christians that they, like Christ, will have no place to lay their head and no earthly possessions to call their own. Sorrow is not only a test of faith, but suffering and death are the natural ends of a committed Christian life. This suffering is the witness of the true Church, and part of the cosmic battle between God and Satan. Anna Deckert describes the message of the martyr ballads as:

> All God's innocent creation must suffer for the sins of the world and its hostility against God. Though the martyr must suffer, in a sense, because of his guiltlessness, his death will aid in ushering in the new age. The path to life is narrow and rough, but the path of martyrdom and tribulation is the surest way, the only (way) to life and joy. The imitation of Christ occurs again in that just as Christ was a pure sacrifice to God for the sins of man, the true Christian martyr presents his body as a sacrifice to God for the sins of the world. He is as a sheep to be slaughtered.[14]

Alongside the Bible and the *Ausbund* in nearly every Mennonite home lay Thieleman J. van Braght's *The Bloody Theater or Martyr's Mirror of the Defenseless Christians.*[15] The martyrs were continually raised by Mennonite preachers before their congregations as spiritual heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their faith. Mennonite historian Robert Friedmann observes that the *Martyrs Mirror* "exerts its immense spiritual influence by presenting models of Christian life."[16] Because the paradigm of the martyr was the root paradigm of Mennonite religious culture, an appeal to this paradigm provided the most effective justification and motivation among Mennonites for mission activity.

Haury needed an argument which reached to this "generative center" of Mennonite thinking. Unfortunately, the paradigm of the martyr initially stood as a hindrance to Haury's goal of promoting the mission enterprise among Mennonites. The stories of the martyrs reminded Mennonites of the necessity of separating themselves from the world and remaining pure. James Juhnke underscores the complex relationship between the paradigm of the martyr, the desire of most Mennonites to remain separate from the surrounding American culture, and the appeals of Mennonites such as Haury to engage in mission work.

> The Mennonite genius for a separated and simple life had Scriptural warrant as surely as did the Great Commission. The *Martyrs Mirror*, which stood second only to the Bible as the shaper of Mennonite identity, reminded the congregations of days past when so-called Christians persecuted the church with fire and sword. Was there not a great danger in becoming unequally yoked with worldy Protestants who knew not the ways of Mennonite discipleship and non-resistance? Was not this missions movement—and the modern religious enthusiasm that came with it—simply a lure to seduce Mennonites away from their historic commitments and identity? What was to be gained by joining this latest Protestant bandwagon?[17]

To overcome these objections and turn the paradigm of the martyr in his favor, Haury first made a strong distinction between those soldiers who fight worldly battles and missionaries, who are soldiers and martyrs in the cause of Christ. Haury wrote of missionaries: "they have left everything—money, property, homes, conveniences, friends and loved ones. They do not consider their lives of any merit. . . ."[18] By invoking this familiar martyr's formula, he presented the missionaries as the contemporary heirs to the spiritual power contained in the paradigm of the martyr.

Haury gave five examples of missionaries who died in their attempts to bring the gospel to the "heathen." His descriptions of their deaths included references to the historic teachings of the Mennonites on non-resistance and discipleship, and the exemplary death of Christ. He thus covered the dual nature of *Nachfolge* (obedience and imitation) in the context of martyrdom.

> Thus we could relate a whole "cloud of witnesses" of those who did not go out with the sword but with the message of peace. They went as sheep among wolves and did not consider their lives precious even unto death. And as long as mission work does not lack such men and women, it is the legitimate work of him who freely gave his life for the salvation of many.
>
> Dear friend, aren't you gripped by these tales of suffering, by this love that sacrifices itself for others? Aren't those

sacrifices in the realm of discipleship of Christ? Wouldn't you who are probably proud that you confess to be "defenseless" be willing to make this sacrifice rather than to seek revenge for yourself?[19]

Secondly, Haury presented what became the standard Mennonite defense of mission efforts among the Indians—missionaries were replacing soldiers, martyrs for warriors. Haury's discussion of the relationship between Christian missions and conquest concluded that it was enough to show that the motivation and method of missionaries were significantly different from those who conquered with the sword. Soldiers with weapons of violence were being replaced by missionaries who would suffer and die before resorting to violence to protect themselves. Haury challenged Mennonites to identify themselves with these martyrs who were giving their lives for the cause of Christ. Here was an argument which, because of its use of this root paradigm, was capable of unsettling the status quo among Mennonites.

Haury at times appeared to balance this emphasis on the sacrifice of missionaries with stories of the success of their efforts. But, even in his third letter, which addressed the question of what results of mission work could be shown, Haury repeated for a second and third time the dying words of an American missionary, "and if a thousand fall, do not forget West Africa."[20] While recounting the success of Christian missions, Haury recognized that it was important to emphasize for his Mennonite audience the great cost of this success. Success in and of itself did not legitimize the missionary efforts, but the sacrificial deaths of those who obeyed the command of Christ were irrefutable evidence of the validity of mission work.

Haury provided his readers with a complex array of religious symbols and theological assertions. The format of fictitious dialogue allowed him to use disparate concepts to pursue a single goal without forcing him to resolve the subtle discrepancies. Haury's creative adaptation of religious symbols represents a syncretistic effort to bring coherence and purpose to Mennonite communities shaken and unsettled by geographic and cultural change. Haury's argument rested not on an ideological unity, but a unity of purpose, motive, and goal. These letters stood in the wake of Haury's movement toward the mission field. Those who supported him and those who followed his example faced the difficult task of molding the many elements contained in these letters into an ideologically consistent statement. The paradoxes involved made this task formidable.

The theme of martyrs for soldiers became an accepted part of mission rhetoric among Mennonites, supporting their historic emphasis on suffering and their contemporary identity as participants in the spread of "Christian" civilization. In 1892, M. M. Horsch, a graduate headed for the mission field among the American Indians, read a paper he had written entitled "The Progress of Civilization" before his graduating class of the *Fortbildungs Schule* (preparatory school), at Halstead, Kansas. Horsch defined "civilization" as "a refined and improved state of society, as distinguished from a barbarous or savage condition . . . a national culture and refinement." This improved state owes its existence to the introduction and increasing involvement of Christianity. Horsch believed that the forces of culture and religion had converged.

> After long struggles and fierce encounters, Christianity at last mated itself with civilization and has now become so intimately connected with it that it is rather difficult to distinguish between the two.[21]

This "mating" had resulted, according to Horsch, in the transformation of the "methods employed to promote the progress of civilization." Horsch echoed the arguments of Haury—that missionaries were martyrs, and that they had replaced soldiers as the promoters of civilization. Again we see the formula ("not counting their lives dear") which associated the missionaries with the martyrs.

> We have come to realize that there can in reality be no civilization without Christianization. Both work hand in hand. To-day civilization is not spread, as in ancient times, by means of the sword; nations are not compelled, with great slaughter, to bow their stiff necks under the yoke of civilization, but men, with the Bible in one hand and the pen in the other, go out unto barbarous nations, and, if necessary, not counting their lives dear to themselves, but offering them upon the altar of sacrifice, for their poor fellow-beings.[22]

In 1893, *The Mennonite* published an article by H. P. Krehbiel which outlined the historical and philosophical framework of the new "progressive" Mennonite perspective. Krehbiel, the son of Christian Krehbiel (founder and proprietor of the Mennonite Indian school at Halstead, Kansas), was destined to become the official historian of the General Conference Mennonites. Written while he was a 20-year-old student at seminary in Oberlin, Ohio, Krehbiel titled his article, "The Mennonite Church in the Midst of a Transition." He divided mankind into three "classes"—those who "follow the great current without thinking" (a condition Krehbiel calls "plastic inactivity"), those who are "always on the defensive," and those who are "aggressively active." He believed that the historical situation of Mennonites had changed so dramatically, that Mennonites must alter their defensive posture towards the world and become "aggressively active" in the promotion of the Christian gospel.

> In general the church of Christ has established the truth of its founder's statement that he has not come to bring peace but the sword; that is to say that the work which he has inaugurated is one of aggression. Unceasing warfare against sin and oppression was to be waged until his spiritual kingdom should be established throughout the world. With varying energy these instructions have been obeyed and results of the most stupendous magnitude have been attained. Barrier after barrier has been broken down midst persecution and suffering. The poor and the rich have yielded. Nations have bowed and continents have submitted until in our day we witness the wonderful spectacle of seeing the Gospel preached in all parts of the earth.[23]

Krehbiel posed the question, "what has the Mennonite church done in bringing about these great results?" He answered this question in an historical context, describing early Mennonites as aggressive and zealous, but forced over time by persecution and suffering into a defensive stance towards the world. Krehbiel saw this defensiveness as not wrong, but necessary. Like the defensiveness of the Jews, which preserved the true religion until the coming of the Messiah, through the exclusivity of the Mennonites "the highest conceptions of the teachings of Christ" were being protected. Three tenets of Mennonite belief contained these teachings—nonresistance, refusal of the oath, and baptism upon confession. The time had now come, according to Krehbiel, for Mennonites to aggressively promote these tenets.

> It is plain that a reversal of circumstances has occurred. There is now no occasion for entrenchment. No longer is the defensive attitude fitting. The antagonists have ceased to be offensive. Injury to the cause need not be feared as the result of an effort to disseminate the noble doctrines transmitted and secured to us by persecution and martyrdom.
>
> The world stands ready to embrace advanced conceptions of Christ's religion.[24]

The association of Mennonite missionaries with the paradigm of the martyr suffered in the transition to the mission work among the American Indians. The historical context out of which the Mennonite understanding of this root paradigm came, differed significantly from the situation on the mission field. Within the paradigm of martyrdom, "every sacrifice requires not only a victim—in this case a self-chosen victim—but also a sacrificer."[25] The tradition handed down to Mennonites in Van Braght's *The Martyr's Mirror* left little doubt as to at whose hands the martyrs had suffered. The "sacrificers" in the case of the martyrs were the agents of various governmental and religious authorities. Mennonites brought their message to the Indians like a priceless gift that would provide just restitution for the great suffering and loss the Indians had received at the hands of the white man. When Indians resisted this "gift," friendly persuasion became forced acculturation. Mennonite missionary methods strongly contradicted Mennonite missionary motivations—"sacrifices" turned into "sacrificers."

H. P. Krehbiel.

ENDNOTES

[1]*Christlicher Bundes-Bote* 15 Jan. 1993, p. 15.
[2]Franklin H. Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism: a study of the Anabaptist View of the Church* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 119.
[3]Halstead, Kansas: Western Publications Co., 1877. This booklet was also published at Heilbronn, Germany, in 1878 for distribution in Europe. I will quote from the English edition, *Letters Concerning The Spread of The Gospel* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1981), hereafter *Letters*.
[4]Richard K. MacMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1985), pp. 157-182.
[5]Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* (April, 1944): 78-79.
[6]*Letters*, p. 11.
[7]Harold S. Bender, "Eschatology," *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* Vol. II (Scottdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1956), pp. 247.
[8]*Letters*, p. 6.
[9]*Ibid.*, p. 20.
[10]Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 64.
[11]*Ibid.*, pp. 272-274.
[12]*The Mennonite Quarterly Review* (July 1945): 205. Dr. Stauffer was professor of New Testament at the University of Bonn, Germany.
[13]Rosella R. Duerksen, "The Ausbund," *The Hymn* 8:3 (July 1957): 82.
[14]Anna Sue Deckert, "Martyrdom in the Ausbund," Unpublished research paper, MLA, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, pp. 9-10.
[15]Published originally in Dutch in 1660, the latest English edition was published by Herald Press, Scottdale, PA, in 1972.
[16]Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* (Goshen, IN: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1949), p. 164.
[17]James C. Juhnke, *A People of Mission: A History of General Conference Mennonite Overseas Missions* (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1979), pp. 6-7.
[18]*Letters*, p. 22.
[19]*Ibid.*, p. 24.
[20]*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 44, and 50.
[21]*The Mennonite* (Sept. 1892): 90.
[22]*Ibid.*
[23]*The Mennonite* (Oct. 1893): 2.
[24]*Ibid.*, p. 3.
[25]Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, p. 69.

Etwas über Die Wehrlosigkeit (Something on Nonresistance)

Edited and introduced by Theron F. Schlabach
Translated by Hilda Ediger Voth

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Twice in his lifetime Leonhard Sudermann moved to a new homeland. Born in Prussia in 1821, at 20 he moved to the Ukraine in the southern regions of the Russian empire. For several years he lived in a village of the Mennonites' Molotchna colony, but then, marrying and moving to his wife's location, he soon took up residence in Berdyansk,[1] a city with a port on the Sea of Azov open to the Mediterranean and ocean trade. In 1860, when Sudermann was 39, the rather atypical urban Mennonite congregation at Berdyansk elected him to be their minister and five years later their elder. Within the next decade came the rumblings and then the reality of reforms in the Russian empire which included a radical modification of favorable terms under which quite a few foreign settlers lived—their cherished *Privilegiums*. For the Mennonites, a crucial development was change in exemption from military service—first a serious threat of losing the exemption altogether, and finally, after much painful negotiation, a system of alternative service.

In the end a majority of Russia's Mennonites accepted the draft and other changes, but about a third, usually estimated at some 18,000, decided to leave, mostly for North America. By 1872, quite early in the discussions, Sudermann and one of his very able parishioners, another Prussian named Cornelius Jansen, made Berdyansk a center of agitation for emigration. In 1873 Sudermann was one of twelve deputies, eleven from the Russian empire and one from Prussia, who toured in the U.S. and Canada to find places to settle. Finally in 1876, when he was fifty-five, Sudermann and his family emigrated, settling briefly at Summerfield, Illinois, and then near Whitewater, Kansas. At Whitewater Sudermann became pastor of the Emmaus congregation, made up largely of Prussians.

Both at Berdyansk and at Emmaus Sudermann was something of an intellectual leader, serving for instance on the publications committee of *Zur Heimath* (a newspaper largely for the Russian and Prussian immigrants) and often taking roles in General Conference (GC) related conferences. Through his lifetime he published a few short items—the occasional piece in one or another German-language Mennonite newspaper, and, later in life, an account of his deputation trip[2] and an autobiographical series.[3] Perhaps his most significant statements, however, were ones he apparently did not publish, or not immediately. In 1874 he was leader of the first team appointed by Mennonite congregations to travel to St. Petersburg and petition the Czar's government about the new reforms; very probably a statement the team carried with it (later published with his deputation account[4]) came largely from his pen. Then in 1876 he wrote out a farewell sermon which he gave to his Berdyansk congregation.[5]

The piece here presented fits with those two. Like that of the St. Petersburg statement, its authorship also is not absolutely certain. However, it appears in manuscript form in the Sudermann papers at the Mennonite Library and Archives of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.[6] Internal references to the author's role in the emigration surely point to Sudermann himself. And the article's language and some of its points closely resemble a Sudermann article in *Zur Heimath* in May of 1878.[7] Neither is the date absolutely certain; but referring at the outset to a May article in *Zur Heimath*, Sudermann almost certainly had in mind the article just mentioned. That article did not really promise that another would follow, as Sudermann implied. Yet its language was such that Sudermann could easily have remembered it that way; and besides, no May issues in 1878 or any other year carried any other article remotely suiting his reference. So the date is surely 1878. Oddly, this article seems not to have been published: a search through the entire run of *Zur Heimath*, 1876-1881, does not turn it up.

The St. Petersburg statement, the farewell sermon, and this piece are not significant for broad readership and demonstrable influence. Rather, they are important as statements of Mennonite theology. It is a truism to say that Mennonites have not had a systematic theology. Yet in fact, through history, there has been a Mennonite theology. At times and places, even among Mennonites and Amish themselves, it has had to compete so much with other theologies and outlooks that the historic Mennonite core is almost lost. The competition has been with continental Pietism; with American revivalism; with forensic, Protestant concepts of salvation; with borrowed schemes of eschatology; with Protestant Fundamentalism, or, more lately, some expressions of liberalism; with exaggerated emphases, within Mennonite's

own circles, on humility or ethnicism or rule-keeping or progressivism; or with whatever else. In Sudermann it is not so. In those three unpretentious documents the key features of an authentically Mennonite theology are very clear. They are:

—A perception that the "gospel of peace" (*"Evangelium des Friedens"*) is at the heart of the Christian message of redemption—fully integrated with Christ's work on the cross and with human salvation. Nor did "gospel of peace" stop only with inner, personal tranquility.

—Seriousness about discipleship, about trying literally to follow and pattern ourselves on Christ. The seriousness appears in words such as "duty," "strive," and "struggle."

—Similarly, seriousness about Scripture. Fearing that theological rationalizing was mostly a means to get around Scripture, Sudermann thought Christians should read and obey the Bible almost naively, as revealed unto babes. Nor was his method to construct elaborate human proofs and deductions that would make scripture a code of legal or argumentive prooftexts.

—A consciousness of martyrdom and suffering—but of course a historical one, not really the existential consciousness of the early Anabaptists.

—A two-kingdom outlook that makes a clear distinction between the realm of God's faithful and the reign of sin.

—A faith rooted in personal decision and piety.

—But a faith rooted also in community, in common faithfulness, in being a true church.

—Eschatological references and concerns and pietistic hope for heaven woven artlessly among the other points.

—Holism. Salvation and discipleship, atonement and pacifism, community and individual, grace and earnest striving, inner piety and objective obedience, concern for earth and concern for heaven, Christliness and humanness —all fit together as one whole. In Sudermann, there is only one dichotomy: between obedience and sin, between the nonresistant faithful and those who distort the gospel of peace.

Of course, Sudermann's presentation reflected his person, time, and place. A European, he reacted neither for nor against the humility theology that had dominated Mennonites in America for seven decades. Instead his pain was in seeing the Dutch and Prussian Mennonites losing their nonresistance, and in fearing that the Russian congregations might do the same. Another pain was the deep division among those in the Czar's lands over whether to emigrate. Near its end Sudermann's statement becomes a vindication for his own very partisan role back in the Ukraine. It may even be that not wanting to revive that quarrel was a reason that *Zur Heimath*, or perhaps Sudermann himself, chose not to publish the article. After all, *Zur Heimath* had readers back in the Russian homeland. Those who wish to read a stout partisan of the other side, a minister named Johann Epp, may easily do so.[8] But in Sudermann's case Epp was not fair. Somewhat cynically, he emphasized secular motives of the emigrants, especially desire for land. Sudermann however feared that even many who emigrated because of the draft were merely evaders, without deep, core convictions about nonresistance.[9]

The document herein translated is in old German script and may well be the very first draft. It has no paragraph breaks; the breaks are the work of the translator and the editor. Ideas are not always in the best sequences. The style is wordy. To mitigate such problems the editor has left out some redundant phrases, or replaced clumsy ones with words in brackets. Hence the elipses. He has also changed a few of the translator's words or phrases if doing so seemed to improve clarity and to be clearly a matter for choice. He has tried very hard, however, not to change even a nuance of meaning.

Something on Nonresistance

[Apparently by Leonhard Sudermann, 1878]

I have been asked several times to write . . . on this subject. Recently "Zur Heimath" [called for] articles.... Moreover in the May issue of this year I indicated I would write . . . on this subject some other time. May the Lord bless what I write here and let it promote His honor and strengthen the conviction of His true disciples.

I say *true* disciples because the duties of the New Testament covenant are not always expressed clearly enough for the comprehension of the people not captivated by the power of reason. The gospels are the *basic scriptures* with power to convince people, but . . . [without] obedience the majority will never find this power. The Lord Jesus, our great King of Peace, thanked the Father for keeping the truth from the wise and prudent and revealing it to those not of age. We are those underage people when we search the scriptures without preconceived notions of our own. What strange views a person establishes as facts in the word of God as if there were no way to refute them. A Christian has to be really serious to find truth and not merely justification for his own ideas. Then through prayer and struggle he will grasp the truth in light of the Holy Spirit.

The natural mind of man is so veiled that he cannot see any part of God in God, none of the holiness in His holiness, no part of good in what is really good, no evil in evil, no sinfulness in sin. Yes, his mind is so veiled that he imagines that there is good in evil and evil in good—that there is happiness in sin and misery in holiness. Whenever there is no awakening desire in man's heart to clear up these wrong ideas; whenever he does not have that longing to be more holy and inherit eternal life; whenever he does not ask God to enlighten his mind and open his eyes to recognize the justification of his calling and the kingdom he will inherit, then

Rev. Leonhard Sudermann (photo taken in Elbing, West Prussia).

the boundless power of almighty God cannot work within him. This power cannot lead to the living faith and to the eternal truth. This truth is hidden and mysterious. When the Lord does open his eyes to the truth he will identify with the man in Mark 8:24. But if he remains faithful and lets the Spirit of God uncover and judge the sin in his heart, the Lord will touch his eyes again and again and set him straight.

All prejudice aside, in the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit one can certainly see that war and scripture are diametrically opposed . . . . The law of love fulfills the law and is the new law which our Lord Jesus Christ has made our duty. This [new law] is so different from war and all that is connected with it that for those heathen who have just been converted and are caught in the love of Christ, it is beyond comrephension how Christians who believe in the gospel can go out onto the battlefield and use those awful murder weapons against their own brothers. [The converted heathen] have just been taught, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do well to those who hate you, pray for those who offend you and persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven." These words are not ambiguous. Rather, they should serve as *scriptural proof* and . . . [as] *words of power* so enlightening that everyone will know we must abandon all weapons and not thrust swords against each other.

[Some] . . . speak of just wars. Does the gospel allow unjust means for just ends? If that were the case, the foundation upon which the church has built would have to be rejected as bad, and as having originated in disaster. That would be saying, "The end justified the means." If one could reconcile the gospel with deception, cleverness, and domination, then those who work out the war strategies could be excused. But if a Christian finds these methods contrary to his beliefs and if he strongly prefers to gauge his life according to the gospel, what should he do? Or [do] extreme cases [justify] these works of the flesh? [Such works are named] . . . in Galatians 5:20 and 21: envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and the like. If we say a positive "no" to these, then all those who do allow those methods and put them to use are guilty of wickedness. The basic motives for war and bloodshed are selfishness and egoism, together with self-will. These are also the enemy which, according to the gospel, a Christian must fight against. These are the things that . . . [bring] a Christian unhappiness and . . . utter confusion.

God's will is the only true authority that a Christian must obey. A true Christian recognizes this and tries daily to conquer his self-will, to renew the change that comes over him. He strives to attain eternal life and constantly struggles to achieve the good, the pleasing, and the complete will of God according to Romans 12:2. Whoever believes this will [easily understand] . . . that the commandment of love is directly contrary to warfare. Whoever does not believe this will find it very difficult to comprehend the truth, and no amount of persuasion will change him. Natural man cannot comprehend the spirit of God; to him, a spiritual matter seems foolishness—I Cor. 2:14. In Phil. 2:5 the apostle says, "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus." This Savior is constantly placed before us as our example, to pattern ourselves after. Through Him we have our salvation; through Him we are called to be honorable and worthy so we may use this life to prepare for eternity.

Before man can reap the blessings of using this great example he must accept Him as his Savior. If this does not happen we cannot expect him to have faith in Him or be obedient and thankful. Our Lord Jesus would have been far from letting himself be recruited as a soldier. Even a Christian who has not yet reached the depths of belief would admit this, [despite his limited understanding] . . . of the mind of Christ. What is suitable for the Master is suitable for the followers because they are not above their Master but strive to be like Him. They will do everything in their power to become perfect as Christ's mediation has already accomplished perfection in faith. When the word of God describes the church as the body of Christ and each Christian as a member of that body it visualizes a perfect harmony in a community in which members are subject to the head and also to each other, in every way.

In that community the member of the body of Christ may not set limits on his neighborly love. That would be prejudice, a true case of self-love, and an exaggeration of one's own ego. By our very existence as members of the body of Christ we are urged and compelled to put our neighbor in our own shoes. We must accept the neighbor's needs as our own; we must treat his sorrow as our own sorrow. We must also share with our neighbor everything good that happens to us. May there be exceptions to this wonderful Christian morality? Can it be the duty only of the individual but not of the group?

But where, more than in war, is our fellowman treated with greater atrocity, inconsiderateness, inhumanity, and bestiality toward life and property? I think even a heathen must shudder when he comes upon a battlefield and sees the implements of war and the [resulting] devastation . . . . Does Christianity have any right to train its adherents to make Krupp's new, evermore-devastating cannons of steel—and the armored ships made stronger so as to withstand the cannons? Will they then give orders for the cannons to destroy the vessels? Are those people who concentrate on making better weapons of destruction, and on using them to destroy their fellowmen, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness?

Or do anecdotes about a certain Christian as we read them in the papers really tend to convey to us, "That must really be a Christian man according to his remarks, and yet he takes part in all that war business"? We must not join him in forming that conclusion of faith lest we do damage to our faith. If he thinks he can justify that he is consistent, don't you in any way be judgmental. You must not take that risk. He is responsible to his Lord. Do not be too sure; you cannot rely on . . . [the other man] when you stand before the judge. God's word will judge both you and him. It will be up to you to flee from the wrath of the judge.

Furthermore, what a contradiction! For example, two Christian countries go against each other in war. At home in their congregations the ministers pray for victory, each praying for the army of his side. They may schedule special meetings for prayer. Nor do the soldiers out on the battlefield lack for spiritual aid: the army chaplains perform their spiritual duties toward the soldiers and leave nothing undone. There is a special service before each attack to strengthen them for the terrible ordeal they face. I assume the Lord will deal seriously with all pleas and petitions. All this,

which I have described in rather incoherent phrases, is also in all the enemy camps. One gathers that the decisions are the Lord's; however, our divine Guide can give the victory only to one side. Can this kind of prayer in the name of Jesus be according to God's will? Prayers uttered in God's name are uttered to Him alone and He will hear them. When the prayers of two Christians so violently contradict each other, [and] that which is an answer to one in a material way would be the worst disaster for the other, can there be any sign of love one for the other?

What murder this amounts to! Thousands of unconverted human beings suddenly find their time of grace is gone. It happens during war, and many will go contrary to the biblical truth and say that anyone dying in war dies saved. Others will say he is baptized and born again and as such he is saved. How do teachers justify such foolish unbiblical teaching? They serve God in vain. And as for those who listen to them, how disgraced the teachers will be in the presence of those whom they have led so shamefully the wrong way. May the Lord have mercy on them!

No, whoever believes in God and in Jesus Christ as his Savior may not engage in war. Whoever believes that God is omniscient and omnipotent, and also that Christ Jesus is compassionate, honors Him by following Him in the smallest and the greatest of matters. After all, the Redeemer of mankind has promised that not a hair will fall from our heads against His will, and that He abides with his own even unto the end of the world. We have experienced just a small measure of recognition from this comforting assurance [so] that we gain the confidence to put all our trust in Him. We know no evil will befall us if His rod and His staff are near to comfort us. Whoever relies upon his own strength finally has to accept the means that lead to his goals. But he who believes and hopes in God waits upon the help of Him who created heaven and earth and he knows that He who protects him does not sleep; the keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. This was said by our great Prince of Peace who has given His peace to His own and has left it with them and has gone on to found His church. Included are His "royal council decrees."

To this day there is a small group that attempts to uphold the new law of love. Often this group has been found worthy to witness to this confession by undergoing difficult tests and proofs. They are firmly grounded on the Rock and are willing to bear their burdens along with hope for the future glory promised by God. They consider sin, its results and its punishments very serious, and they stretch out their hands to God's promises for the comfort they desire after these hardships. After their fall into sin they have a serious longing for partnership with God.

Besides this group there are also those who are searching throughout the world that has fallen into a curse, trying to find what good is left in it. They exaggerate that good and compare it with the benefits they derive from it as opposed to God's will. They inflate their own importance in an earthly way and they tie themselves to a more worldly community with its pleasures. The closer they get to that community the farther they wander from the will of God and from the people of God. Those who have been born of the flesh have always persecuted the children of the promise. The children of Hagar have always known how to take advantage of the children of Isaac. But the children of promise take comfort in their misery and oppression from the Lord's assurance that in the end the full inheritance will be theirs. Being convinced that "our home is not here" gives them strength for their self-denial.

Those who refuse to take up arms are not moved by fear of death. They do not fear death. To them death is not a messenger of terror; indeed for many of them it fulfills their wish to leave this life and its struggles and enter the haven of peace, where they may rest eternally. Their main purpose is to fulfill the orders of their great Chieftain. As children of peace they strive persistently to honor and witness in word and deed for the gospel of peace *[Evangelium des Friedens]*. The truth of that gospel is their deepest conviction. They want to be representative of this great truth and kingdom of peace. As yet that kingdom has but few followers; nevertheless, this promise carries the conviction that some day the people of this earth will be won over, that the will of God will be done, and that there will be harmony here as there is in heaven.

Every new convert to this truth is tangible evidence that the time is drawing near for their hope to be fulfilled. This fact remains even though there are fools who say, "No God, no religion, no minister." They take the lead in destroying any dependence one might have on a Creator; they squelch any grateful and humble feeling toward a Savior. Nevertheless, they know that it is inevitable. For it has been proclaimed for almost 200 years [that while there are those] . . . who fear for the time the beast will rise from the abyss and proclaim itself to be God, [even they] will never take a stand for the right. But the spirit asserts itself in the hope that the Lord will slay His enemies by the sword of his mouth. The rights of the Lord will prevail and bring on the victory.

A man who holds fast to these promises and stands firm in this faith; he who puts his trust in the future and its wonderful promises; the one who is already treading the path that leads to heaven, will not fall into a state of doubt if he is urged to take part in warfare. He will realize that as a redeemed man of the Lord he has to remain that way. However the one who puts all his values on the present and on temporary things, the one who loses all hope in the things a Christian should hope for as well as the energy and understanding for the important things, that one will give all his interests to other priorities. Undoubtedly he will remain inside the fellowship of nonresistants. As long as it is to his advantage he will continue to defend the articles of nonresistance and to put himself in a position of defending the faith of his fathers. If he can gain materially and morally, he will even judge harshly someone who sacrifices the old confession of faith because of some other earthly advantage or some social advances. And yet he will yield to temptation as soon as he finds his own comfort threatened or as soon as he sees other advantages.

We have examples of this from the final days of our temptations in Russia and in Prussia. Whenever the government passed a new military law, even the churches that were considered the most orthodox and that saw even the slightest change as heresy would [nevertheless] yield to governmental demands [that they] . . . be brought under military law. The suspicion that was generally expressed against America was and still is their apparent excuse for their willingness to give in to the government. Even those who had taken pride in being grounded in the confes-

sion of truth showed no sign of offering themselves as sacrifices for the truth. When the discussion of this submission became more general, the conclusion generally reached was that we might as well give in at once.

Recently . . . Mennonites of the Rhine areas and of Holland sacrificed the confession of nonresistance to their governments, [and so] they were judged to be apostate. It was decided that when the next test came from the King of Peace they would be more true to Him. Unfortunately, they are still unwilling to admit this; they insist they have always remained true to the old confession and have the right to be called Mennonites. When others leave the group as they did, they have to search their hearts and be their own judge about their ambiguity regarding nonresistance. They try to soothe their consciences as though they had never sidestepped the truth in any way. Yet time will soon reveal how they sacrificed this important truth and what disappointments they bring upon themselves and upon their children.

Of course, the long period of rest our people have enjoyed in the recent past has not helped to strengthen our faith and our unique avowal of [it]. Unfortunately, instead of finding satisfaction in the truth of our confession, the leaders of the churches have . . . [failed to mediate the truth to the younger generation]. To be specific, they wanted to avoid any possibility of severing good relationships with their government and focus all their attention on the decisive doctrine of nonresistance. There was always the fear of weakening the endurance of the monarchs.

It has actually come to the point that our articles of faith have been changed so much into an article of nonresistance that it is utterly impossible to get the true meaning from it any more. In Molotschna, when our privilege regarding nonresistance was under attack, there were numerous meetings of the elders to discuss the matter. I attended those meetings myself as long as there was hope of maintaining our freedom in the future. At that time it seemed strange to me that, even among those who were considered pillars of the church, there was questioning about the reasons for the article of nonresistance. They wanted clear decisive answers in case they were asked about it since they themselves knew no reason for it. If one considered what the article said, there seemed no basis for the questions raised. So I called my fellow elders and other capable brethren together to ask them to contribute some clear and concise statements . . . [to back] this article. Then in a general meeting this could be discussed and the articles could be tested. As a result we could perhaps put together a compact, positive statement to supplement where things were missing [and] to formulate an applicable foundation for us and for our posterity. The latter can then see in clear words just what the issues were, why objections would be raised, and what they should consider in taking a stand on their own. Then they will be able to speak intelligently to the objections that will be raised.

If we as children of peace proclaim the gospel of peace and assure our fellow sinners that Jesus made peace when he died on the cursed wooden cross, how could we possibly approve of war? More than that—we should do all we can to bring about what we proclaim. It would be proper for every nonresistant Christian to be a witness and to consider it his duty to see that this becomes a universal conviction. He should help to prepare the way for the complete fulfillment of the words prophesied in Isaiah 2:4 and in Micah 4:3. In the 11th chapter the prophet Isaiah makes us aware of the fact that the whole creation will be renewed in victory. Indeed we are no less appointed to make this prophecy come true. Oh that the Lord may make His word come true within us, that He might set watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem who will never resort to silence neither day nor night, but who will be mindful of the Lord! May there be no silence among us either, not until Jerusalem has been prepared and has been established as a place of praise here on earth!

ENDNOTES

[1]For biography see Sudermann's own *"Lebenslauf . . . ,"* in either *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 21 (29 Aug. - 3 Oct. 1900) or *Herold der Wahrheit*, 37 (15 Sep. - 15 Oct. 1900); and *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, IV: 653.

[2]Leonhard Sudermann, *From Russia to America: In Search of Freedom*, trans. and intro. by Elmer Suderman (Steinbach, Man.: Derksen Printers, 1974). Original: Leonhard Sudermann, *Eine Deputationsreise von Russland nach Amerika vor vierundswanzig Jahren* (Elkhart, Ind.: Mennonitische Verlagshandlung, 1897).

[3]Note 1.

[4]Pp. 28-29 of the English edition.

[5][Leonhard Sudermann], *"Abschiedsrede Gehalten am 20st. July* [sic] *vor des Jahres 1876 vor der Mennonitengemeine* [sic] *in Berdyansk, Sud-Russland* [sic] *von L. Sudermann."* Typed farewell address to Mennonite congregation, 20 July 1876, at Berdyansk, south-Russia; f. 25, Leonhard Sudermann papers, Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

[6]Collection cited note 5.

[7]Leonhard Sudermann, *"Die Denkmäler, die sich lebendige Christen setzen," Zur Heimath*, 4 (1 May 1878), 69-70.

[8]Gross, Leonard, ed. "The Coming of the Russian Mennonites to America: An Analysis by Johann Epp, Mennonite Minister in Russia, 1875," doc. trans. by Elizabeth Bender, *MQR*, 48 (Oct. 1974), 460-75.

[9]Sudermann, *"Die Denkmäler,"* 70.

Mennonite Rhetoric in World War I: Keeping the Faith

by Susan Schultz Huxman

This article is an abbreviated version of chapter seven in Huxman's doctoral dissertation entitled: "In The World, But Not Of It: Mennonite Rhetoric in World War I As An Enactment of Paradox," 1987.

American involvement in World War I became an engrossing experience for all American citizens in the great crusade to make the world safe for democracy. While most Americans readily heeded the war call, the Mennonites envisioned the war not as a righteous crusade, but as a violent storm that would disrupt their nonconformist peaceful lives. When America reached out to pull Mennonites into the war effort, they tried diligently to remain uninvolved. Mennonites were eventually forced to recognize, however, that they were inescapably part of a militaristic America and an angry world and that refusing to take up arms against the enemy would require an explanation to each other, the government, and a fervently patriotic public.

Mennonites were faced with limited rhetorical choices given their religious ideology. Yet for a people commonly noted for their rhetorical deficiencies, Mennonites juggled four prominent rhetorical postures from 1914-1918: deliberative, confrontative, apologetic, and reaffirmative.[1] This article examines how Mennonite rhetoric functioned to reaffirm the righteousness of Mennonitism. In the face of public pressure to join the crusade to make the world safe for democracy, preserving the faith became a crucial rhetorical posture for the church's integrity.

Most of the rhetoric Mennonites generated during America's involvement in the war served the essential function of faith maintenance. Mennonites were fearful that the world crisis would undermine the very existence of their church. Apprehensively, Mennonites observed that "The world has become a neighborhood and we are 'in the world' as we have never been before."[2] Acknowledgements of worldly encroachment made Mennonites keenly aware that, if their faith were to be preserved and the membership remain strong, it would be essential for members to reaffirm the righteousness of Mennonitism to themselves and to each other.

Rhetorical transactions with each other served a reflexive task of psychological refurbishment. The very practice of verbalizing their beliefs reconstituted their selves. To a significant degree, Mennonite rhetoric fulfilled a consumatory function for its members.[3] Articulating their beliefs, fears, suggestions, and admonishments in print carried intrinsic worth; it aided in reducing the uncertainty of espousing an unpopular position with its share of penalties.

Specifically, the Mennonites' practice of defending their religious convictions to each other was characterized by several reaffirmative themes. First, refamiliarizing members with the biblical and historical basis of nonresistance became an important way to ground Mennonitism in a relevant epistemological framework and instill confidence in the faith's legitimacy. Second, re-emphasizing the importance of membership in a select body of believers became a necessity in maintaining membership loyalty. Third, drawing sharp distinctions between Mennonitism and militarism became an important way to prevent compromise or half-way stances that could lead to wholesale adoption of the Crusade mentality. Finally, redefining the war to emphasize its positive aspects while simultaneously diminishing its significance became a crucial strategy to help members survive as devoted Christians in a world at war and to emerge from the experience with minimal psychological battle scars.

An Entrenched Stance Against War

One of the prominent reaffirmative themes that surfaced in a number of Mennonite publications was confirming the biblical and historical basis of nonresistance. Justifying nonresistance on these grounds was essential for Mennonites to reinforce the commitment entailed in their faith. Proving that Mennonites were dutiful Christians involved using the Bible to support nonresistance. Mennonite leaders encouraged members to be well-versed in relevant New Testament passages that addressed the evilness of war. As it was, Mennonite leaders feared that some members had become unfamiliar with what the Scriptures said on the subject of war. When General Conference (GC) leaders convened in April 1917 to discuss the war, they expressed their concern:

> The long period of rest and the supposed security have been detrimental for some. Many many [sic] did not know on what scripture passages our confession of nonresistance was founded, especially among the young people . . . . [So] the Committee decided to publish two collections of scripture passages in order to still remedy this deficiency to some extent.[4]

Daniel Kauffman, the ideologue and authoritative bishop among Mennonite Church (MC) Mennonites, made it his crusade throughout the course of the war to encourage members to stand firm on God's word in times of crisis. In one of many passages in the *Gospel Herald* where the editor urged readers to get back to the Bible, he wrote: "[T]he testimony of Christ and the apostles with reference to carnal warfare is so clear (Matt. 5:38-45; 26:51, 52; John 18:36; Rom. 12:17-21; II Cor. 10:4; etc., etc., etc., etc.,) and emphatic that we can not for one moment think of surrendering the nonresistant faith."[5] Establishing the biblical foundation for nonresistance was so critical to the reaffirmation of their faith prin-

ciples in these tumultuous times that Aaron Loucks, president of the Mennonite Publishing Company, decided that funds should be appropriated to print a handy pocket-size tract that, among other things, served as a concordance of relevant passages on nonresistance.[6]

Printing biblical passages that supported nonresistance was a way in which Mennonite leaders could help members see that their position was founded on the essentials of Christianity. Furthermore, because the Bible was primary evidence for justifying nonresistance, Mennonite leaders were also able to help members make a relevant defense of their faith to outsiders, without having to rely on other forms of Mennonite doctrine, which could be interpreted by outsiders as obscure and irrelevant.

Mennonites quoted Scripture to show that they were dutiful Christians in maintaining nonresistance during war. Yet to further demonstrate that their doctrine was and always had been scripturally based, leaders frequently reprinted the central tenet of Mennonitism: the Dordrecht Confession of Faith adopted at Dordrecht, Holland, in 1632.[7] This document relied heavily upon Scripture in explaining the Mennonite aversion to war. The Dordrecht Confession of Faith was ample proof that Mennonitism was biblically based. Its repeated appearance in Mennonite tracts served a larger purpose: that of proving to themselves, if not to outsiders, that Mennonites were sincere conscientious objectors; they had not, as the public suspected, temporarily adopted nonresistance as a convenient way to escape the present world conflict.

Only The Strong In Heart Need Apply

Perhaps the Mennonites of twentieth-century America would have been hard-pressed to emulate the stoic postures of European Anabaptists, but they were, nonetheless, still a hearty breed of devoted Christians and members of a church that demanded very high standards of its followers. To encourage members to remain faithful to their church throughout the war, Mennonite rhetors re-emphasized the importance of their membership in a select body of believers. Giving members a sense of pride in their religious affiliation served an essential reaffirmative purpose. Church leaders pointed out that Mennonitism stood for something distinctive, and that many people could not meet the requirements of the church because it demanded too much of a Christian sacrifice.

Daniel Kauffman's extremely popular and influential book, *The Conservative Viewpoint*, published at the height of the war, outlined the special character of the Mennonite faith. Unlike other Christians, Kauffman intimated, Mennonites attempted to be examples of God's paradoxical dictum: Be ye in the world, but not of it. This meant that Mennonites had to be "models of holiness and purity," "God's representatives on earth," and "lights to the world," and perhaps most difficult of all to be both "pilgrims," because "we are in the world to do all the good we can," and "strangers," because "we should not live for this world, but for the world to come."[8]

Standards like these were not for the weak at heart. And Mennonites understood that their strength would not come from a large following. In its smallness, Mennonites contended, their church was distinctive, not weak and obscure, but strong and special. Providing counter-arguments to the common assumption that the power and strength of a group is determined by its size was important for several reasons. First, it was easy to assume that since Mennonites were one of the smaller bodies of Christians, their demands for complete military exemption need not be taken seriously, and, second, because the church could not show a large following, they were often categorized as an obscure religious group. These charges were detrimental to keeping the faith strong in a crisis situation. H. Frank Reist, editor of the smaller MC organ, the *Christian Monitor*, attempted to remedy the potential damage of such charges by comparing stringent requirements for joining the Mennonite church with the lax requirements for joining other churches. He wrote:

> We believe that it would be desirable to have and maintain some high standard for applicants, one that . . . will require of all applicants certain evidences of fitness for church membership. The tendency has been to lower the standard. It is a very easy matter to 'join church' . . . . The result is that churches today are loaded down with unconverted members who hinder her in her spiritual progress and service for the Master.[9]

In a similar vein, S. M. Grubb, the progressive thinker and editor of the GC paper *The Mennonite*, emphasized the special character of the faith by emphatically denying the idea that smallness meant weakness: "If our church is not large in numbers, there are a number of reasons why we prize it all the more for its being our church," he countered, adding "[T]he Mennonite church aims not at increasing its size, being satisfied rather to increase the respect for its principles which insist that there must be a separation from the world." Grubb, like Reist, went so far as to claim that many people could never become Mennonites because the church required levels of "fitness" or Christian sacrifice that were too high. "[T]hose who are outside of it," he wrote, "are frequently out because they could not come in if they wanted to unless they changed both their way of living and believing."[10]

With the high expectations of members, Mennonites had difficulty attracting outsiders in peace times. When the world was engulfed in war, the church had to prepare itself for losing members that it had attracted and yet somehow find ways to persevere. Mennonite leaders braced themselves for watching fellow members leave the flock in the face of extreme pressures from outside. After several readers of *The Mennonite* voiced their concern to the editor about the fact that some Mennonites in their community had slipped away to other churches during the present crisis, Grubb responded rather callously: "Such losses came about because our aims and ideals were too high for the shallow-minded to approve and our very losses along this line have been our gain, because we have remained what we set out to be instead of permitting our standard to be lowered for no other reasons than to acquire mere bigness."[11] To be sure, Grubb's line of reasoning appealed to those who elected to endure the trials of war and stand firm in the faith as the real Christians, but it failed to reflect an element of compassion or forgiveness, or a recognition of human foibles—important traits for a group of believers who called themselves Christ's disciples.

In point of fact, Mennonite congregations did not deal with wayward members so severely. Bishops of the Springdale Church in Waynesboro, Virginia decided that "since instances of disloyalty are so varied—some the result of weakness or extreme pressure, others as evidence of disloyalty or indifference to the doctrine of nonresistance—we

recommend that the disposition of individual cases be left to the local officials." On a personal note the bishops added: "We believe due sympathy should be accorded to right meaning brethren who in case of severe pressure yielded a point of doctrine . . . ."[12] The bishops of Lancaster County who met in Pennsylvania to discuss, among other things, the issue of sagging membership granted much leniency to those who in a weak moment had compromised their faith principles. They agreed that "the brethren who have taken active service in the army, and those who enlisted, may be reinstated to membership on making a full confession of transgression." For the brethren who accepted noncombatant service, the repentance consisted of an apology.[13]

Although the idea of a faith comprised of those who had never yielded to temptation might have appealed to church leaders in theory, put into practice the policy would have seriously eroded the faith. Being in the world, the church would not be unblemished. Mennonites would have their share of prodigal sons and daughters. Under certain circumstances some members would sacrifice principle for expediency. That Mennonites by and large invited back into the fold those who had once walked away was evidence of a church that cared deeply about its losses and wanted desperately to avoid religious obscurity.

While Mennonite rhetors understood that the problem of dwindling church membership in their own faith needed to be addressed forthrightly, they were much more comfortable and willing to discuss the faltering membership of other nonresistant bodies. Self-examination for the purpose of exposing weaknesses is never gratifying. By exposing the weaknesses of others, members could divert attention from their own troubles, take some comfort in knowing that their church was not in the serious trouble that others were, and, ultimately, provide further incentive to remain firm in the faith.

The practices of both the Church of the Brethren and the Quakers were frowned upon by Mennonite rhetors as encouraging a lax faith commitment. One MC member hoped his fellow believers would learn a lesson from the serious mistakes committed by the Church of the Brethren. "We have seen what compromise has done to the Church of the Brethren," he began gravely. "They have accepted army reconstruction and other non-combatant service and as a result their name is scarcely mentioned in connection with non-resistance." His bleak pronouncement included the observation that "they have manifestly lost their identity on this principle. The public has not stamped them as C.O.'s and probably they are not deserving of this high privilege."[14] Less condemnatory, but no less dissatisfied with their actions, the *Gospel Herald* made the Quakers the subject of a lesson for their own faith. "Among those who protest against connecting pacifism with disloyalty are the Society of Friends or Quakers. They are manifesting their loyalty by mobilizing their young men for service. While holding aloof from actual fighting they mean to serve their country in the way of hospital service, relief work etc.,—an attitude which is at least questionable for nonresistant people."[15]

The Society of Friends, the Church of the Brethren, even Mennonites in Germany, compromised faith principles in some way, and hence ran the risk of dilluting, if not washing out entirely, an historic nonresistant stance. Reporting the questionable and unfaithful actions of other groups gave Mennonites further impetus to reaffirm their own religious identity.

A Battle Between Competing Scenes:

Distinguishing themselves from other wayward nonresistant bodies was one way in which Mennonites could clarify their own identity and preserve an aura of superiority. Distancing themselves from the crusade mentality became a more important way to protect their distinctiveness.

Rhetors of the faith were able to draw the lines between Mennonitism and militarism by calling attention to the dangers of compromise. With its repeated use in Mennonite tracts in negative contexts, the word "compromise" became a baneful concept. Compromise meant weakness, selling-out one's principles, giving in to sin, and placing the church in jeopardy. Kauffman's favorite sermon topic was to warn members against the perils of compromise. Using his editorial discretion, Kauffman devoted a good deal of space in the MC's church paper to spell out the dangerous long-term ramifications of a compromising stance both to the individual and the church. With so much consternation expressed over the consequences of giving in to external pressures, Mennonite rhetors, like Kauffman, hoped to intensify the importance of clinging to the essentials of their faith. "History has proven that compromise in one generation means surrender in the next," Kauffman flatly told readers of the *Gospel Herald*.[16] To Mennonites of the Indiana-Michigan conference, he preached: "To draw the line on all war measures is the only satisfactory platform to stand upon. Let us be consistent. If we thought that war was right we should go into it with all our might. If it is not right then draw the line on all war measures. We are in a testing time. Compromise means trouble."[17]

Silas M. Grubb.

Mennonites recognized that the distinctions between right and wrong, good and evil, morality and immorality, etc. must always be presented clearly, simply, and in polar extremes to prevent "half-way stances." In order to preserve Mennonite identity, members were forced to choose between Mennonitism or militarism. Straddling the fence was not an alternative. This strategy confirms an important dimension of reaffirmative rhetoric that has been adopted by many groups intent upon reconstituting their identity in the face of external pressures. In order to enhance their identity as an out-group, there is often a need expressed among group members to distance themselves from their adversaries; the very process of identifying a self involves identifying against others.[18] By identifying

against a war mentality, Mennonite rhetors could thereby delineate their own position—locate themselves by contrast. Such a strategy necessarily becomes self-persuasive and confirmatory.

The polarization between Mennonitism and militarism, insofar as it was a battle between the secular and sacred world, kingdom of God versus the kingdom of man, was actually a battle between competing scenes, not, as theory would dictate, between persons. The "enemy" was an entire way of life. Belief systems were in conflict, not individuals. To describe the conflict in these terms depersonalized the confrontation. By identifying the antagonism as between competing scenes, Mennonites could issue apologetic statements in an effort to identify with patriotic Americans while at the same time issue reaffirmative statements in an effort to identify against militarism.

When Aaron Loucks published and circulated the popular pocket-size tract on nonresistance, he contributed to the efforts of polarizing the two world views. In form and content the tract accentuated the great distinctions between good and evil and reduced the complexities of war to simple, clear-cut issues. On both sides of the credit card size tract were the two sides, militarism and Mennonitism, in dramatic juxtaposition. Readers received in capsulized form testimony of "The Warrior" versus "The Christian" and the foundations of "Nonresistance" and "War."[19] Loucks made the evils of war and the goodness of peace strikingly clear by using reluctant testimony, a strategy by which the source adds credibility to the message precisely because he has nothing to gain by stating it and everything to lose. By quoting "noted warriors," Loucks enhanced the credibility of his devastating depiction of war. Below the warriors' testimony lay "The Christian's Duty,"—a series of Bible verses that served as a code by which all good men lived. Strategically, the Bible passages chosen for the Christian's honor code reflected the Mennonite position exactly.

Loucks "facts concerning war" helped maintain the gulf between competing scenes. The lines were clearly drawn between war and peace, good and evil. Loucks adopted an absolutist stance in order to polarize the world of the Christian and the world of the warrior. "All war is evil" the tract asserted. No gradations between just and unjust wars, good and bad soldiers existed. Such universal claims also gave the tract a distinct ahistorical flavor. It was not just applicable for Mennonites in the crisis of the Great War; rather, it was relevant for all times and all places. Its ahistorical character, however, also gave the impression that Mennonites were an apolitical people who owed no loyalties to any country.

Taking Control of The Crisis

It was one thing for Mennonites to find rhetorical means by which to reconfirm the righteousness of their church identity, it was quite another for them to actually go about their daily routine without events of the war controlling them. The war loomed larger than life for many Americans. As a relatively small religious group, it would have been very easy for members to become overwhelmed, if not paralyzed, by the war's insatiable demands for sacrifice and its rude intrusion on community tranquility. Mennonite writers, who before United States intervention had grimly stated that: "It is idle to dream of a war-less world," and "Our faith in the sanity of the world has fallen to a point where it disappears,"[20] were quick to recognize that such comments were patently inappropriate for helping members remain faithful in a crisis situation. By the time America had entered the fray, such expressions of hopelessness and despair had tapered considerably.[21] The task before Mennonite leaders now was to alter the impression of the war as a "violent storm" that pinned their church to either a defensive or a defenseless posture. Mennonite rhetoric designed to convince members that the war need not control their actions was characterized by two seemingly contradictory strategies: to celebrate the war as a "day of opportunity" that would test their faith and to dwarf the significance of the war by transcending their present situation.

In several issues of the *Gospel Herald*, Daniel Kauffman repeatedly advised: "In the midst of trials is our brightest opportunity to shine for the Master."[22] The *Christian Evangel*, the small GC affiliate edited by Benjamin Esch, proclaimed: "This is a day of testing for those societies who make the claim of being Christian, and their character brought under the full light of the gospel."[23] The *Christian Monitor* also voiced enthusiasm for interpreting the present situation as an opportune time for members to show the world that they were devout Christians. "We as a Church are today face to face with an opportunity to give a practical testimony for Christ such as has seldom or ever confronted her," Reist exclaimed.[24] Subscribers to *The Mennonite* were presented with these encouraging words: "The present war is an unequaled opportunity for us to demonstrate, if we can, the immense superiority of the gospel of peace and non-resistance."[25]

Reversing the perception of the war from an unfortunate to a fortunate experience enhanced the Mennonites' desire to remain part of the church. But if the war presented a grand opportunity to demonstrate their Mennonite identity, how, exactly, were they to go about meeting the challenge in their home communities? The answer that Mennonite rhetors provided was to emulate the actions of key biblical characters, like the proverbial Good Samaritan. Playing the role of the Good Samaritan entailed supporting the Red Cross for S. M. Grubb. He claimed: "If I cannot be a soldier, I can and ought at least to be a good Samaritan."[26] Grubb rationalized that because persons who were killing were in great need, Mennonites needed to be dutiful Christians—Good Samaritans—and help their fallen brethren, not because they were militaristic Americans, but because they were part of the human family.

MC leaders also used the Good Samaritan comparison, but in a slightly different context. The role was used to justify the importance of Mennonites finding charitable works that were dissociated from the military arm of the government. J. E. Hartzler instructed:

> Let us not content ourselves in walking with the "be good" fellows who passed by the man who fell among thieves. Let us join hearts and hands with the "do good" man who came with oil and wine and carried the half dead man to the hotel and paid all his doctor bills. The good Samaritan was non-resistant but he did a service which the world shall never forget. No people on earth are in better position just now than are the Mennonites.[27]

Acting the role of the Good Samaritan gave Mennonites a way to reconcile their loyalties to God and country. Mennonites could maintain their nonresistant stance and their image as hard-working Christians, yet help those in need and be seen as loyal Americans because Jesus taught his followers to be good neighbors to all persons.

Another inventive strategy Mennonites used to avoid letting the events of the war dominate their lives was to downplay its significance, a strategy which would appear to contradict attempts to celebrate the war as a day of opportunity. The war could not be significant and insignificant at the same time, or could it? For a people set on being in the world, but not of it, the decision to make both arguments in an effort to maintain control of events made perfect sense. As "pilgrims" in the world, Mennonites were instructed to be "God's representatives on Earth," not just in peace times but in war times too. True disciples of Christ would view the war as an opportunity to shine for the Master. As "strangers" in the world, Mennonites were instructed to live "not for this world but for the world to come." Loyal followers of the Gospel would view the war as a necessary evil of the world that should be kept in perspective lest they became too absorbed in the affairs of this life.

In keeping with Christ's teaching to be strangers in the world, Daniel Kauffman urged members not to let the war control their lives because "It is not the most important thing before us." He continued: "We are apt, in the time of noise and turmoil and clamor of war, to lose sight of things less noisy but of far more importance . . . . Let us apply ourselves to the great work of strengthening the Church . . . ."[28] Kauffman transcended the immediate concerns generated by the war to focus upon matters "of far more importance" to the devout Christian. Passages like this served to distract members from contemplating the anxieties of war pressures, and helped to preserve a semblance of tranquility and separation from the world. The *Gospel Herald* was not the only forum in which Kauffman avoided a discussion of war issues. *The Conservative Viewpoint*, was silent on the war. Despite the fact that Kauffman saw so many "problems" facing the Mennonite church, as evidenced by a table of contents which identifies everything from dress problems to publication problems, the influence of the war was neither a cause or consequence of them.[29]

Kauffman's belief that there were more important matters than the war for members to attend was shared by the editors of the other Mennonite newspapers. During the course of the war, the layouts of the five major Mennonite periodicals regularly intermixed the numerous church-related subjects with only a few articles that addressed the war. In all five newspapers between the years 1917-1919, there was never an entire issue devoted to war concerns. In fact, with the exception of the GC newspaper *Der Herold*, edited by C. E. Krehbiel for all German-speaking Mennonites, rarely was there an entire page devoted to war concerns. *Der Herold* provided the notable exception primarily due to its advertising policy.[30] Unlike American periodicals, which featured war-torn cities or patriotic G. I.'s and acquainted readers with names of battles, generals and casualties in order to make the war real for Americans back home, Mennonite newspapers closed their columns to war reports in order to keep the outside world from infringing on their lives; the less Mennonites had to know about the war, the less they were reminded that they held a nonresistant position in a resisting world.

The editors of Mennonite papers felt much more comfortable giving coverage to such subjects as mission work, Bible study, Mennonite history, births, deaths, marriages, and other community news. It is of particular interest to look at the front-page of the *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite* in the issue after war had been declared. The *Gospel Herald* gave the news of America's entrance into the war one column on the first page. Yet getting equal coverage on the first page was an article discussing whether or not there was such a thing as degrees of sinfulness. America's entrance into the war did not even rate front-page coverage in *The Mennonite*. Rather, Grubb decided to print an article of two columns on page four, alongside a three-column article that argued that "ministers of the gospel of today would preach better sermons if they would get more physical exercise."[31] From an outsider's journalistic perspective, juxtaposing a subject that warranted screaming headlines with a subject so trivial that it barely warranted a blurb in a humor column was the epitome of gross error on the editor's part. But from a Mennonite perspective, it would not have been appropriate to emphasize a worldly concern at the expense of a church concern.

In Mennonite publications, war news had to compete with church news. By refusing to consider the war the most pressing news of the century, Mennonite rhetors could distract their fellow members from dwelling on an unpleasant subject and remain faithful to their Scriptural paradox: Be ye in the world but not of it. When editors refused to give war news any larger headlines than they gave to community news, they were giving the impression of "business as usual." Mennonites were a people of the Bible bent on doing constructive church work, and although the war intruded upon their lifestyle, Mennonites refused to give it their undivided attention. In deflecting attention from the war to dwell on Christian concerns, the war became a less real threat to the church.

Mennonite rhetoric that aimed to downplay the significance of the war was also characterized by a tendency to dwell in the past or future, but not in the present.[32] Specifically, this took the form of focussing on the glorious past and future of the church. Highlighting the glorious past of their martyred ancestors was one way to dwarf the present. When Mennonite writers reminded members of the barbaric torture that the early Mennonites endured for their peace stance, they were also reminded that their present ordeal involved much milder forms of verbal and physical abuse that could not compare with the hardships suffered by their heroic forebears. The world war appeared much less threatening to the church when it was compared to the trials suffered by the early Mennonites.[33]

Reliving a glorious, and sometimes troubled, past was one way to rob the present of its reality, another way was to hope for a better future. Mennonite leaders frequently stressed the great rewards that would be forthcoming for the true Christian who remained a staunch believer in Christ's peace principles. Two scriptural passages frequently found in Mennonite periodicals that transcended the world crisis included: John 18:36: "My Kingdom is not of this world," and Col. 3:1, 2: "Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth."[34] Kauffman frankly stated: "Life here is a little thing compared with life over yonder . . . Let us look at life from this standpoint only."[35] Since devout Christians were in the hands of God, it did not matter if they had to endure persecution here on earth. They would be justly rewarded by God in the future.

With four reaffirmative themes designed to refurbish their image as loyal Mennonites, Mennonite rhetors composed an essential rhetorical posture to insure the church's survival. But then

Mennonites affirmed "an extraordinary position"[36] which required a host of persuasive arguments to maintain.

ENDNOTES

[1]"Rhetorical posture" is an inclusive term that subsumes purpose, strategies, tone, role, and argument. Deliberative address is concerned with the expediency and efficacy of domestic and foreign policy issues. Confrontative address is comprised of exposing wrongdoing, creating guilt, yet capitalizing on shared values. Apologetic address aims to rebuild a rhetor's tarnished character. Reaffirmative address attempts to revitalize a faith already held by an audience. This conception of posturing is mine. Mennonites made no distinctions between their rhetorical stances. Rhetorical postures were identified in order to showcase the rhetorical complexity and inventiveness of Mennonite rhetors. "Mennonite rhetoric" is restricted to the two largest of the seventeen recognized bodies of Mennonites in North America: the Mennonite Church (MC's) or (Old Mennonites) and General Conference (GC's).

[2]"Opportunities and Responsibilities," *Christian Monitor* XII (March 1920), 455. Among other things, the article is a retrospective view of the war experience.

[3]A consumatory purpose of communication is accomplished at the moment of its consumption; it is an end in itself. The primary appeal of consumatory rhetoric is its affirming power for the rhetors who generated it. See Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1950); Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 4 (Spring 1971).

[4]"Report of the Special Committee For Freedom from Military Service of The Western District Conference to the 26th Conference," *Minutes Western District Conference 1906-1917* (Mennonite Library and Archives, MLA), Unpublished, p. 39.

[5][Daniel Kauffman, ed.], "Keep Your Vision Clear," *Gospel Herald* 30 May 1918, p. 146. The brackets symbolize assumed authorship. Rarely did editors of Mennonite newspapers leave their signature on their editorials.

[6]Aaron Loucks, "Nonresistance," Tract No. 153 (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, n. d.).

[7]"A Statement of Our Position On Military Service as Adopted by The Mennonite Church Aug. 29, 1917," rpt. *Gospel Herald* 6 Sept. 1917, p. 420.

[8]Daniel Kauffman, *The Conservative Viewpoint* (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1918), p. 15-16.

[9][H. Frank Reist, ed.], "Standards For Church Membership," *Christian Monitor* 10 (Aug. 1918), p. 612.

[10][S. M. Grubb, ed.], "Editorial," *The Mennonite* 28 June 1917, p. 4.

[11][Grub, ed.], "Editorial," p. 4.

[12]Conference Minutes of the Virginia conference of The Mennonite Church, 6-7 Dec. 1918, Waynesboro, VA; unpublished and rpt. in *Mennonite Statements on Peace and Social Concerns* ed. Urbane Peachey (Akron, Ohio: MCC U. S. Peace Section, 1980) p. 92.

[13]Conference Minutes of the Lancaster conference Board of Bishops, 2 Oct. 1919, Lancaster, Pa; unpublished and rpt. in *Mennonite Statements*, p. 90.

[14]Letter from O. B. Gerig to J. S. Hartzler, 9 Oct. 1918; Loucks and Hartzler Correspondence 1918-1919 Box 3, Archives of the Mennonite Church (AMC), Goshen College.

[15][Kauffman, ed.], "Editorial," *Gospel Herald* 26 April 1917, p. 72.

[16][Kauffman, ed.], "Conscientious Objector and The Issues Involved," *Gospel Herald* 25 July 1918, p. 290.

[17]Message preached by Daniel Kauffman to the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, Wakanesa, Indiana, 5, 6, June 1918; rpt. in Indiana-Michigan Conference Minutes 1918, Mennonite Historical Library (MHL, Goshen College), p. 238.

[18]Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (rpt. Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1973), p. 193.

[19]Aaron Loucks, "Nonresistance," Tract No. 153.

[20][Kauffman, ed.], "Editorial," *Gospel Herald* 29 April 1915, p. 65; [Grubb, ed.], "Editorial," *The Mennonite* 16 March 1916, p. 4.

[21]Grim accounts of the devastation of war, while commonplace in Mennonite newspapers as long as the war remained in Europe, became increasingly rare after U. S. intervention.

[22][Kauffman, ed.], "Our Opportunity In This Hour of Trial," *Gospel Herald* 26 Sept. 1918, p. 450; "Things Worth Remembering," 9 May 1918, p. 99; "Conscientious Object and The Issues Involved," p. 291.

[23]A. Augspurger, "The Mennonite In Reply To Dr. Gray's Article: What The Bible Teaches About War," *Christian Evangel* 7 (Sept. 1917), p. 1.

[24][Reist, ed.], "Editorial," *Christian Monitor* 9 (Sept. 1917), p. 261.

[25]H. G. Allebach, "Why Is Our Church Not Bigger Than It Is? Is It Lack of Opportunity?" *The Mennonite* 27 Sept. 1917, p. 5.

[26][Grubb, ed.], "What Is The Message of A Mennonite Minister To His People In War?" *The Mennonite* 18 April 1918, p. 4.

[27]J. E. Hartzler, "Are Mennonites Slackers?" *Gospel Herald* 13 Dec. 1917, p. 683.

[28][Kauffman, ed.], "War Problems For Non-Resistant People," *Gospel Herald* 17 May 1917, p. 115.

[29]*The Conservative Viewpoint* reads like a modern Jeremiad. Yet the seven problems Kauffman identifies in the Mennonite Church have nothing to do with the war, giving the book an ahistorical flavor that effectively transcended the troubles of the crisis.

[30]The five newspapers referred to include: *The Mennonite*, *Gospel Herald*, *Christian Monitor*, *Christian Evangel*, and *Der Herold*. The latter was a journalistic experiment in Mennonite church papers. One of its notable distinctions was a liberal policy on advertisements. C. E. Krehbiel, its editor, made no distinctions between Mennonite and non-Mennonite advertisements. As a result, the paper was often sprinkled heavily with official government advertisements encouraging support for the war. Of course, the German newspaper also took a more active interest in the affairs of the war precisely because of its readers' cultural heritage. But like all Mennonite Church papers, most of the articles did not provide news from the battlefronts.

[31]J. M. Kreider, "Farm For A Living While You Preach," *The Mennonite* 12 April 1917, p. 4.

[32]Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 70-71. Hoffer observes that there is no more potent dwarfing of the present than by viewing it as a mere link between a glorious past and a glorious future—a strategy that is important for group cohesion.

[33]Good examples of the genuflecting on Mennonite martyrs include: [Grubb, ed.], "War At Last!" *The Mennonite* 12 April 1917, p. 4; Gerald Dahlke, *A Defense of the Mennonites Against Recent Attacks Made Upon Them* (n.p.: n.p., [1917]), p. 9; Aaron Loucks, "The Church and War," *Gospel Herald* 26 July 1917, p. 314. Jacob C. Meyer, "The Supreme Test," *Gospel Herald* 6 Feb. 1919, p. 804; [Kauffman, ed.], "Things Worth Remembering," p. 99.

[34]See for example, *Christian Evangel* 7 (July 1917), p. 162; *Gospel Herald* 9 May 1918, p. 98; 12 April 1917, p. 1; 26 July 1917, p. 314.

[35][Kauffman, ed.], "Our Opportunity," p. 450.

[36]Ibid.

Deciphering Seventeenth Century Napkins: Testimony to a Mennonite Family's Way of Life

by Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen

"You can tell a lot about an airline by the way they design their (sic) napkin" was the slogan of a recent ad of the German airline Lufthansa. Featured over most of the page is a snow-white damask napkin, fastened with a buttonhole to the top of the passenger's shirt, while a delicate forkfull of delectable food is lifted across the napkin.[2]

Similarly, the figurated linen damask napkins from the households of seven successive generations of two prominent Mennonite families, the Linnichs and the van der Smissens of Altona in Northern Germany, now in the collections of the Kauffman Museum, "can tell a lot" about late 16th through 18th century Northern European life and thought, the cultural context in which Mennonites became established."

What is white figurated linen "damask"?

The word "damask" in its origin was used, according to van Ysselstein, to describe the linear decorations of contrasting metals of cuirasses and swords made by the armourers of the Middle East, for which the city of Damascus was a key trading center. The word "damask" came to mean a fine and indestructable adornment using principally curved lines. Weaving techniques which use curved line patterns then came to be called "damask." Byzantine weavers of the 5th and 6th centuries produced silk damasks in the modern sense of the word. By the 15th century figurated damask cloth had been introduced from Italy to already well established linen weaving centers in the Low Countries. Courtray (Kortrijk in today's Belgium), and Haarlem (in today's Netherlands) became the foremost centers of figurated linen damask production through the 17th and 18th centuries. The word damask then became synonymous with white linen tablecloths and napkins of high quality.[3]

As was the case with bed linens, table linens came in various qualities, from coarse and unbleached, greyish-brown flax, to white linen damask woven so tightly of such fine yarn that it had a silken quality. The patterns of white figurated linen damask only become visible when light falls onto the fabric from a certain angle—the ultimate of understated luxury!

Damask table linens of the early 16th century, described in inventories of European royalty, had geometric or flower patterns, or scenes from the Old and the New Testaments.[4] The oldest surviving linen damask feature coats of arms. Historical events and classical stories were equally part of the repertoire of patterns.

Family History of the Napkins

The Linnich/van der Smissen napkins, each measuring about 70cm × 100cm, are marked with now faint red embroidered initials, IL. Who was "IL"? The linens' path of inheritance can be found by tracing the van der Smissen geneology back in time: one meets Ida Linnich, daughter of Jacob II Linnich (1665-1757) and Elisabeth de Voss (1669-1750). Ida's father was brother-in-law to Hinrich I van der Smissen (1674-1732), renowned self-made man and founder of the van der Smissen mercantile success and wealth.[5] He owed much to the astute business sense of his wife Maria de Voss, Ida's aunt. The de Voss, the Linnichs, and the van der Smissens (who intermarried with the Linnichs for six generations partially due to the congregations' prohibition against marrying outside of the Mennonite church) were all three leading families in the worlds of business, shipping and finance and in the Hamburg/Altona Mennonite congregation. Ida's father, Jacob II Linnich, was the head of a well known commercial firm and merchant in Altona. He came from an extended family of merchants who sometimes served as deacons in the Mennonite congregation of Hamburg/Altona.[6] Trade in textiles, especially in linens, is documented for the merchant house van der Smissen which began, according to family tradition, when the baker Hinrich I accepted the offer of two gentlemen from Silesia, a major flax growing and linen weaving region, who came to Altona to find an agent for selling their linen goods.[7]

Altona, a neighbor city of Hamburg, has been the seat of the Mennonite Hamburg/Altona congregation since 1601. In 1664 Altona received the rights of a city and was made the first free harbor of Europe. The founding families of the Altona/Hamburg congregation were predominantly of Flemish and Frisian origin and kept strong relationships with the Amsterdam congregaion.[8] Indeed, Dutch was the language used in the church, at home, in the writing of family history, right until the beginning of the 19th century.[9]

Ida's birthday is not recorded but can be deduced on the basis of her daughter's birthdate in the year 1715. Ida's birthdate may have been around 1690-95, and the assemblage of her trousseau would have occurred around 1700. It cannot be determined whether her daughter Gertrud Ovens inherited Ida's linens. According to family oral his-

tory, the linens were handed down first within the Linnich family to women born with the Linnich name for three generations. Then, when Helena Linnich (*1751) married Jacob Gysbert van der Smissen in 1770, it was through this avenue that Ida's linens entered the van der Smissen family line of inheritance for three or four successive generations until Frieda Andreas, daughter of C. H. A. van der Smissen donated the five remaining pieces of once complete sets of 12, if not 24, possibly with matching tablecloths, to the museum collections in 1985.

In order to appreciate the central role linens played in Dutch and North German households of the 17th and 18th centuries, mention must be made of the number of sets of household linens reported in inventories of the time. Since sources from Altona were not available at the time of this writing, Dutch sources are quoted instead. The culture of the home and family was very similar in these two regions. A 1717 inventory of a tailor's household in Amsterdam lists six sets of bed linens, forty-one napkins. A similar household contained 18 sets of bed linens, 12 table covers and thirty-five napkins. Even fourteen sets of bed linen for two or three beds, and thirty or forty napkins was not at all unusual.[10] Another source quotes inventories which list forty dozen table cloths and napkins set aside for the children's dowries, among sheets, shirts, neckerchiefs, and bonnets. In the inventories of an Amsterdam bookseller more than 300 table napkins were listed.[11]

The custom of preparing sets of linens of at least one dozen like items, initialled, and often also numbered and dated, for the dowries of one's daughters and granddaughters well before they married persisted into the 20th century.[12]

If Ida Linnich, an only daughter, received these napkins for her trousseau by 1700, they would have been manufactured in the last quarter of the 17th century or before. This date is corroborated by dated linen damasks of the same patterns in European collections, manufactured by linen damask weavers in Courtray or Haarlem in about 1648. The patterns themselves were first developed in the 16th century and then continued for an extended period of time.[13] Maybe Ida's father or her uncle Hinrich van der Smissen, both of them very successful merchants, got a "special deal" for the purchase of these linens, because by about the 1680's the Dutch East Indies Company imported textiles of all kinds which were comparatively cheap, cheaper than the figurated linen damasks, and also, much easier to take care of.[14] Because of this new boom in exotic textile fashions, especially from India, these linen damasks could have been in a merchant's stock for quite some time before they were purchased by the Linnichs.

When the van der Smissens had lost their large fortunes by the middle of the 19th century, and especially after the inheritors of these linens came to the United States and a life without servants, these figurated damasks were not used at the table anymore. It was not considered practical. In many families linens were completely "used up." After becoming too threadbare to use at table, they ended as rags. Thanks to the traditionally strong historical consciousness of the van der Smissen family, and thanks to their awareness of the significance of these textiles—to the extent that they were deemed too valuable to be used, and homespun linens were used instead[15]—they have become a unique, invaluable key to understanding a way of life long past. Since Northern Europe's most comprehensive collection of linen damasks, in Courtray, was destroyed during World War II, the few remaining examples have become all the more precious.

The household context of the napkins

Often the etymology of a word contains clues to the object's history. The English *napkin* is related to *napery,* i.e. household and especially table linen. The root of the word is in the French *nappe* (tablecloth), which in turn is derived from the Latin *mappa* (tablecloth, napkin).[16] The Dutch and German terms for napkin, *servet* and *serviette* respectively, reveal that the word was borrowed directly from the French *serviette* (from *servir,* to serve at table) in the 16th century. This means that the use of the napkin was first prominent in France, and then more popularly adopted in the Netherlands and in the German states.[17]

The history of the use of napkins at the table, as separate from the table cloth, begins somewhere between the 13th to 15th centuries. "The table napkin was an absolute necessity at a time when the fork was not yet—or rarely used—(only since about 1700), and when people ate with their fingers."[18] Napkins usually measured 70×100cm during most of the 17th century, but increased in size up to about 90×115cm.[19]

In the woodcuts, engravings and paintings of the time, the tables of princes and kings, of Christ's Last Supper, are set with sumptuous linens. By the end of the fifteenth century the individual napkin was fashionable at the French Court (and not the common handcloth). First worn over the left shoulder, the napkin later was tied around the customary large circular collars with help of an attendant or buttoned around the neck. This widespread custom, to tie the ends of the napkin, led to the coining of the Dutch, French and English proverb "to make ends meet," i.e. to make do with one's money.[20] Still later, large napkins were fastened around the neck with a cord and two clips, which was the custom in the van der Smissen family according to Frieda Andreas, née van der Smissen, and as was the habit of the author's father well into the 1950's.

While the poet of the Roman de la Rose (1275) admonishes the ladies to wipe their mouth with a corner of the tablecloth,[21] Erasmus, nearly 300 years later, advises boys in the proper use of napkins at banquets: "If given a napkin, put it over either the left shoulder or the left forearm . . . . do not raise the cup to your lips without first wiping them with a napkin or cloth . . . it is impolite to lick greasy fingers or to wipe them on one's tunic: you should wipe them with a napkin or cloth."[22] In the 17th century, among the élite, a distinction was made between artfully folded napkins for *Schauessen,* (foods presented in virtuoso shapes, a veritable feast for the eyes, clever conversation "pieces" in the literal sense, but not to be eaten), and napkins actually used to wipe one's hands and mouth. In very wealthy circles, new fresh napkins were passed around with new plates between courses. There was also the practice of imprinting the coat of arms of guests in a corner of the napkin by pressing the wet linen between carved wooden or cardboard molds of the respective coat of arms.[23] The French devised at least twenty-seven different ways of folding napkins into fancy shapes.[24] Seventeenth century Dutch genre paintings and French engravings illustrating interior decorating fashions frequently

"De Kas," Jan Luiken, Het Leerzaam Huisraad *(ca. 1700).*

"De Tafel," Jan Luiken, Het Leerzaam Huisraad *(ca. 1700).*

featured tablesettings of the upper bourgeoisie where linen table cloths and napkins play a conspicuous role.[25]

Documents of the early trade in linen damasks reveal very clearly that they were luxury goods. Linen damasks were ordered from the manufacturers of Courtray and Haarlem by European royalty and aristocracy for trousseaus and for the celebration and commemoration of special political events. Often they were gifts of cities to visiting royalty.[26] Not only was it expensive to purchase linen damask for the table, its upkeep was also very costly, requiring specialized services: "linen does not bear ironing. The combination of damp and heat causes quick decay. It has to be cleaned with soft soap in a brass casserole, laid out on grass to be bleached and has to be pressed cold between rolls. Only then does the shining pattern appear." If one wanted to see the pattern, linen damask could not be ironed. At the French court a special room was reserved for the care of the table linens, and a special court position was held by the caretaker or manager of the royal linens.[27]

There were special linen and napkin presses, designed to produce the desired sharp creases in regular rectangular intervals, which were so virtuously rendered by painters and engravers.[28] A three story Dutch doll or model house of around 1700 features in one of the two top rooms a linen room where a laundry maid irons linen at a table next to a miniature napkin press.[29]

The mark of a well-furnished house was the presence of at least one lockable linen cupboard, which indicated more status than a less expensive linen chest, and which was controlled by the mistress of the house with a key.[30] The key chain worn from a belt with a set of large keys forms part of the costume of many middle class women portrayed in the art of the 17th and 18th centuries.[31] Linen cupboards, often "perfumed with sweet woodruff,"[32] are frequently seen in Dutch genre paintings and engravings. The mistress of the house, assisted by her maid servant, placing freshly laundered, pressed and folded linens neatly into the cupboard is the subject of a painting by Pieter de Hooch of 1663, and of the engraving "De Kas" (literally "the money box") by Jan Luiken in his moralizing best seller *Het Leerzaam Huisraad* ("The Tutelary Household").[33]

Luiken takes this image as the occasion to warn against amassing false treasures which rot, citing as principal scripture Matthew 19:21. His admonishing motto for this emblem of material order and wealth is "Verrot en mot Schat," i.e., "rotten and moth (prone) treasure."[34]

In this book Luiken likens the household of man to the household of God. All the principal furnishings of a 17th century home, the things which provide comfort, which we think of as mundane and divorced of sanctity, all this material comfort is regarded as a metaphor for the household of God, and thereby sanctified. As long as one remains mindful of the vanity of this world it is acceptable to enjoy its comforts. The very first of fifty illustrations of domestic scenes, all annotated with a moralizing caption, a poem and scripture, is a family gathered around the table, in the middle of a meal. A tablecloth and large napkins are prominently in use. The engraving is called *De Tafel,* (literally "the table," however, the Dutch and German "Tafel" connotes a table set for a main meal).[35] Luiken quotes scripture from the Old and the New Testaments to furnish the moral justification of the scene. The key verse is from Matthew 8:11: "Many, I tell you, will come from east and west to feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven." The accompanying poem links the virtue of

"Het Servet," Jan Luiken, Het Leerzaam Huisraad *(ca. 1700).*

the family meal to the "feast in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29).

Another emblematic illustration is called "Het Servet" (the napkin) with the motto "Behoed het beste," i.e., "watch over (guard) happiness (luck)." The woman of the house is placing folded napkins on each place setting, a maid servant is carrying in a tray of food from the kitchen, while the man of the house has already begun to adjust his large napkin to protect his clothes. Luiken's key scriptural text for this image is Hebrews 10:22-36: "We have, moreover, a great priest set over the household of God; so let us make our approach in sincerity of heart and full assurance of faith, our guilty hearts sprinkled clean, our bodies washed with pure water." The napkin as a device for cleanliness becomes an emblem of spiritual cleanliness or purity.

A somewhat earlier German book on the proper decoration and serving of banquets for the upper classes, with lavish woodcut illustrations, also likens the hosting of a meal to Christ's comparison of eternal life with a feast. The elaboration and splendor of the described table settings are justified by citing occasions of feasts from the Old and the New Testaments, i.e. the parable of the Kingdom of Heaven as a wedding feast (Matthew 22:37). The stated purpose for the rich imagery of napkins folded into any imaginable shape—pyramids, columns, triumphal arches, many different animals, complex geometric shapes—and of the fancifully arranged food is to feast the eye and to cause good conversation. "A good conversation is food for the soul which satisfies the guests for a long time. As Sirach says, the teaching of the Wise is sweeter than honey."[38]

The Iconography of the Figurated Damask Napkins

The woven designs of three of the Kauffman Museum's napkins (KM 6554.2,5,9) illustrate five episodes of the story of the prophet Elijah (I Kings 17 - II Kings 2), especially the episodes of miraculous feedings. The designs of two napkins (KM6554.4,8) show what appear to be at first sight secular hunting scenes. Both pictorial themes are appropriate for the mealtime function of napkins. As picture books they constituted marvelous "conversation pieces" and visual entertainment. As napkins they were practical in that they met the demands of required table etiquette. They were status symbols, status in terms of money expended for the acquisition and care and status in terms of theological erudition. They were entertainment for the eye, they were visual sermons and moralizing lessons. The designers for the figurated damasks most likely derived the patterns from popularly available woodcuts and engravings of the same themes.[39]

The "Elijah napkins"[40]

The designer chose and illustrated five episodes from the life of the prophet Elijah, which were woven as mirror images on a napkin loom, repeated many times and then the seventy centimeter wide strip was cut into the required lengths of about one meter each for table napkins. Scripture references, the name of the prophet and key locations are woven into the design in Latin.

Why Elijah and not another prophet? Elijah was a very popular prophet in the early church, in the Middle Ages, during the counter reformation (the church made him the patron of the Inquisition), and right through the 19th century, as is evident in Mendelssohn's magnificent oratorio *Elijah.* The Order of the Carmelites, for whom Elijah was patron saint, contributed to the veneration and the iconography of Elijah by commissioning artists to execute fresco cycles, stained glass, paintings and engravings on Elijah for their monasteries and churches. The Carmelite churches in Brussels, Antwerp, Louvain, Liège and Cologne[41] were situated near Courtray, the most likely origin of these napkins. Elijah was interpreted by the Church as a prefigure of Christ. Each episode

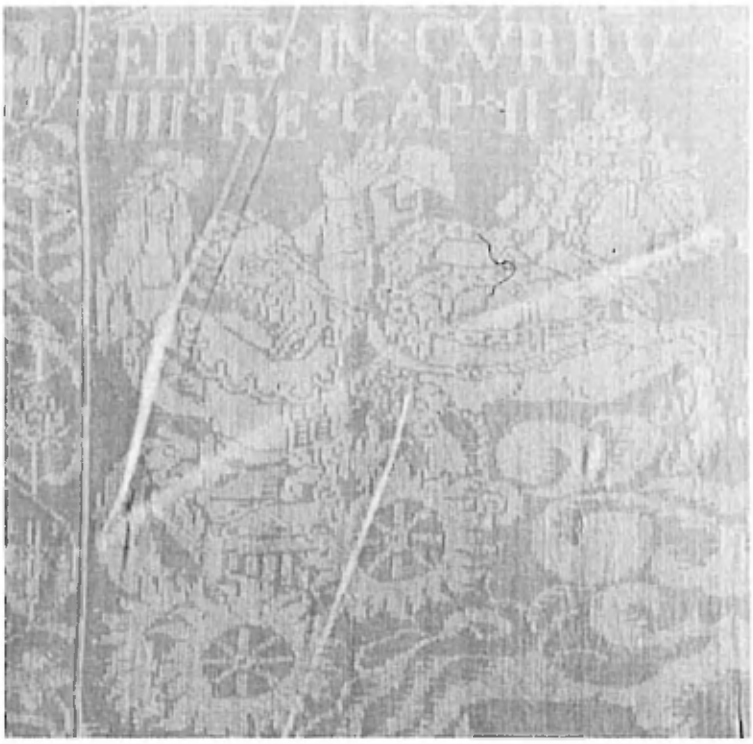
Above. Elijah fed by ravens, detail of KM 6554.5.
Right. Elijah napkin, ca. 1648, Haarlem, KM 6554.2, 70 × 100 cm.

from Elijah's life which is illustrated on the napkins represented to Christians a prefiguration of a parallel episode in the life of Christ.[42] Clearly the iconography of the napkins predates the iconoclastic tendency of the Reformation.

The first of the scenes, in terms of chronological order of the life of Elijah, is the prophet fed by the ravens (I Kings 17:1-7), "He did as the Lord had told him: he went and stayed in the morning and evening, and he drank from the stream." The design shows Elijah dipping a pitcher into the stream while looking up to the ravens who carry bread in their beaks. This theme was a favorite for the decoration of refectories, especially those of the Order of the Carmelites and it was a favorite of Menno Simons. In his writings he referred to this episode in Elijah's pilgrimmage more frequently than to any others.[43] The motif of Elijah's reviving the son of the widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17:8-24), focuses on the dramatic moment when Elijah, after healing the widow's son, gave him to his mother and said, "Look, your son can still be seen in Brussels, Ghent, Amsterdam, Lübeck. In medieval theological typology, this miracle prefigures the resurrection of Lazarus by Christ Himself.[44]

The episode of Elijah in the desert under a juniper tree, fed by an angel (I Kings 19:1-10), who brought "cake baked on hot stones, and a pitcher of water" shows the angel in a bank of clouds, and Elijah as "he rose and ate and drank," thus strengthened for his journey to Mount Horeb. The juniper tree was rendered by the Northern European illustrator as an oak tree bearing acorns. The occurence of this motif on 17th and 18th century Dutch embroidery samples indicates further the popularity of this particular episode in the Elijah story. The symbolism of this scene is particularly rich, alluding to eucharistic, christological and marial themes all at the same time. Theologians see in it a prefiguration of the Lord's Supper, of the Christian nourished by the Eucharist ("bread of angels"), as well as of Christ's agony in the Garden, when He is comforted by an angel. The prophet nourished by the celestial being was thought of as a prefiguration of the Virgin Mary nourished in the temple by the angels.[45]

The fire of heaven descending on the altar Elijah built on Mount Carmel to prove the power of God to the prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:30-39) was likened to the flames of the Holy Spirit alight on the heads of the Apostles.[46] The moment shown by the illustrator is that of "the hour of the regular sacrifice (when) the prophet Elijah came forward and said 'Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known today that thou art god in Israel and that I am thy servant and have done all these things at thy command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me and let this people know that thou, Lord, art God and that it is thou that hast caused them to be backsliders.' Then the fire of the Lord fell. It consumed the whole-offering, the wood, the stones, and the earth, and



Elijah ascending in fiery chariot, detail of KM 6554.9.

licked up the water in the trench."

We see the moment of Elijah's intense prayer while the fire of the Lord consumes the offering on the altar. Next to Elijah is the altar of the prophets of Baal and the crowd whom Elijah had summoned. The trench which Elijah had dug around the altar is there, so are the jars of water which were poured over the wood in order to heighten the miraculous power of God's fire.

The ascension of Elijah in a fiery chariot (II Kings 2:1-11) had been an extremely popular subject since the Early Church, for whom Elijah's miraculous escape from death symbolized the hope of the resurrection. From then on Elijah's ascension was thought to prefigure the Ascension of Christ.[47] For example, the artist of the *Biblia Pauperum* had placed the image of Christ's Ascension right next to Elijah's on the fiery chariot. The napkin shows the episode when ". . . suddenly there appeared chariots of fire and horses of fire, which separated them (Elisha and Elijah) one from the other, and Elijah was carried up in the whirlwind to heaven." Elijah is shown as he lifts his mantle, which will then fall for Elisha to carry.

The episodes of miraculous feedings by the ravens and by the angel, of the widow's son healed, of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, and of his being swept up by the Lord in a fiery chariot, all end with the exclamation of the people that they have witnessed the power of God. All these miraculous manifestations of the power of God strengthen the faith of the prophet and of the people. Man's fears of hunger, loneliness, illness and death are appeased by these stories and by these images of hope. This effect the Elijah napkins would have had for the Linnich and van der Smissen families whose chronicles tell of sickness and the deaths of so many of their children with ardent expressions of hope for everlasting life. The van der Smissen family chronicle of 1875 summarizes the pervasiveness of this sentiment in the lives of Hinrich I and his children thus: "His children did not only receive the worldly wealth, but also the spiritual inheritance of everlasting life which they passed on to their descendants."[48]

The borders of the napkins show at least twelve different flowers interspersed with birds, and finally a very narrow checkerboard edge. It is very likely that some, if not all of these flowers carry religious symbolic meaning. They are there purposefully and not "just" decoration. Flower symbolism was pervasive during the Middle Ages and through the 17th century,[49] especially the Dutch had a passion for flowers.

Elijah, the widow, the widow's house, the bush in the wilderness, the pitchers of water, the flowers, protagonists and scenery are rendered in the natural, the material and symbolic setting of 16th-17th century Northern Europe. For example, the oak tree which is shown instead of the juniper bush of the biblical account, was venerated by the Celts and this veneration was later absorbed into Christian symbolism. The oak was one of the several species of trees that were looked upon as the tree from which the Cross was made. Because of its solidity and endurance, the oak is also a symbol of the strength of faith and virtue, and of the endurance of the Christian against adversity.[50] This practice of rendering biblical stories in the time and setting of the artist and his patrons was common during the Middle Ages and through the Renaissance in order to make the message more immediate for the contemporary beholder.

The "Hunting" Napkins

Two other linen damask napkins (KM 6554.4&8), also embroidered with Ida Linnich's initials, are very much more worn than the Elijah napkins, and if it were not for their shimmering, intricate patterns of scenes of hunting, one would easily dismiss them and throw them into a box of rags.

The pattern dates to the 16th century and was repeated through the 18th century. Like the Elijah napkin, this pattern originated in Courtray-Haarlem. After a first superficial glance one would classify the hunting napkins as secular in message, and opposed to the biblical Elijah napkins. The much heavier wear of these napkins might find an explanation in the fact that they were used more often than the Elijah napkins, for mundane occasions, because of their perceived secular motifs.

Patterns with hunting scenes relate to a larger category of representations of the Joys of Life on linen damasks: scenes of fishing, angling, skating, and huge served dinners occur on damask linens.[51] However, a careful analysis of all the motifs reveals that most carry disguised Christian meaning.

We see mirror images of a mounted horseman with a falcon perched on his outstretched right arm, a footman blowing a bugle and carrying a pike over his shoulder, another footman kneeling and taking aim with a gun. In addition there

Left. Hunting napkin, 17th century, Courtray-Haarlem, KM 6554.4.
Right. Horseman with falcon, detail of KM 6554.4.

are three central images, symmetrical around a center axis: a three-tiered fountain flanked by unicorns, a fortified castle which could also be interpreted as a walled-in city, and a tree-of-life laden with apples, birds and two human busts which most likely represent Adam and Eve. On each side of the tree-of-life there is a butterfly.[52] These motifs in the center of the napkin are surrounded by stags being chased by four dogs, wild boar, squirrels, rabbits, and birds. The border designs show a garland of flowers and birds and a very narrow checkerboard edge, very similar to the Elijah napkins.

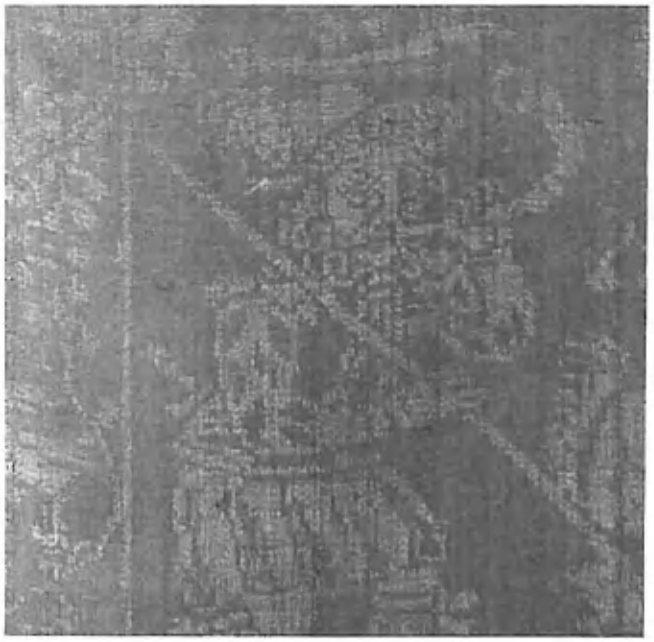
The horse, falcon and dog, all assisting the rider in the hunt, have long been attributes of men of high birth.[53] A mounted hunter therefore is a person of high social standing. From ancient times the hunt was one of the major pastimes and forms of entertainment for the nobility and is often shown to take place in lavish landscape settings, on tapestries, in illuminated manuscripts, carved in stone reliefs, in frescoes and engravings. But horse and rider also symbolized the two natures of Christ, human and divine.[54]

Judging by the art of the time, the most favorite game of the hunt were deer, rabbits and wild boars. Often a castle appears in the backgrounds of these hunting scenes in paintings.[55] The napkins' center images, castle, tree, and fountain, have all been associated with the theme of the hunt in the profane art of the Middle Ages through the Renaissance. The castle could not only signify the residence of the noble party out on the hunt, but the castle also had the meaning of "castle of love;" a garden could also mean a "garden of love," and the fountain could mean the "fountain of love or of eternal youth." Sometimes a representation of a garden of love includes a fountain of youth and a castle.[56] The tree in certain configurations served as a profane allegory of human life.[57]

But the imagery and their specific configurations are purposefully chosen to expand upon the theme of the hunt, the providing of bodily needs, of secular

These three center images then expand upon the theme of the hunt, the providing of bodily needs, of secular entertainment, to include the theme of the biblical vision of everlasting life: the fountain has long been an attribute of the Virgin, symbolizing her virtues of purity and feminine chastity,[58] based on the metaphor of "the fountain of living waters" in the Song of Solomon 4:12 and Psalm 36:9. The fountain is crowned by a phoenix, its beak serving as water spout. This mythical bird is said to burn itself on a funeral pyre and then rise from its own ashes, restored completely to enter another cycle of life. It "was introduced into Christian symbolism as early as the first century and signified the resurrection of the dead and the triumph of eternal life over death. In this way the phoenix came to signify also the Resurrection of Christ,"[59] In 16th century Northern European paintings and prints, artists frequently feature the phoenix crowning a fountain.[60] This motif thus reinforces the symbolic meaning of the fountain as a fountain of eternal life.

The association of fountain of life and unicorn is not accidental. According to legend the unicorn was thought to take refuge in the lap of a virgin when pursued by hunters, only then could the wild beast be captured. So the unicorn, in the Christian context, "stood for Christ Who took on human form in the womb of the Virgin Mary, thus delivering Himself up to those who were seeking Him."[61] The unicorn was said "to



Left. Footman with lance and bugle, detail of KM 6554.4. Right. Castle or Heavenly Jerusalem, detail of KM 6554.4.

have the power to purify poisoned springs by making the sign of the cross over them with its horn, and in this sense too it is a symbol of the Redeemer."[62]

Since in this design the unicorn is placed next to the fountain, symbol of the Virgin, the whole configuration signifies the Incarnation of Christ, and by extension, everlasting life. The motif of the unicorn hunt in Christian art occurred in conjunction with the motif of the Annunciation. The hunt usually takes place in the *hortus conclusus*, the enclosed garden, another symbol of the Virgin's purity and the immaculate conception. The motif flowered in the waning Middle Ages but the Council of Trent in 1563 prohibited its use in art.[63] It may be that the designer of this 16th century pattern based his or her imagery on representations of the Christian version of the unicorn hunt, in combination with hunting motifs in secular art.[64]

The castle in Christian symbolism signifies the "castle of paradise" or "Heavenly Jerusalem" based on Revelation. In this sense the castle is a symbol of everlasting life, as are the fountain and unicorn. These symbols complement the tree of life with Adam and Eve, a common symbol of man's fall from grace and need for redemption. The "tree of life" is an ancient Christian symbol especially in vernacular or folk art in all of Europe. It signifies at once the fall of man (Baum der Erkenntnis), man's need for redemption and the promise of eternal life. In Northern European art of the 15th and 16th century prints, paintings and folk art, Adam and Eve under the tree occur very frequently. Here the artist solved the difficult problem of rendering the nude figures and of limited space for his complex messages by showing them as busts in the tree.[65]

Most of the animals which would be part of a "real" setting of a hunt in the forest, also carry Christian symbolic meaning: the domestic falcon may signify the holy man or the Gentile converted to Christianity; the rabbit is "a symbol of men who put their hope for their salvation in the Christ and His Passion. It is also a well-known symbol of lust and fecundity. A white hare is sometimes placed at the feet of the Virgin Mary to indicate her triumph over lust."[66] The stag (hart) "takes its symbolic significance from Psalm 42:1, 'as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' Thus, the stag has come to typify piety and religious aspiration.

Similarly, because the stag seeks freedom and refuge in the high mountains, it has been used to symbolize solitude and purity of life."[67] The dog had become a symbol of his virtues, watchfulness and fidelity.[68] Finally, the butterfly was understood as a symbol of immortality. Because of its transformation from caterpillar to cocoon and from cocoon to butterfly "it is an image of resurrection in general and the Resurrection of Christ in particular."[69] If one goes so far as to suggest that the footmen accompanying the horseman could signify disciples of Christ, then indeed every figure on this napkin is symbolic of Christian virtues and hope for eternal life. The fusion of the mundane and the sacred realms of experience and aspiration in life and art is characteristic of the 14th through the 16th centuries when all of life was "imbued with the conception of faith."[70] While the Linnichs and the van der Smissens enjoyed their dinners with family, friends and business partners the images of the "Elijah" and the "Hunting" napkins reminded them that "Man cannot live on bread alone" (Luke 4:4, Matthew 4:4, Deut. 8:3) and thus sanctified their gatherings.

The 1988 Lufthansa Napkin Compared

This unfolding of layers of meaning has shown that in their time of use these napkins served as much as practical devices as they served as *exempla virtutis*, examples of virtue.[71]

These worn pieces of linen with their barely visible but eloquent imagery permit us to reconstruct the material and spiritual setting of affluent Flemish/German Mennonite families who justified their wealth through pietism, as did their well-to-do contemporaries in the Netherlands, One wonders what were the occasions when the Elijah napkins were chosen over the Hunting napkins, and vice versa, and one imagines the meals at baptisms, engagements, wed-

dings, birthdays and funerals, the Easter, Christmas and New Year celebrations, the special dinners in honor of visiting dignitaries of the Church, the State and of Commerce.

The Museum's 18th century cabinet organ from the Deknatel and van der Smissen homes in Amsterdam and Altona once was part of this same setting, and the hymns played by its pipes sanctified the household as much as did the imagery beheld on the linen damask napkins. In comparison the damask napkins of the Lufthansa airliner with their mono-syllabic, value-free stripes do not remind us that a meal can be a fellowship which can give us a foretaste of the Kingdom of God.

ENDNOTES

[1]This study is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother Elisabeth Gericke née, excellent needleworker and daughter of a linen manufacturer. Special thanks go to Greta Hiebert and to Hendrikje Robrecht Kauenhoven for invaluable assistance with bibliographical references, to Rachel Pannabecker and to John M. Janzen for encouragement to sustain this study and for their editorial assistance.

[2]*Newsweek*, (Spring 1988).

[3]van Ysselsteyn, *White Figurated Linen Damask, from the 15th through the beginning of the 19th century* (Den Haag, 1962), p. 8/9.

[4]Braun-Ronsdorf, *Alte Tafeldamaske*, Darmstadt, 1955, p. 11-12; In order to place Kauffman Museum's napkin with the story of the prophet Elijah into the context of other biblical motifs shown on figurated linen damask, patterns described by van Ysselsteyn are listed here:

Old Testament patterns: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the story of Loth, of Joseph, Daniel, David and Abigail, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, Naboth's vineyard, Susan and the Elders, Judith and Holofernes, the spies in the promised land; and from the New Testament: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the parable of the Good Shepherd, the Disciples going to Emmaus.

[5]See Heinz Münte, *Das Altonaer Handlungshaus Van der Smissen 1682-1824* (Altona, 1932), for family trees of the Linnichs and the van der Smissens.

[6]Robert Dollinger, *Geschichte der Menoniten in Schleswig Holstein, Hamburg und Lübeck* (1930), p. 171, see also *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 351, "Linnigh (Linnich)."

[7]Hillegonda Van der Smissen, *Sketches of my Life* (n.d.), p. 4.

[8]*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, vol. II (1956), pp. 639-643.

[9]Only after 1838 were worship services held exclusively in German. Münte, p. 150, note 296. The marriage of Jacob Gysbert van der Smissen (1746-1829) to Hillegonda Jacoba Deknatel from Amsterdam (1750-1817) is an example of the family's enduring ties to the Netherlands.

[10]Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (1987), pp. 316, 319.

[11]Paul Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland* (1963), pp. 39-40.

[12]The author's maternal grandmother presented her four granddaughters each with sets of 6 embroidered and initialled bed linens.

[13]van Ysselsteyn, pp. 224, 233.

[14]Ibid., p. 25ff.

[15]Personal communication with Frieda Andreas, née van der Smissen, donor of the napkins, Oct. 1985.

[16]Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. II (1967).

[17]Duden, 1963, vol. 7, p. 640.

[18]Zumthor, p. 64.

[19]Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (Yale University Press, 1978), p. 286.

[20]C. H. A. Scholte-Hoek, *Het Gastmaal en de Tafel* (Elsevier, 1965), pp. 55-56.

[21]Braun-Ronsdorf, p. 6.

[22]See Erasmus' essay: "De civilitate morum puerilum," in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, J.K. Sowards, ed., University of Toronto Press, p. 280-286.

[23]Georg Philipp Harsdörffer, *Trincir Buch* (Nürnberg, 1665), pp. 50-51, 227.

[24]Thornton, p. 286. Linen presses occur as embroidery motifs on 18th c. samplers made in Hamburg Altona. See p. 49, ill. 96 in *Stickmastertudier aus dem Besitz des Altnaer Museums* (1975, Hamburg).

[25]See for example, *Masters of 17th c. Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984): two paintings by Esaias van de Velde on the subject "Party on a Garden Terrace," (plates 3, 4) and two by Willem Buytewech on the subject "Merry Company," (plates 5 and 6).

See also Peter Thornton, ill. 228.

[26]van Ysselsteyn, p. 33.

[27]Ibid., pp. 5, 25.

[28]See illustrations of 17th c. linen presses in K. Sluyterman, *Huisraad en Binnehuis in Nederland* ('S-Gravenhage, n.d.), figs. 187, 188, 190; and in Louise Ade Boger, ed., *The Complete Guide to Furniture Styles* (1969), fig. 101, dated as early 16th c.

[29]Thornton, ill. 320.

[30]Schama, pp. 316-317; and Zumthor, p. 39.

[31]See E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw* (1968), plate 30: The wife in the doubleportrait of "a couple in a landscape," by Herman Doncker, prominently displays a key chain and a set of large keys for chests and cupboards.

[32]Zumthor, p. 39.

[33]Schama, p. 394, ill. 185, 186. See also Jan Luiken, *Het Leerzaam Huisraad* (Leiden, 1711), p. 22.

[34]Other scripture cited by Jan Luiken to accompany the engraving on storing "false treasures": Proverbs 11:28, 23:4-5; Luke 12:33-34, 16:9; Jacobus 2:13-16, 5:1-3.

[35]Ibid., p. 2. Other scripture cited for commentary on the engraving "De Tafel": Matthew 5:6; Luke 13:29; Revelation 3:20; Isaiah 25:6; Psalm 81:2.

[36]Ibid., p. 150/151. Other scripture is cited from Psalms 119:11, 51:12, 7:10.

[37]Georg Philipp Harsdörffer, *Trincir Buch* (1665), p. 12.

[38]Harsdörffer, p. 214.

[39]See, for example, Jost Amman's (1539-1591) engraving of Elijah's Ascension in van Ysselsteyn, p. 224.

[40]See van Ysselsteyn, p. 224, fig. 38, cat. no. 98. This pattern cloth is identical to the Ida Linnich Elijah napkins. Ysselsteyn located this pattern in only three European collections: the Courtray Museum, the Stockholm Nord. Museum, the National Museum in Copenhagen. Whether this linen damask pattern exists in other North American public or private collections is not known at present. It is highly unlikely. The Textiles Department of the Smithsonian Museum of American History could not furnish information in this regard.

[41]Ibid., pp. 243-248.

[42]*Elie le Prophete* (Etudes Carmélitaines, 1956), vol. I, p. 208, ff.

[43]Ibid., p. 251; and *Biblical References in Anabaptist Writings* (1969), compiled by Eldon T. Yoder, Monroe D. Hochstetler, pp.32-33.

[44]Ibid., p. 251. See also the woodcut in the *Biblia Pauperum*, the mid. 15th c. "Bible for the Poor," which juxtaposes Elijah and the son of the widow with Christ and the resurrection of Lazarus. In H. TH. Musper: *Die Urausgaben der holländischen Apokalypse und biblia Pauperum* (München), p. 22.

[45]Ibid., p. 256; Furthermore, the motif of Elijah and the angel occurs also on Dutch samplers, another indication of its widespread popularity. See for example the motif in A. Meulenbelt-Niewburg, *Embroidery Motifs from Old Dutch Samplers* (1975), p. 22.

[46]Ibid., p. 241.

[47]Ibid., pp. 259, 260.

[48]van der Smissen Family Chronicle, p. 30.

[49]Both theological writing and popular verse expounded on symbolic meanings of flowers, and artists incorporating these flowers into their work were of course aware of the hidden messages the flowers would carry for the beholder. See Meulenbelt-Niewburg, p. 13.

[50]George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 35.

[51]van Ysselsteyn, p. 45.

[52]Ibid., p. 233, fig. 64, cat. no. 171. This napkin is very similar to motifs and style to KM 6554.4&8. van Ysselsteyn has located this pattern in the museum in Courtray, in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, in Stockholm's Nord. Museum and in several private trousseaus. Whether it exists in North American collections other than the Kauffman has not yet been determined. Braun-Ronsdorf (Plate 16, Victoria and Albert Museum, London) illustrates a silk damask table cloth from Flanders or Holland, dated ca. 1765, with strikingly similar motifs, an indication that damask patterns were copied for a long time.

[53]Raimond van Marle, *Iconographie de l'Art Profane* (Hacker Art Books: New York, 1971), pp. 26-36.

[54]Meulenbelt-Niewberg, p. 131. The horse-and-rider motif also occurs on old Dutch embroidered samplers.

[55]See for example the Flemish miniature of about 1500 in the Grimani Breviary, in the library of San Marco, Venice, reproduced in van Marle, 1971, p. 256, or in the Flemish tapestry of a hunt with a falcon, from the beginning of the 16th c. in the Museum of Cluny, van Marle, p. 261.

[56]For example, "Le Jardin d'Amour," plateau de maternité, par Marcotte di Nardo, Coll. Lichtenstein, Vienna, or in a French 15th c. miniature of "The Garden of Love," both in van Marle, figs. 457 and 459.

[57]van Marle, p. 149.

[58]Ferguson, p. 42.

[59]Ferguson, p. 23.

[60]See, for example, Albrecht Aldorfer's painting of 1510 "Rest on the Flight to Egypt," the holy family gathered around a three-tiered fountain which is crowned by a phoenix, in Erhard Ruhmer, *Albrecht Altdorfer* (München, 1965), plate 25.

[61]Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. I (New York, 1966), p. 13.

[62]Meulenbelt-Nieuburg, pp. 40-41.

[63]Schiller, p. 55.

[64]See the engraving by Jean Duvet (1485-1556) "La chasse royale attaqué par la licorn," Albertina, Wien, in L. Hansmann (1966), p. 78, fig. 159, also, p. 84/85. The book "Physiologus Bestiarus," ca.370, was put together in Caesarea by one or several Christian authors after neoplatonic sources, and became the foundation of Medieval Christian animal legends. The legend of the unicorn "which bathes in the fountain of life" represents the unicorn as the most powerful amulet of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. A 1557 travelogue from France gives an account of the reliquaries at St. Denis, among these the royal scepter on which is placed a little horn made of unicorn horn, and a 6' tall horn placed in a bucket of water behind an altar from which the sick received drinks.

[65]Liselotte Hansmann, und Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, Lenz, *Amulet und Talisman* (München: Verlag Georg DW. Callwey, 1966), p. 57-58.

[66]Ferguson, p. 20.

[67]Ibid., p. 25.

[68]Ibid., p. 15.

[69]Meulenbelg-Nieuburg, p. 43.

[70]Johan A. Huizinga, quoted in Gardner, *Art through the Ages*, 8th ed. (1986), p. 662.

[71]Schama, p. 100, shows how the "Old Testament had served as a storehouse of parable and allegory for Renaissance humanists in pursuit of *exempla virtutis*."

Book Reviews

Carl Kreider, *The Rich and the Poor: A Christian Perspective on Global Economics.* Scottdale: Herald Press, 1987. Pp. 168. ($8.95—paperback).

Carl Kreider's recent book, *The Rich and the Poor* is one which deserves a much wider audience than it is probably going to receive. He has taken a subject, defined in the subtitle as "A Christian Perspective on Global Economics," that is very difficult for most lay persons to comprehend and has done an enviable job of making it understandable.

Dr. Kreider, undoubtedly the dean of professional economists at Mennonite institutions of higher education, has effectively and sensitively used his many years of teaching and administration and his cross-cultural experiences in treating his subject. One can only hope that this scholar's so-called retirement years allow him to undertake additional projects of this nature. His readers would certainly benefit from these activities.

Let us now turn our attention to the content of the book. With about 150 pages of text the book is not at all intimidating. It is written in a conversational manner that is very readable, and at about $9.00 (U.S.) it is attractively priced. In order to appeal to a wider audience Dr. Kreider states (p. 12) that he "made a conscious decision to limit my use of footnotes" and "to use statistical tables only sparingly." This approach certainly contributes to the flow of the book but it must have been a difficult decision for the author to make inasmuch as it confronts the reader who wants to pursue a particular point with an unnecessary hurdle. A fairly complete index and a short reading list help somewhat but any reader with normal curiosity will find several instances where a citation would be satisfying.

In this section of the book Dr. Kreider openly acknowledges that it is written from a capitalist perspective. He provides a brief rationale for this position which demonstrates his awareness that for many it carries connotations which may or may not be justified. The author also makes it clear (p. 13) that he is "a Christian first, an economist second." This frees him, at the appropriate occasions, to go beyond a mere recitation of the facts to make thoughtfully considered recommendations concerning personal and corporate responsibility.

The introduction and chapters 1 and 2 provide the data, the facts and the generalizations about the characteristics of less developed countries. Dr. Kreider handles what could have been a daunting and tiring litany of problems tactfully and without being judgmental. Chapters 3 through 6 focus on specific problems and the approaches that might be employed to address them. Chapter 3 emphasizes controlling population growth as a key component in alleviating poverty; 4 discusses the importance of agricultural development; 5 looks at investments in human capital; and 6 looks at the various perspectives on stimulating industrial development. His treatment of the material in these four chapters is well done, surprisingly sophisticated, yet capable of being understood by a high school student. Chapter 7, covering the important topic of international cooperation, is perhaps necessarily more technical being filled with acronyms, alphabet soup names of organizations, and terms that are not going to be as easily related to as those in the earlier chapters. This chapter of the book is the only one which could present difficulty in understanding to the typical reader.

The last chapter, entitled "What Can I Do?" has obviously received Dr. Kreider's careful consideration. Some of his recommendations are fairly obvious, some are possibly a bit utopian and call for either unlikely or unattainable scenarios, but all of them are thought provoking. This chapter and the end-of-chapter questions he provides should stimulate a lively discussion. Questions are provided at the end of every chapter but those which follow chapter 8 are especially good. Several examples of individual and organizational actions are mentioned. However, these may appeal more readily to the reader who is familiar with Mennonite programs than one who is not.

All Christians should be concerned with the plight of those less fortunate than we are. This book represents a very evenhanded approach to third-world poverty. It is an ideal vehicle to raise congregational consciousness of the issue or at the very least to serve as the basis for small group discussions within the church. This book should be read by those, regardless of their religious convictions, who are spurred on to individual action that takes them into an overseas service program. Within Mennonite circles it should be required reading for all church board or MCC orientation efforts (e.g., the Transcultural Seminar) for any assignment outside of North America.

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Rodgers, John. *Medical Ethics, Human Choices.* Scottdale: Herald Press, 1988. ($9.95—paperback)

Medical Ethics, Human Choices is definitely a book whose time has come. Over the past forty years the patient-physician relationship has changed. In the past the physician's duties were to diagnose, prognose, and comfort. This was usually done with simple and inexpensive tools. The major change has been the addition of the duty to intervene. This desire to intervene, along with the escalating complexity and cost of diagnosing diseases, has for too long begged the questions this book asks us to confront.

As a physician at a referral center, I find no situation more difficult than to treat a patient with an eighth-century world view who finds him- or herself thrown into the quagmire of 21st century medical technology. *Medical Ethics, Human Choices* has hit upon the solution to this problem: acquaint lay people with the ethical complexities of modern medicine before they are forced to make decisions in the midst of a personal crisis.

There are four major themes addressed in the book: 1) the basis of Christian ethics, 2) characterization of the health care delivery system (HCDS), 3) justice, and 4) the church's response to the HCDS.

The basis for Christian ethics is set out by Conrad G. Brunk in chapter 2 using the concept of God-given personhood. He then moves on to draw some specific conclusions based on these principles. In one case he commits an

error that is typical of the book's major weakness. The example in this chapter is genetic engineering and Brunk warns that "the genetic interventions we make in our offspring could potentially undermine their own full personhood" (p. 35). On the next page, however, this weakness is avoided when Brunk states that "sincere Christians disagree about the significance of this potential for the personhood of the fetus" (p. 36). The first statement closes off discussion whereas the second promotes it. Rarely will we all agree on the course to be taken but the decisions need to be openly discussed and made in the context of a loving community.

The second major theme of the book is the characterization of the present-day HCDS. Certainly no one who has had personal contact with a modern medical center needs to be convinced that a change has occurred. The personable and kind general practitioner of yesteryear has been replaced by what appears to be an impersonal medical-industrial complex. The change is one of the main reasons that this book is needed.

There are several descriptions of the HCDS in the book that deserve comment. The first is the impression given in chapter 4 that physicians have only a mechanical view of patients and therefore have a particular problem dealing with death. In sum it is the "death equals failure" view. This is a straw man. I was not trained to view patients in such a narrow fashion, instead the bio-psycho-social model of disease was emphasized. Likewise, during residency training at a tertiary care center, the subspecialists were concerned about the issue of humane death. The most frustrating situations usually do not involve an automaton physician but more commonly arise with patients who have no prior understanding of the complexities of 20th century medicine. One of the admirable goals of this book is to decrease the frequency of this occurrence.

The second characterization that deserves comment is the issue of patient advocacy that is raised in chapter 6. This terminology tacitly implies that there is an adversary from whom the patient needs to be protected. Hopefully, the only adversary is suffering and all the members of the health care team should be striving against that enemy. However, advocacy can be taken in another sense. It is extremely helpful when members of a patient's community are present to speak on his/her behalf. This additional information is often helpful to all the members of the health care team as they strive to serve the patient.

The HCDS can have an ominous appearance. However, within that system are people who have chosen health care professions in an attempt to help others. Hopefully the discussions sparked by this book will help humanize the HCDS to people both inside and outside the system.

The third major theme of the book is justice. This area is most extensively covered in chapter 11 but it arises often in other chapters. Besides all the other ethical dilemmas that the modern HCDS has presented to us, it is also an extremely expensive system. As Christians concerned about the allocation of resources, spending large amounts of money on ourselves strikes some dissonant chords.

At most points in the book this issue is dealt with at the "micro" level. In other words, the problem is seen as one of individual physicians spending too much on individual patients. Clearly the problem does exist on this level, but the book implies that the major solution also lies at this level. The first problem with this view is that it places the physician in the role of the gatekeeper. As a patient you do not want your physician making decisions based on the good of society or concern for the national health care bill. You want your physician basing his or her decisions on what is best for you.

The second problem with micro solutions is that they may not be solutions at all. If you as a patient decide to forego a procedure, there is very little chance that the money you did not spend will be used for more just endeavors. If you are insured by a for-profit insurance company, the money will go to the stockholders. If you are covered by Medicare, it will lessen the national debt. If you are insured by a non-profit insurance company, it may at least go to decreasing other policy holders' premiums (or retarding future increases). Currently there are no mechanisms for it to go to third-world health care needs.

The third problem with micro solutions is that it is extremely difficult for even cost-conscious physicians to truly save money. Forgoing moderately expensive tests may save money in the short term. However, if a disease is found at a later stage it may be much more difficult and expensive to treat.

There are two solutions presented in the book, one micro and one macro, that may have a chance at conserving and transferring resources. The micro solution is prevention, to which chapter 12 is devoted. This is above critique. If we do our utmost to stay healthy we will have more resources at our disposal to give away.

The macro solution is suggested by Stan Godshall in chapter 11. He proposes that a denominational insurance company be established. Its goals would be to stop high-tech, dead-end practices and transfer funds to the third world. It would definitely put our Christian faith to the test to turn down expensive procedures and treatments that have only a small chance of saving a life and redirect those resources.

The book does an admirable job of detailing the problems of justice in today's HCDS. It also proposes several solutions, the most easily instituted being prevention. However, it is a complex problem, as are its solutions. Groups that use this book as a study guide should avoid becoming entrenched in this issue. Some of the other areas lend themselves to more immediate application.

The fourth and most important theme of the book is the church's response to the HCDS. The third chapter is wholely devoted to this topic. Howard Loewen offers many suggestions to bring the church and the HCDS together. One of his best points is that the overall goal of the church *vis a vis* medical ethics "is not so much to help the professional and the patient make the right decisions as to create a context of understanding, care, and support in times when tough decisions have been made or difficult realities have struck" (p. 42).

Every Christian who chooses to seek health care within the paradigm of Western medicine should read this book. If its advice in regards to becoming informed about medical issues is heeded, the emotional trauma of a medical crisis can be reduced. Christians together need to become a group that in a time of crisis can comfort and assist in making difficult decisions.

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The Cantonment