Unpublished Paper, 1983

Conrad Grebel College
Waterloo, Ontario

BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE AMONG ONTARIO AMISH MENNONITES

By Hugh Laurence

I. Introduction

In this paper, we consider the history of Ontario Amish Mennonites using Francis' theory that the Mennonites represent a kind of "primary" ethnic group—a group maintaining a positive separation from the rest of society (Francis, 1976). This positive separation arises among the Amish Mennonites as a result of their desire to realize a religious project. The project of living the true Christian life enforced a separation that was not merely a reaction to the wider society, but was also internally generated. Even so, our data illustrate Francis' insistence that the course of history in an ethnic group must be understood as an interaction of the internal and external sources of its distinctiveness. By examining the positive aspects of separation, however, we can go beyond merely outlining that there must have been some interaction between community goals and external circumstances. We can show how that interaction was shaped by the internal organization of the religious project as it was set in the context of the times.

We will focus on the period from about 1940 to 1970 to illustrate the usefulness of this mode of interpreting change in the Amish Mennonite community.

Francis stresses that ethnicity can only arise within the context of the modern state (p. 4). Ethnic groups are subgroups which have some kind of reduced access to the rewards of the state society (p. 4). People within such groups choose ethnicity among various other possible group markers to distinguish themselves and to deal with the lack of access to the rewards of society. Thus the choice of kinship as an identifying marker, itself the main criterion for identifying a group as an "ethnic group" (p. 2/3) is arbitrary—merely one of several ways of rallying the group. Francis makes explicit that the marker symbols of the ethnic group—the cultural distinctives—are themselves merely arbitrary symbols chosen because they are distinctive (p. 12). These distinctive groups arise, according to Francis, mainly from either annexation, or immigration (p. 41). In either case, the formation of the group is a reaction to events from the wider society. Francis does not deal with groups who have formed for positive reasons. Instead, he considers ethnicity as merely a method of coping with subordinate status. As a result, ethnic markers are arbitrary, meaning nothing except that the group is dealing with its lower status.

In reference to the Mennonites, however, Francis realizes that this is not a complete picture. He sees the

active separation of the sectarian faith among the Russian Mennonites. As long as the people maintained their separatist faith and still retained a dependency on the social institutions of the wider society, there was no compromise. When the people migrated to the Ukraine, however, they were able to create their own complete social world, with their own secular institutions. This led to the collapse of the tension inherent in the faith, as the community had to face the inevitable compromises of organizing a secular world (p. 8). It was as if the existence of the separatist aspect of the faith depended on having a group to be defined against. A group cut off from the rest of society, forced to handle all its needs and able to become a complete society, could not maintain that religious project of separation. But a group that could actively maintain a boundary could acculturate, yet still maintain group identity. As long as cultural traits were borrowed from the outside by the entire group, and not by individuals, the group could use these new traits to reinforce identity (p. 10/11).

A conceptual distinctive drawn from Francis informs Redekop's insistence that we separate primary from secondary ethnic groups (Redekop, 1983, p. 11). Primary ethnic groups have a strong positive sense of themselves. They portray themselves as complete institutional worlds, and as worlds of complete meaning, actively trying to realize some alternative system of values (p. 11). Secondary groups arise as a reaction to events from the outside. The

Mennonites are a primary group, and thus are not formed simply as a reaction to the outside, but out of a strong sense of inner purpose. This does not mean, however, that internal ideology can be the sole source of change among such groups.

Both Francis and Redekop insist that any model of ethnic relations must be interactive. Only when we understand the relations a group has with the wider society can we understand the particular history or culture of the group (Redekop, p. 4, 7). Within a primary group, members try to realize internal values and goals. But they do so in a particular environment which in turn shapes those goals, just as the move to the Ukraine shaped the entire internal organization of the Mennonites dicussed by Francis.

If we take seriously the idea that Mennonites are primary groups, we can knit together some of the themes we have been discussing. Because such groups are actively separatist, maintaining certain central values and goals, they have an internal source of change. This is the starting point of our argument. We can show that members of the group attempted to realize a religious project, and thus were members of a primary group in the Francis/Redekop sense. That project, however, was ambiguous, and this ambiguity led the group to develop alternate ways of expressing the central project. Because these alternatives were inherent in the religious project, they tended to reappear as long as the group was serious about its faith. Internal ambiguities thus

gave the group the well-recognized tendency to split into subgroups defined against one another in matters of religious expression.

The symbols that mark the expression of this ambiguous project cannot be merely arbitrary markers to the outside. A group that is positively seceding, rather than one being forced into a subgroup status, must represent its values in some form. Once particular symbols become associated with the religious project, arguments about the symbols cannot be arbitrary—they become arguments about the project itself. Thus we would expect to find some key symbols among members of primary ethnic groups which are not merely markers of distinction, but actual representations of the faith keeping the group separate.

Arguments about these core symbols in the Ontario Amish Mennonite community did not, however, take place in a vacuum. External changes deeply affected the community. The ambiguous central ideology forming a positive guide for group life raised serious questions for those living under it. To decide which of its alternatives was right, or made more sense, the people looked tothe wider experience they had, including the experience outside their control, from outside the community. The internal ambiguities formed a structure of relevant questions, and defined how events from outside were understood. Thus the process of history in the community became one of trying to bring together the evidence from experience at the boundary

and the internal questions raised by the positive, but ambiguous group ideals. We examine the history of the Ontario Amish Mennonites, with special emphasis on the years following World War II, as an example of this basic model. Our data exemplify this process of internal ambiguities being resolved by external circumstances.

Once we can show that the Amish Mennonites have a strong positive religious faith which they express in their social life, and once we can show that this faith is somewhat ambiguous, we can then demonstrate that there must be some symbols which become necessarily associated with group goals. We can also show that as the internal ambiguities open questions for the members of the community, external circumstances become relevant data for resolving the internal questions. Because internal changes create a structure of relevant questions, external events interact with community values to create the history of the group. Among the Ontario Amish Mennonites, internal divisions created subgroups which were, because of their internal ideologies, affected rather differently by changes in the period after World War II. It is to that story we will now turn.

II. Positive Separation

Our first argument is that the Amish Mennonites in Ontario who maintained an active separation from the rest of Canadian society were not forced to be different. They

chose to live distinctively in order to realize their religious convictions. The idea that the various Anabaptist groups became actively secessionist has been well explored in the literature, and emerges very quickly from any close sociological study of traditional communities. We will therefore merely summarize some of the distinctive aspects of this positive separation here.

The Amish had come to Canada because they wished to live out their religious convictions in peace. Those convictions involved a distinct separation from the world around them, and a tight internal discipline regulating all aspects of community lifestyle. Through this regulation, the community created and enforced a boundary to the outside. People crossed this boundary mostly through the depersonalized market exchanges that only served further to keep the Amish distinctive. Within the boundary, life was organized into repetitive life cycles shared by all members. Individualism was submerged in the community discipline administered by the ordained men in the name of the congregation. Members were not allowed to use personal distinctives to define themselves--dress, demeanor, and activities were all to be, at least ideally, under community control. All members were to be farmers, thereby sharing an economic lifestyle and participating in the repetitive daily and seasonal cycles associated with their mixed farming regime.

The distinctive lifestyle of the group was its

theology. The Amish did not create a separate intellectual class to define group ideals, and did not even tend to standardize their faith in verbal formulae. It was a faith that was lived. As a result, maintaining the discipline was the mark of true faithfulness. And similarly, arguments about the discipline were theological arguments about the Christian life of the group. It is true that the Amish held to such statements as the Dortrecht Confession when they wished to give verbal form to their convictions. In general, however, theological arguments arose about lifestyle because that was the medium for theology. In that the group represented its theology to itself through the community discipline, that discipline and the boundary it enforced became crucial symbols of belief. Not everyone in the community, of course, was a theologian. Many people accepted the community standards as part of their culture without deep thought about the religious goals of the congregation. But those who did consider such things, and who therefore tended to lead the religious development of the community, argued about the central religious project of the group in matters of lifestyle.

And there were arguments, because the particular religious form of the Amish represented only one possible interpretation of the Biblical basis for community. The Amish believed they could realize Christ's teachings about the Kingdom of God through their separation. Within the community, relationships based on Christ's own model would

prevail. Love, support, mutual admonition and counsel, and equality between all people were to ground all interaction. Without, power, violence, the objectification of others, and status hierarchies were the rule. This splitting of the world in two—the Kingdoms of Christ and Satan, the church and the state, and finally the spiritual and carnal nature of the person—eventually left the community in something of a quandary. That quandary centred on the key symbols or ideas of the community and the individual. These symbols could represent either the spiritual or the carnal, depending on their interpretations.

The community could be the place of brotherhood, where love could be practised. Then the community represented the discipline that enforced equality in lifestyle, and made it possible for true Christian relationships to flourish. Opposed to the community in this interpretation was the individual. The individual stood for the selfish world outside—the power of sin that had to be yoked by the discipline. And this in fact was the traditional alignment of these two symbols--individual submerged in the community as a metaphor of the carnal man yoked to the spiritual, obedient to Christ.

There was, however, another interpretation. The Anabaptists were strong believers that only through individual commitment could the purity of the Kingdom of Christ be realized on earth. Thus only adults, capable of understanding what true discipleship meant, could be part of

the church. This individual commitment was the core of community life, and gave it meaning. The relations of brotherhood arose from regenerate individuals. Without that inner conviction—without a change in one's inner life—there could not be true Christian community. The community discipline was merely a set of rules. Those rules served individual conviction.

Thus the place of the individual in the tension between brotherhood and discipleship was ambiguous. Among the Amish, that ambiguity was resolved in favour of the community. It was certainly possible, however, to imagine a group in which the individual fervour of personal conviction dominated group life, and the community was aimed at promoting that fervour and channelling it into a regenerated lifestyle. The Amish, in setting themselves along a particular path, could not ignore its logical alternative. In the early days of settlement in Ontario, the alternative did not present itself in full force. Throughout the 1800s, however, Amish of strong conviction heard the whispers of revivalist faith in the wider Christian context. Its stress on personal conviction and personal holiness awakened the alternative, and forced the community to face its own theological ambiguities.

Although some individual Amish families left the local congregations to join the Holdeman movement in the middle 1880s, the first major division over the issue of revivalist theology occurred in Ontario in the 1880s. At this

time, a group of traditional Amish left the main body over the issue of the construction of meeting houses. This group became the Old Ordr Amish. Although most of the rest of the Amish agreed to construct meeting houses, there remained ambiguity surrounding the place of revivalism in the community. It arose again, in the 1890s and early years of the twentieth century, in the form of a debate over Sunday School.

In 1911, the Amish Mennonite congregations around Wellesley divided, unable to agree on several issues, of which Sunday School was the most important. The more traditional group, presently loosely affiliated with the Beachy Amish in the United States, rejected the Sunday School. The other group, following the lead of several other congregations in Ontario, accepted it and tried to integrate it into their religious life.

The Sunday School was the focus of debate because it was the institution through which revivalism was preached. In the Sunday School, laymen spoke from personal conviction about the importance of personal salvation, and the evils of tobacco and alcohol. They could not pretend to be community representatives, and therefore challenged directly the authority of the ordained men. Thus the Sunday School was not merely a channel through which alternative ideas might flow—it was, in its very organizational structure, the representation of the alternative way of realizing the community goals.

Those who espoused the evangelical personal message of the new institution felt it gave them a rew religious fervour among the lifeless rules of the discipline. Further, it enforced a stronger discipline, in that both alcohol and tobacco were forbidden. Those who accepted the Sunday School could therefore no longer hide from themselves the logical alternatives in their own project. They had to integrate alternatives somehow.

Whatever revivalism had meant outside, it was understood within traditional theological categories by the Amish Mennonite Church. It put individual choice at the core of the faith, in direct contrast to the traditional emphasis on community life. That raised crucial problems about the boundary, hitherto administered by the ordained men in the name of the community. The very idea of the boundary was to keep out individualism—the ability of persons to define a unique personal lifestyle.

In the years from 1911 until about 1940, individual access to the outside was limited, and thus the church did not face severe challenges from people wishing to be different. Most of the people remained on the farms, a lifestyle in itself that tended to isolate those within it from the faster pace of Canadian urban life. Also after 1911 economic times became uncertain or downright bad, and there was little with which an individual could distinguish himself. Thus the period following the 1911 division was one in which the church gradually integrated the Sunday School.

By 1940 it was an accepted part of the community, though it occupied a subordinate position. The ordained men as representatives of the more traditional approach of community discipline still held sway in the groups accepting Sunday School. These congregations had created the Ontario Amish Mennonite Conference in the early 1920s, partly to deal with the place of community discipline and the new revivalist impulse. The accommodation they reached by 1940 served them well during that period, but was to collapse under the changes World War II and subsequent years presented to the community.

During all this time, the more traditional Beachy Amish did not need to go through this dilemma. They had reaffirmed the traditional approach to realizing their faith. Their religious institutions did not change, and their lifestyle was more distinctly different. Although there were not many lifestyle differences between the two groups, they were still defined very clearly against one another. Group identity was partly in terms of the other—they were the people who represented what we were NOT. And each group represented a different approach to the central religious project. The conservative Beachy Amish had maintained, and perhaps strengthened, the traditional submergence of the individual to the community discipline.

The more progressive group, which I will denote under its current name of the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference (WOMC), retained church control as well over

lifestyle, but gave a much more important place to individual conversion and conviction. Thus the two groups were very much part of the same tradition and shared many of the same goals. In separating, they had, however, represented in social form the alternatives already inherent in their own religious ideals.

III. Analysis

At this point, we can turn from an outline to an analysis. We have presented a model of the community divided in two, each group having a strong alternative approach to the realization of religious ideals. Both groups had a strong sense of group identity, born partly from their ideals, and partly from the struggles to express them which had led to divisions. As we consider the effect of changes arising in the wider society during the 1940s we will be able to see the interaction of these internal ideological alternatives with external events leading to change. Each of the two groups is affected differently by external events because of the positive internal organization.

The most influential external changes arose from the general increase in prosperity during the 1940s. At this time, farm produce prices rose sharply. This sharp rise applied to all the produce sold by Ontario mixed farms—wheat, beef, pork, and dairy products. The rise was especially sharp in the period from 1947-1953. After this point, prices fell, but stabilized at levels considerably higher

than those reached before World War II. During this period, farm input costs—for land, machinery, stock and seeds—also increased, but at a much reduced rate. Thus the spread between prices and costs increased, and farm real income rose to levels that had not been attained previously, and were not to be realized again until the 1970s. If ever a farm in Ontario was prosperous, it was at this time.

We can see indirect evidence of this prosperity by examining what farmers did with their funds. Many paid off mortgages that had been granted during the 1920s and 1930s. Far more mortgages were discharged in the period from 1945-55 than one would otherwise have expected. Discharging mortgages, however, did not seriously affect the pattern of farm life, as it had always been a value to pay off the mortgage as it became financially possible. What did affect the entire farming enterprise was the decision to mechanize.

Just after World War II, the rise in prosperity coincided with the introduction of smaller tractors suitable for use on the smaller Ontario farms. Many farmers purchased such tractors, and the implements to use with them, in the period from 1941 to 1951. The rise in the number of tractors on farms in Waterloo and Perth Counties is given in Table 1. In 1941, only about one-quarter of the farms had tractors; by 1951, more than three-quarters used these machines. By 1956, there were almost as many farms reporting tractors as there are today. Since the census

includes as "farms" all properties with more than one cultivated acre producing over $50 of produce, it is not surprising that about 20 percent of the so-called "farms" did not use tractor power. We can be reasonably certain that most of the 20 percent without tractors were these smaller farms.

From the records of the Fire and Storm Aid Union, we have actual records of the number of Amish Mennonite farms with tractors. These data show that by 1956, about three-quarters of the farms had tractors. By 1958, almost all the farms had them. The Beachy Amish purchased tractors almost as readily as did the WOMC farmers. We can probably explain the slightly lower number of Beachy Amish farmers with tractors as a result of the higher average age of Beachy Amish farmers. These older men could not justify the move to tractor power, since they were to leave farming in a few years.

Tractors were not the only important purchases with the extra funds in the later 1940s. Most of the homes in the area signed up for electrical service at the time. This meant that the farmer could install a milking machine in the barn, and thus increase the number of cattle he could milk. He could also install modern appliances in the home. The records of the Fire and Storm Aid Union show that insured values increased sharply during the period from 1940-1955 for all congregations, both Beachy and WOMC. Thus the picture that emerges from these data suggests that the

Beachy and WOMC spent the extra money on the farm in similar ways. Both groups accepted mechanized field and barn equipment, and improved the basic standard of living in the homes. Certain outside innovations were accepted, and integrated into an existing pattern of life. These innovations did not seem to have met many challenges in either congregation. Thus the two religious groups both accepted what we often feel are modernizing influences. The effects of these influences, however, varied considerably in the two groups.

Young people began to make quite different occupational choices in the two communities. The Beachy Amish remained as farmers until the early 1970s; even today most of the members of the Beachy Amish are farmers or retired farmers. Among the WOMC, however, many younger people left the farm. The data in table 3 outline the numbers of young farmers purchasing farms from various sources in the community, or leaving farming altogether. In the period from 1910-1924, between ten and thirteen percent of the young people remained in the Wellesley WOMC congregation, but worked off the farm. From 1940-54, that percentage rose to 26 percent—from 1955 to 1969, to over 51 percent. At the same time, the percentage of WOMC men purchasing farms from their fathers remained at approximately the same level of 31 to 33 percent. This is approximately the same percentage as that of the Beachy Amish purchasing from their parents. But the number of

farms purchased by WOMC men from other Mennonites or from non-Mennonites declines sharply. This is not the case for the Beachy Amish.

The reason for this drop has to do with the problems of financing farm purchases. Before the 1940s, most owners were willing to take back a mortgage on the property with only a small down payment. The interest on that mortgage helped them with expenses in their retirement. Homes were inexpensive, and a retired farmer could afford to leave most of his money in the mortgage. But as farm prices rose sharply in the 1950s, prices to build new homes also rose. A retired farmer needed a large payment himself to move into a new home, and thus could not afford to leave most of his money in a mortgage. This meant he needed a larger down payment on the sale of his farm—a down payment few younger men could afford.

In addition, the government began to offer farm mortgages at rates well below those current in the general market, and it was thus to a farmer's advantage to take such a mortgage. A previous owner was thus more interested in getting his money out of the farm to invest elsewhere than in matching lower government rates of return. But a father might be willing to take a second mortgage for the down payment, especially if he could continue to live on the farm instead of building a new house. Thus young men could purchase their home farm more easily than they could that of another person.

Among the Beachy Amish, who were committed to farming as the lifestyle sanctioned by religious ideology, the economic problems were faced but put in second place. Among the WOMC, where lifestyle was more under the control of the individual, financial decisions were allowed to govern occupational choice, and religious considerations were stepped over.

A more complete survey of occupational choice is presented in Table 4. Here data on the occupational choice for different age groups are categorized by congregation. In the table, we have distinguished WOMC members from the Mornington Township in Perth County from those in the Wellesley Township of Waterloo County. This represents a distinction between two congregations in the Western Ontario Conference, a distinction we will elaborate on shortly. These data show that in all congregations, the number of farmers and retired farmers increases with age. But this increase proceeds at different rates in the three categories.

Among the WOMC congregations, non-farmers predominate among single adults aged 20-29 in 1972. Some of these young people moved to farming once they married and their parents were ready to retire; traditionally very few young people ran a farm, if they were not married. In this table, however, farm labourers were included in the category "farmers." This means that very few of the young single adults even worked on farms. Among the Beachy

Amish, however, about half of the people aged 20-29, married or single, worked on farms. This pattern of half farm workers and half workers off the farm extends in the Wellesley congregation to those married adults from age 20-39.

Among the Mornington members, the same pattern extends to age 49. Thus among the Beachy Amish, those older than 30 in 1972 were almost exclusively farmers. Among the Wellesley WOMC members, those older than 40 were primarily farmers, and among the Mornington members, those older than 50. Thus the Beachy Amish are only moving to non-farm work in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Among the Wellesley members, this trend began when those about 40 in 1972 made their occupational choices—or about 20 years before that time, in 1952.

The shift away from the farm among the Mornington members started somewhat earlier, in the later 1940s. By the late 1960s, most of the young people were leaving the farms. These data thus support the conclusion that among the Beachy Amish, the church retained control of lifestyle choice in the matter of occupation until the later 1960s, managing to retain farming as the dominant occupation. Among the WOMC members, however, economic considerations began to outweigh religious ones in the period around 1950—just after the period of major prosperity.

Members of the WOMC congregations explain this move as a result of mechanization. As farmers mechanized

their farming operations, there was a decrease in the need for wage labour on the farms. In the past, many farmers had hired young adults for farm work, especially when they themselves did not have sons able to help in the fields. Wages paid to these young men were stored and used as part of the down payment on their own farms. But with machinery, there was a decreasing need for such young people on the farms. This meant that young people could leave the farm and work for wages off the farm.

In a period of booming economics after World War II, there were plenty of such wage opportunities, not all of which required that the young people go into the cities. Several people admitted that they hired Beachy Amish young people while their own children worked in the woolen mills in Wellesley. The steady cash of wage labour, and the increasing costs of starting a farm in the middle 1950s persuaded many WOMC members to leave the farm. As this happened, there was a need for even more machinery, and a corresponding decrease in the need for wage labour at home. Members of the WOMC began to make essentially financial decisions about occupational futures, while the Beachy retained religious limits on occupational choices.

One of the key changes occurring as a result of these financial calculations was the increase in education among WOMC youth. People were quick to see that with education, young people could enter the job market at a higher level and hope to attain greater returns. Table 5

presents data on this trend in education. No data are given for the Beachy Amish, who still do not attend school past grade 8. But the data for the WOMC show that most of the young people today have attended high school. The move to high school education, however, follows the move to wage labour off the farm. Very few of those over 35 in 1972 had any high school training. Among those 20-24 in 1972, those with high school training predominated over those without. This means that the move to high school training really began in the 1960s--about ten years after the move to wage labour. This suggests that the move to higher education was indeed part of the adaptation to the wage labour process.

If we were to curtail our analysis at this point, we might be tempted to say that the key difference between the Beachy Amish and the WOMC hung on the choice to allow wage labour as an occupational choice for young people. The Beachy Amish allowed mechanization but as a community retained traditional patterns of occupation. The mechanized farm may have been different from the farm worked with horses, but not so radically different that the older religious values could not be kept in control of lifestyle. Individuals were still retained within the community and under community control, and the whole group moved together to adapt themselves to a new technology while retaining their core values.

As for the WOMC congregations, they did not control individual access to the outside so strictly. Once a

person worked for wages, that immediately distinguished him from his fellows. He became part of a public beyond the reach of community control, and his earnings became disposable income that he alone could spend. Such earnings were not being plowed back into the farm, but were available for his discretionary use. Thus we can see clearly how the same external changes interacted with different internal community values to produce different trajectories of change.

Such an analysis however is incomplete. We introduced the data comparing not merely the Beachy Amish and the WOMC, but also the Wellesley and Mornington WOMC congregations to show that there were differences in the speed with which change took place in the WOMC. In matters of occupation, the Wellesley WOMC congregations occupied a middle ground. They changed more quickly than did the Beachy Amish to allow wage labour, but not as quickly as did the Mornington group. If we examine the other characteristics of the Beachy and Wellesley WOMC groups, we begin to see that while the Beachy Amish members did not change, they purchased their stability at the cost of exporting large numbers of people—individuals who simply left and joined other churches. Those who remained Beachy Amish retained traditional values, but far from all those born in Beachy congregations remained in them. Many of those raised in the Beachy Amish congregations felt the same pressures as did their WOMC

neighbours when machines were introduced. They did not, however, remain with the Beachy Amish.

We can refine our picture of the effects of mechanization and prosperity on the Beachy Amish by considering the demography of the groups in the area. Table 6 presents data on the different ages in 1972 of members of the three groups. There are minor differences between the two WOMC groups—the Wellesley congregations had fewer people in the age group from 20-39, and more in the age group from 40-59, than did the Mornington group. But the big difference comes with the number of Beachy Amish over 60. About 25 percent of the Beachy Amish in 1972 were older than 60; only about 12 percent of the WOMC members were in this age category. From genealogies of the Beachy Amish we can be certain that there was no drop in fertility. The lack of people in the ages from 20-60 among the Beachy Amish can only be accounted for by migration.

From genealogies, we have compiled the data on migration presented in Table 7. In this table, we have listed the congregational choice of the children of Beachy Amish members. We have distinguished between the sexes, and found no relation to either congregational choice or generation. We have also distinguished those in the first generation from the founding of the Beachy congregations (the children of the founders) from those in the second generation (the children of those children who remained with the Beachy Amish). These data have been reexpressed in

Table 8, which lists only generation and congregational choice. These data illustrate that for those who changed congregations, most of the first generation went to the WOMC, while an increasing number in the second generation left the Mennonite church altogether.

These data can be supplemented by those in Table 9, which deal with congregational choice by marriage choice. These data show that the choice of congregation and spouse are highly correlated. The choice of a spouse is part of the choice a young adult makes as he or she decides whether to identify with the traditional Beachy community and its values. Those that wish to remain within the community marry within the Beachy congregations. Those that wish to leave, however, often marry directly outside the Beachy church. During the period from 1935-49, however, this pattern is modified somewhat. Couples who had been married within the Beachy congregation left together for the WOMC churches. Almost as many left the Beachy congregations as stayed. But since that time, those who decided to leave did not marry within and then leave as part of a couple, but left first and married without.

It is not surprising to find that marriage choice and congregational choice are strongly related. It is interesting, however, to note how many young people have decided to leave the Beachy Amish. There has been a consistent out migration of people since the founding of the congregations, as we see in Table 10.

More interesting, however, is the migration of those couples married in the period from 1935-49 into the WOMC congregations. These couples were leaving the Beachy congregations in exactly the period during which the pressures of mechanization were faced by the Beachy community for the first time. Those married before 1934 faced the choice of remaining with the Beachy congregation within a more or less well-known setting. A number married out, but few found the Beachy congregation intolerable after they had decided to marry in it and thus identify with it.

Similarly, after 1950, while many decided to leave, they did so knowing what the problems and pressures were. Those that remained did not subsequently leave. But for those married in the years just before the mechanization, life in the community changed drastically. They were familiar with the Beachy lifestyle in the age before machines. Once married, however, they faced the religious control of that lifestyle under the pressure of prosperity and mechanization. Many of them decided that they would prefer more individual autonomy in matters of lifestyle, and left the Beachy congregations.

And from the genealogies, we know many of them transferred their membership to the Wellesley WOMC congregations--the very church their fathers and grandfathers had left some forty years before. We can show the influx of people to the Wellesley WOMC congregation

through the figures in Table 11. In this table, data on the mode of joining the congregation are presented for different periods. Since only the variables age and mode of joining are not independent, we have compressed these data in Table 12. We see there that the large difference occurred for those 35:49 in 1972. These people were from 15 to 30 years of age in 1950, or at the age when the new mechanized farming methods would have affected their occupations the most.

The large influx of Beachy Amish into the Wellesley WOMC congregation can explain the slower pace of change in that congregation compared to the pace among the Mornington members. Thus the Beachy congregations purchased ideological stability at the cost of exporting large numbers of potential members. Many of those members went to the WOMC congregations, especially to the Wellesley congregation. For some, the Wellesley congregation represented a secure home with many close kinfolk. It was also not a profoundly different religious community. For others, the ability to be involved with revivalism was of prime importance. The Wellesley group represented the perfect compromise--part of the Amish Mennonite traditions, but with revivalism mixed in. As a result of this influx of Beachy Amish, however, religious change in that Wellesley congregation took a unique form.

The Beachy Amish who joined the Wellesley WOMC congregation became part of the new debate about the

religious life of the community. Before 1940, revivalism had been given a place in the group, but was still subordinate to the more traditional accommodation that put community discipline in control of lifestyle. As people began to encounter the wider society as individuals, and began to have the resources to create a unique lifestyle, debates arose again about who was to control that lifestyle—the community through the church leaders, or the individual.

IV. Conclusion

Throughout the 1950s, and into the 1960s, there were many debates about the discipline. While each issue centred on some specific aspect of the discipline, such as cape dresses, ice skating, or television, the real issue was the kind of religious ideals the community would hold. The committed revivalists stressed that the individual defined his or her own lifestyle, and that definition arose from the personal relation with Christ. The community could not enforce standards—only the individual could in the end create a meaningful expression of faith.

The traditional people still wanted to see community control, even if that control was not as complete as in the more conservative Beachy Amish congregation. Between those ideologically committed on either side were the large groups of ordinary folks, who believed in the community because it was their culture. More and more, these people were drawn into the economic justifications of

the wider society, and more and more their lifestyles were becoming individualized. Yet the congregations could not break away from the old traditions, partly because of the large influx of Beachy Amish into the congregation. The old and new traditions were both alive, represented by various factions.

Eventually, the community turned completely to the revivalist approach, and abandoned its community discipline. The religious organization of the traditional Amish congregation was abandoned. Instead of an elder, minister and deacon, the congregation moved to the Protestant model of a paid, seminary-trained minister. The church no longer attempted to maintain a uniform lifestyle model for the entire group. The revivalists were delighted, as their approach was the core of the new religious group. And those who simply wished to continue in their sense of community were also pleased, because a new religious compromise had been worked out. Faith still dominated the individual lives of community members, but the faith made accommodation to the economic order much easier.

But the interaction of faith and circumstances had transformed the religious project of the community. The accommodation of the 1920s and 1930s was exemplified in the dictum that the community should be evangelizing in a straight-cut coat. Revivalism had been part of a community discipline. But the new revivalism lacked any community ethic. Since faith was individualized, it could not keep the

community together. The community had to rely on kinship and a common history and culture to keep itself together. It was no longer a community with a religious project as its central defining symbol.

Once the WOMC congregations resolved the place of revivalism there was a corresponding change in the Beachy group. The WOMC did not represent any longer an alternative form of the more traditional religious project. Having resolved the question of individual and community, and in the process having set itself completely different questions, the Wellesley congregation was no longer the social representation of the alternative the Beachy opposed. For the Beachy Amish who wished to leave the community to escape the rigours of the discipline, the WOMC congregation was still a suitable home. Close kin ties and a sense of common history were enough to attract people to the Wellesley congregation.

But for those committed to traditional religious ideals, the Wellesley congregation no longer represented an alternative. Thus it became evident that the original dilemma had not been resolved, merely pushed aside into another group, where dissidents could migrate. And so the Beachy Amish recreated the debates that had led to their formation in 1911. In 1976, the Beachy split again. The more traditional people remained, and reinforced their commitment to traditional values and approaches. The other group chose a religious lifestyle very similar to that worked

out in the 1920s in the WOMC—evangelism in a straight-cut coat. The internal religious ideology—the religious project of the community—reacted to the change in the internal structure of the wider Amish Mennonite community, and recreated the splits and schisms which gave its ambiguities social expression.

The analysis illustrates how similar external events affected the two Amish Mennonite conferences in the Wellesley area differently. We have outlined how those groups represented different approaches to their religious projects in their religious institutions. Among the Beachy Amish, changes in economic circumstances led essentially to the migration out of many young people, and some adult couples. The community retained a traditional faith as long as it was defined against the WOMC congregations, and as long as it exported those potential dissidents.

Having accepted a different formulation of the religious project, the changes of the 1940s had a different meaning for the WOMC members. They had accepted revivalist theology and institutions because these originally represented an alternative formulation of their religious project. But as time went on, and more and more individuals were organizing their lives around economic rather than religious systems of justification and meaning, the revivalist faith proved a way of recontextualizing the religious project.

The community could retain a religious focus, but

one which made sense of social life in different terms. The religious base of the community was replaced by a more individualistic faith that had no community ethic. Once the WOMC put aside the entire question of aligning individual and community within the faith, the serious ones among the Beachy Amish began to recreate in that community the same expressions that had led to the 1911 split.

We have not, in this short essay, done full justice to the themes arising here. We have presented a refined picture of the impact of the prosperity of the 1940s. But the interesting earlier material on the ambiguity inherent in the religious life of the community and its representation in two communities in the period around 1911 could only be asserted, not explored in depth. Similarly, the course of debates about the role of community and individual in the WOMC during the 1950s and 1960s was only alluded to.

Still, we have shown enough to demonstrate that internal religious ideals created a relevant set of issues which were affected differently in the post-War years. This should be demonstration enough to convince us that the particular associations we have argued exist between the nature of primary ethnic groups, their key symbols, and the interactions they have with the outside, can be represented in models that allow us to understand the history of Mennonites as ethnic groups.

TABLE 1

Tractors on Census Farms, 1931-76
Percentage of Farms Reporting at least One Tractor

Year	Waterloo County	Perth County
1931	16	15
1941	28	26
1951	77	76
1956	82	86
1961	83	89
1966	81	90
1971	81	90
1976	86	91

TABLE 2

Number of Amish Mennonite Farms Reporting Tractors, 1946-58

Year	Beachy Amish		WOMC	
	With	Without	With	Without
1946	32	24	34	26
1952	45	15	61	9
1958	58	6	61	0

Percentages of Amish Mennonite Farms with Tractors, 1946-58

Year	Beachy Amish	WOMC
1946	57	57
1952	75	87
1958	91	100

TABLE 3

Person from whom farm purchased, in 15-year period from 1910-1970, for Northern Amish Mennonites

Source	Congregation	1910-24	1925-39	1940-54	1955-59
Father	WOMC	9	11	22	11
	Beachy	7	11	10	8
Other Mennonite	WOMC	10	14	12	2
	Beachy	10	13	11	5
Non-Mennonite	WOMC	17	11	21	3
	Beachy	15	10	8	6
Non-Farm	WOMC	4	6	16	17
	Beachy	0	0	0	2

TABLE 4

Occupation for Northern Amish Farmers, by age group in 1972, and Church Congregation.

Congregation	Occupation	20-29S	20-29M	30-39M	40-49M	50-59M	60 over
Wellesley WOMC	Farmer	5	6	16	23	26	31
	Non-Farmer	21	10	21	9	9	3
Mornington WOMC	Farmer	1	12	25	16	16	29
	Non-Farmer	22	10	21	14	8	3
Beachy	Farmer	5	10	16	9	25	51
	Non-Farmer	7	6	0	0	0	0

Age Group columns: 20-29S through 60 over.

S=single
M=married

TABLE 5

Extent of Education, by Age Groups in 1972, for Northern WOMC

Age	Education	Wellesley 1	Wellesley 2	Mornington 1	Mornington 2
15-19	Primary	6	4	0	0
	High School	36	30	35	32
20-24	Primary	14	4	12	9
	High School	7	26	22	8
25-29	Primary	10	7	15	18
	High School	6	6	17	8
30-34	Primary	11	12	24	9
	High School	1	2	11	3
35 up	Primary	196	70	90	103
	High School	2	3	7	0

Table V.

Age	Education	Congregation Wellesley	Congregation Mornington
15-19	Primary	10	0
	High School	66	67
20-24	Primary	18	21
	High School	33	30
25-29	Primary	17	33
	High School	12	25
30-34	Primary	23	33
	High School	3	14
35 and older	Primary	266	193
	High School	5	7

		Value	D/F
Overall G^2	=	595.62	13
Age independent of education	=	551.02	4
Age independent of congregation	=	26.26	4
Education independent of congregation	=	5.93	1
Interaction of all variables	=	12.41	4

Of these values, those for age/education and age/congregation are significant at the .99 level.

Age and Congregation

		Value	D/F
15/19 versus 20/24	=	0.23	1
15/24 versus 25/29	=	8.98	1
15/29 versus 30/34	=	3.18	1
15/34 versus 35 and older	=	13.87	1

Wellesley is low in people from the ages of 25/34, and high in those over 35 compared to Mornington.

Age and Education

		Value	D/F
15/19 versus 20/24	=	37.01	1
15/24 versus 25/29	=	40.74	1
15/29 versus 30/34	=	55.13	1
15/34 versus 35 and older	=	418.15	1

Throughout, the younger people are better educated.

TABLE 6

Numbers in Northern Amish Mennonite Congregations, by Age Group in 1972

Age	Congregation		
	Wellesley WOMC	Mornington WOMC	Beachy
0-19	290	282	156
20-39	147	200	84
40-59	146	110	80
60 up	74	73	109

TABLE 7

Congregational Affiliation of those with Beachy Amish Parents, by Generation and Sex

Generation from founding	Sex	Congregation			
		Beachy	WOMC	Non-Menno	Transfer
First	Male	29	28	6	0
	Female	35	24	7	2
Second	Male	24	26	20	6
	Female	19	48	23	4

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Generation and Sex	0.34	1
Generation and Own Congregation	25.708	3
Sex and Own Congregation	1.117	3
Interaction of all three	8.334	3
Total	35.508	10

TABLE 8

Congregational Affiliation by Generation for Those with Beachy Amish Parents

Generation from founding	Beachy	Congregation WOMC	Non-Menno
First	66	52	13
Second	53	74	43

For Beachy v. WOMC, G^2= 4.95, sig. 0.0261
For Menno v. Non-Men, G^2= 12.21, sig. 0.0022

TABLE 9

Church Congregation of Couple Compared with Congregation of Spouse, By Period, One Spouse from Beachy Amish

Period	Spouse's Church	Own Congregation OOA	Beachy	WOMC	Non-Menno
1910-34	OOA	3	3	2	0
	Beachy	0	41	6	3
	WOMC	0	0	21	4
	Non-Menno	0	0	1	4
1935-49	OOA	0	2	0	0
	Beachy	1	37	32	2
	WOMC	0	0	52	7
	Non-Menno	0	2	1	17
1950-74	OOA	1	7	0	0
	Beachy	0	27	7	0
	WOMC	0	0	24	0
	Non-Menno	0	0	2	22

For independence variables	G^2	DF
Period and Spouse's Church	30.624	6
Period and Congregation	22.040	6
Spouse's Church and Congregation	341.905	9
Interaction of all three	18.180	18
Total	412.749	39

Table K-6a Outmarriage of Amish Mennonites, 1860-1974

Period	Married Within	Married Without	Percent Leaving	G^2	Level of Significance
1860-1884	49	2	4		
1885-1909	84	3	4	0.02	
1910-1934	103	7	7	0.99	
1935-1959	209	28	13	7.98	0.005
1960-1974	126	51	40	41.24	0.000001
			Total	50.23	0.000001

TABLE 10

Migration from Beachy Congregations, By Period

Period	Congregational Choice		
	Remain	Move Out	Marry Out
1910-34	44	11	33
1935-49	41	34	78
1950-74	34	7	69

	G^2
For 1910-34 v. 1935-49 and Move v. Marry Out,	0.45
For 1910-34 v. 1935-49 and Leave v. Stay,	13.02
For 1910-49 v. 1950-74 and Move v. Marry Out	12.73
For 1910-49 v. 1950-74 and Leave v. Stay,	0.65
Total G^2	26.85

Table K-7 Residence of Couples, One Spouse at least with Beachy Amish Parents, by Congregation of Parents and Period

Period	Church of Parents	Residence of Couple		
		Farm	Town	City
1910-34	Beachy	41	4	4
	B/WOMC	20	4	2
	B/NonM	2	1	3
1935-59	Beachy	61	11	0
	B/WOMC	34	18	10
	B/NonM	4	7	9
1960-75	Beachy	33	3	0
	B/WOMC	9	10	2
	B/NonM	4	6	15

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Period and Parents' Churches	20.319	4
Period and Residence	11.130	4
Parents' Churches and REsidence	99.593	4
For interaction all three	9.858	8
Total	140.906	20

TABLE 11

Mode of Joining Mapleview Congregation, by Age in 1972 and Sex

Age in 1972	Sex	Mode of Joining: Baptism	Mode of Joining: Letter
20-34	Male	10	10
	Female	11	5
35-49	Male	15	19
	Female	11	34
50-64	Male	16	12
	Female	12	14
65-79	Male	13	8
	Female	11	11

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Age and Sex	1.909	3
Age and Mode of Joining	10.153	3
Sex and Mode of Joining	2.647	1
For interaction all three	3.312	3
Total	18.021	10

TABLE 12

Age in 1972 and Mode of Joining Mapleview

Age in 1972	Mode of Joining: Baptism	Mode of Joining: Letter
20-34	21	15
35-49	26	53
50-64	28	26
65-79	24	19

For 20-34 v. 35-49, G^2= 6.565
20-49 v. 50-64, 1.790
20-64 v. 65-79, 1.798

TABLE 1

Tractors on Census Farms, 1931-76
Percentage of Farms Reporting at least One Tractor

Year	Waterloo County	Perth County
1931	16	15
1941	28	26
1951	77	76
1956	82	86
1961	83	89
1966	81	90
1971	81	90
1976	86	91

TABLE 2

Number of Amish Mennonite Farms Reporting Tractors, 1946-58

Year	Beachy Amish		WOMC	
	With	Without	With	Without
1946	32	24	34	26
1952	45	15	61	9
1958	58	6	63	0

Percentages of Amish Mennonite Farms with Tractors, 1946-58

Year	Beachy Amish	WOMC
1946	57	57
1952	75	87
1958	91	100

TABLE 3

Person from whom farm purchased, in 15-year period from 1910-1970, for Northern Amish Mennonites

Source	Congregation	1910-24	1925-39	1940-54	1955-59
Father	WOMC	9	11	22	11
	Beachy	7	11	10	8
Other Mennonite	WOMC	10	14	12	2
	Beachy	10	13	11	5
Non-Mennonite	WOMC	17	11	21	3
	Beachy	15	10	8	6
Non-Farm	WOMC	4	6	16	17
	Beachy	0	0	0	2

TABLE 4

Occupation for Northern Amish Farmers, by age group in 1972, and Church Congregation.

Congregation	Occupation	Age Group 20–29S	20–29M	30–39M	40–49M	50–59M	60 over
Wellesley WOMC	Farmer	5	6	16	23	26	31
	Non-Farmer	21	10	21	9	9	3
Mornington WOMC	Farmer	1	12	25	16	16	29
	Non-Farmer	22	10	21	14	8	3
Beachy	Farmer	5	10	16	9	25	51
	Non-Farmer	7	6	0	0	0	0

S=single
M=married

TABLE 5

Extent of Education, by Age Groups in 1972, for Northern WOMC

Age	Education	Congregation: Wellesley 1	Wellesley 2	Mornington 1	Mornington 2
15–19	Primary	6	4	0	0
	High School	36	30	35	32
20–24	Primary	14	4	12	9
	High School	7	26	22	8
25–29	Primary	10	7	15	18
	High School	6	6	17	8
30–34	Primary	[illegible]	[illegible]	24	9
	High School	[illegible]	[illegible]	11	[illegible]
35 up	Primary	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	High School	[illegible]	[illegible]	7	[illegible]

Table V.

Age	Education	Congregation	
		Wellesley	Mornington
15-19	Primary	10	0
	High School	66	67
20-24	Primary	18	21
	High School	33	30
25-29	Primary	17	33
	High School	12	25
30-34	Primary	23	33
	High School	3	14
35 and older	Primary	266	193
	High School	5	7

		Value	D/F
Overall G^2	=	595.62	13
Age independent of education	=	551.02	4
Age independent of congregation	=	26.26	4
Education independent of congregation	=	5.93	1
Interaction of all variables	=	12.41	4

Of these values, those for age/education and age/congregation are significant at the .99 level.

Age and Congregation

15/19 versus 20/24	=	0.23	1
15/24 versus 25/29	=	8.98	1
15/29 versus 30/34	=	3.18	1
15/34 versus 35 and older	=	13.87	1

Wellesley is low in people from the ages of 25/34, and high in those over 35 compared to Mornington.

Age and Education

15/19 versus 20/24	=	37.02	1
15/24 versus 25/29	=	40.74	1
15/29 versus 30/34	=	55.13	1
15/34 versus 35 and older	=	418.15	1

Throughout, the younger people are better educated.

TABLE 6

Numbers in Northern Amish Mennonite Congregations, by Age Group in 1972

Age	Congregation: Wellesley WOMC	Mornington WOMC	Beachy
0-19	290	282	156
20-39	147	200	84
40-59	146	110	80
60 up	74	73	109

TABLE 7

Congregational Affiliation of those with Beachy Amish Parents, by Generation and Sex

Generation from founding	Sex	Congregation: Beachy	WOMC	Non-Menno	Transfer
First	Male	29	29	6	6
	Female	35	24	7	2
Second	Male	24	26	20	6
	Female	19	48	23	4

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Generation and Sex	0.34	1
Generation and Own Congregation	25.708	3
Sex and Own Congregation	1.117	3
Interaction of all three	8.334	3
Total	35.509	10

TABLE 8

Congregational Affiliation by Generation for Those with Beachy Amish Parents

Generation from founding	Congregation: Beachy	WOMC	Non-Menno
First	66	52	13
Second	53	74	43

For Beachy v. WOMC, $G_2^2 = 4.95$, sig. 0.0261
For Menno v. Non-Men, $G^2 = 12.21$, sig. 0.0022

TABLE 9

Church Congregation of Couple Compared with Congregation of Spouse, By Period, One Spouse from Beachy Amish

Period	Spouse's Church	Own Congregation: OOA	Beachy	WOMC	Non-Menno
1910-34	OOA	2	3	1	0
	Beachy	0	41	6	3
	WOMC	0	0	21	4
	Non-Menno	0	0	1	4
1935-49	OOA	0	2	0	0
	Beachy	1	37	32	2
	WOMC	0	0	52	7
	Non-Menno	0	2	1	17
1950-74	OOA	1	7	0	0
	Beachy	0	27	7	0
	WOMC	0	0	24	0
	Non-Menno	0	0	2	22

For independence variables	G^2	DF
Period and Spouse's Church	30.624	6
Period and Congregation	22.040	6
Spouse's Church and Congregation	341.905	9
Interaction of all three	18.180	18
Total	412.749	39

Table K-6a Outmarriage of Amish Mennonites, 1860-1974

Period	Married Within	Married Without	Percent Leaving	G^2	Level of Significance
1860-1884	49	2	4		
1885-1909	84	3	4	0.02	
1910-1934	103	7	7	0.99	
1935-1959	209	28	13	7.98	0.005
1960-1974	126	51	40	41.24	0.000001
			Total	50.23	0.000001

TABLE 1[illegible]

Migration from Beachy Congregations, By Period

Period	Congregational Choice		
	Remain	Move Out	Marry Out
1910-34	44	11	33
1935-49	41	34	78
1950-74	34	7	69

	G^2
For 1910-34 v. 1935-49 and Move v. Marry Out,	0.45
For 1910-34 v. 1935-49 and Leave v. Stay,	13.02
For 1910-49 v. 1950-74 and Move v. Marry Out	12.73
For 1910-49 v. 1950-74 and Leave v. Stay,	0.65
Total G^2	26.85

Table K-7 Residence of Couples, One Spouse at least with Beachy Amish Parents, by Congregation of Parents and Period

Period	Church of Parents	Residence of Couple		
		Farm	Town	City
1910-34	Beachy	41	4	4
	B/WOMC	20	4	2
	B/NonM	2	1	3
1935-59	Beachy	61	11	0
	B/WOMC	34	18	10
	B/NonM	4	7	9
1960-75	Beachy	33	3	0
	B/WOMC	9	10	2
	B/NonM	4	6	15

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Period and Parents' Churches	20.319	4
Period and Residence	11.130	4
Parents' Churches and REsidence	99.593	4
For interaction all three	9.858	8
Total	140.906	20

TABLE 11

Mode of Joining Mapleview Congregation, by Age in 1972 and Sex

Age in 1972	Sex	Mode of Joining: Baptism	Mode of Joining: Letter
20-34	Male	10	10
	Female	11	5
35-49	Male	15	19
	Female	11	34
50-64	Male	16	12
	Female	12	14
65-79	Male	13	8
	Female	11	11

For independence of variables	G^2	DF
Age and Sex	1.909	3
Age and Mode of Joining	10.153	3
Sex and Mode of Joining	2.647	1
For interaction all three	3.312	3
Total	18.021	10

TABLE 12

Age in 1972 and Mode of Joining Mapleview

Age in 1972	Mode of Joining: Baptism	Mode of Joining: Letter
20-34	21	15
35-49	26	53
50-64	28	26
65-79	24	19

For 20-34 v. 35-49, $G^2 =$ 6.565
20-49 v. 50-64, 1.790
20-64 v. 65-79, 1.798