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Author(s): Hans Kasdorf.

Source: *Direction* 13 (1984): 44-55.

Published by: Direction.

Stable URL: <http://hdl.handle.net/11418/485>

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Pietist Roots of Early Mennonite Brethren Spirituality

Hans Kasdorf

Introduction

The thesis of this article is that the LORD of history and redemption is not only vitally interested in renewing His people; he also has unlimited resources for breathing new life into dry bones. God is in His people's midst and accompanies them on their journey. He knows their coming in and going out. He is mindful of their spiritual pilgrimage which can be likened to the ebb and flow of the ocean's currents determined as much by inherent power as by circumstantial forces. God is in control of both, sometimes allowing them to be infused from unexpected quarters.

I want to look at Pietism as only one such influential current which has provided a certain theological orientation as well as forms of spiritual renewal and nurture to the Mennonite Brethren in Russia.

Varieties of Pietism

Pietism is most commonly classified in terms of its geographical concentration in such places as Halle, Herrnhut, and Wuerttemberg.¹ But that categorization overlooks two important streams, namely the Reformed and the Catholic. Therefore, I suggest that a confessional classification as Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian, and Roman Catholic Pietism is a more appropriate one.

Reformed Pietism

Inspired by German and Bohemian Mysticism as well as by English Puritanism, Reformed Pietism emerged in Holland quite early in the seventeenth century. Convinced that the Protestant Reformation had not gone far enough to realize the biblical principles which it had initially envisioned, Reformed Pietism aspired to reach that goal. Its leaders were revivalists, calling for repentance as well as for deeper godliness in personal devotions and in corporate church life. The movement was so attractive to other Christian groups that even large numbers of the

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more evangelically-oriented Mennonites left their congregations and joined this branch of Pietism.² As we trace the course of this movement to North Germany, we find it centered around the “Mennonite city” of Kreefeld, with the famous song writer and lay preacher Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) as the centripetal force. He preached in Mennonite churches, conducted Bible studies, and demonstrated the meaning of piety and spirituality in daily life. Tersteegen had only one passion and that was to help people in their pursuit of knowing God in a very personal way. “Gott ist gegenwaertig,” says the Mennonite Kreefeld chronicler, Dirk Cattepoel of Tersteegen, “das war seine gelehrte, gepredigte und gelebte Theologie.”³

The songs and other writings of Tersteegen became one of the currents of new life for dry bones of Russian Mennonites.

Lutheran Pietism

There are actually two groups of Lutheran Pietists. The one under Philip Jakob Spener (1635-1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) was centered in Halle, East Germany. Its focus was comprehensive, embracing education, evangelism, social reform and crosscultural mission.⁴ The other group was concentrated in Wuerttemberg. It too was intensely evangelistic and reformatory, but its theological orientation had strong eschatological tendencies.

Wuerttemberg Pietism has raised up great men and women of the Christian Church of whom the best known in Mennonite circles were men like Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), Ludwig Hofacker (1798-1828) and Eduard Wuest (1818-1859).⁵ They have either indirectly or directly impacted Mennonite spiritual life in the nineteenth century. “Who of us,” Friesen asks, “would wish to deny that this or that member of this group of men was not sent by God to carry out His work of salvation in a time of darkness?!”⁶

The accomplishments of both groups in terms of spiritual renewal and social reform are simply astounding. Whoever claims that Pietism was interested only in saving the soul and cared little for the well-being of the whole person has not read the records.⁷

Both types of Lutheran Pietism, more than any other, were instrumental in restoring and reforming the famous edifying Bible studies called *collegia pietatis*, more commonly known as *Stunden*. These Bible studies became so popular in Germany and among the German-speaking people in Russia that a whole spiritual movement known as *Stundisten* resulted from them.⁸ But contrary to popular notion the *Stunden* were not invented by the Pietists; they were only recovered and restored by them. Long before the Pietism of Halle and Wuerttemberg popularized the *Stunden* in Germany, the Mennonites in

Holland were known far and wide as *collegiants*, meaning those who diligently study the Bible at certain times and places. The famous Mennonite preacher Hans de Ries (1553-1638) contributed his thorough knowledge of the Bible as well as his entire preparation for spiritual ministry in the church to this type of intensive Bible study held in Mennonite homes and congregations.⁹

But subsequent generations had lost interest in these edifying and instructive Bible studies. They were a forgotten heritage for nearly 200 years until the Pietists recovered them early in their history.

The man who deserves credit for the recovery of this important part of the Anabaptist legacy was Spener, the father of German Pietism. In his comprehensive program of renewal outlined in the *Pia desideria*, Spener expressed deep concern over the lack of knowledge of the Word of God among the common people and recommended radical steps to remedy the situation. One of them was the introduction of the Bible studies which later became known as the *collegia pietatis* in academic circles of the Halle group and as *Stunden* among the common people of the Wuerttemberg movement.

Lutheran Pietism has impacted Russian Mennonitism in a variety of ways, but most profoundly through hymns, written sermons, literature, and the preaching of Eduard Wuest.

Moravian Pietism

Shortly before his death in 1705, Spener went to visit his four-year-old godchild, Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), later one of the most original and dynamic leaders of the Pietist movement. Next to his conversion, Zinzendorf's profoundest change took shape when in 1722 he came in contact with the refugees from Moravia who were looking for shelter from their persecutors and for a new homeland to live in in peace. Zinzendorf showed great compassion towards these people and allowed them to found a Christian community on his estate at Berthelsdorf.¹⁰

Under the leadership of Zinzendorf, the Moravian Brethren developed a new model of Believers' Church that was designed entirely to be a missionary church throughout the world. The motto of Zinzendorf was: "I have only one passion, and that is He, only He."¹¹ This motto took hold of the entire movement. Along with Halle Pietism, the Moravians were on the forefront of world mission long before William Carey made his bold move to India in 1792. Within twenty years this small church had organized more mission teams and commissioned more missionaries than the entire Protestant movement in 200 years.¹²

Much like the Mennonites, the Moravians were a church in

dispersion.¹³ But unlike the Mennonites, they had maintained the dynamics of their missionary witness and thus possessed the capacity of being inspirational to the Mennonites in Prussia and later also in Russia.¹⁴ Zinzendorf's songs and writing were like a breath of fresh air to those who were waiting for new spiritual winds.

Roman Catholic Pietism

The Pietist revival movement went far beyond the borders of Reformed and Lutheran Protestantism. Many Roman Catholics of Bavaria were equally gripped by the Spirit of God, and were thoroughly converted. They began conducting evangelistic services in Germany, Austria, and even Russia. On the continent a number of leaders adopted the *Stunden* as the most effective method of nurturing believers in their faith. Men like Martin Boos (1762-1825), Ignaz Lindl (1778-1845) and Johannes Evangelista Gassner (1773-1758) belong to the hall of fame of great Catholic revival preachers and promoters of the *Stunden*.¹⁵

Lindl and Gassner went to Russia in 1819 and 1820 respectively, making Odessa and the surrounding area their field of operation where they preached to crowds of 10,000 and 15,000 German-speaking people.¹⁶ Although their stay in Russia was cut short due to legal restrictions, their impact was extensive and lasting. Contrary to popular belief the *Stunden* were brought to Russia by these Catholic Pietists, and not by Protestants. When the Mennonite teacher Tobias Voth (1791-?) and the Lutheran pastor Eduard Wuest came to Russia, these Bible studies were already flourishing in some German settlements. The breath of God was already blowing into the dry bones of traditional Catholicism and nominal Lutheranism before it reached the parched ground of institutional Mennonitism in the Molotschna and Chortitza colonies.

Summation

Whatever type of Pietism has appeared in history, it has challenged the church in various ways. In general terms, Pietism has often served as a channel of renewal in the midst of orthodox faith and human enlightenment. In its stream were flowing the ingredients of a more biblical combination of faith in action.

Pietist Influences

In 1965 Victor Adrian stated the thesis that the Mennonite Brethren Church was "Born of Anabaptism and Pietism."¹⁷ Ten years later, the late J.A. Toews challenged that statement on the grounds that

Pietism only revitalized the fellowship-concept but failed to provide a New Testament church-concept.¹⁸ Toews is right. But his argument should be modified by saying that while Pietism in general suffered from the lack of a biblical view of the church, such emphases as conversion, the new birth, an attitude of worship, intentional deepening of personal and corporate life, or a spirituality as a disciplined Christian life, and the practical witness to the world rather than a focus on traditional orthodox faith and static ecclesiastical structures are foundational to a biblical church concept. And those are Pietist emphases. In fact, early Evangelical Anabaptists and later Evangelical Pietists held many of these traits in common.

It is, of course, difficult to assess either the quantitative or qualitative influence of one movement or another without measurable, scientific data. Yet from the historical records available to us several areas of Pietist influence on Mennonite Brethren are evident. I mention only four.

Experience of Faith

“The central concern of the Mennonite Brethren before and after the withdrawal in 1860,” asserts J.B. Toews, “was conversion to God through repentance and faith in the reconciling grace in Jesus Christ and the life sanctified according to the rules of the gospel through the gift of the grace and Spirit of God.”²⁰

The Founding Document of the Mennonite Brethren reinforces that concern together with a vision for the establishment of a Believers' Church patterned after the New Testament. Therefore, they emphasized repentance from sin, conversion to God and the experience of the new birth as a condition for baptism. Such experience, they maintained, does not rest on a “memorized faith” but rather “on a genuine, loving faith effected by the Spirit of God.” Quoting John 3:3 they insisted that people must be born again to become eligible for the church and kingdom of God.²¹

In his analysis of the Mennonite Churches in Russia, P.M. Friesen points out how far they had strayed from the Believers Church concept so prominent among early Anabaptists. Menno Simons had erected a house “on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, of whom Jesus Christ is the cornerstone.” However, this house of Menno, says Friesen, became “nearly empty, cold, and barren.” But thanks to such “evangelical Pietists like Philipp Hiller, Gerhard Tersteegen, Ludwig Hofacker, Friedrich W. Krummacher as well as many others through their writings, and pastor Wuest personally,” there has come “new light, new warmth and new food” into this deserted house.²² It is through these and similar influences, Friesen asserts with references to the early

Mennonite Brethren theology, structure, and leadership, that God “is gradually freeing us from the confines of the inherited, one-sided Prussian system,” and that He will also “protect our congregations from the equally one-sided and therefore unwholesome system of the Dutch Mennonites.”²³

What Friesen means by the one-sided Prussian system and the unwholesome Dutch system is the exclusive orthodoxy and narrowness of Mennonite traditionalism on the one hand and the inclusive broad-mindedness of theological liberalism on the other. With some exceptions, to be sure, these trends had reduced the Mennonite Church in Russia to a mere sociocultural institution based on ethnic identity and historical privileges rather than on the dynamic Christian faith and a vital relationship to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Not only were most of the elders and teachers of the Word uneducated, they were also unconverted. In addition, they lacked the ability to preach freely, were restricted to the reading of printed sermons which they had inherited from previous generations, and functioned in positions of leadership by virtue of a legacy from their great-grandfathers.²⁴

Christian conversion had become virtually unknown among the Mennonites in Russia until the Pietists brought it there in a new way. It was this emphasis on experiential faith through repentance and regeneration by the grace and Spirit of God that led to a spiritual revival among the early Brethren.

A.H. Unruh, the great teacher, preacher, and second generation M.B. leader, tells of his conversion experience in a similar way. At the age of seventeen, says Unruh, “I began earnestly to long for the forgiveness of sin.” In this spiritual longing he studied good literature, taught religion in school, attended Bible readings, sought counsel from others, and “with earnest prayer continued to seek salvation.” But he could not find it. Walking back and forth in his room one evening, adds Unruh, “I came to the point of giving up saving myself.” Suddenly he was reminded of a verse from a hymn by the Moravian Pietist Zinzendorf which reads:

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
my beauty are, my glorious dress.
Therewith I will before God stand
when I go into heaven’s land.

I was left standing before the word, ‘therewith,’ and said to myself: ‘When I will appear before the judgment door, I’ll say, I have nothing, but there is Jesus who atoned for me.’ At that moment a ray of light fell into my heart and I dared to embrace by faith the substitutionary suffering and death of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:16).”²⁵

The Mennonite Brethren experience of faith has deep roots in Pietist language and theology.

Songs of the Heart

When on September 23, 1860, the Mennonite Brethren of the Molotschna celebrated their first baptismal service by immersion they chose to sing not from their Mennonite song book, but from the *Glaubensstimme* (Voice of Faith) instead.²⁶ As we know, the *Glaubensstimme* later became the official song book of the German Baptists. But more important here is the fact that it, together with the *Frohe Botschaft* and the *Heimatklaenge*, made up the famous *Dreiband*,²⁷ a lyrical trilogy that became the main hymnary of the Mennonite Brethren in Russia as well as in North and South America. As one journeys through the *Dreiband* and notes the origin of the songs either by the authors given or the sources stated, the Anabaptist-Mennonite hymns are most conspicuous by their absence. Out of a total of 1079 songs recorded, 748 clearly indicate origin. Of these 748 songs, only two can be identified as being of Anabaptist derivation,²⁸ while 181 are written by prominent Pietists.²⁹

The songs which the early Mennonite Brethren sang focused sharply on experiential faith, the new life in Christ and the demonstration of that new life in daily living, and not on a strong concept of the church. The reason may well be in the fact that the institutionalized Mennonite Church, as the early brethren knew it, seemed insignificant at a time when they had found new meaning in a genuine spiritual awakening and in the subsequent dynamic of the new Christian life, characteristic of the Pietist movement.

The songs of the heart, while describing the subjective and experiential relationship between the believers and their God, do not neglect biblical and theological teachings.

Discipline of Spiritual Life

In his *Origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, Jacob P. Bekker speaks of "great spiritual awakenings [that] were taking place" in the 1850s, particularly in the village Gnadenfeld. It seems that this was the time when the Pietist type *Stunden* of which I spoke earlier played a significant role among the Mennonites. As more and more people were converted, recalls Bekker, "Meetings for edification and prayer were arranged for the evenings, resulting in many rich blessings. Because they met frequently and not only on Sundays, their opponents called them 'Meeting-goers' (*Stundengaenger*)."³⁰

When the *Stundengaenger* became quite numerous they agreed to

convene brotherhood conferences on Saturday afternoons “during full moon so that people from other villages could drive home in the moonlight.”³¹ These meetings, according to Bekker, contributed much to the idea of mission, a life of prayer, and the formation of Christian character.³²

Wuest was the organizer and initially the driving force behind these fellowship meetings. It was during these meetings that the converted Mennonites began to take seriously the spiritual disciplines of the Christian life. They yearned for ways of expressing their faith, a spiritual exercise from which the larger Mennonite body had long since departed.

A special report by Jacob Reimer written in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Mennonite Brethren Church states that these monthly Saturday meetings were designed for the following purpose: 1) to strengthen each other in the faith; 2) to admonish one another in Christian conduct; 3) to care for one another in the body of Christ; and 4) to learn to know each other in our human depravity and Christ in His boundless love. “Oh, these were often blessed afternoon hours,” says Reimer, “during which our hearts were filled with Jesus’ love and we were fused together in Him.”³³

One of the profoundest spiritual thoughts is expressed by Gustav Knak’s song of the heart which Mennonite Brethren have sung for generations:

O that my heart an altar were of incense and of praise,
Where thanks and honor to the Lamb my soul might ever
raise!

The knowledge of this Lamb sublime has banished doubts
away,
Because my faith is placed in Him, I fear no Judgment Day.

The debt of sin has now been paid, Tis covered by the
blood!

And God has no remembrance made since came the cleans-
ing flood!

My heart is glad, I now rejoice, To find such peaceful ways!
Thus ever shall I lift my voice in my Redeemer’s praise!³⁴

Witness to the World

By the end of the sixteenth century the Mennonites in Europe had become the “quiet in the land.” Due to persecution, forced dispersion, internal division, and theological rigidity, their spiritual energies were expended in self-maintenance rather than in dynamic mission in the world. As time went on, they became increasingly more ingrown and

exclusivistic until the various Pietist groups brought new vision for mission to Russia between 1819 and 1860. Simultaneously with spiritual renewal emerged a call for witness to the world.³⁵ Quoting G.H. Lohrenz, Victor Adrian states that the founding of the Mennonite Brethren Church brought with it “a new sense of mission. Whereas the old church had lost its zeal and contented itself with peaceful coexistence, the new church soon found ways of implementing the Great Commission.”³⁶ The Pietists restored both the missionary dimension and the missionary intention to the Mennonite Brethren in Russia.

According to both Bekker and Friesen, Eduard Wuest was the single most influential person from the Pietist movement in shaping a Mennonite Brethren mission mentality. Friesen goes so far as to equate him with Menno Simons. “Next to God’s Word and His Spirit,” says Friesen, “Menno and Wuest have actually made the Mennonite Brethren Church what it is and will be in the Church of Christ.”³⁷ Friesen also recognizes the influence of other Pietist groups as well as that of the Baptists, but next to Menno, he calls Wuest the “second reformer” of the Mennonite Brethren.³⁸

Touching the whole question of missionary witness both Bekker and Friesen credit the Pietists more than any other group. First, there were what Bekker calls “the richly blessed mission festivals” instituted by Wuest. People enjoyed traveling together with Wuest to these festivals. There was something dynamic about the man which inspired and motivated others “so that even before they arrived at their destination their hearts were expectant and blessed.”³⁹ I have noted earlier that Tobias Voth had already introduced similar festivals in the 1820s. He brought the idea from the Moravian Pietists in Prussia. But Wuest brought a new impetus to them.

Second, Bekker reports that in the midst of the revival which led to the founding of the Mennonite Brethren Church the renewed vision for mission was evident. Not only did the new converts pray for mission in general and support mission work in tangible ways; they even secretly (for fear that the unconverted elders might hinder the project) commissioned two young men, Henry Bartel and Benjamin Bekker, as missionaries to Saratov. Here they assisted missionary Otto Forschhammer from Wuerttemberg in colporteur ministry as well as in speaking “to many people about their soul’s salvation.”⁴⁰

Third, the Mennonite Brethren became actively involved in itinerant evangelism and cross-cultural mission. One of the major concerns of the first Mennonite Brethren General Conference which convened in Andreasfeld, Chortitza, in May, 1872, centered in the question of evangelism and mission. The conference appointed an itinerant preaching committee, selected five itinerant evangelists, and decided to

support them financially. The main objective was to teach and preach the Word for the edification of believers and the conversion of unbelievers. But the committee also received a specific assignment to publish and distribute a newsletter in order "that the congregations become aware of the labors of the brethren and that interest for missions be awakened more." In addition it was assigned to "consider the foreign missions in India, which is relatively large and demanding in personnel and money."⁴¹ Thus the ministry of these preachers in the early Mennonite Brethren Church, as J.J. Toews notes, "stimulated soul-winning and a growing missionary spirit in the churches."⁴²

Conclusion

The focus of this study has been on the positive dimensions of Pietism and Mennonite Brethren. That is not to say that there have not been aberrations and negative influences. Nor is it to assert that the spiritual life of the Mennonite Brethren was not also shaped and molded by other than Pietist forces. But that was not the burden of this study. My purpose was to look at the roots and varieties of Pietism and how the various movements brought new life and vision to Russia, touching the early Mennonite Brethren in a special way.

Endnotes

¹ Hans Kasdorf, "Anabaptism and Pietism: Two Radical Christian Movements in Church History" (pp. 22-32) and "A Survey of Pietism and its Confrontation with Orthodoxy (pp. 8-30). Unpublished manuscripts, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1982.

² J. Van den Berg and J.P. Van Dooren, eds., *Pietismus und Reveil* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 5, 11-13, 20.

³ Dirk Cattepoel, "Das religioese Leben in der krefelder Mennonitengemeinde des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Beitraege zur Geschichte der rheinischen Mennoniten*, ed. Kurt von Beckerath (Weiherhof, Pfaltz: Mennonitischen Geschichtsverein, 1958), p. 15.

⁴ Carl Hinrichs, "Der hallische Pietismus als politischsoziale Reformbewegung des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Jahrbuch fuer die Geschichte Mittel-und Ostdeutschlands* (Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1953), vol. 2, pp. 177-189; Arno Lehmann, *It Began at Tranquebar*, tr. M.J. Lutz (Vepery, Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1956).

⁵ Hartmut Lehmann, *Pietismus und weltliche Ordnung in Wuerttemberg vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969), passim.

⁶ P.M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)*, tr. and ed. J.B. Toews et. al. (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature General Conference of Mennonite Brethren, 1978), p. 980; cf. pp. 47; 225-247.

⁷ Hans Kasdorf, "Early Pietists' Wholistic Mission." A Model for Integrating Spiritual Renewal and Social Reform." Unpublished manuscript, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1983.

⁸ Waldemar Gutsche, *Westliche Quellen des russischen Stundismus* (Kassel: Oncken, 1957), pp. 15-42.

⁹ P.M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood*, pp. 33; 72-73; 208.

¹⁰ Hans von Sauberzweig, *Er der Meister wir die Brueder* (Offenbach: Gnadauer Verlag, 1959), pp. 39-40.

¹¹ Gustav Warneck, *Abriss einer Geschichte der protestantischen Missionen von der Reformation bis auf die Gegenwart* 7th ed. (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1901), p. 65.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹³ von Sauberzweig, *Er der Meister*, p. 50.

¹⁴ Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood*, pp. 43; 71; 73-74; 98-101; 141f.

¹⁵ Gutsche, *Westliche Quellen*, pp. 24-27; Hans Braudenburg, *Christian in Schatten der Macht* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1974), pp. 37-41.

¹⁶ Gutsche, *Westliche Quellen*, p. 11-14; 22-23.

¹⁷ Victor Adrian, "The Mennonite Brethren Church: Born of Anabaptism and Pietism," insert in the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, March 26, 1965.

¹⁸ John A. Toews, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church* (Fresno: Board of Christian Churches, 1975), p. 32.

¹⁹ P.M. Friesen uses the term "evangelical" for both groups. *Mennonite Brotherhood*, pp. 31, 47.

²⁰ J.B. Toews, "The Significance of P.M. Friesen's History for Mennonite Brethren Self-Understanding," in *P.M. Friesen and His History*, ed. Abraham Friesen (Fresno: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1979), p. 158.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 47; cf. pp. 48, 34, 37, 53, 980, 981.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

²⁴ Jakob P. Bekker, *Origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, tr. D.E. Pauls and A.E. Janzen (Hillsboro: Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of the Midwest, 1973), p. 32.

²⁵ [Henry E. Reimer], *Being Born Again by the Word of God* (no place, publisher or date), pp. 5-6. The booklet contains a collection of earlier Mennonite Brethren conversion stories from both Russia and North America. For a complete rendering of the song cited by Reimer see *Church Hymnal*, No. 270.

²⁶ A. Braun, "Die kirchlichen Spaltungen in den reBlanddentschen Mennonitengemeinden," in *Beitraege zur Geschichte der Mennoniten* (Weierhof: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1938), p. 10.

²⁷ My copy of the *Dreiband* contains all three songbooks, but carries the single title *Heimatklaenge*, sixth ed., ed. Heinrich Braun (Neu-Halbstadt: H.J. Braun, 1905). All subsequent references are to this edition.

²⁸ *Heimatklaenge* (Dreiband), Pt. 1, No. 233, by Bernard Harder and Pt. 2 No. 464 is taken from *Mennonitisches Gesangbuch*.

²⁹ In my survey of the *Dreiband* I verified in historical sources the name of every author when in doubt about his Pietist identity.

³⁰ Berker, *Origin*, p. 25.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³³ Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood*, pp. 206-207.

³⁴ *Worship Hymnal* (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1979), No. 345.

³⁵ I have borrowed the phrase “witness to the world” from David Bosch’s book by that title.

³⁶ Quoted by Adrian, “Born of Anabaptism and Pietism,” p. 9.

³⁷ Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood*, p. 212.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

³⁹ Bekker, *Origin* pp. 25; 28.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33; cf. pp. 35-39.

⁴¹ Friesen, *Mennonite Brotherhood*, pp. 475-476.

⁴² Jacob J. Toews, “The Missionary Spirit of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Russia,” in *The Church in Mission: A Sixtieth Anniversary Tribute to J.B. Toews*, ed. A.J. Klassen (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature Mennonite Brethren Church, 1967), p. 144.