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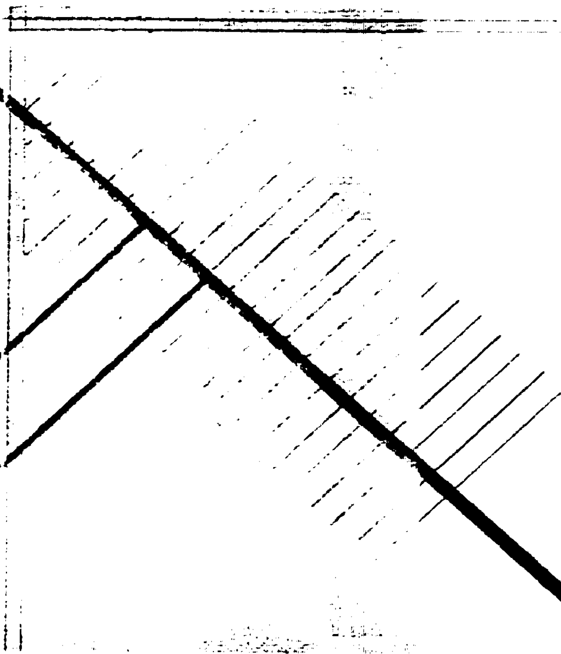
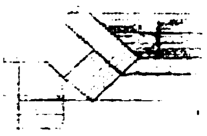
THE MENNONITE DIALECTIC

A Survey of the Cultural and Physical Morphology of Steinbach





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The Mennonite Dialectic: A Survey of the Cultural and Physical Morphology of Steinbach

BY

T.D. Goertzen

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree

of

Master of Landscape Architecture

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This thesis topic began simply enough, in an attempt to understand the meaning and expression of Mennonites in the exterior environment of Steinbach. I am sincerely grateful to those who expanded my understanding of that expression to include the complexity of issues surrounding Mennonitism and its transformation through time. This complexity is often undermined when understood simply in terms of history, and described popularly as *heritage*. Many thanks to all members of my advisory committee, who embraced history, but also encouraged me to move forward in my thinking.

Special thanks are extended to Ed Epp who directed much of the work in Part I, and John J. Friesen from the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, without whom I would never have derived Prussian Mennonite settlement information. The assistance of Rudy Friesen is also much appreciated, whose understanding of Mennonite architecture helped consolidate my appreciation of Mennonite expression in the land.

Committee member, Roydon Loewen, is also gratefully acknowledged for his particular contributions to Part II, and his breadth of knowledge in Mennonite writings. Part II would not have been complete without the participation of the Gospel Fellowship Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Church, the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church, and the Southland Community Free Church who provided membership, doctrinal and church formation information.

I further wish to express my love and gratitude to my parents, who instilled in me a great respect for my Mennonite history. This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents and parents who endured many difficult years, and struggled to allow me the freedoms I enjoy today.

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INTRODUCTION

The intent of this thesis is to demonstrate an understanding of the cultural and physical morphology of Steinbach, Manitoba, considering the influence of historical, theological, cultural and sociological transformations through time. The following dialogue is intended to reveal a unique Mennonite response to settlement, evident in the creation and formation of the Mennonite city[1] of Steinbach, and guided by a combination of cultural, theological and economic inter-relationships. This thesis will uncover the evolution of the community from a traditional Mennonite agricultural settlement to a contemporary city. The goal is to promote a holistic understanding of human settlements, which recognizes built environments as cultural constructs.

This study expands the understanding of place beyond its traditional conception as a social and historical manifestation, and acknowledges place as a cultural expression; an expression that embraces the dynamics of both time and society. The notion of place as a purely social manifestation is reductive, and suggests that place is not equally an expression of a specific history or a specific culture. However, it is the social and historical components that together define culture, that is, the customs or achievements of

a particular group of people. History is not an isolated, singular expression of a culture, but is rather a temporal manifestation of theological and sociological development. This study does not advocate historicism, but recognizes that the unique cultural history of the Mennonites has considerably influenced the nature of the community of Steinbach today. It will continue to influence the community, despite increasing external religious, political, social and economic influences. The community of Steinbach today has a complex identity, which is a combined expression of contemporary Mennonitism and external contextual relationships. This complex identity will be revealed, as shifts in attitudes are made physically manifest in the transforming structural composition of the city.

This thesis also recognizes that the true nature of the community cannot solely be revealed through an objective investigation conducted, for the most part, external to the community. Therefore, the intent is to provide a basis for further study that engages the community and its members in a subjective manner. Both the primary and secondary investigations are necessary to gain true insight into the community, and together they provide an opportunity for consolidating an approach to future physical modifications and growth within the city. As a primary investigation, this thesis contributes to a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the complex identity of the community, which should, through the secondary investigation, engage the community in the design of the physical expression of this identity. This process seeks to assist the community as it continues to negotiate the implications of Mennonitism in an urban society.

Part of the significance of this project lies in its potential to expand the knowledge base of landscape architecture:

- Firstly, by addressing the significance of cultural identity, and consequently, its unique response to the landscape.
- Secondly, by linking work done in several areas of interest, including theology, sociology and history.
- Thirdly, by attempting to explain the value and significance of a landscape that is fundamental to this community.

As landscape architects, one of our responsibilities is to accommodate the needs of humans in the environment. However, such a task requires specific examination of the user group, with intent to reveal character and uniqueness, but most importantly, identity. It is identity that determines the nature of that relationship to the environment, and the ability of that relationship to adapt to change over time. The findings of this study can provide a significant basis for developing guiding principles for future growth. Not only is such a product useful to the community of Steinbach, it also contributes to the body of knowledge in the discipline by providing a model for use by other researchers and practitioners studying culturally constructed environments.

Methods

Methods Structure

A. Literature review

1. Anabaptist and Mennonite Theology
   - Origins and transformation
   - Evangelical and Pentecostal Influences
2. Mennonite sociology
   - Origins and transformation
3. Mennonite Settlement Patterns
   - Precedents and Origins
   - Consolidation and Transplanting
   - Transformation and Development

B. Survey

1. Steinbach churches
   - Evolution of church doctrine and theology
   - Addition of non-Mennonite churches

The proposed topic, although very specific in its focus, is cross-disciplinary in nature. In order to reveal the cultural and physical morphology of Steinbach, an extensive literature review of both primary and secondary resources was necessary. The methodological approach to this study was generated from survey, literature, and online resources engaging the following general topic areas: Anabaptism and Mennonite theology, Mennonite sociology, and Mennonite settlement patterns.

1. An extensive literature review of the origins and transformation of Mennonite theology and Anabaptism was conducted. Much of the information on Anabaptism was found within books concerning theology specifically, but discussions on Anabaptism was also found in books dealing generally with Mennonite history. Although a survey inviting several Steinbach churches to participate was anticipated

to provide much insight into the developing theology of the city, response to the survey was poor. Much of the data regarding the churches selected to participate was therefore gathered from the various pamphlets, Statements of Faith, annual reports, and web sites prepared by the individual churches. Harder's (1970) study, *Steinbach and Its Churches*, and *The Online Canadian Mennonite Encyclopaedia* (Steiner) were significant resources, and provided much information regarding membership numbers and doctrine. Secondary resources included both literature and online documents relating to Evangelical and Pentecostal doctrine in order to determine the degree of its incorporation into the doctrine Mennonite churches of Steinbach.

2. The study of Mennonite sociology included a thorough literature review of sociological development from its founding in 1874 to the present. With the exception of a few isolated sources, discussion regarding Mennonite sociology was found within Mennonite history texts, particularly the *Mennonites in Canada* series (Epp, 1974; Epp, 1982; Regehr, 1996). Sources pertaining specifically to Mennonite sociology were found in the works of Driedger (1994, 2000), and Francis (1955). Steinbach was widely regarded in the literature as a prominent Mennonite community in Manitoba; this provided information regarding the greater Mennonite context as well as Steinbach specifically.

3. The analysis of the origins and development of the settlement pattern of Steinbach involved a survey of exclusively primary sources. Very little information was found regarding the origins of Mennonite settlement patterns, consequently, the works of

Roberts (1996) in *Landscapes of Settlement: Prehistory to the Present*, and Lambert (1971) in *The Making of the Dutch Landscape*, were essential in determining the pattern of nucleation, and eventually, the typological consolidation of Mennonite settlement patterns in Russia. Literature resources regarding Mennonite village patterns in Russia were quite thorough, and provided social, political and economic contextual information. Schroeder's (1996) *Mennonite Historical Atlas* was an invaluable resource for physical maps and a discussion of Russian Mennonite settlements. Although literature resources provided detailed information regarding the initial pattern of settlement in Steinbach, its transformation was traced through the assemblage of archived plans of sub-divided blocks, retrieved at the City of Steinbach, Planning Department.

Study Objectives

The intent of this study is expanded in the following objectives:

1. To examine the morphology of Mennonite settlement patterns, with specific attention given to political, social, economic and regional influences.
2. To investigate the conditions surrounding the origins and transformation of the physical settlement pattern of Steinbach.
3. To identify Mennonite sociological and theological origins and modifications in Steinbach.
4. To reveal a new identity, with characteristic cultural elements that have physical implications, which can serve to inform further study.

Structure

This study is divided into two sections. Part One consists of two chapters that explore the constitution of Mennonite settlement patterns from the Netherlands to Steinbach, Manitoba. Methodologically, it examines these through morphological and typological analysis. It outlines a compilation of early prototype patterns, emerging patterns, and finally, a consolidation of settlement types. Chapter One explores the morphology of nucleation, and outlines the political, social and economic issues surrounding nucleated patterns of settlement. This discussion is continued in Chapter Two, as the origins and consolidation of Mennonite settlement patterns are traced from nucleated agricultural village settlements of the medieval period to the Russian Mennonite settlements of the 18th century. Here, the consolidated pattern and its physical attributes are considered in the context of social, economic, cultural and political influences. Chapter Two concludes with a brief review of modifications to the village pattern typology in Russia, and ends with a detailed analysis of periods of typological modification and transformation in Steinbach. This chapter ultimately posits a present pattern of development that is characterized by adhocism, and is consequently increasingly de-centralized.

Part Two is composed of three chapters, which explore the sociological and theological developments in Steinbach from the late 19th century to the early 21st century. It examines the evolution of Steinbach from a communitarian, sectarian, farming community to an evangelistic, capitalistic, and commercial city. The chapters divide the sociological and theological in Steinbach into three periods of transformation

distinguished first by segregation, then by acculturation, and finally by a new community identity. Methodologically, it examines the following:

- The theological origins of the Anabaptist Mennonites in the 16th century.
- Theological origins, schisms, and additions in Steinbach.
- Sociological trends, particularly the transformation from the *Gemeinschaft* model to the *Gesellschaft* model, as defined in the Introduction to Part Two.

Chapter Five concludes with a conception of Steinbach that constitutes a multifarious and diverse community of religious, social and cultural thought.

The Conclusions provides the definitive link between Parts I and II. It connects the sociological and theological conclusions drawn in Chapter Six with the physical morphology of Steinbach, suggesting cultural elements that might bring hierarchy and order to the increasingly complex and disconnected urban structure of Steinbach.

NOTES

[1] Steinbach became recognized as a city in 1998 when the Province of Manitoba reduced the population requirements from 10 000 to 7 500.

PART I

THE MORPHOLOGY OF MENNONITE SETTLEMENTS:

Village and Settlement Pattern Development in Steinbach

1

THE MORPHOLOGY OF NUCLEATION

In exploring the morphology of Mennonite village settlement patterns, the contextual issues surrounding their constitution are essential in the explanation of their physical manifestation. Thus, it is critical that this study, involving the processes of change, view these rural settlements within a temporal framework (Roberts, 1996).

In Roberts' *Landscapes of Settlement* (1996), he examined rural settlements worldwide, and identified significant attributes which support each other to inform patterns of nucleation[1] and dispersion[2] through time. The significant attributes identified by Roberts have been amended to include *technological regulators* and *religious regulators*, which have greatly influenced the social, political and economic aspects of Mennonite village nucleation (Table 1.1).

Political Factors

Feudalism

In Western Europe, peasant agriculture emerged from feudalism; a society designed to support knights and churchmen through the labour of peasant farmers in the 8th and 9th

centuries (Roberts, 1996; Lamberts, 1971). These medieval farmers worked the land of the Lords, and provided food and rent; thereby enabling the Lords to defend, worship, build and consume. People settled on the land represented both political and economic power, and groups of villages were established as part of a strategic plan to settle friendly colonists and increase defence (Roberts, 1996). This process of aggregation is the dominant reason for the presence of villages within Europe. Consequently, many of these medieval villages "contain or lie near castles, manor houses or halls and churches, or have in some way been subject to the rule of an aristocratic landowner" (Roberts, 1996, p.37). In England and parts of the Netherlands, the peasant farmer administrations of the estates resulted in the formation of geometrically planned villages (Roberts, 1996; Lamberts, 1971). In the Netherlands, all unoccupied land was pronounced royal domain, and Saxon counts and officials were granted large estates. These less favourable lands could only sustain single farmsteads, resulting in a pattern of dispersed settlement.

Pacifism

The Mennonites steadfast beliefs in pacifism and discipleship dramatically impacted their political relations with external governments, causing them to migrate continuously throughout their history (Fig. 1.1). In 1521, an edict in the Netherlands expelled Catholic heretics, resulting in the influx of these heretics, and eventually Mennonites, into the religiously tolerant region of Prussia and Free State of Danzig[3]. In 1573, the Mennonites were briefly forced outside of Danzig and into surrounding Prussia by the Lutherans and Catholics of Danzig[4]. In the 1700's the Mennonites of East Prussia fought mandatory military service, heavy taxation, and religious restrictions, including an edict stating

church buildings must be reduced in appearance to houses (Rempel, 1933; Schroeder, 1996).

Table 1.1 Attributes of Rural Settlements *(after Roberts 1996)*

Economic Factors	Social Factors	Political Factors
MAJOR GOALS	POPULATION REGULATORS	DECISION MAKING
Survival	Demographic Profile	Internal Factors
Wealth Accumulation	Immigration/Emigration	External (Colonial) Factors
Stability	Disease	
Change	War	
	Famine	
	Environment	
ECONOMIC BASE	SIZE REGULATORS	DECISION ENFORCEMENT
Agriculture	Physical Environment	Internal Factors
Crafts/Industry	Food Supply	External (Colonial) Factors
Fishing	Social Factors	
Extraction	Population Density	
Other		
	LOCATIONAL REGULATORS	
	Physical Resources	
	Cultural Resources	
	TECHNOLOGICAL REGULATORS	
	Physical Resources	
	Cultural Resources	
	Cultural Environment	
	Economic Base	
	Social Factors	
	REGLIGIOUS REGULATORS	
	Convictions	
	Morals	

In Russia, pressures of universal military service spawned an emigration to Manitoba in the late 19th century. This was followed by another emigration in the mid-1920's following Russian Revolution, and a final exodus in the 1940's following a lesser

evacuation by the Germans of the German-speaking population (Warkentin, 1960; Schroeder, 1996; Regehr, 1996).

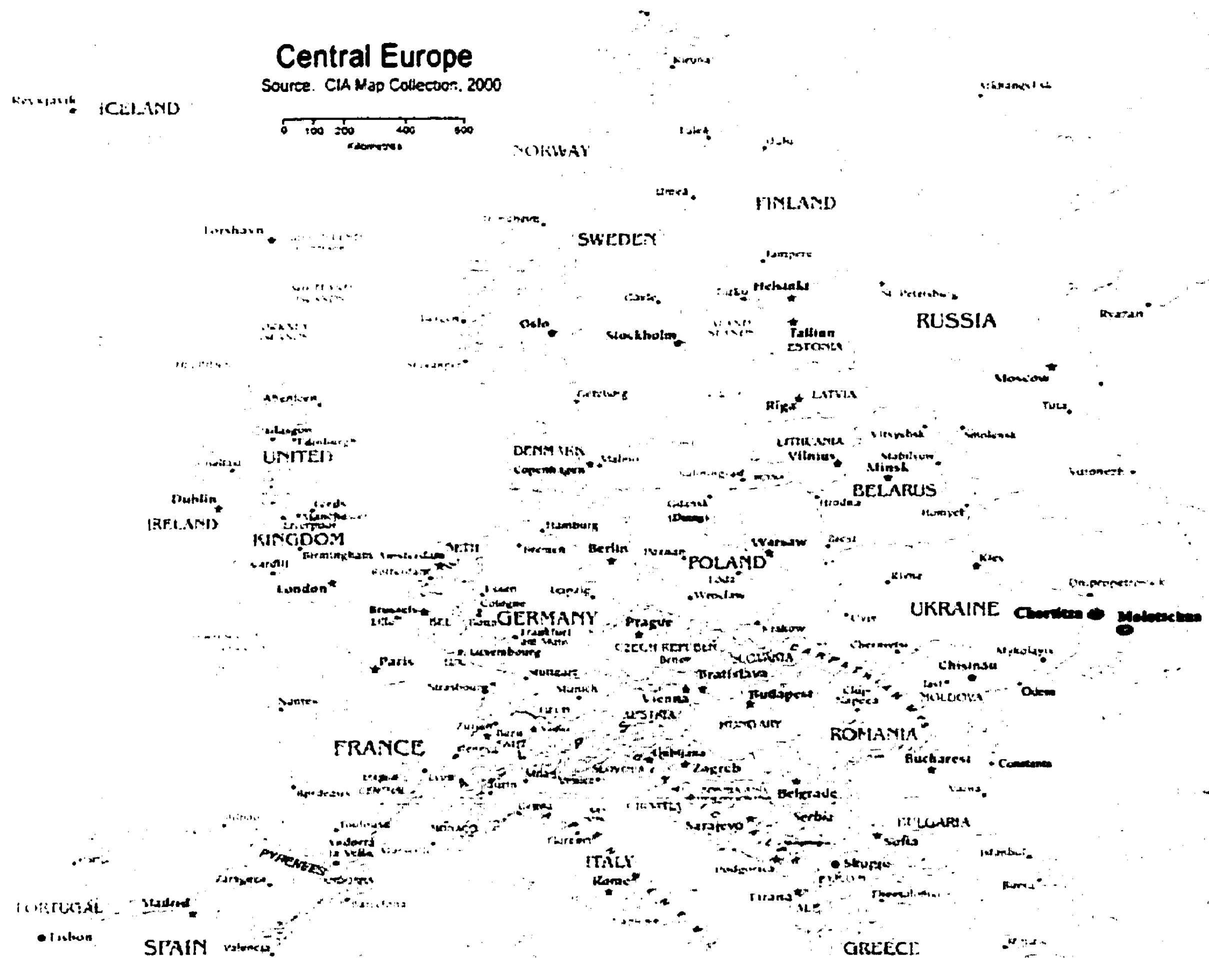


Figure 1.1 Map of Central Europe, indicating Netherlands Northwest of Germany, Poland in the centre, and the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies north of the Black Sea. (Source: CIA, 1999, *Europe*; CIA, 1999, *Commonwealth*).

Government Devised Colonisation

Invitations to colonisation were sent to the Dutch Mennonites beginning in 1560 by Polish rulers in order to settle what they considered were industrious farmers and artisans on poorly drained, unproductive land (Rempel , 1933; Mezynski, 1975). By this time, the

Mennonites of the Netherlands were regarded as skilled agriculturists, given their experience in reclaiming land from the sea, draining lake areas, constructing dikes and water mills, and acquiring areas of former peat cutting (Roberts, 1996; Von Kampen, 1985; Rempel, 1933; Mezynski, 1975).

The foreign colonisation policy of Catherine II and Alexander I was devised to settle a permanent population, and thus bring order and economic value to Russian land occupied sparsely by transients (Rempel 1933; Krahn, 1949). This included a specific invitation in 1786 to the Mennonites of Prussia, who were considered skilled in agriculture[5]. Political tensions between the Free City of Danzig and Prussia had crippled Danzig's commerce (Rempel, 1933). In addition, a shortage of available land and heavy taxation threatened the Mennonites in Danzig and the surrounding Prussian territory. Consequently, many citizens responded to Catherine's appeal to new foreigners (Fig. 1.2) (Rempel, 1933). Initially, the colonisation policy included travel expenses, tax exemptions, religious and social autonomy, military exemption, and an allotment of just under 160 acres (Rempel, 1933). Russia expanded the charter in 1800, granting the Mennonites the right to build factories in colonies as well as the cities, the right to brew beer, vinegar, and distil whiskey for home consumption and retail sale within the colonies, and the right to reject the establishment of boarding houses and taverns in their colonies (Rempel, 1933). The Russian colonisation policy eventually increased in its constraint, restricting immigration in 1804 to those of agricultural occupations, until finally, in 1819, excluding all immigrants except the Mennonites, "in view of the industriousness and the excellent state of farming prevalent among all the Mennonites in West Russia" (Rempel, 1933, p.34).

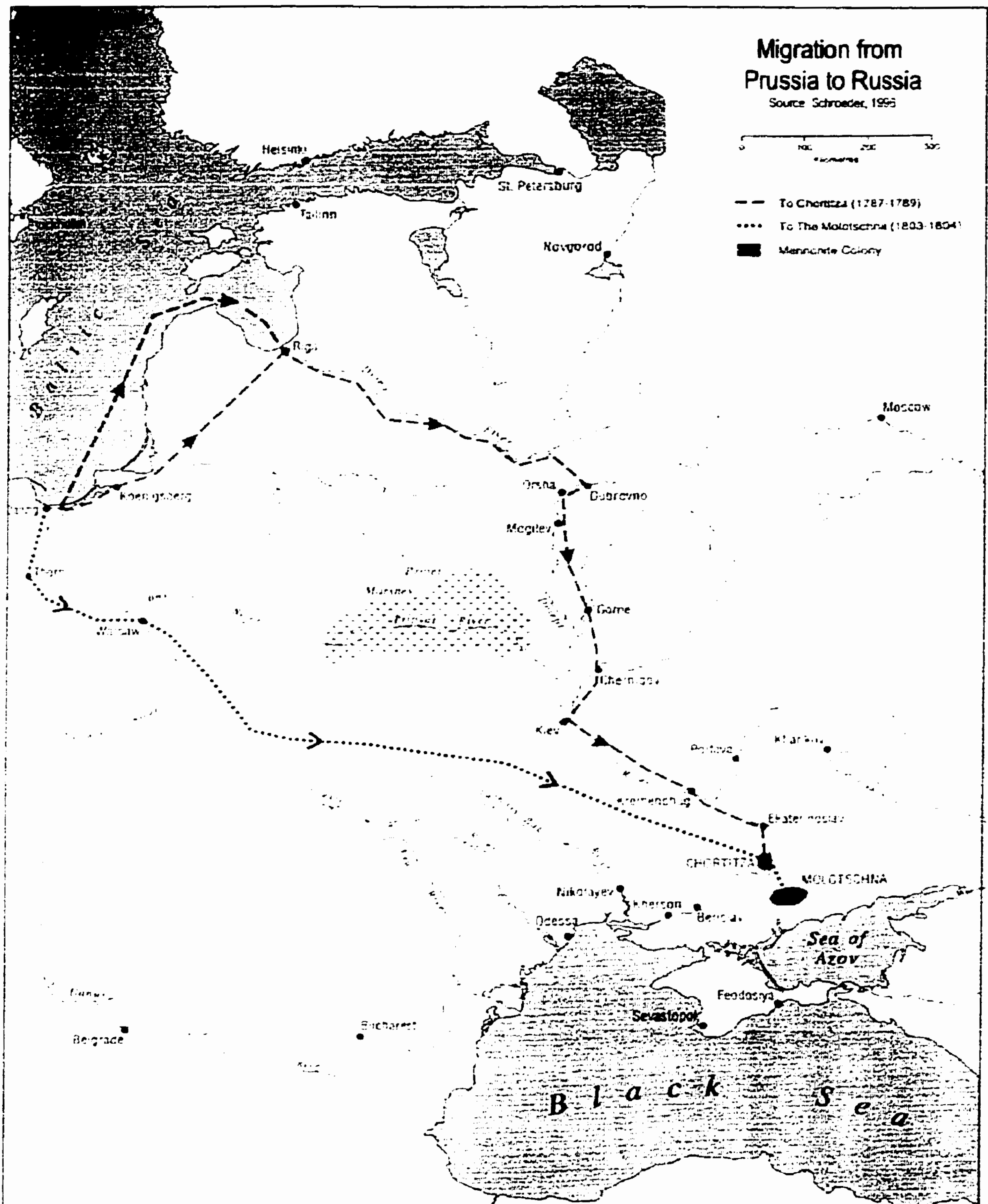


Figure 1.2 The migration from Danzig (now Gdansk) to the Chortitza and Molotschna Colonies.

Acculturation

The administration of all Mennonite villages in Russia was organized according to the Dutch right, and accordingly, a mayor and assembly were elected by members of the village. This form of self-government persisted until the latter part of the 19th century, when the Russian government took measures to Russianize the general population in the interests of nationalism (Krahn, 1959; Smith, 1981). The Polish revolt of 1863[6] further advanced the nationalist objectives for the Russian government, and in 1870, the government informed the German colonists that there were to be no more special privileges. Russian became the official language of the local colony government, which was to be controlled by the Russian government from Petersburg. The Russian language was taught in schools, and German schools were regulated by imperial educational authorities (Smith, 1981). Of the greatest impact to the Mennonites was the abolishment of military exemptions.

In the 1870's, the Canadian government adopted a foreign colonisation policy that was designed to settle a sparsely populated, unproductive interior land. Once again, the skills acquired upon the exposed open steppes of Russia in addition to their skills in land reclamation, gave them the ability to settle the difficult land in the East and West Reserves of Manitoba (Francis, 1955).

Social Factors

The strong links between nucleation and collectivity, and the desire for individuals to act collectively in order to achieve community coherence, resulted in Mennonite village

settlements that were strongly influenced by social conditions. These settlement forms "have close and complex relationships with human culture...reflecting lifestyles and aspirations" (Roberts, 1996, p.87). The element of community is substantial in Mennonite history. Their beginnings in the 16th century were theological, and their initial organisation was as a community of common believers (Driedger, 1988; Wenger, 1959).

To some extent, this lifestyle of communality was well suited to agricultural village settlements, and it may partially explain the trend from the 16th century to the 19th century towards increasing agricultural (rural) occupations amongst Mennonites. Numerous expulsions and expropriations throughout their history, including the expropriation of the Mennonites in Danzig to the rural areas of Prussia, have supported an isolated existence of segregation well-suited to the self-sufficiency of a rural agricultural livelihood.

Social Organisation

The early Mennonites established their roots in Friesland[7], the Netherlands (Fig. 1.3), as early as 1530, followed in 1550 by an influx of Anabaptist refugees from Flanders escaping severe persecution. Friesland consequently became the province in the Netherlands most populated with Mennonites in the 16th century, with their own unique culture and language reminiscent of its ancient Frisian ancestry (Vos, 1956; Schroeder, 1996; Lambert, 1971). The strong Dutch roots of the later Prussian-Russian Mennonites had a significant impact on the nature of the agricultural livelihood of the Mennonites. The Mennonite population was concentrated in the northern portion of the province, where agriculture still predominates as the principal means of support. The province,

although centrally below sea level, has been protected by the construction of polders and dikes, dating back to medieval times (Vos *Friesland*, 1956; Roberts, 1996). The Mennonites who later settled in the Elbing, Danzig, Swetz, Culm, Marienburg, and Graudens districts of Prussia were of Flemish and Frisian origins[8] (Fig. 1.4). Those of Frisian descent were exclusively farmers, and relied on their skills in land reclamation to convert these districts into arable land (Rempel, 1933; Vos, 1956).

Physical Resources

The limitations imposed by the harsh physical environments of the Netherlands, Prussia, and later in Russia, influenced the size of the villages and settlements as well as the patterns of nucleation. The vast bogs and swamps of the Netherlands in the 8th and 9th centuries resulted in the formation of self-sufficient villages which did not depend on trade and exchange (Lambert, 1971). Environments, such as the wet, periodically inundated lowlands of the Netherlands and Prussia, tended to encourage dispersion, due to the fragmentation of arable land, but often the advantages of collaboration resulted in increased communality (Roberts, 1996). In the tradition of their Prussian settlements, many Mennonite farmers attempted to settle on individual homesteads, but were advised by the Russian government to settle in villages for protection from the plunder of bandits (Rempel, 1933; Friesen, 1999). This shift in settlement from a dispersed to a nucleated pattern may have provided cultural cohesiveness in addition to social strength, allowing the Mennonites to consolidate their identity and their settlement patterns.

Figure 1.3 Map of Netherlands indicating provinces and boundaries

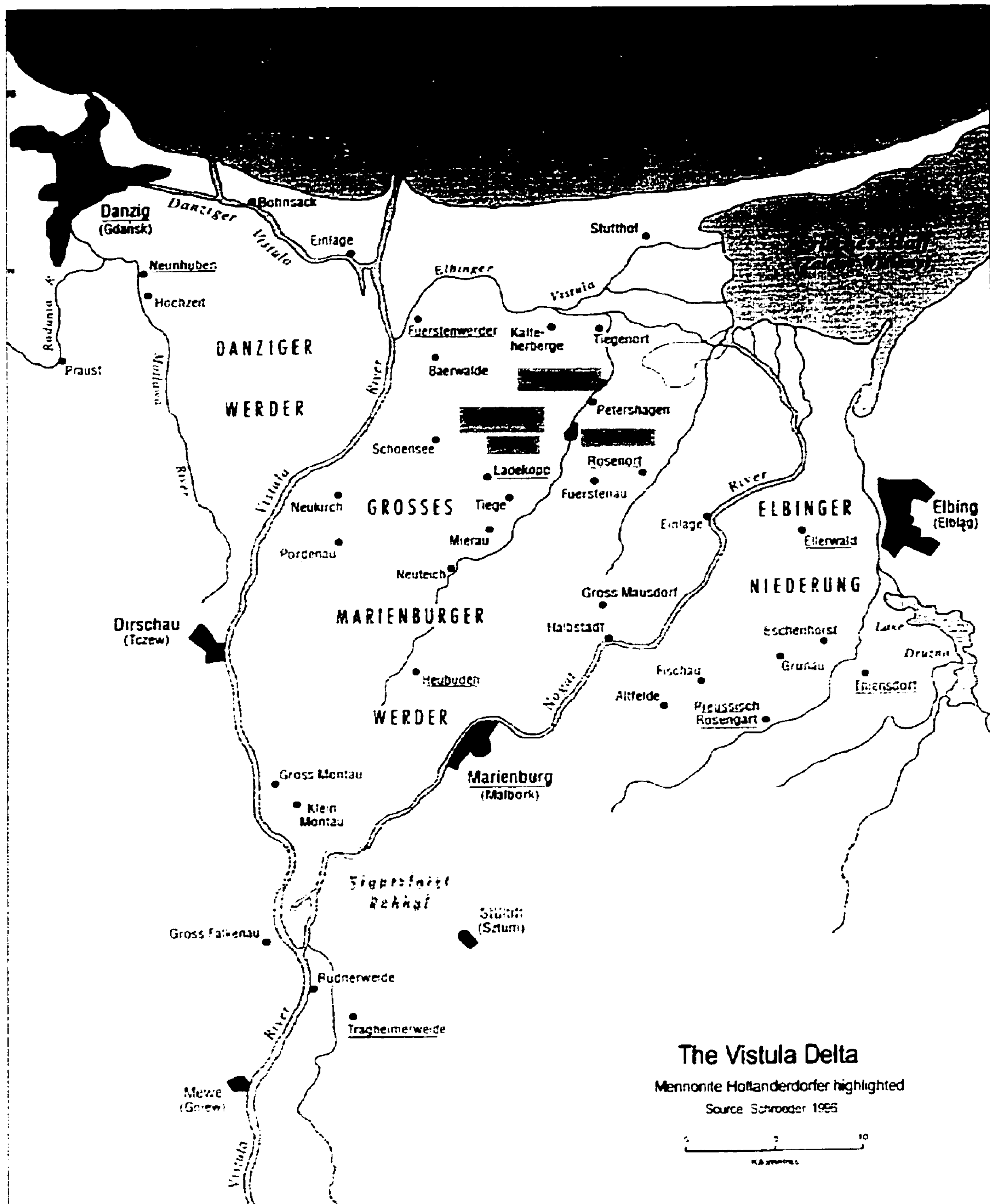


Figure 1.4 Villages of the Vistula Delta in Prussia

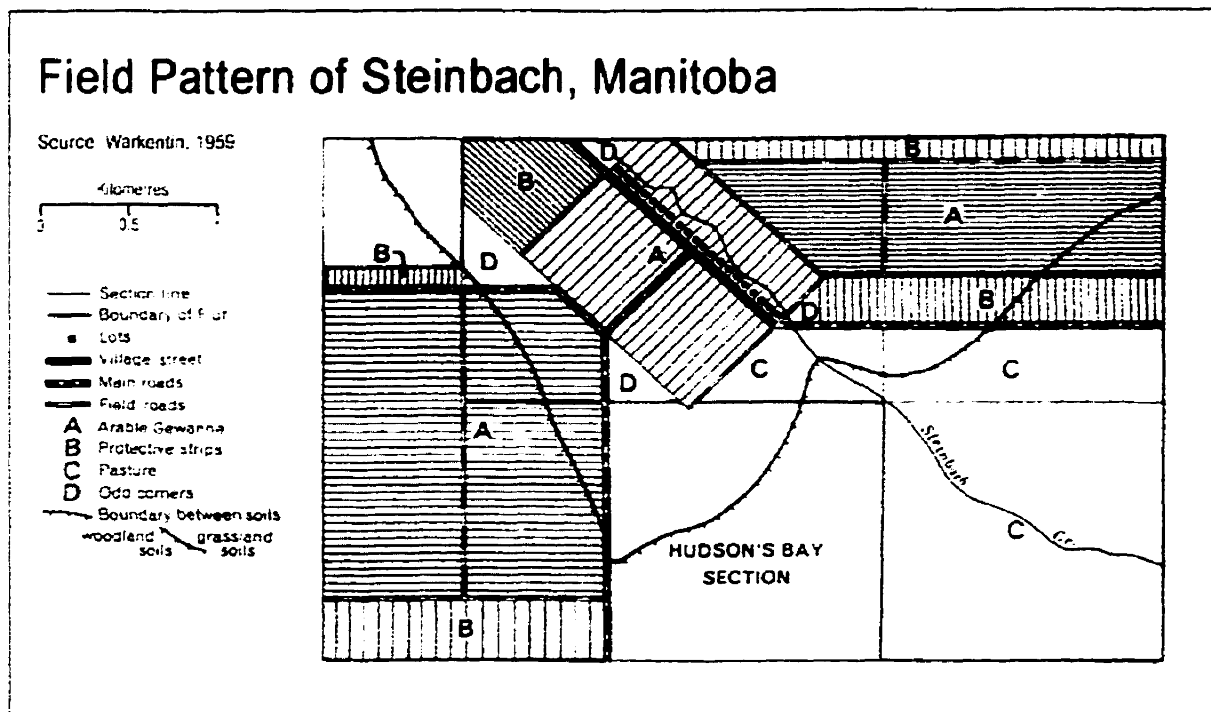


Fig. 1.5 An example of the ***Gewannflur*** **can be found in this plan of Steinbach in 1912. The communal Gewanne is 'A', the communal pasture is 'C', and the private lots are along** ***Steinbach Creek.***

Social Consolidation

The open-field *Gewannflur*[9] was first introduced in the Russian Mennonite village communes, and became the predominant pattern of settlement. The ancient medieval roots of the *Gewannflur* were likely in response to the combined social, political and economic factors at the time, as discussed above (Fig. 1.5) (Roberts 1996). However, as social contexts changed, the influences on village morphology changed as well. The Mennonites were a people who were socially distinct, above all else. Following their founding, any political or economic disposition was in response to their beliefs; indeed, the entire social structure of the Mennonites was founded on their belief system (Driedger 1988). "Their beliefs in divine inspiration differed from that of the other Christian

theologies in that the Mennonites manifested their adherence to the bible in daily life to a degree considered fanatical by many 16th century Christians" (Wenger, 1959, p.114). It was their strength as a community of believers that rendered the communal, equitable nature of the *Gewannflur* so appropriate. In the mid 19th century, a foreign traveller made a befitting observation of the Mennonite community:

> Nowhere can one find a greater equality of men based on constitution (namely religious constitution) then among Mennonites. Since agriculture is a religious duty no one can be more or less than a farmer. Each industry, handicraft and business subservient to this idea, is related to and connected with agriculture (sic) (Krahn, 1949, p.1).

Economic Factors

The origins of the *Gewannflur* are also found in ancient patterns which involved economic differentiation of space where arable fields were concentrated in better soils, and pastures and woodlands were located in less suitable areas (Robert, 1996). Early precedents can be found in the Saxon settlements of the Netherlands, in the 8th and 9th centuries, which were characterized by communal settlement and the division of terrain into pasture, arable fields, woodland and heaths[10]. These ancient settlements were often unevenly and unequally re-distributed, resulting in a simple uniform agrarian economy, and the formation of locally distinctive, and complex patterns of settlement (Lambert, 1971). Examples can also be found in the 12th and 13th centuries in recorded place-names incorporating versions of the word *shield*, referring to an area of summer pasture corresponding to the setters of Sweden (Roberts, 1996). Likewise, patterns of differentiation are evident in Mennonite Russian village names. The place name of

Waldheim in Molotschna referred to the forested region in Volhynia where the village settlers originated (Schroeder, 1996).

Village settlements reduced the cost of human movement, by locating close to arable land. Moreover, the agglomeration of human activities was appropriate to scale economies, which reduced operation costs by concentrating activities at a common location, resulting in consistent output (Roberts, 1996). This economic approach dominated the Mennonite village from its beginnings in Prussia, through to Russia, and to Manitoba in the late 19th century (Fig. 1.6).

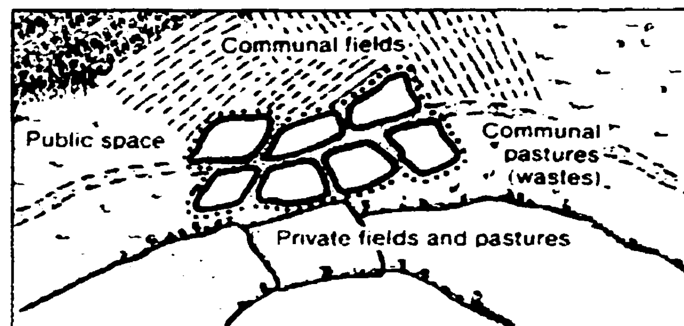


Fig. 1.6 Nucleated activities. *(Source: Roberts, 1996)*

As discussed above, the physical environment influenced the degree of dispersion or nucleation in early settlement patterns to some extent. Historically, nucleated settlements have tended to favour the plains because of the uniformity of the terrain and soil, resulting in a uniform distribution of arable land (Roberts 1996). In the case of the Mennonites who choose to transplant their cultural settlement and village morphology with the movement to Russia, and later to Manitoba, physical environments which met the primary requirements of the *Gewannflur* were chosen (Rempel, 1933; Warkentin,

1960). Prior to the first immigration to the Chortitza settlement, Mennonite delegates were financed by the Russian government to investigate the suitability of the climate, soil and other conditions[11]. The stipulations of the petition submitted by the delegates included freedom of worship, military exemption, 65 desiatins (approximately 175 acres) per family, provision of lumber and seed, tax exemption for ten years, financial aid, and financing of travel expenses (Rempel, 1933). In addition, the requirements for the Molotschna settlement, as set out for the Russian government by the Mennonites, included proximity to water, proximity to towns and ports, flat land, presence of meadow, and proximity to the Dniepr River to facilitate lumber delivery to the treeless land (Rempel, 1933). Clearly, the Mennonites were seeking a physical environment which could support their agricultural livelihoods and lifestyles.

Equity could easily be achieved within the *Gewannflur* by consolidating community resources for the gathering of lumber, and the construction of buildings, roads and drains. Agricultural practices, such as communal herding, negated the expense of individual fencing and herding. In addition, less fortunate villagers could offer labour in exchange for oxen and farm implements (Warkentin, 1960). This notion of equity emerges in all settlements as they increase in size and resources. In mixed farming economies, such as those of the Mennonites, an ordered village plan allowed for the equitable distribution of resources, such as arable fields, meadows, woods, and pastures. Villages like these, found throughout history, have been successful forms of settlement because they were successful production units and villages whose associated field systems were defined by labour demands[12] (Roberts, 1996). Clearly, these requirements outlined by the

Mennonites were economic in nature, considering the presence of resources for the establishment of an economic base of agriculture and industry.

2

THE ORIGINS AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE MENNONITE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Origins

The origins of the Mennonite village settlement patterns can be traced back to nucleated agricultural village settlement patterns of medieval Western Europe, which indicate influences of the Roman occupation of Europe in the 1st and 2nd centuries. Most western European regular village plans included house/field plots which were compartmentalized, with an axial street or green as the foci, an interior green or back lane, and an overall plan which was geometrically defined (Fig. 2.1). These village types are linked with medieval settlements in which rope surveying was used (Roberts, 1996). Compartment based villages appeared in the Netherlands as early as the 9th century, and small planned villages in Denmark appeared as early as the 4th or 5th century (Roberts, 1996; Lambert, 1971). The idea of small standardised layouts may have roots in 1st and 2nd century Rome, where military camps were sub-divided into equal parcels and distributed amongst the farmers to ensure tax equity (Roberts, 1996). In parts of Denmark and Sweden, the regular village plans were likewise generated for simplicity of royal taxation (Roberts, 1996).

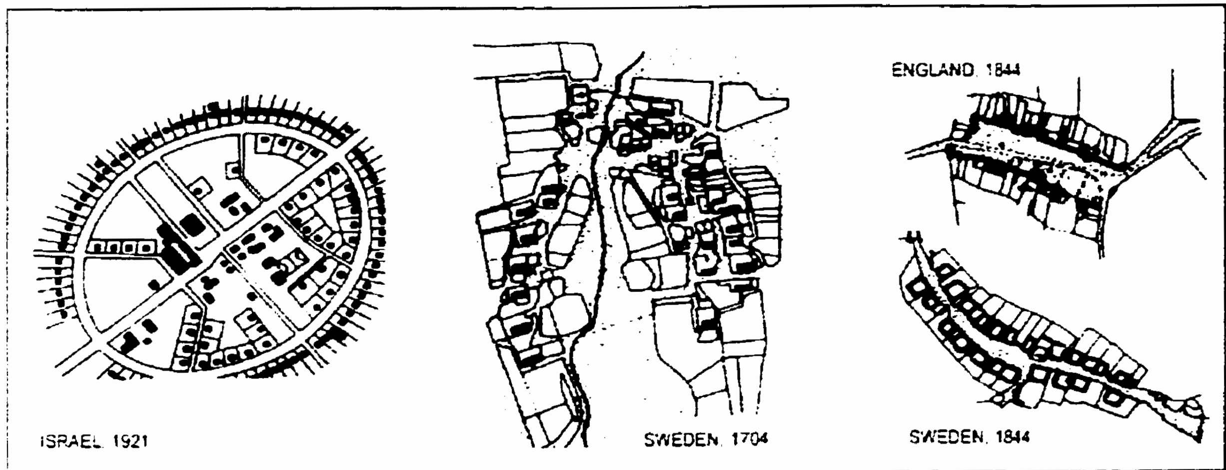


Fig. 2.1 The Israel plan is a regular, radial, agglomerated plan; the Sweden plan of 1704 is an irregular row plan, with a central green; the Sweden and England plans of 1844 are regular row plans with central greens. All of these plans indicate one or more attributes of the typical European village. (Source: Roberts, 1996).

The emergence of the system of village settlement, later appropriated by the Mennonites, appeared as early as the end of the 3rd century, in a pattern of settlement and agrarian organisation established by the Saxons in the Netherlands. This pattern of settlement dominated the Dutch landscape until the 19th century with only minor modifications, and is still evident today (Lambert, 1971).

The Netherlands

These first villages share similarities with the Mennonite villages, and are strongly informed by the resources and limitations of their physical environments, the extent of their technology, the degree of communality, and tenurial circumstances (Lambert, 1971). Early hamlets of the Drente Plateau in the Netherlands indicate clearance of the land was a communal task, in which land-use types were identified, divided into strips and re-

distributed amongst the settlers, resulting in the establishment of small hamlets of six to eight families (Fig. 2.2)(Lambert, 1971). The open arable field was subdivided into individual plots, which were irregularly grouped as sections were reclaimed and population grew. The land-use arrangement, land holding dispersal, communal cropping and de-pasturing of stubble, and the daily movement of the village herdsman prescribed the formation of large, agglomerated nuclear settlements (Lambert, 1971). The farmsteads were clustered on the edge of the arable fields, near water, with a common heath as the foci. The common heath was essentially a communal green, characterized by ponds for livestock, planted trees, and traversed by paths (Fig. 2.3) (Lambert, 1971).

The Drente Plateau extended into parts of the Friesland and Groningen provinces. However, the settlements in this region formed along dry, sandy ridges amidst the swamps, resulting in the formation of related but unique settlement patterns. Although the economic base was primarily mixed farming, as in Drente, the ridge formations led to a linear pattern of settlement, with house plots placed along the ridge roads, and arable land extending back from ridge top to valley floor. (Lambert, 1971). The formation of beach ridges along the West Coast of the Netherlands provided well-drained sandy soils suitable for an arable open-field system, similar to that of the Drente Plateau. The beach ridges were long and narrow, resulting in elongated fields, beyond which were extensive common pastures for village livestock (Fig. 2.4) (Lambert, 1971).

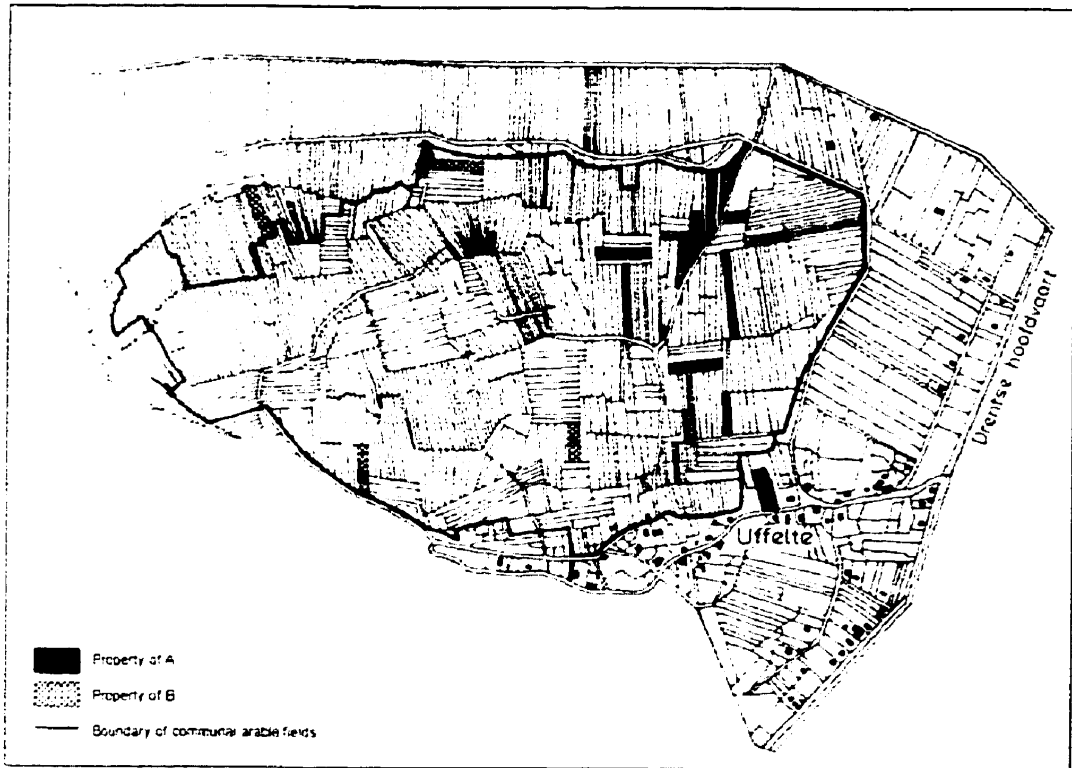


Fig. 2.2 Communal hamlets of the Drente Plateau. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

Fig. 2.3 The common heath of the Drente Plateau. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

Fig. 2.4 Beach ridge villages of West Coast of the Netherlands in the late 7th century. The beach bars provided well-drained sandy soils suitable for an arable open-field system, similar to that of the Drente Plateau. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

In response to population growth, daughter settlements were often formed. As arable fields grew and the resources of the heath gradually depleted, settlers moved to the other side of the arable fields, adjacent to the pastures. Daughter hamlets were formed here, and new arable fields were created from heath (Fig. 2.5) (Lambert, 1971). The Mennonites of Russia responded similarly to population growth, establishing the daughter colonies of Yazykovo, Zagradovka, and Baratow and Schlachtin (Friesen, 1996).

As mentioned previously, geometrically planned villages developed to some extent under feudal estates of the 8th and 9th centuries. Street villages of this period, such as the *Waldhufendorf*, were tightly nucleated villages with linear houseplots roughly perpendicular to the street, enclosed farmsteads and orchards, and tracks leading from the

orchards to the arable open-fields (Fig. 2.6 and Fig. 2.7)(Lambert, 1971). As reclamation expanded into bogs during the 10th century, drainage systems and land plots extended, creating widespread patterns of elongated holdings.

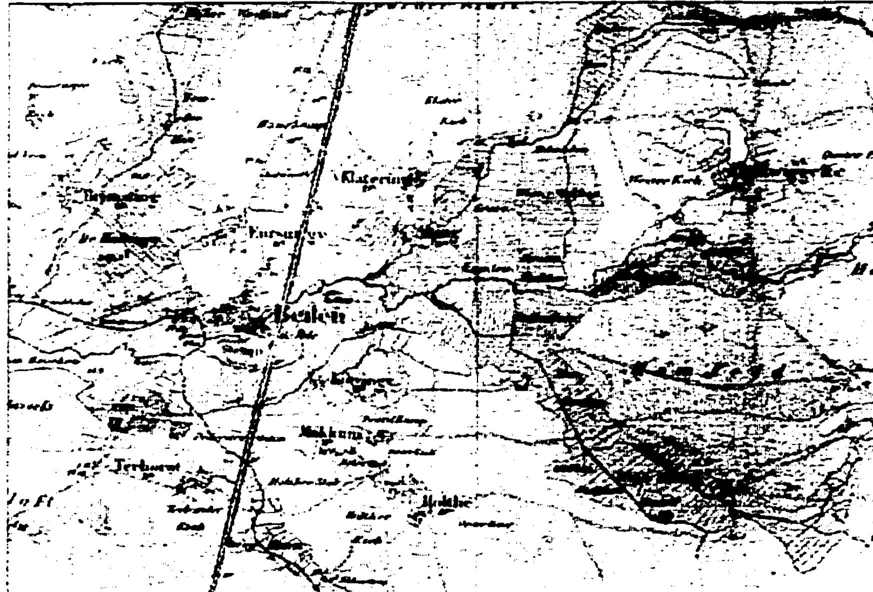


Fig. 2.5 The meadowland beside the streams surround the hamlet of Zwiggelte and its communal arable open-fields in the 19th century. Beilen is surrounded by daughter settlements like Eursinge, Holthe, and Makkum. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

Prior to feudal control, the individual efforts of settlers generally resulted in irregular village formations. The Counts and Bishops of the Netherlands were later able to determine the system of distribution, and uniform parcelization was the result (Fig. 2.8). The system of allotment determined a base line, often along a levee or dyke, along which homesteads were constructed with plots 100 to 120 m wide by 1250 to 2500 m long (Lambert, 1971).

The ridge formed villages and street villages of the Netherlands significantly influenced the pattern of Mennonite settlement, particularly in Russia where religious and social

freedoms, as well as safety considerations, lead to the establishment of nucleated village settlements. In all cases, form determinants included the available technology, proportions and proximity of land types, relationship to water-table, individual or communal establishment, and tenurial circumstances (Lambert, 1971).

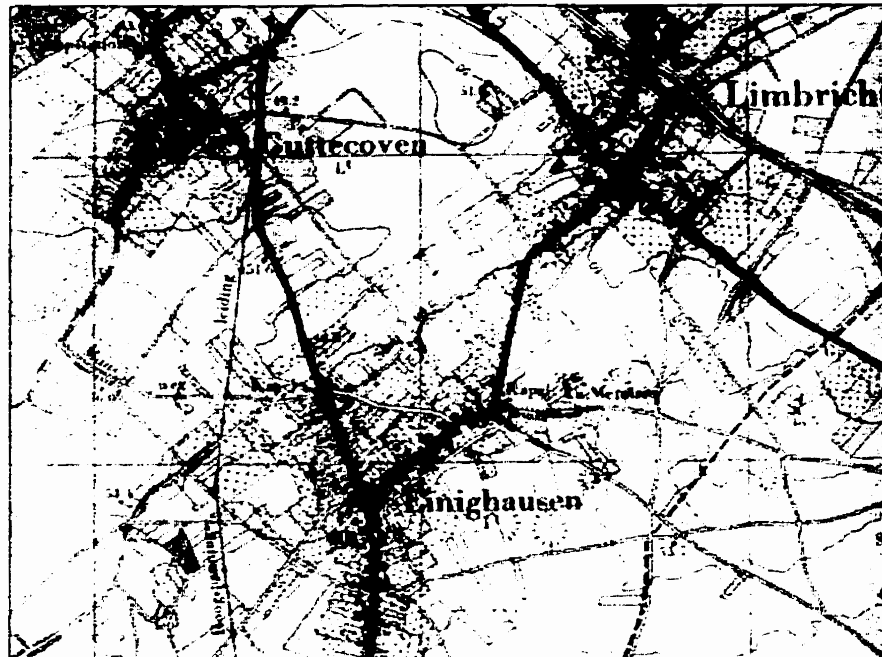
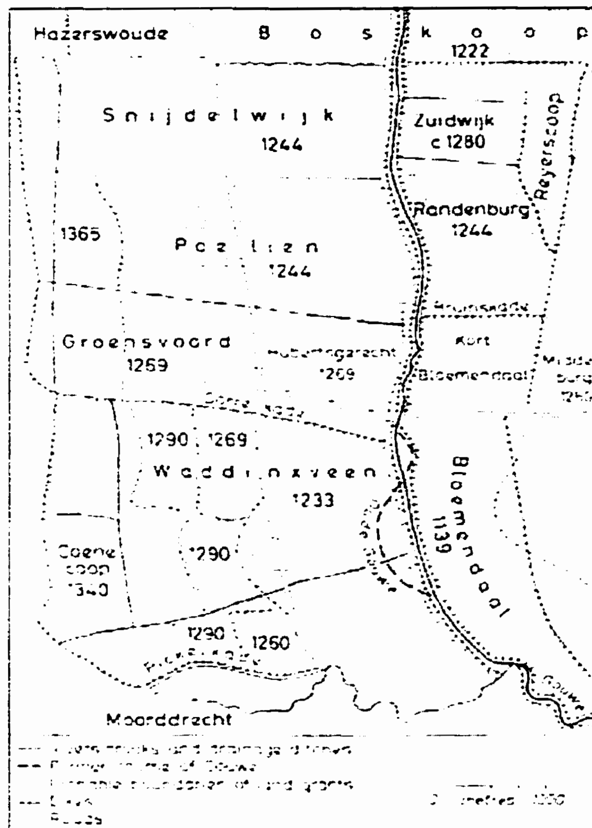


Fig. 2.6 Large nucleated villages of southern Limburg. The farmsteads are surrounded by grassed orchard closes, lining the tracks leading to the arable fields. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

Fig 2.7 A *Waldhufendorf* of Limburg, illustrating perpendicular layout of plots to street, orchards, and enclosed farmsteads. (Source: Lambert, 1971).



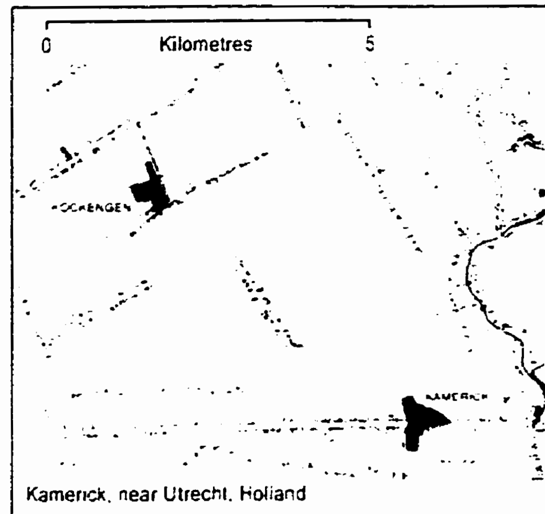


Fig. 2.8 Levee ridge settlements of feudal control near Gouda, illustrating uniform parcelization and regular organisation. (Source: Lambert, 1971).

Fig.2.9 Linear dyke settlement of Kamerick. (Source: Roberts, 1996).

Although the Netherlands are largely dominated by medieval cultural landscapes, it has been significantly altered by processes of landscape adaptation begun in the 13th century; particularly the draining of lake areas and the reclaiming of sea land (Roberts, 1996). Ancient manorial farmsteads historically formed the core of a development of large villages of tenants, with hamlet development on former heaths of the peripheries in the 13th century. Settlements of the medieval reclamations were generally located along the dykes and canals of these drainage ditches, and thus frequently assumed linear forms (Fig. 2.9) (Roberts, 1996).

Consolidation

The Swiss Mennonite settlements of Poland, Volhynia and Galicia were characterized by dispersed village plans which frequently did not follow specified village plans. Although some villages indicated greater tendencies toward nucleation[13], these villages were only temporarily occupied by the Mennonites. Consequently, the settlement pattern of the Swiss and German Mennonites settling in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and other states in the late 17th century remained a dispersed pattern of individual homesteads (Krahn, 1959).

The Prussian-Russian group of Mennonites were the first Mennonites to consolidate a distinctive village pattern, which was accordingly transplanted to Manitoba, Mexico and Paraguay (Krahn, 1959.) The influences on this pattern are found in the religious and cultural environments that preceded the Mennonite movement first to Prussia, and then Russia. Generally, villages in Prussia can be identified as conforming to either the *German right*, or the *Dutch right* (Dick, 1984; Krahn, 1959).

German Right

The prevailing settlement type along the Vistula River, in place since the medieval colony village, was known as the German right. In this case, a lease was obtained from the royal owners of the land by a single person who acted as mayor, who accordingly granted long-term lease agreements to invited settlers. The role of mayor was a hereditary office, which included special privileges such as free rent (Dick, 1984; Krahn, 1959).

Dutch Right

The Dutch right was a free tenure system, in which a group of settlers entered into a joint lease agreement for up to forty years with the landowner. Each farmer received his own homestead, resulting in a widely spread out village pattern (Fig. 2.10 and Fig. 2.2) (Krahn, 1944; Krahn, 1949). The office of the mayor was elected by the settlers, and he was awarded no special privileges (Dick, 1984; Krahn, 1959). Initially, the settlers of these villages were predominantly Dutch, with a majority of Mennonites. Eventually, the Dutch village, or *Hollanderei*, came to refer to village land established on the basis of the Dutch right (Dick, 1984; Krahn, 1959). It was in the 16th century when Dutch religious refugees began settling at the mouth of the Vistula River, near the Gulf of Danzig in Prussia (Krahn, 1949). These Hollanderei, or *Hollanderdorfer* as they came to be known, became the framework for the formation of the Mennonite villages of Prussia, Poland, and Russia (Krahn, 1959).

Prussia and Poland

The skills acquired by the Dutch Mennonites in the reclamation of inundated land in the Netherlands, enabled the construction of ditches and canals in Prussia (Krahn, 1949). Although the Hollanderdorfer was established initially in the swampy lowlands of the Vistula Delta by Dutch Mennonites, it was later transplanted to upland areas in both Poland and Russia (Krahn, 1959; other). By 1772, approximately 400 Hollanderdorfer were established by various settlers, including the Mennonites and the Dutch. Numerous villages, including Orloff, Orlofferfelde, Reimerswalde, Tiegenhagen and Tiegerweide

have been identified as Hollanderdorfer villages, established by 1676, and occupied predominantly by Mennonites in the 18th C (Fig. 2.10) (Krahn, 1959).

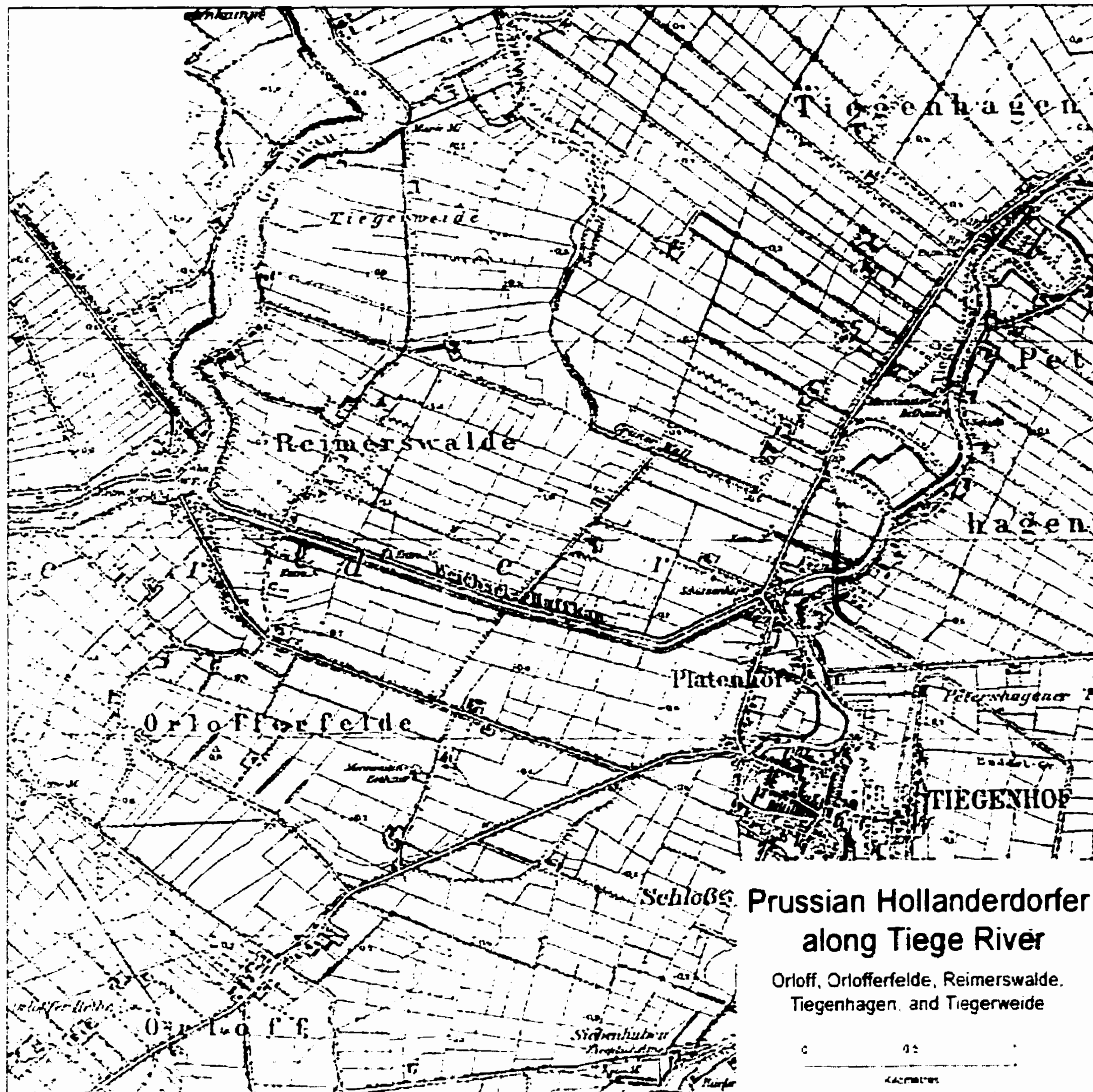


Fig. 2.10 The Mennonite *Hollanderdorfer* villages of the Vistula Delta

These villages were characterised by a semi-nucleated pattern of individual plots, adjoining a street which in some cases followed the curves of the stream along which it

was established. In addition, some village plans indicated the arable land of each individual farmer was attached to his house plot (Fig. 2.10). These characteristics are strongly related to the village pattern known as Hufendorf, which is similarly distinguished by the uniform arrangement of house plots on one or both sides of a linear street, forming a regular row street village form (Roberts, 1996; Krahn, 1959). The Gewanndorf, by contrast, is an irregular agglomeration of homesteads and arable land, constituting little of the regularity and uniformity apparent in the Hufendorf. The Gewanndorf does, however, incorporate an established pattern of crop rotation, which later became characteristic of villages in Russia and Manitoba (Krahn, 1959; Francis, 1955). Clearly, there is a modest correlation between the Gewanndorf and the Hollanderdorfer, but the parallels between the Hufendorf and the Hollanderdorfer are clear (Krahn, 1959). Therefore, this type of village will be referred to as a Hollanderdorfer in the context of this study.

Russia

The movement of the Mennonites to Russia between 1789 and 1835[14], resulted in a significant shift in the Hollanderdorfer pattern, which was partially in response to the contrasting physical environment. The wet environments of the Netherlands and Vistula were left for the dry upland steppes of Russia which experienced little rainfall (Krahn, 1959; Rempel, 1933). Most of the Mennonite villages in Russia were located in settlements along rivers or streams, such as the Chortitza Colony along the Dniepr and the Molotschna Colony along the Molochnaia River (Fig. 2.11 and 2.12) (Rempel, 1933). However, given the often dry conditions, the construction of dams or dykes were no

longer needed. Moreover, dry conditions demanded unique crop selection, and the use of dry farming techniques, such as summer fallowing (Krahn, 1959; other). This, in turn, made it necessary for community adherence to a specified method of crop rotation. This need was one of the reasons for the formation of the Agricultural Association in 1830 (Krahn, 1949; Krahn, 1959; Goerz, 1993).

Johann Cornies

Villages in both the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies in Russia attributed the uniformity of their village patterns to Johann Cornies, a Mennonite empowered by the Russian Government to improve agriculture and industry for the Mennonites, and for Russia (Goerz, 1993; Krahn, 1959). Johann Cornies' level of expertise in ornamental and agricultural horticulture, as well as in livestock breeding, led to the founding of the Agricultural Society in 1830. The Society exercised strict control on Mennonite villages, declaring that: "the Society shall control the farm of every Mennonite and shall determine if he cultivates his fields well, if he plants his forest trees correctly, if he keeps his house in repair and if he possesses all the equipment necessary for farming" (Goerz, 1993, p.47).

Cornies introduced the four-field system and the use of *summer black fallow*[15], as well as the active planting of fruit and shade trees on the treeless steppe in Russia (Goerz, 1993). The four-field system prescribed that each year three-quarters of the land was planted with grain, and the remaining quarter was reserved for fallow (Goerz, 1993). Moreover, the Society dictated the layout of villages, building locations, construction of buildings,

village street maintenance, and the planting of trees and orchards on the individual house plots (Krahn, 1959). The orders and regulations of the society were diligently and promptly carried out in the Molotschna villages, and consequently, respect for the Agricultural Society was carried through in the strict physical ordering of the villages in Manitoba, such as Steinbach.

> Each holding included a *Hauskorgl* (messuage, toft) along the village street and one strip in each of the *Gewanne* (open fields) into which the total area belonging to the village was divided. The toft provided space for house and farm buildings, a barn yard, a flower and vegetable garden, an orchard and a small piece of plowland to be used for bulkier crops for home consumption, such as potatoes or cabbage. The fields were larger areas of plowland selected in such a way that the value of all land in each field, as determined by distance, soil quality, moisture, etc. was uniform, providing an equitable share in the available arable land to each villager (Francis, 1955, p.63).

It is possible that the Mennonite village pattern of Russia was influenced to some degree by the Russian government. Between the period of 1764 to 1767, planners were employed by the Russian government to prepare Master Plans for the German Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed villages of the Saratov region (Friesen, 1999). Regardless of whether there were direct political influences on Mennonite village planning, there is little doubt they gravitated to the concept of a strict, simple ordering system. The transplanted architecture of the Mennonites reveals this to some extent, and the Agricultural Society, a social construct, certainly has roots in this kind of idealised thinking. These influences resulted in the formation of a coterminous colony, with villages in close proximity, profoundly impacting economic and social development in Russia (Friesen, 1999).

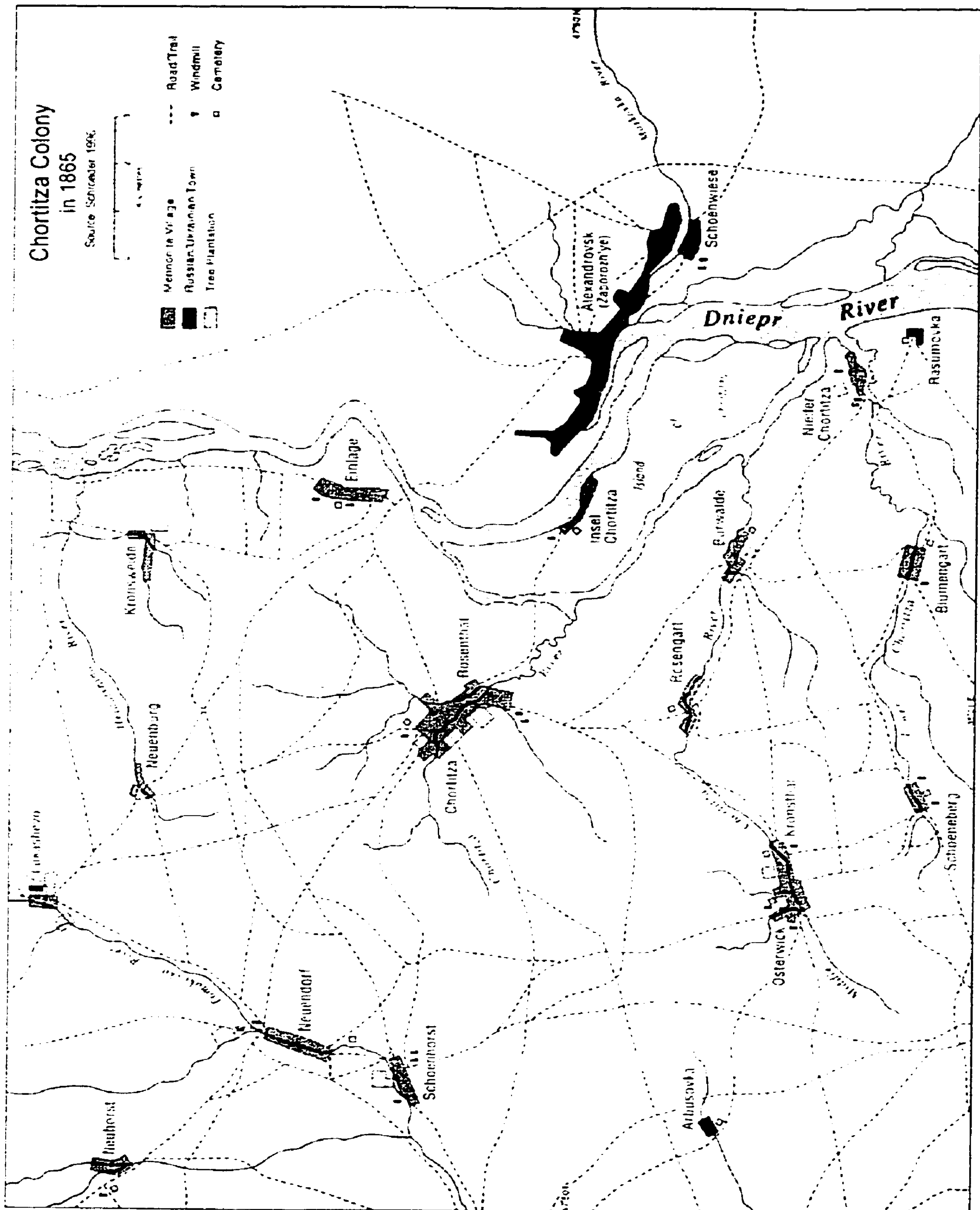


Fig. 2.11 The Chortitza Colony in Russia

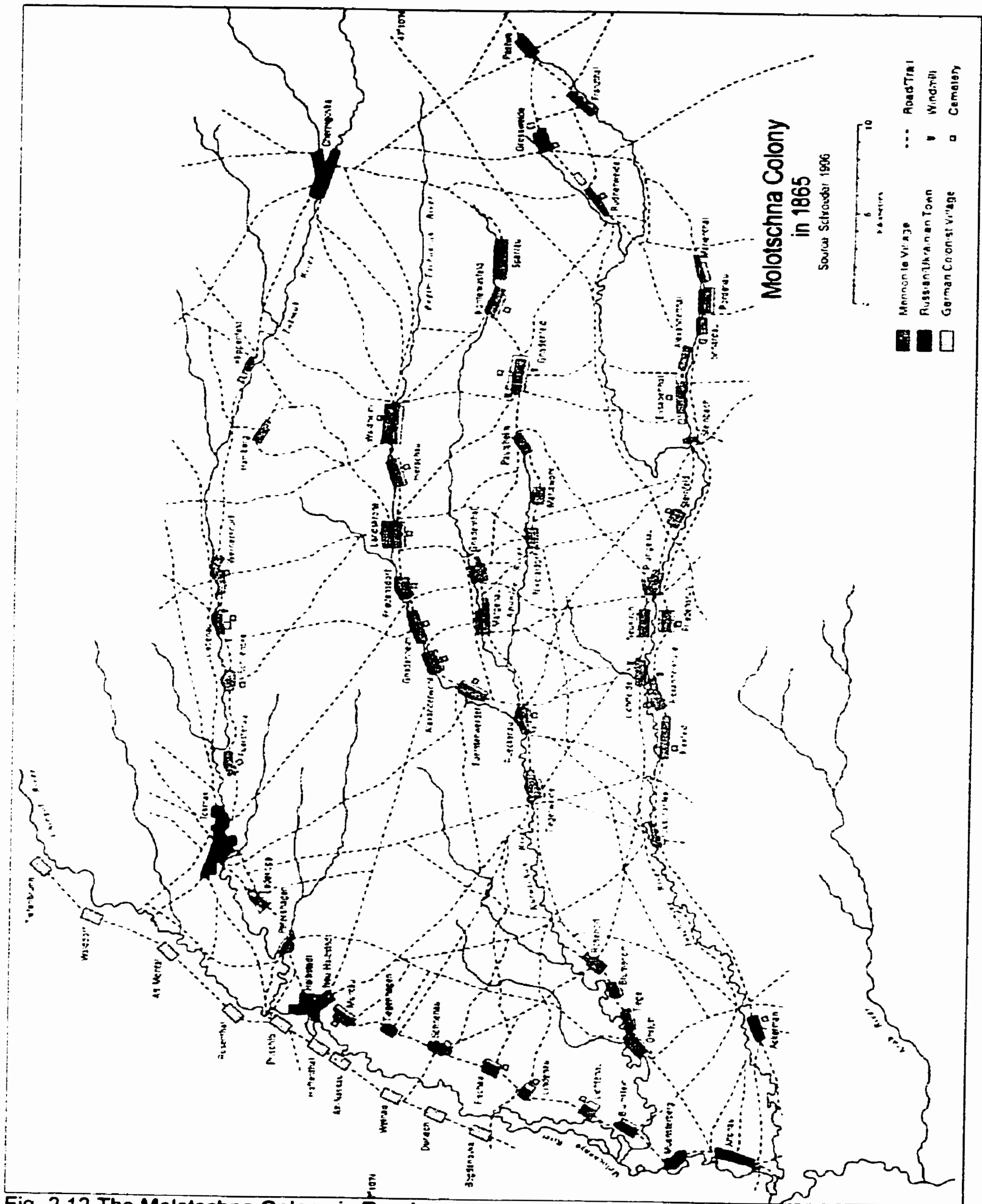


Fig. 2.12 The Molotschna Colony in Russia

The Village Prototype

The prescriptive regulations of the Agricultural Society consolidated the Russian Mennonite village pattern during the first half of the 19th century, such that most Mennonite villages established subsequently in Canada could generally be identified as regular row plans which often followed the curves of a stream (Fig. 2.13) (Roberts, 1996). In contrast to the isolated Prussian villages, the communal settlements of Russia were characterised by stronger unifying forces which dictated solidarity (Dick, 1984). The introduction of the strictly planned settlement is significant, because it demonstrates the consolidation of a cultural concept. This is a universal pattern which emerges in countless traditional settlement forms. For example, African traditional settlement forms have been identified as conveying overall patterns of a turtle or a human body.

> This is a perception of the built environment which sees it as a reflection of the divine model, a cosmological frame, ultimately linking buildings, settlement, indeed the whole 'architecture' of the territory occupied by a group, to their perception of the wider ordering of the universe (Roberts, 1996, p.94).

In either case, African or Mennonite, these planned settlements were created by people who had a concept of what a settlement *should* be (Roberts, 1996). So strong was this notion, that the Agricultural Society established prototype villages, such as Hiershau, within the Molotschna colony, illustrating what was conceived by Cornies and others to be the essential qualities of a settlement; uniformity, symmetry and simplicity (Fig. 2.14)[16] (Rempel, 1933). Such concepts have travelled with the Mennonites throughout their history, and have been elaborated, duplicated and adapted to the varying physical contexts within which their settlements were placed. Consequently, the later Mennonite plan types of Manitoba have little to do with the colonising context within which they

were placed, and are essentially the transplanted prototypes of Russian Mennonite villages.

Russian Mennonite villages were generated from an open-field system which had no enclosures, and consisted of a communal pasture within which the livestock of all the villagers were pastured. This area was then tended by a herdsman to prevent damage to crops (Francis, 1955; Krahn, 1959). The communal, equitable nature of the Mennonite settlement was further evidenced in the strict control of crop rotation, such that all landowners were required to plant the same crops and fallow at the same time (Francis, 1955; Goerz, 1993).

Generally, the villages were characterised by a wide unimproved main street, with 20 to 30 house plots on one or both sides of the street. Often, the individual arable field, of approximately 160 acres, adjoined the back of the house plot, combining with the other fields to create a contiguous community Gewanne. However, when the village land lacked consistency, it was parcelled out according to the *Gewannflur* to ensure equitable distribution of superior and inferior land (Krahn, 1959).

Initially, these villages consisted of full-size farms, established by original settlers, half-size farms, and *Anwohner*[17] land. The provision of Anwohner land is based on the notion of provision of surplus land to the younger generation for future village development, and for non-farmers (tradespeople, craftspeople) (Krahn, 1959; Urry, 1989).

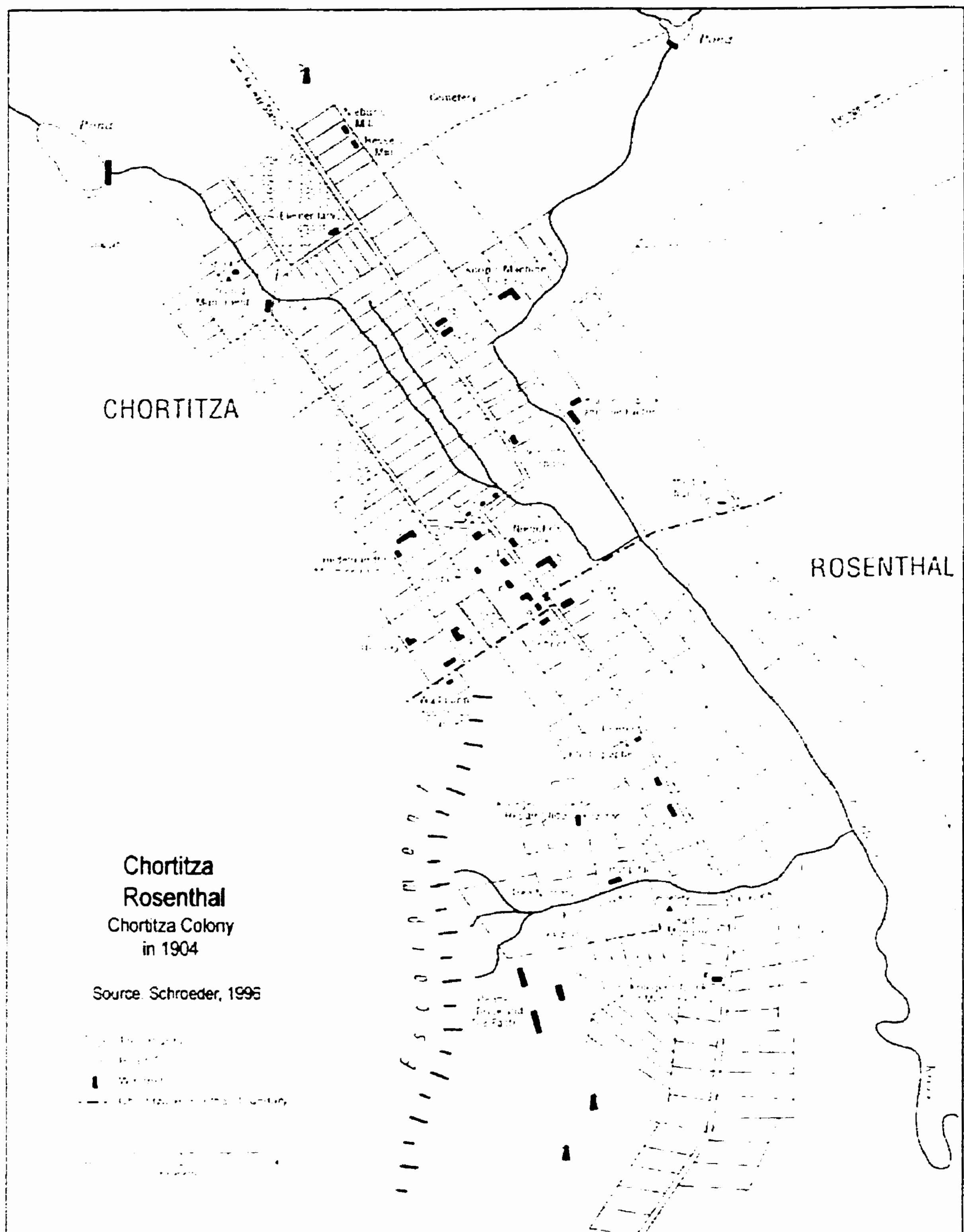


Fig. 2.13 The village of Chortitza-Rosenthal follows a main street, which aligns with Chortitza river, resulting in a unique pattern of land parcelization.

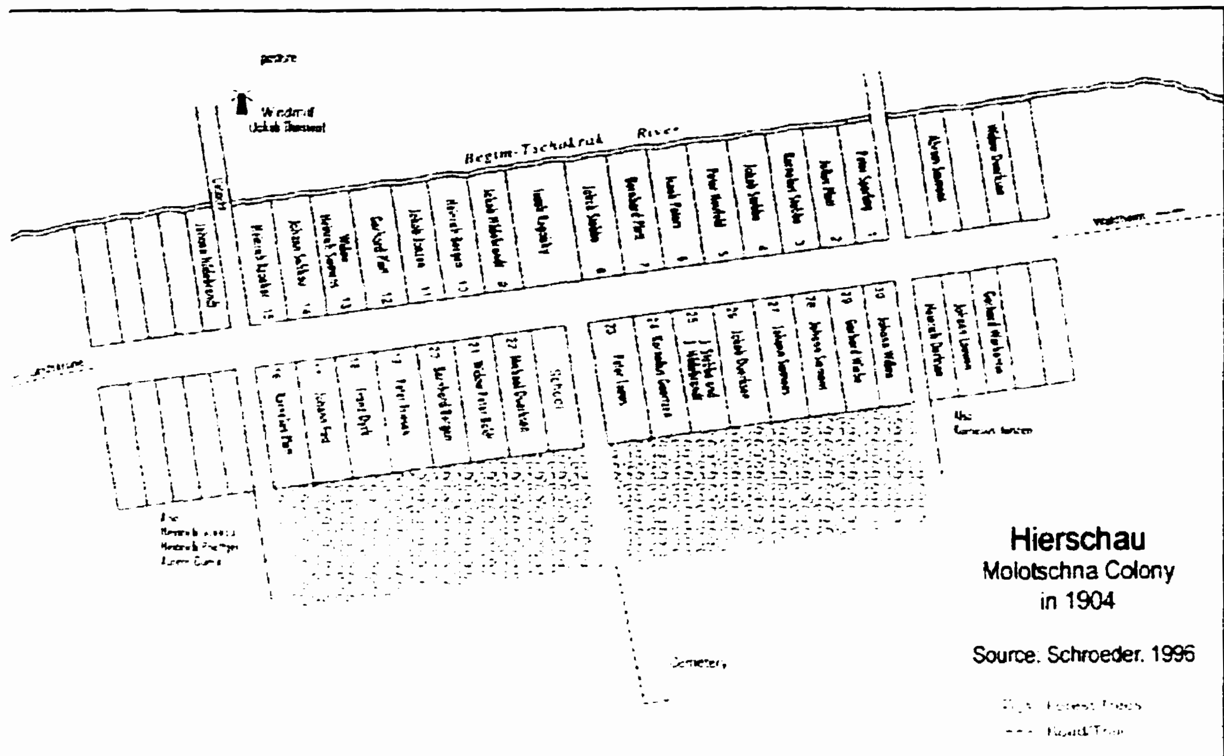


Fig. 2.14 **The Russian Mennonite model village designed by the Agricultural Association.**

These new villages were frequently established in new settlements, often referred to as daughter colonies, and were monitored by the mother colonies. Although they followed the village patterns of settlement, previously established in the mother settlements, their administration, village morphology, and particularly architecture took on new modifications (Krahn, 1959).

Modifications

The villages of Chortitza and Rosenthal were established in 1789, as part of the first series of established villages within the Chortitza colony. Through village expansion and development, these villages eventually amalgamated into one village which grew into a major administrative, agricultural, religious, educational, business, and trade centre for

the Chortitza colony (Friesen, 1996; Schroeder, 1996). The village plan of Chortitza-Rosenthal in 1915 indicates the framework of the simple village pattern is still evident (Fig. 2.13). The overall pattern follows an alignment with the Chortitza river, and the initial uniform house plots remain intact along the main street. Expansion of the village has taken place in the formation of two small community service centres and the addition of new house plots, taken from the partial subdivision of encroaching arable land and the infilling of open space between the two old villages. The Rosenthal Main Street, placed parallel with the Chortitza River, has been connected with the Old Row (*Alte Reihe*) and New Row (*Neue Reihe*) streets of Chortitza by means of a cross street (Friesen, 1996; Schroeder, 1996).

Although the 1915 village pattern of Chortitza-Rosenthal may be conceived as a derivation of the simple village plan, it is more accurately explained by shifting village economics, resulting in an increasingly complex village pattern that reflected temporal changes. The process of village expansion has been described by Roberts (1996) as a process generated by various forces, such as external pressures, free market, and urban growth. The autonomy achieved by this village in particular, allowed for an 'open' village characterised by numerous owners, rather than one powerful landowner who dominated the landholdings (Roberts, 1996). The emergence of a free market economy in the 19th and 20th centuries allowed for the independence of the Mennonites, which fostered economic development. Entrepreneurs, merchants, bankers, and professionals located along the village Main Street to profit from the movement of coaches or ponies along the street (Roberts, 1996).

The quick development of this village into an increasingly urban area is also attributed to the proximity of this village to the Russian town of Alexandrovsk, now known as Zaporozh'ye (Fig. 2.11). Not surprisingly, Chortitza-Rosenthal has since been incorporated into the city of Zaporozhyel as a suburb known as Verkhnyaya Khortitsa (Friesen, 1996). Rural villages in close proximity to long established or new towns often dramatically change, as their settlement fabric takes on the influences of the urban forms, while preserving the rural beginnings (Roberts, 1996). This process of modification can be paralleled to Mennonite village development of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the East and West Reserves of Manitoba.

The Mennonite Reserves of Manitoba

With the immigration from Prussia to Russia barely complete, the pressures to Russianize in the 1870's compelled the Mennonites to begin a new migration to North America (Dick 1984, Krahn, 1959). Villages established in the East and West Reserves, beginning in 1874, virtually transplanted the pattern of village settlement and administration established in Russia.

The system of colony and village organisation in Southern Manitoba can be paralleled to Russian Mennonite colony settlements of the nineteenth century. As in Russia, the pattern of colonisation fostered community collaboration, and equity for all settlers. Each of the original eighteen families who founded Steinbach pooled the 160 acres which they

were individually allotted by the Canadian government in order to establish the village commune (Warkentin, 1971).

Although the *Gewannflur* proved effective in Russia, the Mennonite reserves in Manitoba, particularly the East Reserve, were not uniform. In the East Reserve, this system of settlement proved inappropriate because the selection of government land survey sections had to be contiguous, and often this meant the inclusion of poor land. The vegetation and soils were inconsistent, varying from stony to sandy, and the overall drainage was poor (Warkentin, 1960). In fact, there was often not enough arable land in a *flur* to support a farmer economically. Some Mennonites preferred the North American system of settlement, in which individual settlers farmed independently on their own homesteads. A trend towards increased dispersion emerged particularly in township 7-4, where flat low-lying land made it difficult to establish five contiguous sections of arable land. Frequently, groups of relatives would group their homes on ridges, while still maintaining individual quarter-sections. However, the sociological advantages of the *Gewannflur* outweighed the economic and political disadvantages for most Mennonites (Warkentin, 1960), and many village communes were established in spite of the recommendations of the Canadian government.

Steinbach

The immigrants responsible for the founding of Steinbach were a sectarian group of Mennonites called the *Kleine Gemeinde*, who had separated from the Molotschna colony in Russia because of theological differences. Migration to the Borozenko colony in 1865,

and later to Canada offered the Kleine Gemeinde the opportunity to separate physically and to form independent communities (Francis, 1955; Loewen, 1993, *Family*). Beginning in 1874, Mennonite immigrants from Russia began settling in southern Manitoba, in what is now known as the East and West (Mennonite) Reserves. They were the first group of immigrants to settle on the open prairie, and to begin systematically planting trees. With them, they brought a way of life rooted in a strict Anabaptist belief and a sense of community based in agriculture (Von Kampen, 1985). The Mennonites created a distinct cultural landscape, articulated clearly in village and building form.

Steinbach was a typical Mennonite settlement village in the East Reserve, characterized by a linear Main Street which followed the course of a creek, the distribution of village lots along Main Street, and an open-field system referred to as the *Gewannflur*. The *Gewannflur* had no enclosures, communal pastures tended by herdsmen, provision of land for the landless, and the adherence to the system of crop rotation identified by Cornies. Figure 1.5 indicates the division of the *Flur* into arable *Gewanne*[18], *Kagel*[19], and *Raine*[20]. This created a distinctive village pattern, still visible today, which is diagonal to the grid of the sectional survey of the province.

Similar to later settlements in Russia (Urry, 1989), the village of Steinbach was ordered according to the standards of the previously established Agricultural Association. Figure 2.15 depicts Main Street Steinbach in the 1920's, indicating a wide, unimproved main street, characterized by picket fencing and planted rows of trees, in keeping with the typologies established by the Agricultural Association. Similar to the Molotschna

settlement, the plots laid out to the east of the village street were roughly six acres, and approximately 220 feet wide. The set-back of houses was consistent with that found in the Molotschna colony at roughly 60 to 90 feet, and house typologies were maintained. At the time of settlement, the plots directly across Main Street from the settlers were 10-acre parcels of land belonging to the same landowners (Warkentin, 1971).

Fig. 2.15 **Main Street, Steinbach in the 1920's. (Source: Wright, 1991).**

The collective area of the Flur was delimited by the depletion of the creek as well as the presence of a Metis trail to the south, unsuitable marshy land to the west, and the Clearspring settlement to the north. The village itself was situated in the centre of the Flur in order to ensure that the surrounding Kagel were distributed equidistant from a roughly central point (Von Kampen, 1985). As part of the open-field system, the arable Gewanne was chosen based on its suitability for agriculture, and further divided such that each settler had a portion of land in each area of arable Gewanne to ensure equity. As the land to the Southeast was unsuitable for agriculture because of excess moisture, it was set aside as the communal pasture, as were the remaining corner plots (Warkentin, 1971). Figure 1.5 illustrates shorter strips surrounding the fields of arable land which functioned as a protective belt against infestations and fires (Warkentin, 1971). These protective

plots were cultivated by each settler, and the produce was donated to the treasury of the church and distributed to needy settlers.

The importance of cultural cohesiveness was quite evident in the establishment of Mennonite villages in the East and West Reserves. Many Mennonite village names reflected existing villages in Russia, including the place name *Steinbach*, which was taken from a village in the Borosenko colony. Although the Canadian government encouraged the settlement of individual homesteads, the desire of the Mennonites to consolidate and endure eventually resulted in an amendment to the Dominion Lands Act in 1876, enabling the Mennonites to settle as village communes (Warkentin, 1960). The limitations of the physical environment had played a considerable role in the consolidation of the Prussian and Russian settlements, and although there was again a shift from the dry upland steppes of Russia to the low-lying, poorly drained areas of the East Reserve[21], the village morphology remained virtually identical. Initially the inappropriateness of the *Gewannflur* was circumvented by the abandonment of settlements, or the creation of drainage systems, as was the case in Steinbach. The social and political advantages of the commune were shortly threatened by increasing economic considerations. The *Gewannflur* proved too rigid for the widely dispersed areas of arable field and pasture (Warkentin, 1960).

The mixed farming economy was aided by the development of trading centres like Winnipeg, in the 1890's, and the construction of roads after 1900 (Warkentin, 1960). The quick development of Steinbach into a trade centre for the reserves was similar to the

development of the Chortitza-Rosenthal village in Russia. Steinbach was in close proximity to Winnipeg, resulting in the influence of urban economics and form. It was the developing success of Steinbach as a rural trade centre which contributed to the abolition of the open-field system in 1910 (Francis, 1955; Goerz, 1993; Warkentin, 1971; Wright, 1991). The separation of the Church of God in Christ in 1881 introduced an ideology of individualism into Steinbach and many other Kleine Gemeinde villages (Francis, 1955; Warkentin, 1971). This shift in ideology was connected with a significant shift in this period which brought about social, economic and religious change in Steinbach, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. As Mennonites increasingly endeavoured to meet the demands of the Canadian commercial wheat markets, the Mennonites of Steinbach chose to expand and increase the efficiency. Rapid advances in agricultural machinery in this period enabled farmers to handle larger acreages, prompting many to abandon the commune and acquire larger, contiguous property.

The movement towards the dissolution of the village commune cannot be entirely attributed to the demands and influences of the 20th century. Villages of the Netherlands experienced a similar phenomenon in the 11th century, which led to the abandonment of communal landholdings. The daughter settlements of the Drente Plateau expanded in this period, resulting in continued swamp reclamation, and indistinct village boundaries. As a result, individual rights in the common heath of each village became explicitly defined, and holdings in the open fields were viewed as individual properties thereafter (Lambert, 1971). The *Kransesdorp*[22] village type of the Netherlands was characterised by a primary

nucleation, with communal open-fields sub-divided into individual holdings, similar to Steinbach. Communal tenure was also replaced by individual ownership, and peasants established private pasture plots within communal pastures close to the open-fields, allowing for greater convenience (Lambert, 1971). It is possible the population growth of Steinbach resulted in similar resource depletion, requiring further holdings far removed from the village centre in less suitable growing conditions. The nature of communal farming became restrictive on individual farmers, and they began to buy quarter-sections outside of the commune. This led to the expansion and dispersion of holdings among the Mennonites living within the village, and eventually, to the dissolution of the village commune (Warkentin, 1971).

1874 to 1930 Expansion

At some point between 1910 and 1912, the village commune in Steinbach was formally dissolved, and the plots were surveyed (Francis, 1955; Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*) (Figs. 2.16 and 2.17).[23] These plots were further divided into three and sometimes four private lots, beginning with the lots nearest to Main Street. This began a system of street and lot development which continued the orientation established initially by the settlement, and persisted until the 1950's. The expansion of Steinbach began as the addition of new house plots, taken from the subdivision of house plots, and the subdivision of encroaching arable land. Some complications arose with the meeting of the Gewanne and the toft, and the consequent colliding of the village grid and survey grid. The top portion of the plan indicates some attempt to resolve the conflict of present day Hospital St. and Home St., resulting in some odd-shaped lots which have persisted to present-day.

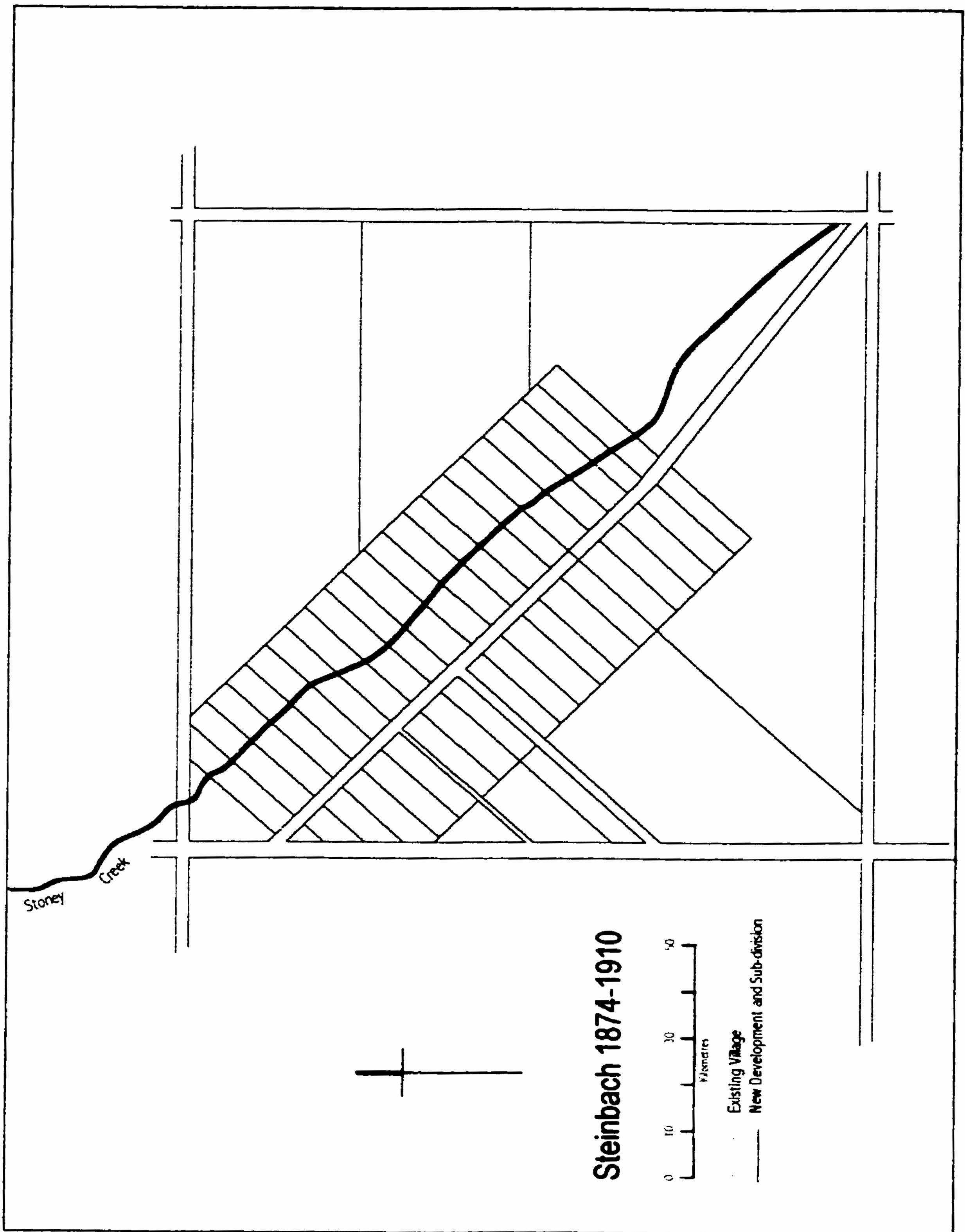


Fig. 2.16 Steinbach, Manitoba

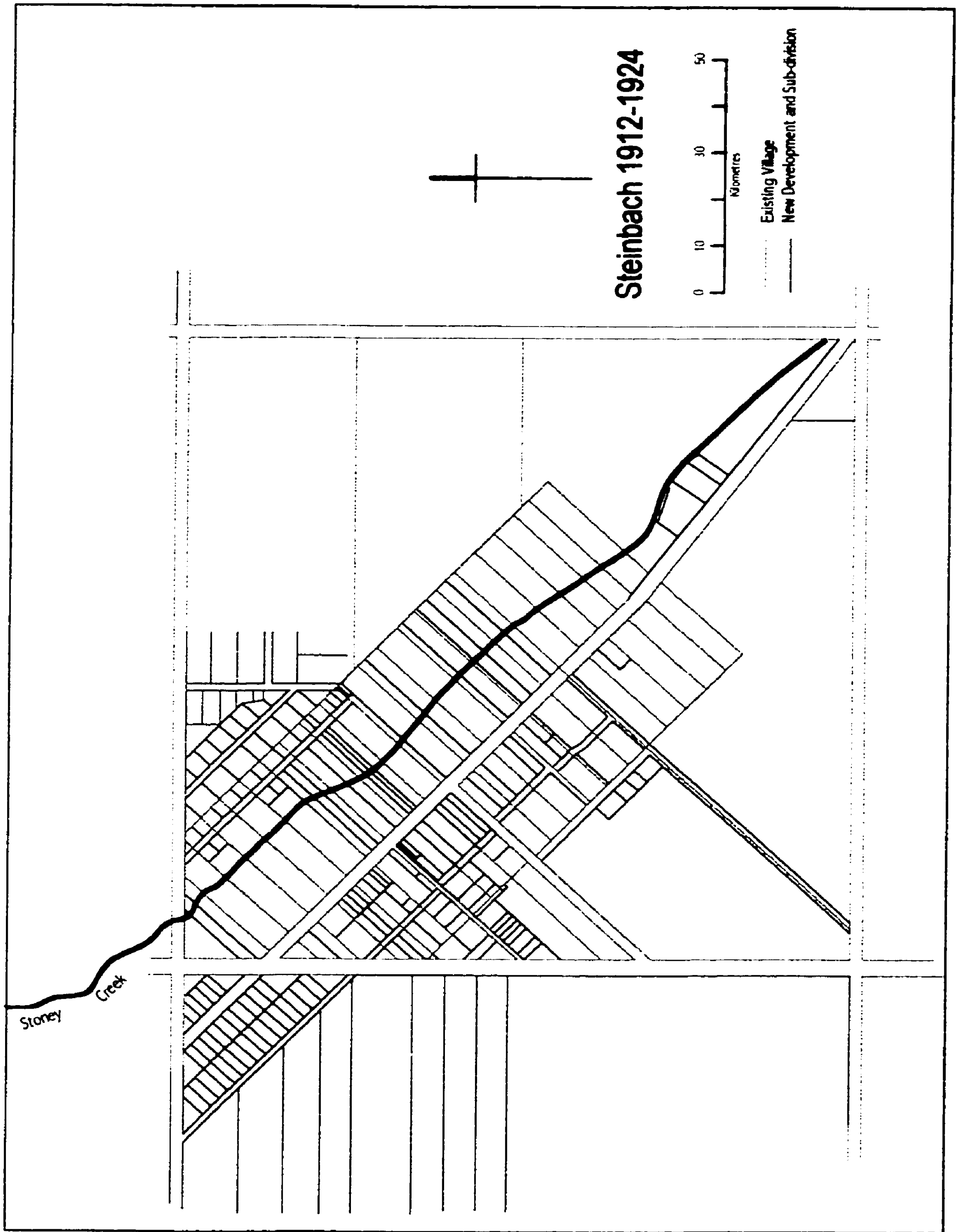


Fig. 2.17 Steinbach, Manitoba

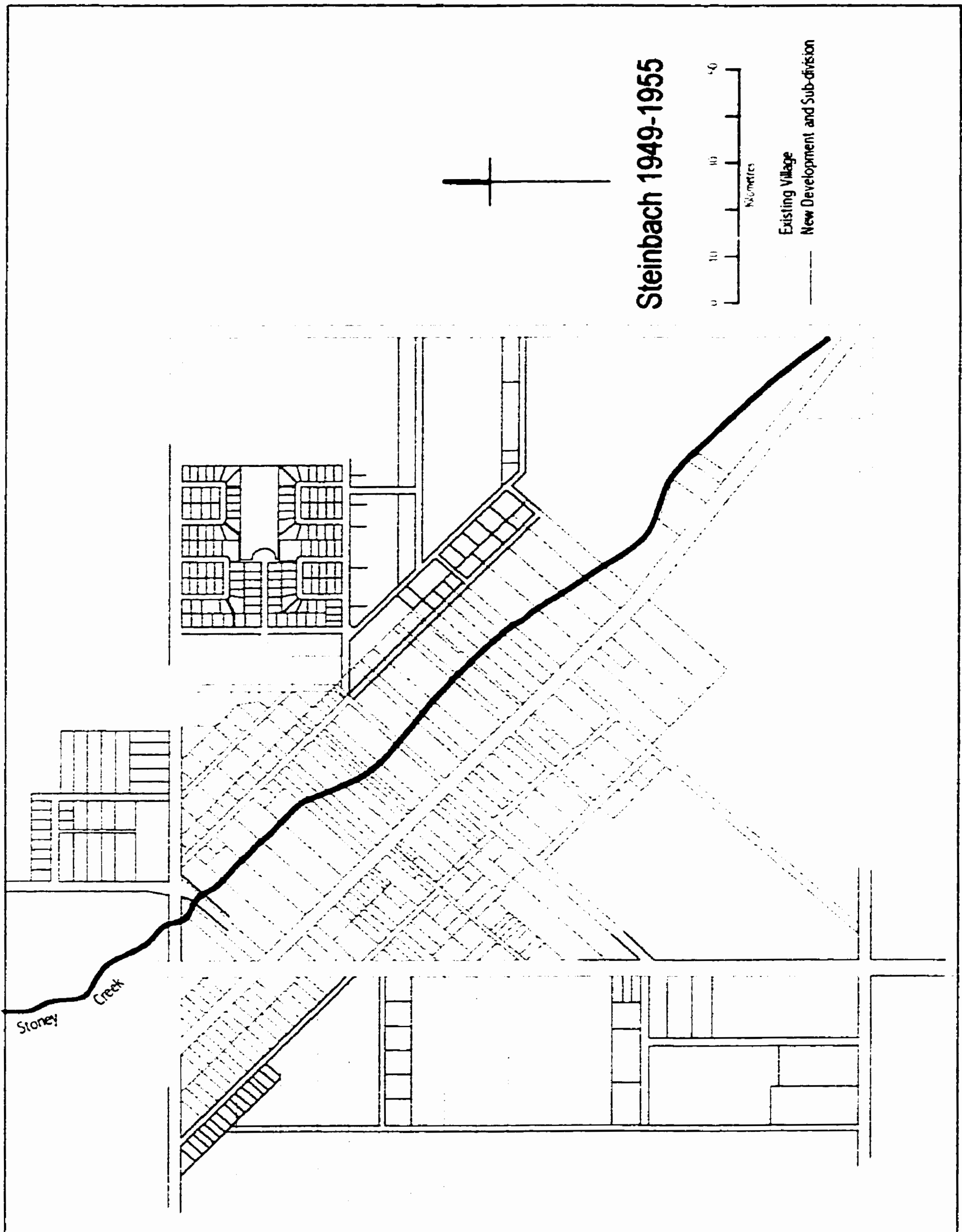


Fig. 2.18 Steinbach, Manitoba

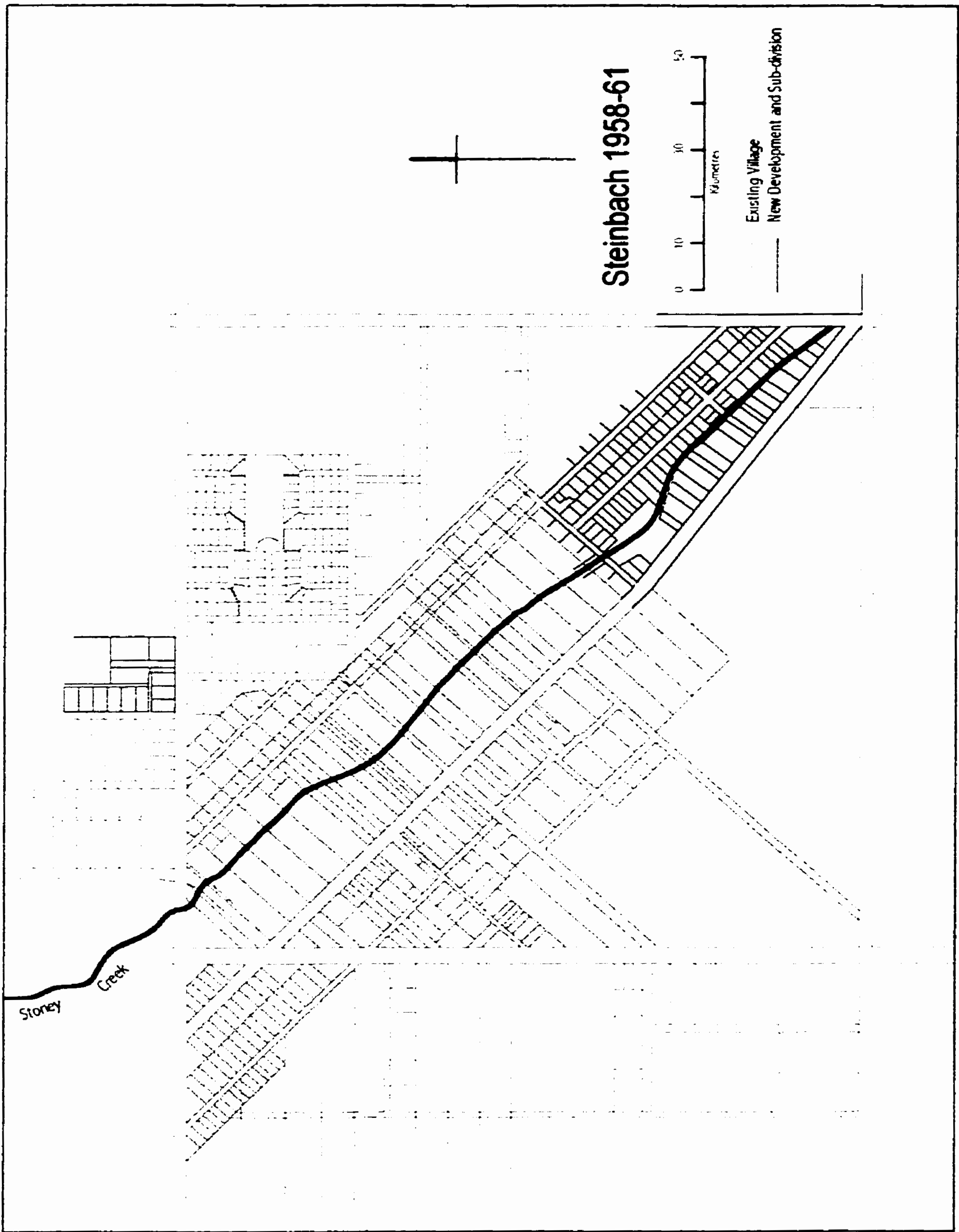


Fig. 2.19 Steinbach, Manitoba

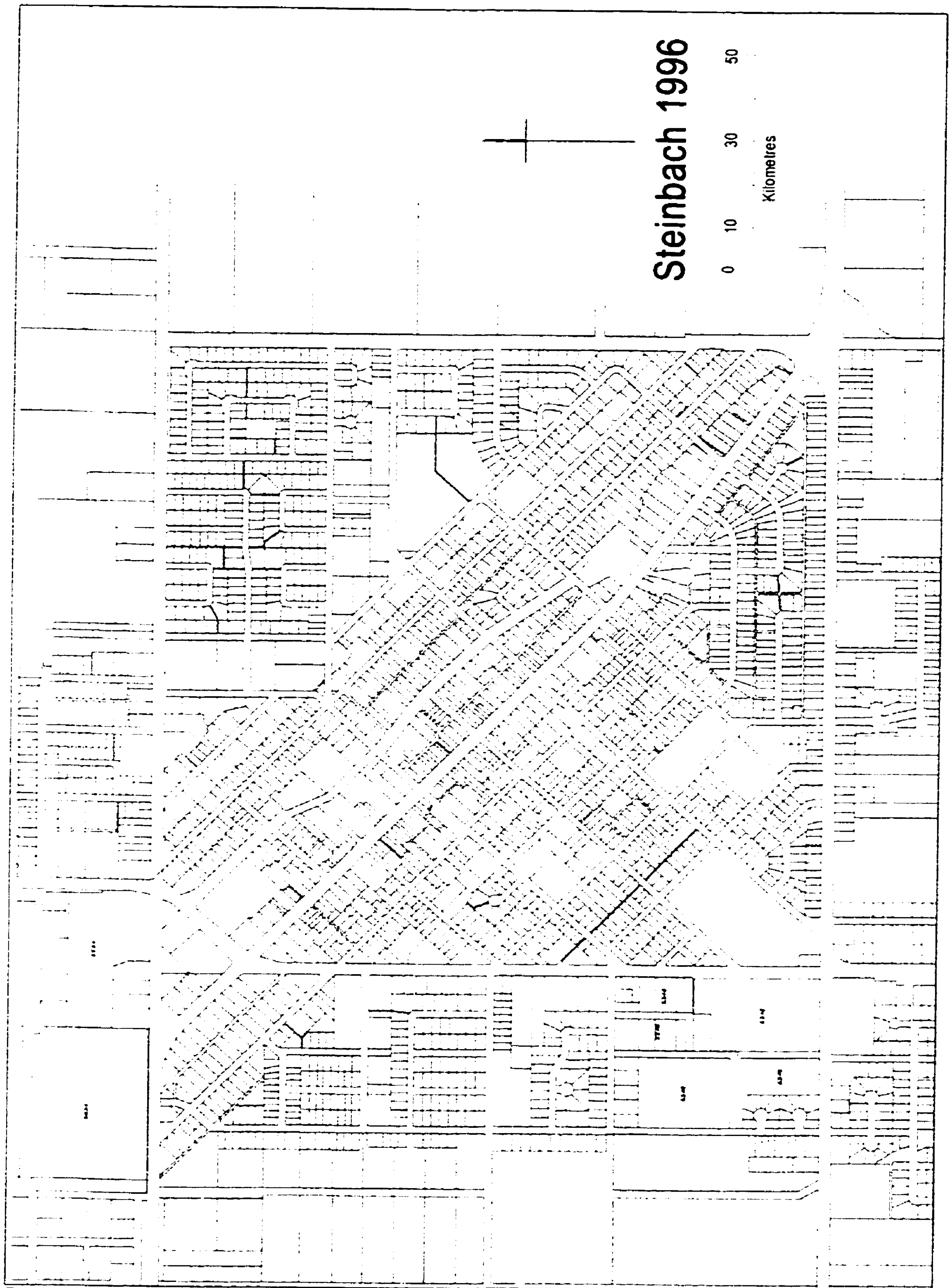


Fig. 2.20 Steinbach, Manitoba

Four main roads were established within the village of Steinbach. The road east led to the French district, the road south followed the *Hochruecken* or high ridge road to Grunthal, and the road west passed through Lichtenau, Reichenbach, and Rosenfeld. The road north which later developed into Highway #12, passed near the English settlement of Clearspring, the neighbouring villages of Blumenort and Blumenhof, and eventually led to Winnipeg (Warkentin, 1971). The first street established in Steinbach, Main Street, had a length defined by the number of establishing families, or more specifically, the number of house plots, or toft, within the village (Von Kampen, 1985). Main Street then terminated on the north side of the village and connected to the Winnipeg route (later Hwy. 12).

1930 to Present: Development

The transformation from a detached agricultural community to a trade centre associated with an urban centre became physically apparent in the 1950's as the appropriation of external patterns of development. Figure 2.18 indicates a shift in residential organisation akin to the post-war residential development taking place at the time in various other urban centres. This pattern of growth clearly occurred during the rise of the automobile, as new subdivisions were less centred on the core of the town and more on the peripheries. Respectively, the coherence of the community began to weaken as community goals were redefined to accommodate economic prosperity, rather than economic sustainability. The movement of non-Mennonites into the town began to greatly increase at this time, including a large majority of external tradesmen, craftsmen and professionals.

1949 to Present: Transformation

External influences in this period increased as the demands of the surrounding reserve villages grew and the accessibility to Winnipeg improved. In response to drought, low grain prices and increased urbanisation, a significant shift in agriculture occurred in the 1940's, and the demands of Winnipeg's urban market transformed the East Reserve into a dairy and poultry producing economy (Warkentin, 1960). Farm service centres established in Steinbach to provide for the dairy and poultry farmers, and the town shortly developed into the leading trading centre for all of South-Eastern Manitoba (Warkentin, 1960). Figures 2.19 and 2.20 indicate a continuation of the post-war pattern of development that has persisted to present day, with a trend towards increasing de-centralisation. The 1970's proved to be significant in terms of shifting landuse patterns. Residential development to this point was characterised by peripheral residential development, and was likewise followed by peripheral commercial development in the 1970's. This commercial development tended to occur along Hwy #12 north of the town, largely driven by increased use of Highway #12 as a major thoroughfare. The construction of Clearspring Shopping Mall occurred later in this period (Magnusson, 1996), and was corresponded by the movement of residential development north of the town (Fig. 2.19).

Evidence of the original plots established in 1874 still exists in the form of present-day lot lines, streets, and some occurrences of *Raine*. Remnants of *Raine* can today be found most prominently as strips preserved in their original state in the remaining farm land

beginning at Hespeler St. and continuing eastward (Fig. 2.21 and 2.22). This particular strip of farmed land is peculiar in that it is clearly bound by Hespeler St. and the residential development to the west. As mentioned previously, many streets were built upon existing *Raine*. Ridge formation within this farmed land continues eastward aligned with both Reimer and Evergreen Avenues, suggesting that these avenues in particular may have been developed upon *Raine*. Figure 2.22 indicates the *Raine* at Evergreen Ave. appear to be the most preserved, such that soil accumulation upon a rock ridge has allowed the establishment of some trees and shrubs. Conversely, Figure 2.21 indicates an access road into a farmstead which may have been based on the same *Raine* as Reimer Ave.

It is likely the dissolve of the village commune that sparked a renewed interest in commercial, professional and business occupations. However, a significant shift in thinking had occurred since the 16th C., during which the crafts and trades were chosen by the Mennonites for their opportunities in individual initiative and freedom (Driedger, 1988). In fact, the village commune of Steinbach had grown quite wealthy, and it was the growth of capital within the community which was providing opportunities for agriculture expansion. This was no longer a community of religious radicals, but rather a community of agricultural middlemen (Driedger, 1988).

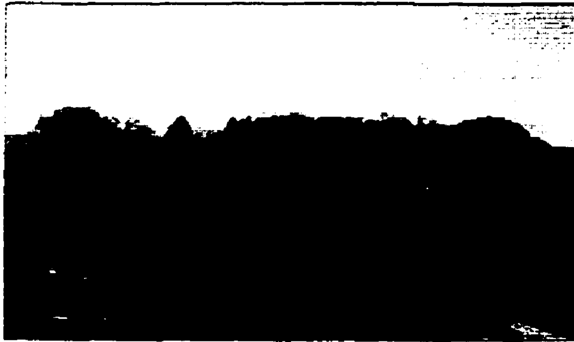


Fig. 2.21 Remnant *Raine* in Steinbach.

Fig. 2.22 Remnant *Raine* in Steinbach.

Ironically, it had been the diminished role of theological and religious concerns, and the dominance of entrepreneurial and organisational economic drive, which in part led to the protest and formation of the Kleine Gemeinde in Russia (Driedger, 1988; Francis, 1955), and the consequent establishment of Steinbach. The renewed interest in the commercial, professional, and business occupations in the 1920's within the community of Steinbach was now in positive response to the very socio-economic condition which had caused the abandonment of the Molotschna settlement 100 years earlier.

The village settlement of Steinbach has since evolved into a provincial urban trade centre, rendering Steinbach as a typical small city of Manitoba, with little to distinguish it from other cities beyond a few remaining artefacts which testify to its origins. The complexity of political, social, and economic factors have enabled a process of acculturation in response to limitations imposed by political control, physical environment, and technological resources. To some extent, a lack of social cohesiveness within the community of Steinbach is evident in the incongruity of the city plan as it exists today

(Fig. 2.20). Social strength remains in this community, but it has since transformed from an isolated, exclusively Mennonite village of a primarily agriculture economic base, to an open community of many trades, professions, and cultures.

NOTES

Part I

[1] Patterns of nucleation are associated with the notion of communality of effort and enforcement in order to economise (Roberts, 1996).

[2] Patterns of dispersion are associated with individuality of freedom and status, and cash income (Roberts, 1996).

[3] The Mennonites enjoyed a considerable amount of religious freedom in West Prussia, including educational and religious freedoms, and in some capacity, military exemption. In East Prussia, however, religious uniformity was more strictly enforced, with military service often becoming a point of contention. As Mennonite families grew, they relied on constant land acquisition for children to prevent the division of land holdings. The government viewed this as a weakness in the military strength of the country. Consequently, Mennonites were often subject to various heavy taxes and denied rights of citizenship (Rempel, 1933).

[4] The prosperity of the artisan Mennonites was viewed as a threat by Prussians, and as a result, the Mennonites were subject to " monetary extortions, hampering restrictions on economic pursuits and occasionally in religious pursuits" Mennonites of Danzig were not permitted to buy land or belong to guilds, restricting what professions they could practice, and which districts they could reside in. Many attempts at expropriation forced them to make monetary contributions to the government, leaving them insecure in the Free State of Danzig and West Prussia (Rempel, 1933).

[5] The invitation to the Mennonites followed initial colonisation by the Germans, Moravians, Hutterites and Swedes. Generally, their colonisation was not considered successful by the government because most had no agricultural experience, and were unfamiliar with Russian vegetation, climatic conditions, and economic markets. This was followed by more successful settlement by German Lutheran, Catholic and Mennonite farmers experienced in plant cultivation and cattle raising (Krahn, 1949).

[6] The multiethnic composite of the country was viewed with some suspicion by the government, and it was felt the individual interests of the different ethnic groups were threatening the collective interests of the nation. In some ways, the Polish Revolt confirmed the fears of the government, and inspired the movement to *Russianize* and create a coherent country with nationalist interests (Smith, 1981).

[7] A province along the northern coast of the Netherlands, adjacent to Groningen. Both provinces have a history of strong Mennonite congregations. Although the Mennonite population has been steadily declining since its inception in the Netherlands, they still comprised 3 percent of the population in 1949 (Vos, 1956).

[8] Three centres of Mennonite settlements arose in Prussia, beginning with the Elbing and vicinity settlements of mid 16th century, including Danzig in about 1567, and later encompassing the districts of Swetz, Culm, Marienburg, and Graudens (Rempel, 1933).

[9] *Flur* refers to the entire area of village land, including the village and fields. The large fields, or *Gewanne*, were subsequently divided into *Kagel*, and distributed equitably amongst the farmers based on suitability for cultivation, hay land and meadow, drainage, slope, soil texture, vegetation, and proximity to village centre. The entire system is referred to as *Gewannflur*. The success of such a system depends on large areas of consistent arable land, so that equitable distribution amongst the settlers can be achieved (Warkentin, 1960).

[10] Heaths are extensive areas of level, open, uncultivated land of poor drainage, coarse sandy soils and peat accumulation. The dominant form of vegetation is low shrubs of the *Ericaceae* family.

[11] The delegates considered the Chortitza land unsuitable for a large number of colonies, because of the distance from ports and towns and the lack of water and trees. The Mennonites were later given no choice but to settle in the Chortitza and Molotschna areas, due to increasing pressures from the Prussian government. Government relations between Prussian and Russian authorities resulted in difficulty in the procurement of passports, and the delayed selection of land for the Mennonites. (Rempel, 1933)

[12] Roberts has expressed this concept as "communality to economise" (Roberts, 1996).

[13] These cluster villages were known as *Haufendorfer* (Krahn, 1959).

[14] The Chortitza colony was the first to be established, with immigration and village creation continuing from 1789 to 1797. The Molotschna colony was the second "mother" colony, with immigrations continuing from 1803 to 1835. These Mennonites were largely of Dutch origin, having lived in Prussia for two and half centuries (Rempel, 1933).

[15] The summer fallow innovation introduced by the Mennonites is also known as *black fallow*, in which the soil is continuously cultivated throughout the summer to prevent the establishment of weeds.

[16] These new villages were conceived by Cornies to serve as prototype examples to the surrounding population in the production of grain, production of improved strains of stock, planting of orchards and vineyards, and the development of linen and silk industries (Rempel, 1933).

[17] Identical to Russian Mennonite colonies, the village of Steinbach, Manitoba set aside an area equal to one-sixth of the area of its settler households for non-farmers to establish houses and workshops.

[18] Land surrounding the village suitable for meadow, hayland, cultivation.

[19] *Gewanne* divided into smaller units and distributed amongst the settlers.

[20] A strip of uncultivated land separating *Kagel*, often forming ridges over time due to deposition of field stones and soil.

[21] The surveyors noted of the five southern townships of the East Reserve (including 6-6 where Steinbach was located), the landscape was somewhat timbered and poorly drained, with coarse sandy and stony soils (Warkentin, 1960). Both Warkentin and Francis indicate Steinbach vegetation was typical of poorly drained to marshy land, including tamarack and willow. Warkentin also indicates marsh to the south of the town.

[22] Also known as *ring-village* (Lambert, 1971).

[23] The attached plans indicate some of the development that has occurred in Steinbach during significant periods of growth or change in pattern of development. This information was redrawn using all historic maps available from the City of Steinbach, but is not considered complete. Legend: grey indicates previous development and subdivision; red indicates new development and subdivision.

PART II

THE SOCIOLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF STEINBACH

Introduction

The sociological nature of the community of Steinbach is a reflection of religious and cultural processes developed in the Netherlands, Prussia and Russia, apparent in Steinbach in the late 19th century. However, Steinbach is also a manifestation of an identity in transformation during the 20th century, and represents a heterogeneous composite of Mennonite people today.

This transformation can be more broadly identified within the context of a general framework of community analysis, which examines the historical transition of 19th century communal society to its contemporary "industrialized and politicized" character (Nisbet, 1966, p.71). Nisbet's discussion of Tönnies concepts of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*[1] provides a model for examining the developments in Mennonite society in this period. Close parallels can be drawn to social events of this period; moreover, the Mennonites are well acquainted with concept of Gemeinschaft, which appears frequently in the writings of the Mennonites (Kauffman, 1975).

Nisbet's typology of community is structured upon three movements: (1) the transition of society from the corporate and the communal to the individualistic and rational; (2) the movement of social organization from ascribed status to contract; and (3) the shift in thinking from the "sacred-communal" to the "secular-associational"[2] (Nisbet, 1966, p.73). Essentially, Gemeinschaft can be described as a stable, closed community based on given status and tradition, membership, unity of communal[3] and corporate groups, legal decentralisation, and discrimination between state and society. Conversely,

Gesellschaft is described as an individualized, open society based on achieved status and contract, the centralization of political power and the individual, resulting in the dissolution of the community amidst the state and the individual (Nisbet, 1966). The underlying human relationships describe the motivating constituents of both; Gemeinschaft proceeds from the complexity of traditions, whereas Gesellschaft proceeds from the volition of the individual. "In Gemeinschaft (human beings) remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in Gesellschaft they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors" (Nisbet, 1966, p.75).

Common Beliefs

Gemeinschaft is made manifest in relationships of unity, such as families and churches, through associations of blood, place and beliefs (Nisbet, 1966). The Mennonite community of the 19th century was strongly represented by all of these characteristics. The pioneers of Steinbach were connected through kinship and place, with their respective histories tracing back to the 16th century, where they had primarily organized as a community of common believers (Wenger, 1959).

Anabaptism began as a result of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, breaking with religious tradition by placing exceptional emphasis on adherence to Biblical doctrine, rather than religious ritual (Wenger, 1959). The Mennonite beliefs in divine inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments "differed from that of other Christian theologies in that the Mennonites manifested their adherence to the Bible in daily life to a degree considered fanatical by many 16th century Christians"[4] (Wenger, 1959, p.147).

Menno Simons, the namesake of the Mennonites, wrote a confession founded on biblical doctrine. In *Confessions of the Triune, Eternal, and True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, he stated the Mennonite belief is of a God

> who created the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein...who is an almighty, powerful and an over-ruling King, in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; whose strength, hand and power none can withstand (Wenger, 1956, p.183).

Anabaptists believed in discipleship in the sense that their strict adherence to the Scripture was made manifest in their daily lives (Wenger, 1959), resulting in a unity which was founded on the solidarity of their beliefs.

The actions of the early community of Steinbach are derived from this existing unity, and therefore, the actions of the individual "take place on behalf of those united with him" (Nisbet, 1966, p.75-76). Steinbach is later characterized by Gesellschaft, as represented by the proliferation of modern economic enterprise, and religious emphasis on the individual. The actions in this community take place on the part of the individual, and on behalf of the individual, resulting in a conflict with the community (Nisbet, 1966).

The significance in Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft lies not in the classification of concepts, but rather in the differentiation of types of social classes, providing a "sociological explanation of the rise of capitalism" (Nisbet, 1966, p.78). The agricultural tradition of the Mennonites lent itself well to Gemeinschaft, which "transforms all labour into a kind of art, giving it style, dignity, and charm, and a rank in its order, denoted as a

calling and an honour" (Nisbet, 1966, p.76). Input of time and concern for compensation was consequently de-emphasised. The Mennonite initial resistance to urbanism in Steinbach was founded in an ideology which considered farming no less than a calling by God, in which the labourer gave himself limitlessly to his work (Epp, 1974; Francis, 1955; Regehr, 1996). The introduction of the artisan, the merchant, and the professional marked the movement towards Gesellschaft, in which the individual is its sole personality (Nisbet, 1966).

The movement from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft is inherent in all societies, and is described in its inception in terms of 'progress' and 'enlightenment'; terms which frequently appear in the writings of 20th century Mennonites (Epp, 1974; Warkentin, 1971). However, the causal relationship between this and the systemization and codification of the law is clear, "the decay of life and mores along with brilliant political successes, capable administration, and an efficient and liberal jurisprudence, have often been described (Nisbet, 1966, p.77). The nature of that relationship was described by Marx as a loss of community as a result of capitalism, but Tönnies, is his book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887), understood capitalism as a consequence of the loss of community; "the passage of Gemeinschaft into Gesellschaft" (Nisbet, 1966, p. 78). The relationship is also dynamic and the two may overlap, allowing economic relationships to develop communal interests, or communal social relationships to develop individual interests (Nisbet, 1966).

The social analysis of Steinbach will be examined within its temporal context, where the phases of development emerge, initially dominated by increasing individuality characterized by impersonality, competition and egoism, and finally indicating an attempt to recover Gemeinschaft through the development of human relations and social responsibility within the context of a Gesellschaft society (Nisbet, 1966).

3

A SECTARIAN PEOPLE: 1874-1930

The Mennonites of the Netherlands and Prussia resided in communities similar in association to the cities of the European Middle Ages. Like the cities of the European Middle Ages, these communities represented a confessional association of individuals, rather than a ritual association of kinship groups. Once established in Russia, the Mennonite communities shared more similarities with the cities of ancient world, that is, they were "composed of tightly knit and legally indissoluble ethnic or kinship groups" (Nisbet, 1966, p.81). The exclusive nature of these tightly knit guilds created increasing communality and autonomy in the primary stages of development in Mennonite villages in both Russia and Manitoba.

Mennonite immigrants to Canada represented a particularly communal and autonomous group of people. The Mennonite leaders of the Canadian immigrants preferred settlement in Canada to the United States, because the Canadian government permitted village settlements that enabled closer religious control, internal schools, and economic and social conditions considered advantageous by these leaders (Epp, 1974). However, underlying the organization of these villages was the association of *individual* believers

(Wenger, 1959). The eventual consequence of this was an awareness of the individualism of membership, facilitating a pull toward associational character, and resulting in the increased prominence of the rights of the individuals. Frequent uprooting, and suffering for the sake of communal living in Russia had left the Mennonites predisposed toward individualism, adequate to prevent the re-creation of an unbroken commonwealth (Epp, 1974).

The Greater North American Context

By mid 19th century, American Mennonite predecessors faced a disintegrating Mennonite church, in which membership was declining in response to schisms and transfers to other denominations, such that the "continuity of the church was threatened" (Epp, 1974, p.234). American Protestantism and its associated Evangelicalism were welcomed by some as an awakening that would generate a contemporary Mennonite faith that was relevant to the younger generation, and enable the preservation and propagation of Mennonitism. Others felt the increasing effect of outside influences were in direct opposition to the Mennonite principles of sectarianism (Epp, 1974). The introduction of this shift in faith, although at this point only accepted by a minority, was a small indication of the transformation from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft that was beginning.

American Evangelical causes included Sunday School, urban, rural and foreign missionary organizations, and bible and tract distribution. The result of this outreach was an incredible growth of revivalistic denominations, including new Mennonite

denominations. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the General Conference Mennonite Church were among the most evangelical in their approach, and were typified by emotional revivalism, climactic conversion, individualistic piety, a strong institutional identity, and a general desire to unify dispersed congregations (Epp, 1974). Both churches grew dramatically; creating a powerful movement that both retained the existing membership and expanded to include former Mennonite dissenters. By the end of the 19th century, the activities of the Protestant organizations and the new evangelistic Mennonites had reached the larger context of the old, more communitarian Mennonites, generating a North American Mennonite dialectic that would both accept and resist the Gesellschaft transformation (Epp, 1974).

Those denominations that embraced the movement increasingly organized their approach to charity and education, and began expanding it beyond the confines of the Mennonite community. Church publications and co-operatives were established, along with improved organization of conference offices. The General Conference in particular sought consolidation of the Mennonite church, generally opposing the Mennonite tradition of excommunication and overlooking local congregational rules in order to expand the conference for missionary purposes (Epp, 1974). In one sense this movement toward greater integration is illustrative of a relationship of unity based on religious beliefs, suggesting a strengthening of the Gemeinschaft typology. However, it also points to a Gesellschaft hierarchy of religious power, evocative of the state-and-individual relationship. In this sense, the individual interests were strongly represented by Evangelicalism, the religious interests were represented by the religious organization,

and the community interests were dissolved. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ aggressively sought freedom in 'community evangelism' to such a degree that Mennonite ethnicity and theological identity were completely submerged (Epp, 1974), in essence, removing those qualities that were fundamental to Mennonite Gemeinschaft.

Evangelicalism made its first appearance in Canada in the mid 19th century as the introduction of Sunday School in the more open Ontario congregations. The most conservative Mennonites resisted the idea, and it consequently made limited progress until the turn of the century. During this period, the Mennonite church struggled to avoid Anglicization and preserve the German language. Ironically, one of the key reasons for the organization of Sunday Schools was to preserve the German language in the younger generation (Epp, 1974). Not only was this movement significant as the preservation of a Mennonite tradition, but it also introduced non-ordained members in the work of the church, indicating the absorption of the community into church activities. Sunday School introduced a much more individual focus into the Mennonite church by promoting personal bible knowledge, spirituality, and morality (Epp, 1974).

Many Mennonites resisted the progressive movements of the 19th century, fearing the loss of their traditions (Epp, 1974; Francis, 1950). A resistance movement formed among the Mennonites in all parts of North America, including Ontario and Manitoba, becoming the defenders of the Old Order. "Times of social change and rapid secularization, shifting values and changing styles have always met with conservative recalcitrance in religious as well as in secular societies" (Epp, 1974, p.259-260). The fear of lost traditions might

be better understood as a general fear for lost Gemeinschaft, but the method by which to preserve the appropriate aspects of Gemeinschaft was undoubtedly unclear to those who fought this transformation. The preservation of tradition, regardless of its appropriateness, was likely the only tangible approach to resistance. The Old Order Mennonites felt the de-emphasis of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, the adoption of elaborate church architecture, and the increasing bureaucracy of the church conflicted with the concept of a simple community of believers (Epp, 1974). The consequent behaviour of the Old Order Mennonites was often regarded by the new Mennonites as irrational and illogical (Epp, 1974), owing to their interests in the individual as opposed to the communal.

The resistance to the evangelical movement was strongly felt in Manitoba where the majority supported preservation of the traditional Mennonite church, and the minority fought hard in defence of this movement, resulting in the division of three Manitoba ecclesiastical organizations into eight by the end of the 19th century (Epp, 1974). Two of the organizations had congregations in the East Reserve, including the Kleine Gemeinde and the Bergthaler Church. These conservative churches practiced faith in a provident God, demonstrated by a well-ordered life, social conformity, and agricultural productivity. Community and church were indistinguishable, and salvation was achieved through the community and church rather than the individual (Epp, 1974; Harder, 1970).

Steinbach

By the early 1900's the solidarity of the community of Steinbach was beginning to disipate under the political, economic and social influences of the surrounding people and the Manitoba government. Southern Manitoba communities were no longer remote and isolated, but were penetrated by government officials, settlement agents, inspectors, tourists and evangelists (Epp, 1974). The Manitoba government made many attempts, and later succeeded at assimilating the Mennonites through the introduction of public school. Foreign religious 'intrusions' from the United States brought fragmentation into the Manitoba communities, introducing an approach to Protestantism, which emphasized the individual, rather than the community (Epp, 1974).

The open-field system adopted by the Mennonites in Russia, and later transplanted to Steinbach, had formed out of a need for social coherence, which in turn strengthened the collective strength of the Mennonites. It involved intensive individual interaction, a need for cooperation and mutual concern, and a common value system strictly enforcing the conduct of the individual (Francis, 1955). Francis suggests the survival of this system is dependent on a religious orientation:

> Wherever...secular values become dominant, undermining the inner consistency of the total system of constituent group norms perceived in a religious context, the solidaristic type of rural community organization soon tends to collapse, yielding to characteristically individualistic forms of social and economic behaviour (p. 64).

The abolition of the open-field system and the dissolution of the village commune of Steinbach in 1910 is a strong indicator that the rights of the individuals were coming to bear; no longer were individuals willing to relinquish their rights for the benefit of the

commune as a whole. The individual concerns in improved economic stability and financial growth lead to the pursuit of better land outside the confines of the commune, enabling larger acreages with improved agricultural machinery (Warkentin, 1960). The unfavourable farming conditions in Steinbach, and the inappropriateness of the Gewannflur (Warkentin, 1960; Francis, 1955), coupled with the disappointments of communal living in Russia, created an opportunity for the introduction of a religious strategy and an economic structure that allowed for individual freedom. Although economic factors were influential, the abandonment of the open-field system was most importantly an expression of social change that involved a disintegration of social coherence, and the primacy of individualistic over communal values (Francis, 1955).

The fragmentation of the community produced two opposing approaches that reflected an increasing impression by Canadian society. Some Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites supported an individualistic lifestyle that was no longer agrarian or sectarian, a cultural distinctiveness that was characterized by event celebrations, and a religion that was evangelical and distinguished by pacifism. But the majority sought the traditional agrarian lifestyle and its associated qualities of community, in an attempt to preserve the holism of Gemeinschaft exemplified through the unity of the economic, cultural, and religious (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

Public Schools, World War I, and Migration

The division within the community was encouraged by the international political situation that developed in the early 1900's. The first World War brought animosity against the Mennonites, whose German speech and cultural customs were associated with the enemy, which was further aggravated by their insistence on segregation and non-resistance (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974; Janzen, 1990; Reimer, 1962). Although they were ensured absolute military exemption by the government, they were pressured to pay war taxes, relinquish German-speaking, parochial schools, and participate in national registration (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). The antagonism towards the Mennonites continued to grow after the war. The newspapers referred to them as 'cattle' and 'outlawed parasites' who, because of their unwillingness to accept their 'responsibilities as citizens', should be deported (Janzen, 1990). Finally in 1919, the Canadian government relented to public pressure and issued the order-in-council prohibiting Mennonite, Hutterite and Doukhobor immigration to Canada, giving the reason that Mennonites were "undesirable, owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living, and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after entry" (Epp, 1974, p.407; Janzen, 1990).

William Janzen (1990) suggests the political nature of Anglo-Canadian culture had many similarities to the Lockean liberalism prominent in the United States, including individualism, egalitarianism, integration, participation, and majoritarianism (Janzen, 1990). The Canadian government became increasingly less tolerant, evident in the early

1900's in the seizing of Doukhobor communal landholdings on behalf of the interests of the majority. These views regarding the common interests of the general population had the greatest impact on Mennonites when the Manitoba educational institutions went through a great transformation (Janzen, 1990).

The new immigration ruling was an added pressure to those Canadian Mennonites who felt their sectarianism was threatened through the introduction of public schools, particularly in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The impact of nationalism was felt by 1916 when, because of mass immigration to the province, the British majority fell to 58 percent. In the interests of national unity, a policy of assimilation into the Anglo-Saxon mould was established and manifested in the form of a national public school system (Francis, 1955; Epp, 1974; Janzen, 1990). Despite their efforts to preserve their schools, and compromise by instructing in English, maintaining a high standard of education, improving teacher training, and readily accommodating the Department of Education, they lost (Francis, 1955). In 1916, the School Attendance Act was introduced, making attendance at public English-language schools compulsory. Although the Kleine Gemeinde adjusted by creating local school boards that espoused Mennonite values, the Old Colonist[5] and Sommerfelder Mennonites were not willing to concede to English as the language of instruction (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). The School Attendance Act forced the closure of the Kleine Gemeinde private school in Steinbach in 1919. To the Kleine Gemeinde this was a critical event that signified state control of the education of Mennonite children: "what our Kleine Gemeinde people had regarded as a holy right was now taken out their hands" (Reimer, 1962, p. 30).

Mennonite denominations differed in their acceptance of public schools, seriously degrading the social cohesion of the Mennonites as a whole. "Thus, the Mennonite group was split wide open here as elsewhere over the school question precisely at a time when the outbreak of World War I and a rising tide of nationalism turned public opinion against them" (Francis, 1955, p. 176). The more conservative Mennonite leaders felt they were incompatible with the progressive Mennonites, and consequently, delegations were sent to Latin America as early as 1919 to relocate the estranged conservative Mennonites (Janzen, 1990; Epp, 1974). At this time, delegations were also sent to North America, representing approximately 110 000 Russian Mennonites who sought refuge from the revolution. The overthrown Tsarist regime and the new Bolshevik power in 1917 was followed by an intense civil war which was "fought in part on Mennonite soil" in Russia (Epp, 1974, p.409). The control of the villages changed repeatedly, and this volatility resulted in destroyed crops, burned villages, stolen livestock, and people raped, murdered or taken away. The turmoil left the Mennonites defenceless against venereal disease, typhus and famine, which was further complicated by the eventual state control of schools, and the persecution and closure of churches (Epp, 1974). When they sought relief in Canada, they were initially refused entry by the government, at the same time as other dissatisfied Mennonites were leaving, resulting in doubt as to the appropriateness of Canada as a new home. However, the harsh conditions in Russia, along with the benevolence of new Canadian Prime Minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, allowed the Mennonites sanctuary, and they began to immigrate (Epp, 1974). This immigration, commonly referred to as the *Russlaender* immigration, brought with it evangelistic and

more individualistic Mennonites. They eventually formed a second evangelical church in Steinbach, called the Mennonite Brethren church (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

The Founding Churches of Steinbach

In the early 19th century, the doctrine of the traditional Mennonite church was based on the founding Anabaptist faith, and emphasized the interconnection of church and community. As such, the church determined the moral structure of the community, resulting in identical community and church standards. Membership was generally by birth, as the community was segregated, and the congregation was somewhat passive and respectful of church traditions (Epp, 1974; Harder, 1970). The qualities of Gemeinschaft were inherent in this church.

The Kleine Gemeinde

The oldest church in Steinbach is the Evangelical Mennonite Church (formerly the Kleine Gemeinde), dating from the establishment of the village commune in 1874. The Kleine Gemeinde began as a religious renewal movement in the Molotschna colony in Russia, in response to what was considered "a serious moral crisis regarding the use of police power in its own colony administration" (Harder, 1970, p.37; Reimer, 1962). The unease surrounding the use of police power stemmed from larger concerns regarding decreased religious authority, and increased economic influences in village affairs (Driedger, 1988; Francis, 1955). The Kleine Gemeinde discouraged secularism and rationalism. Faith and obedience to the teachings of the Gospel were enforced through a life of simplicity and

segregation from the *world*, which was characterized by church discipline and an agricultural lifestyle. The intensely conservative nature of this church maintained a small group of believers who eventually migrated to North America in 1874. A portion of this group established the village of Steinbach (Harder, 1970). In Steinbach, the doctrine and practices of the church remained unchanged; all possessions were expected to be plain and purely functional, and the use of new inventions, like the telephone, was forbidden. The church was conceived as a community not a structure, and was characterized by "brotherly love, unity and ... the fear of God" (Loewen, 1993, *Family*, p.244). Ethical concerns focused on pride and abundance, and its devastating effects on communal solidarity. Disobedience to the Kleine Gemeinde was treated with counselling, and finally, punishment through excommunication and shunning (Harder, 1970; Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

The Kleine Gemeinde was increasingly concerned with the subtle transformations in their sectarian community that gradually accepted elements of the secular world. Often, the social constraints were challenged by the members, resulting in a period of upheaval in the early 1900's when the church and the community began a struggle to adapt to an urbanizing and industrializing context (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). 1911 marked a year of great social change for the Kleine Gemeinde, in which Steinbach residents voted to convert the parochial, German-language primary school into a public institution. This decision came seven years before the Government began enforcing compulsory public school attendance, indicating that the majority of the town was willing to accept the process of acculturation. The Kleine Gemeinde was clearly in a minority in its concern

for the preservation of Gemeinschaft, as indicated later that year when their church services were forced out of the Steinbach schoolhouse (Loewen, 1993, *Family; Reimer, 1962*). The Kleine Gemeinde consequently formed their own private school, which operated between 1911 and 1919 (Reimer, 1962).

Above all innovations, the Kleine Gemeinde elders regarded the car as the most significant symbol of pride and abundance. The first purchase of a car by a member in 1910 resulted in excommunication, but was only followed by the purchase of two more cars by members in the following year. The church was publicly opposed by some of its members, resulting in the excommunication or resignation of nineteen members between 1911 and 1913. However, it was not until the death of the church's *Aeltester*[6] in 1919 that the debate over the car ended, and the purchase of numerous cars by members followed (Loewen, 1993, *Family*; Reimer, 1962).

The Church of God in Christ, Mennonite

During this period, the (old) Mennonites in the United States were experiencing a renewal movement of their own, inspiring several members to pursue their own interests in Evangelicalism. Mennonite publications were introduced to the prairies, and were followed by books, pamphlets, hymnals and catechisms (Harder, 1970). Johannes Holdeman, a crusader from the United States, sought the establishment of one *true* church, which re-introduced old doctrines and ethics, while promoting spiritual re-birth. The Holdeman movement made little progress among the (old) Mennonites, but was well received by the Russian Mennonite immigrants after 1874 (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974;

Loewen, 1993, *Family*). Holdeman's ideas on religious assurance and meaningful change came as an encouragement to a people uncertain in their new settlements, and the dogmatism of the Kleine Gemeinde church. Consequently, the Steinbach Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (the Holdeman Mennonite church) was formed in 1881when 30 to 50 percent of the Kleine Gemeinde converted to the Holdeman group (Harder, 1970). Holdeman revitalized the Kleine Gemeinde while maintaining the basic conservatism toward non-resistance, plain dress, condemnation of outside churches, and the discipline of unfaithful members. Most importantly, the new members were given hope for spiritual assurance and personal salvation. The emphasis on personal conversion introduced several innovations, including the revival meeting[7] "which became an institution in the Holdeman Churches after World War I" (Loewen, 1993, *Family*, p. 252). This church consequently experienced two contradictory forces; the need to connect with the community and its churches for the common goal of Evangelism, and the pressure to retain tradition and segregate from the outside world, including outside Mennonite churches (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974). To some extent, the Mennonite paradox is well illustrated by this church, which still struggles to maintain Gemeinschaft through tradition and isolation, but remains so traditionalist and segregated that it prevents the creation of Gemeinschaft with the greater community.

The Bruderthaler Church

The withdrawal of Holdeman supporters left the Kleine Gemeinde congregation insecure and with limited leadership. In their attempt to find a revitalized church, several Steinbach residents invited the Bruderthaler Church in Minnesota to conduct revival

meetings in Steinbach. By the end of the 19th century, the Bruderthaler had a strong foothold in Steinbach (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974; Reimer, 1962). In an attempt to preserve the Kleine Gemeinde, the church leaders produced a list of forbidden activities, including involvement of any kind in funeral eulogies, municipal elections, and attendance at non-Kleine Gemeinde churches and non-Christian weddings. The increasingly restrictive measures accomplished the very antithesis, and many members began to question the relevance of the rigid regulations, resulting in another schism and the formation of the Steinbach Bruderthaler Church in 1897 (later the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren) (Epp, 1974; Harder, 1970; Reimer, 1962). The revival campaigns, animated singing, church choirs, and general openness attracted new members from the Kleine Gemeinde, and the Bruderthaler Church quickly became a popular church (Harder, 1970; Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

> It had to take the lead not only in the resurgence of genuine evangelicalism but also in adapting to the town environment and achieving social progress in the community. This was the church that attracted the business people and community leaders (Harder, 1970, p.47).

The Bruderthaler Church introduced evangelistic evening services, Sunday School, extemporized preaching, and encouraged open prayer and prayer meetings (Harder, 1970; Loewen, 1993, *Family*; Reimer, 1962). They developed a new theology of salvation in which believers were 'redeemed' by spreading the Word of God and 'saving souls' (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). When the transformation from the communitarian economy to the stratified economy occurred, the communitarian emphasis on a self-denying humbling lifestyle was replaced by a theology more accepting of the lifestyle associated with success. This church attempted to bridge "authentic evangelicalism and conscientious

service in the economic realm", with only moderate success (Harder, 1970, p.48). The concept of church as a community no longer translated well into a town of commercial and trade interests, and for good reason. Those who migrate to profit–oriented lifestyles are, by nature, more individualistic given that capital gains are of greater benefit to the individual businessmen and merchants, rather than the community as a whole (Nisbet, 1966). The result was frequent disputes amongst church members, such that "the business people of our town were always at each other's throats and ruthless in their treatment of their competitors" (Harder, 1970, p.48).

The Mennonite Brethren Church

The Mennonite Brethren Church began in the Molotschna settlement in 1860 with distinctive emphasis on immersion baptism (Harder, 1970). After the Mennonite Brethren migrated to the United States in the 1870's, they continued their tradition of seeking converts, and sent ministers from the United States to the West Reserve. In 1888, the first Mennonite Brethren Church was organized in Winkler, Manitoba with a congregation of new converts (Epp, 1974). The Russian migration of the 1920's brought the Mennonite Brethren to Steinbach, and led to the formation of the Mennonite Brethren Church in 1927. An attempt to worship with the Bruderthaler Church (later the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren) proved impossible, given the different baptism practices of the two churches. Although the Bruderthaler Church later adopted immersion baptism, re-union was never achieved (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974; Epp, 1982). The close relationship between these two churches gave rise to a denominalization of church structure in which the significance of religious sectarianism was diminished.

religious pluralism was accepted, and church and community were no longer inextricably linked (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

The Chortitzer Mennonite Church

The Bergthal Mennonite settlement also formed in Russia, and was transplanted first to the East Reserve, and later to the West Reserve when approximately half of the group recognized its preferable land. Dissent formed amongst the Bergthaler group in the West Reserve, resulting in the formation of an independent church, more accepting of innovations such as improved education, Sunday School, choir, prayer meetings, and mission work (Epp, 1974; Epp, 1982; Harder, 1970). The more conservative members had interests in preserving the traditional Mennonite church, and organized a separate congregation known as the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church. After the division, the Bergthalers in the East Reserve identified with the conservative Sommerfeld church, and came to be known as the Chortitzer Mennonite Church.

During its formation in the 1920's, the Chortitzer Mennonite Church opposed the new activities of the Bergthalers in the West Reserve. Spiritual fellowship with other Mennonite congregations was not tolerated, as illustrated by the events surrounding the Russian immigration of the 1920's. In 1922, the Chortitzer Mennonite Church declined to support the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, or the immigration of Russian Mennonites generally (Harder, 1970).

Although schism had resulted in the formation of three different churches by the end of the 1880's, they remained consistent in their foundation of Anabaptist theology. After 1905, religious divergence was in response to a dramatically transformed social and economic environment, which was characterized by declining agriculturalism, increased urbanism, and increased integration into Canadian society (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). The original Kleine Gemeinde was a conservative community of believers, which were separated from broader society, but by the end of the 1920's had developed an open evangelistic approach. The Bruderthaler, which had always been viewed as more progressive, continued to be heavily influenced by American Evangelism, and began promoting personal religious experiences after 1905. The Holdeman group found a place between the Kleine Gemeinde and the Bruderthaler, by incorporating Protestant church methods, but increasing social control over its members and revitalizing traditional religious symbols. "It continued its emphasis on personal religious revival, but at the same time it increased its emphasis of a communal-oriented church, strengthened with visible symbols of separation" (Loewen, 1993, *Family*, p. 252). For this reason, the Holdeman church came to be recognized as the most conservative by 1930.

The initial fragmentation of the Kleine Gemeinde was of great concern to the Bishop of the (Bergthaler) Chortitzer Church, who recognized the disharmony between the churches as weakening the community coherence and strength, seriously affecting the outcome of community concerns, such as public education (Epp, 1974). This fragmentation was also indicative of the increasingly individual, and secular-associational behaviour that was beginning to direct the social structure of Steinbach.

The Increasing Role of a Market Economy

The Mennonites had transferred an economic approach that was established in Russia, that is, pursuing driving economic action in accordance with capitalistic standards. This differed from almost all other cultural aspects where sacred traditions were emphasized along with the welfare of the collective group. The open-field system had, above all, maintained equity amongst the settlers. With its abolition, social stratification became more pronounced as a result of the "breakdown of solidaristic community organization" (Francis, 1955, p. 107). By 1930, three classes of Mennonites formed out the original Kleine Gemeinde agrarian migrants, expanding to include merchants and workers (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). These different classes reflected shifting values suggested by the greater Canadian capitalist society, and typified by a greater emphasis on the individual and an increased concern for economic success. In an attempt to preserve the agrarian tradition of their parents, while ensuring economic success, second generation farmers adapted to meet the demands of the market by mechanizing during labour shortages, and passing the surplus on to their children.

By 1919, a shift from milk to cream had occurred in response to Winnipeg demands, resulting in the renovation of the cheese factory building in Steinbach, and its conversion to a cream-separating plant. The Mennonites were no longer bound by traditional agrarianism, but were able to adapt to market demands, indicating an increasing concern for economic strength. In periods of high labour demand, such as harvest time, labour

swapping evolved to address the economic and community needs of the farmers. As technology developed between 1905 and 1920, labour shortages were increasingly met with farm mechanization, and the preservation of Gemeinschaft continued to decline in prominence (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

Although a mixed farming economy of dairy, hogs and poultry was established in the East Reserve, grains were also marketed by securing producer cars. The improved transportation connections with Winnipeg enabled increased dairy production, and provided a comfortable profit for the farmers. As the economy became more integrated and the Mennonites became more reliant on it for economic success, the Mennonites began to consult with law firms, national banks, city dairies, government agencies and regional co-operatives (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

Interestingly, Mennonite trade and service centres arose out of the church's insistence on farming as the only acceptable occupation. The economy of Steinbach was supported by small local businesses, which served only to meet the needs of a largely agrarian community (Francis, 1955; Loewen, 1993, *Family*). A rail line was consequently disallowed by the town, and was established eight miles east, at Giroux (Francis, 1955). In this way, Steinbach maintained a relatively sectarian, homogeneous community of Kleine Gemeinde, Holdeman and Bruderthaler until World War I. Once the open-field system was abandoned, business began to dominate allowing for Steinbach to grow as a trade centre. Steinbach quickly became the commercial capital for an area south and east beyond the Municipality of Hanover, which was quickly increasing in population and

prosperity (Francis, 1955; Loewen, 1993, *Family*). The economy during World War I generated pecuniary profits that jeopardized traditional communal values, particularly the concern of equity for all.

This was a period of social change, in which merchants in Steinbach increasingly competed in a capitalistic economy, promoted consumer marketing strategies, and expanded to meet the consequent demands. In the period up until 1930, Steinbach

> was transformed from an agricultural village...aiming to meet farmers' basic service needs, to a pluralistic, commercial town, geared to consumer-oriented patrons, and grappling with problems of street lighting, law and order, fire protection, and greater access to outside markets (Loewen, 1955, *Family*, p. 208).

As Steinbach developed into an urban centre, Kleine Gemeinde descendants abandoned the agrarian lifestyle for the business as well as the working class. The number of wage labourers grew from sixteen in 1906 to thirty-two in 1915, indicating gradual urbanization of the Kleine Gemeinde. The modern economy dramatically impacted agrarian communities, by introducing profit and social-class stratification into the social structure of Steinbach (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). Technological innovations increased efficiency in labour, but also generated rising operational costs, making commercial farming less than feasible for many families. While some sought to preserve their agricultural lifestyles through emigration, many chose to urbanize. Absorbing the influences of Anglo-Canadian culture, these Mennonites chose to profit from consumer marketing and global markets through expansion of their businesses. Increasingly, elements of the outside world were introduced and eventually accepted in Steinbach. By

1908, they were connected to Winnipeg by phone; in 1910 the first car was purchased; in 1913 a local newspaper emerged featuring global news and advertising; by 1919 there was mail service; and by 1930 daily bus service to Winnipeg (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). Strong horses, new cars, and leisure and recreation were the symbols of social discrimination. The Kleine Gemeinde increasingly accepted political participation and civic organization in this period, as illustrated by the contracting of a police officer in 1914.

Socio-economic Institutions

With regard to agriculture, capitalism manifested itself through the cultivation of cash crops, exploitive farming methods, the introduction of technical innovations, and a struggle for profit (Francis, 1955). However, second generation farmers had also adopted new farming practices, crops, and methods in crop specialization in the interests of preserving generational succession of the land (Loewen, 1993, *Family*). Church institutions, like the *Waisenamt*, had been transplanted from Russia to ensure family inheritance of homesteads, and preserve the principle of equal inheritance. Each of the original groups, including the Kleine Gemeinde, had their own *Waisenamt*, "to protect the interest of orphans and the general management of estates" (Francis, 1955, p. 125). Beyond controlling transfer of property, it also served as a financial institution. Such institutions were designed to protect the interests of the collective group and preserve social coherence.

Fire insurance had been introduced into the Mennonite collective as early as the 16th century. It was a mutual insurance association that once again protected the interests of the collective group by compensating the losses of the individual through a fund, which was then restored by the premiums of the other insurees (Francis, 1955). Public welfare, particularly the relief of the poor, was provided through church charity organizations, and a regular *poor tax* administered by the *Obershulze* (reeve) usually in the form of a percentage of the harvest. These institutions complemented the socio-economic system of the Mennonites, and controlled the economy with intentions to benefit the interests of the group (Francis, 1955).

There was a general openness to conducting business with non-Mennonites, as long as there was a measure of regard and consideration. Contacts with non-Mennonite groups were at this point limited to trade, therefore, it was through the economic realm that the process of acculturation began. Steinbach Mennonites first came into close association with the Anglo-Saxons who had established the Clearspring settlement in the Northwest corner of the Hanover Municipality previous to the Mennonites. These Mennonites later associated with the German Lutherans who founded the Friedensfeld settlement around 1890. Much of the land in the East Reserve was unoccupied or abandoned by the late 19th century, opening up land within the reserve to outside immigrants (Francis, 1955; Loewen, 1993). The abandoned property south and east of Steinbach was occupied by these immigrants, who, in many cases, were employed by Mennonites and located there for proximity. Like the German Lutherans, Ukrainians settled in the Municipality of

Hanover, in the abandoned lands of Mennonite homesteaders. Between 1900 and 1914, they settled and created the Sarto district.

Summary

Generally, the attraction to associational behaviour allows for outsiders and their ideologies to become more readily accepted, challenging the closed groups within a town, and allowing the development of capitalism and modern secular rationality (Nisbet, 1966). An almost identical process occurred in Steinbach, but in this case the closed groups who were challenged were the churches, representing, to this day, the ideology of the town.

The division between the Kleine Gemeinde Church, the Church of God in Christ (Holdeman), and the Bruderthaler Church were just the first in a long history of schism that afflicted Steinbach between 1930 and 1970. Although these early divisions were the result of varying responses to the Evangelical movement, they began a pattern of division that was later characterized by differences in practice rather than doctrine. In part this can be attributed to increasing individualism, initiated by circumstances and encouraged by Evangelicalism. Shifting social values in this period can also be attributed to the influx of Protestant settlers arriving from Ontario who brought with them a larger social transformation to an industrial society centred on national markets dependant on a democratic system and general literacy (Janzen, 1990). Community values were still evident in institutions like the *Waisenamt*, charity organizations, and mutual insurance. But, in an attempt to bring meaning to the Mennonite existence in the context of an

increasingly capitalist society, individual advancement took place, resulting in the gradual degradation of the community rather than the enrichment of it.

4

ACCULTURATION: 1930 – 1970

The social and religious values of the Mennonites in the latter part of the 19th century were clearly characteristic of communal organization and foundation. These Mennonites believed, like their Anabaptist ancestors, that "the church was an intimate, disciplined community of voluntarily committed believers, who had been baptized…upon personal confessions of faith after reaching maturity" (Epp, 1982, p. 19). Thus, the kingdom of God was attained not through hierarchical institutions, but through modest groups of disciples. While the qualities of Gemeinschaft were distinctive in this church, as indicated by the strong connection between church and community, the organization and theology of Anabaptism also laid the foundation for the consequent fragmentation which beleaguered the church in this period (Epp, 1982).

These 'groups of disciples' or congregations were small and independent, with internal selection of their elders allowing for autonomy. Such divisions were not always in response to serious doctrinal issues, but were rather the result of differing personal preferences. The principle recognized authority was simply the scriptures, allowing believers the freedom to interpret the scriptures, as they felt appropriate (Epp, 1982). Not

only did the ambiguity result in a diversity of interpretations and opinions, but it also exposed the Mennonites to the beliefs and influences of mainstream Protestantism, and to the process of acculturation. The persecution experienced, particularly by the Russlaender group, only served to reinforce this fragmentation.

Mennonites coped with increasing external influences in several ways. Some chose to reject the system they were expected to conform to by further segregating themselves from society, and immigrating to Latin America. The majority of Steinbach Mennonites chose to selectively accommodate the urbanizing industrial society, and strengthen their internal resources through teaching, preaching and distributing literature (Epp, 1982). The movement to an evangelistic ideology and the acceptance of non-traditional institutions offered to some extent a promise of security in the face of the threats of modernism and public schools. This movement spawned the formation of organizations such as schools, conferences, and publishers. While reflecting the trends of a society "obsessed with organizations and institution building", it also reinforced a uniquely Mennonite identity (Epp, 1982, p. 49).

Many Mennonites were torn by the increasing impact of American Evangelicalism, and sought to rediscover and reaffirm the centralities of their Anabaptist faith. This was connected with, and perhaps initiated by a movement in North American Protestantism called *fundamentalism* (Epp, 1982). The Niagara Bible Conference was a strong leader in fundamentalism, focusing on the second coming of Christ and the End Times, the divine inspiration of the bible, faith missions, revivalism, and personal salvation. In the

1920's and 1930's, this movement among the Mennonites involved the incorporation of Mennonite fundamentals such as non-resistance and non-conformity, and was influenced by the theology and ethics of the Evangelical movement (Epp, 1982). The fundamentalist movement, characterized by scholarly debate, was less significant in Manitoba, and only gained impact several decades later. This attempt to later reclaim tenets of the Anabaptist tradition indicated the beginnings of a movement toward a post-Gesellschaft, or a partial recovery of Gemeinschaft, within the context of a Gesellschaft society.

Church Schisms, Formations, and Doctrinal Transformations

The Kleine Gemeinde (later the Evangelical Mennonite Church) experienced increasing loss of membership to the Bruderthaler Church, who had adopted evangelical practices (Epp, 1982; Reimer, 1962). However, when the Canadian government threatened to conscript those of military age who did not belong to a Mennonite church or practice pacifism, the number of baptisms increased within the Kleine Gemeinde church, resulting in a broader membership more open to change (Harder, 1970; Reimer, 1962). The closing of the church school and establishment of the public school between 1919 and 1921 allowed for a general climate of change and religious renewal when it became clear that the children needed religious instruction they no longer received in public school (Reimer, 1962; Epp, 1982). In 1937, elders met to "re-establish the normative teaching and religious practices of the Kleine Gemeinde" (Epp, 1982, p. 422). Given the struggle between old and new practices, unanimous decisions regarding religious practice and

doctrine could not be achieved. The regulations did more to reinforce old practices and strictness then to introduce new strategies. Although restricted, some small changes included the acceptance of singing practice, local evangelism, and a reduction in the use of excommunication (Reimer, 1962).

The period between 1920 and 1950 involved significant changes in the congregation; Sunday School was introduced, a church paper was established, the Steinbach Bible Institute was supported, and the Western Gospel Mission was established (Reimer, 1962; Harder, 1970). Although the Kleine Gemeinde traditionally did not believe in missions, the concept was introduced through Sunday School in offerings to other conference missions, and the invitation of missionaries to Sunday School (Reimer, 1962). Outreach in this period expanded to include concern for the welfare of the local population, and was marked by the purchase of a personal care home in 1946 (Reimer, 1962).

In the late 1920's, many of the Chortitzer group migrated to Mexico and Paraguay, leaving behind vacant land that was bought by landless Bergthal families in the West Reserve. Despite similarities, the Bergthalers were unable to reconcile their differences and did not amalgamate with the Steinbach Mennonite Church (Harder, 1970). Church meetings for the Bergthal Mennonite Church (later Christian Fellowship Church) were begun in 1937, and regular services began in 1939. This church, like the others, experienced much fragmentation in this period, beginning with the withdrawal of approximately sixteen families in the early 1950's. Again in 1959, a group withdrew to form the Grace Mennonite Church (Harder, 1970).

At the same time as the emigration of the Chortitzer group, a second immigration of Russlaender refugees arrived in Manitoba, and organized the Schönwiese congregation. The Russlaender group, although similar to the *Kanadier*[8] in their Dutch Mennonite heritage, were separated by 50 years in which the Russlaender had experienced many difficulties (Epp, 1982). Despite their poverty, suffering, and submissive spirits, they still retained components of their prosperous years with the tsar. They were culturally refined, better educated, progressive and aggressive. Unlike their Canadian counterparts, they were enthusiastic about higher education, leadership, accepting of urbanism, and sympathetic to the Canadian government. Internal integration proved just as difficult as integration with the Kanadier Mennonites, as the Russlaender represented three separate congregations (Epp, 1982). The cultural barriers that had led the Russlaender in Steinbach to abandon the Bruderthaler Church and form the Mennonite Brethren Church in 1927 were problematic for several years. In 1935, several Russlaender families moved to Steinbach to begin what came to be known as the Steinbach Mennonite Church. Integration with other churches was attempted at first, but the differences in cultural and religious practices prompted them to begin their own church (Harder, 1970). This church also became home to the Mennonite refugees following World War II who chose to settle in Steinbach. This church represented a group composed predominantly of immigrants from the 1920's and the 1950's, and thus the traditional Gemeinschaft qualities that were brought from Russia were quickly adapted to incorporate the practices of the mainstream evangelical church (Harder, 1970).

In 1936, schism in the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church in the West Reserve resulted in the formation of a new church, and later, a new conference. Similar to other church schisms, this one was the product of concern for church renewal[9], inspired by the Evangelical movement. The newly created Rudnerweide Church, renamed the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference in 1959, and was able to convert members of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church in Steinbach through evangelistic meetings (Harder, 1970). The result was the formation of the Gospel Fellowship Church in 1963.

Some churches, such as the Bergthal Mennonite Church, experienced several schisms before abandoning the sectarian, withdrawn approach for a more progressive approach advocated by the membership. The Evangelical Mennonite Brethren church was met with conflict among the membership in the 1940's, leading to a formal break and the formation of the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church in 1943. This church also experienced division, in keeping with schismatic character common to Steinbach's churches, when a few families left to form their own church in 1965. This group dissolved in 1969 (Harder, 1970).

Steinbach Bible College

Mennonite bible schools developed out of a felt need for biblical instruction further to Sunday School, and directed towards young adults. Thus, bible schools functioned to educate and guide individuals in their futures as parents, farmers, homemakers, and church members. They trained religious leaders such as preachers, choir conductors, Sunday School teachers, and missionaries. They sought to preserve a distinct Mennonite

identity and heritage, with mixed success (Regehr, 1996). In 1938, the Evangelical Mennonite Church (EMC) and the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (EMB) organized an interdenominational bible school. In 1946, a high school curriculum was added, and the language of instruction was changed to English. In 1961, administration was taken over by the EMC, EMB and the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church (Reimer, 1962; Regehr, 1996). The consortium of EMC, EMB, and the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church was expanded to include the Chortitzer Mennonite Conference and the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, resulting in a de-emphasis of the particular doctrines and practices of the individual churches. As among these churches, the curriculum became largely evangelical, with little emphasis on Anabaptist theology or Mennonite history. In the Steinbach Bible College (SBC), only one course in Mennonite history was offered in 1942 (Regehr, 1996). New Mennonite bible colleges and high schools created a new generation of church leaders who were somewhat versed in Mennonite theology and practices. In the 1950's, leadership took on a new dimension of change where "conferences and congregations were re-structured, new issues and problems were addressed, and old dogmas were reformulated" (Regehr, 1996, p. 300).

In the 1970's, attendance at Mennonite bible schools severely dropped when non-Mennonite bible schools began to offer secular, academic and professional training that better fit the needs of students who could no longer relate to the Mennonite teachings of an earlier separatist lifestyle (Regehr, 1996). Most Mennonite schools closed, consolidated or drastically restructured, as was the case with the SBC.

World War II

With the onslaught of World War II, the Canadian government took much more aggressive action with the Mennonite pacifists. Although the order-in-council of 1873 had been a sufficient reminder to the Canadian government of their promise for complete religious freedom during World War I, the public antagonism that followed that war had pushed the government to make exceptions (Janzen, 1990). When the issue of national registration was raised again in World War II, conscientious objectors feared the registration would lead to conscription. Some Mennonites openly opposed it, despite measures taken by the government to enforce registration. As a result, some were jailed repeatedly, arguing that national registration would identify them with the war. Most co-operated, however, when the government negotiated with the Mennonites for special arrangements (Janzen, 1990).

The military exemptions of 1940 stipulated exemptees might be forced to participate in non-combative military services. This addressed a sensitive issue among the Mennonites, dividing the Kanadier and the Russlaender. The Kanadier were "somewhat critical of those who had stayed, meaning the Russlaender, many of whom had come to Canada in the 1920's, for accepting an alternative national service in Russia (Janzen, 1990, p. 204). Beginning in the 1880's, young Mennonite men had participated in forestry work, and during World War I about 8000 had served the special medical corps of Russia's front lines and 4000 in forestry work. The Kanadier Mennonites refused alternative government service, and pursued exemption form National War Service. In the hopes of rescuing public opinion of the Mennonites and influencing alternative service, the

Russlaender proposed a program of service that included farm, first aid, forestry, and other work supervised by civilian authority (Janzen, 1990).

Amendments were made to the National Services Regulations in 1940 to incorporate three forms of alternative service, including un-armed service under military surveillance, first aid service, and civilian service (Janzen, 1990). The Kanadier were eventually disallowed exemption from all service in 1941, and proceeded to participate in alternative service. In the same year, the government demanded personal confessions of belief in order to qualify for alternative service. This became problematic in Manitoba where officials felt that young Mennonite men were strongly pressured by church elders (Janzen, 1990). The review boards for exemption proposals were viewed by many Mennonites as 'recruiting offices' that were unfair in their judgment, and dismissive of non-resistant beliefs. In fact, several young men did not pass examination by the judge, but went on to achieve success in military service. This suggests a shift in traditional pacifist beliefs that was in part countered by the efforts of the Kleine Gemeinde church to increase their membership, and thus rescue members from military service (Janzen, 1990). The shift in pacifist attitudes further points to an accommodation of a nationalist country that was increasingly critical towards conscientious objectors. Nationalists presented convincing arguments that presented military service as the duty of the Christian in defending their country's freedom. Despite diversification of alternative service in 1943, problems remained in obtaining military exemption for the remainder of the war (Janzen, 1990).

The expansion of alternative services made it clear that Mennonites could serve their country without violating their religious principles. Participating Mennonites learned about economic and religious opportunities beyond their own communities, and became more accepting of the Canadian government (Regehr, 1996). Military service and alternative service during World War II allowed for the expression of the individual when forced outside of the ethnic enclave. Commitment to alternative service fostered individual fortitude, which created new leaders in Mennonite communities who formed a core of college presidents, church paper editors, theologians, and pastors (Driedger, 2000).

Relief Service Programs

The evangelical emphasis and interest in missions was a clear deviation from the traditional Mennonite church, and represented a common attitude amongst evangelicals that "it is more important to save a man's soul than his body" (Regehr, 1996, p.367). Although early Mennonite mission programs had emphasized relief efforts[10], there was concern among the Mennonite churches for the growing popularity of relief voluntary service programs. The holistic approach to physical and spiritual need was threatened by the parallel efforts of the relief and missionary programs that were represented by distinct denominations, and were therefore viewed as competing endeavours. In an attempt to resolve this conflict, Canadian Mennonites in the 1940's generally resolved to emphasize evangelism and service activities within distinct denominations, while supporting the relief work of the Mennonite Central Committee.

Since its founding in 1920 to assist the immigration of Russlaender, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) had remained a relief agency for Mennonite groups during its first 25 years (Driedger, 2000). Exposure to the needs of a larger society during war service began a chapter of relief work that served the needs of others (Driedger, 2000; Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). Former participants in alternative service began MCC service programs of voluntary service, PAX[11], relief work, Mennonite Disaster Service, and Mutual Aid (Driedger, 2000). Programs like the Mennonite Disaster Service provided the means by which Mennonites could serve their countries without military participation, by providing aid for natural disasters like the Manitoba flood of 1950 (Mennonite Disaster Service, 2000).

The Co-operative Movement

The co-operative movement, although of greatest influence in the West Reserve, had impacts beyond the boundaries of the West Reserve. It "was a necessity borne of the depression, but it was also inspired by the international co-op philosophy, the work of the movement in Canada, and the heritage of mutual aid", and thus strengthened the greater Mennonite community (Epp, 1982, p 361). The mixed farming, diversified practices of the Mennonites in the East Reserve had saved them from the devastation of the wheat markets following World War I (Epp, 1982; Francis, 1955). However, the single-economy wheat farming of the West Reserve was ravaged. Co-operatives dated back to the late 19th century, when creameries had been organized among the Mennonites in Manitoba. The resurgence of the movement during the Depression was tied to

practicality, but the corporate and communal qualities inherent in this movement served to reinforce the Mennonite ideology of Gemeinschaft (Epp, 1982; Francis, 1955).

Co-operatives also served to preserve the agricultural tradition among the Mennonites. The Rhineland Agricultural Society was organized in the 1930's specifically to protect the farmer who continued to view their occupation as a divine calling (Epp, 1982). The movement drew people from many villages, occupations and churches by advocating the psalmist's declaration "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Epp, 1982, p. 363). Furthermore, it regenerated the agricultural spirit by promoting better stewardship, experimentation, and improved cultivating and tillage practices. At the same time, the Rhineland Consumers Co-op was organized in the interests of small-scale farmers and consumers. This co-operative had similar power to purchase products bulk, and redistribute the savings to their members (Epp, 1982).

The co-operative movement in Steinbach formed in the interests of the business and market economy of the town, leading the Mennonites to found a 'people's bank' of their own. The Steinbach Credit Union represented a strong, but not exclusive, Mennonite membership (Epp, 1982). Such co-operatives reaffirmed the community spirit, but also represented the disintegrating role of the church in socio-economic matters. The demands made by the church leaders in the past had influenced the economic philosophy of Steinbach, but the traditional church institutions were replaced with secular cooperatives, and the church lost another measure of social control (Epp, 1982; Francis, 1955). Despite the absence of a railway connection, the town had become more

prosperous than the neighbouring French and Ukrainian villages, and attributed their commercial success to "competitive enterprise and individual resourcefulness" (Epp, 1982, p. 368).

> The stronger individualism resulting from the much earlier break up of the village system and its reinforcement by evangelical movements emphasizing individual salvation rather than communal responsibility led to an aggressive venture into capitalist enterprise, not the least of all in the automobile trade (Epp, 1982, p. 368).

The cooperative movement was not prominent in the East Reserve, and was soon abandoned and transformed into private stock companies, leaving only a few cooperative institutions behind. An aggressive and efficient business approach had developed in the East Reserve, and economic supports, like the cooperatives, were discarded in favour of individual enterprise (Francis, 1955). In the 1930's, additional economic stimulus and education in the East Reserve came from the Board of Trade (later known as the Chamber of Commerce). The Board sponsored short courses, organized clubs, and introduced high quality livestock and poultry (Epp, 1982). The proliferation of institutions in the form of conference systems, educational institutions, and benefit organizations began well before the arrival of the Russlaender. However, the tradition of economic, educational, political, and cultural institutionalization among the Russlaender reinforced the process in Canada (Epp, 1982). Various problems in this period, such as transportation debts, the settlement of the landless, health care, and primary education required organized initiatives. Underlying these problems was a greater concern for the survival of Mennonite identity: "the unfinished tasks and new tasks required not only continuity but strengthening of inter-Mennonite organizations" (Epp, 1982, p. 398).

Post War Economy

By 1920, Canada had been transformed from a rural to an urban nation, marked by industrialization, new technologies, immigration, economic expansion, prosperity and diversification. Mennonites had resisted the new developments during the 1920's and 1930's to the point of abandonment by some, and increased isolationist agrarianism by others. But by World War II, the influences began to impact the Mennonites, resulting in growing accommodation by the this group (Regehr, 1996). The Canadian government's postwar policies provided stability, order and prosperity, in which the Mennonites participated. However, agriculture failed to benefit from the economic boom, and "the return on capital invested in agriculture was not as great as it was on other investments" (Regehr, 1996, p. 126). Literature and public addresses at this time presented significant pressure on Canadian farmers to take advantage of new technologies, make larger capital investments, in short, develop their farms into successful businesses. Farmers responded by expanding, and reducing labour costs and purchasing machinery to increase efficiency. The agricultural technological upheaval that had swept through North America arrived in the East Reserve following World War II, greatly overwhelming traditional family farming and village life (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*; Regehr, 1996). At the same time, the war left the international export markets volatile and the demands unpredictable. Although those in the East Reserve maintained some stability through their mixed farming practices, business and professional careers were viewed as more predictable and secure (Regehr, 1996). Such occupations were believed to reward

honesty and hard work, while providing independence that was more reasonable and fair. This movement from tradition and communality to individualization and rationality is characteristic of the shift from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft, and marks another step in the transformation of Steinbach.

Highway, educational and health care programs implemented by the government in an effort to preserve rural communities had the effect of breaking down the barriers that isolated rural Mennonite communities (Regehr, 1996). The formerly discrete community of Steinbach underwent a social transformation, marked by improved links to the outside such as the construction of an all-terrain road to Winnipeg and the Trans-Canada highway (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). Contact with the outside world was improved through modern developments in transportation and communication such as radios, automobiles, telephones and televisions (Regehr, 1996). The new urban economy was increasingly shaped by consumerism, and the rural economy was revolutionized by mechanized agriculture and electricity (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). Machines required less care, were multi-functional, more powerful, reduced human and horse labour, and generally took the collective experience out of farming (Regehr, 1996). As mechanization increased, the role of labour decreased, and the unity that manual labour had provided for families and villages was undermined. Mechanization led to specialization in poultry, egg and dairy in the Hanover municipality by 1960, with dramatic results. The traditional association between family, farm and community was broken (Regehr, 1996). The agrarian ideal of a communal-oriented rural village was re-

evaluated, and replaced with a view that regarded rural life as isolationist (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*).

Farm related activities and business connected farming communities had included small rural and agricultural service businesses. As needs and opportunities arose, larger towns, like Steinbach, began to expand their services. The local lumberyard in Steinbach generated woodworking shops, which supported the cheese and apiary industries in packaging and hive construction respectively (Regehr, 1996). The apiary industry was also supported by tin and metal shop manufacturing equipment. Farm machinery repair, modification and manufacturing began to replace the traditional blacksmith shops. The Reimer General Store expanded into trucking when they discovered their proximity to Winnipeg combined with reliable trucking would assure them of fresh produce (Regehr, 1996). Although small businesses doubled in Steinbach in the 1940's, they were largely labour intensive. "A simple industrious, and frugal lifestyle that did not unduly offend the social and religious norms of the community, and the quality of the services offered, determined success or failure" (Regehr, 1996, p. 153).

During and immediately following World War II, cars were in shortage, resulting in the establishment of car dealerships in many Mennonite communities, particularly Steinbach. Such dealerships serviced an age of prosperity, characterized by Mennonite bourgeoisie. As early as 1914, the first Ford dealership in western Canada was founded in Steinbach (Regehr, 1996). Although the Kleine Gemeinde met the owner with initial threats of expulsion, it was clear the majority of town residents were supportive, and it was

accepted within a year. Steinbach consequently became one of the most successful centres for auto sales in Canada in the 1950's. As with franchised auto dealerships, large capital was not needed, but instead skilled labour, punctuality, and hard work allowed Mennonite entrepreneurs to establish themselves in business. Although small in the 1940's, the new businesses provided the basis for expansion later (Regehr, 1996). Professions expanded beyond the former boundaries of teaching and health care[12], which were previously regarded as the only appropriate occupations for non-farming Mennonites. Better education and advanced professional training along with a growing demand for professional services encouraged Mennonites into these occupations, and supporting occupations like social work. In general, post war prosperity led to increased urbanization and consequently professional work, allowing Mennonites greater openness to "new and different ideas and influences" (Regehr, 1996, p. 168).

Community and business connections remained strong, evident in employee considerations made by employers like C.T. Loewen (founder of Loewen millwork in Steinbach), who provided a place for employees to worship once a week (Regehr, 1996). Some old attitudes towards employment remained, and employers vehemently opposed new institutions, such as labour unions and collective bargaining. "Adversarial relations, owners believed, would destroy the sense of a common endeavour" (Regehr, 1996, p. 158). There was clearly an attempt to preserve elements of Gemeinschaft by renouncing individual rights for the common good of the group, in this case, representing the interests of the business. At the same time, employee rights were nearly nonexistent and employees were readily exploited for the purposes of monetary gain and secular progress.

The Urban Condition

Urbanization is characterized by ritualism and involves "secular attempts to control, plan, 'strategize', predict, and calculate the probable consequences of particular policies, priorities, and activities" (Regehr, 1996, p. 171). Such circumstances reduce the role of Christian discipleship and reliance on divine guidance. The nature of urbanization reflects a Gesellschaft society, and as such, draws on rationalization for justification. "Rationalization implied that human beings, with the help of new technologies, could control what previous generations had left in the hands of God" (Regehr, 1996, p. 171).

Urbanization is also characterized by specialization and differentiation. "People, organizations, and institutions concentrate on work that they, with their specialized knowledge and understanding of a particular technology, can do best and depend on others for goods and services that they themselves cannot produce economically and efficiently" (Regehr, 1996, p. 171). Whereas traditional societies are bonded by commonalities, modern societies are defined by differences.

Finally, modernity is characterized by individualization. Individuals use rationalization to determine where their knowledge and experience are needed, and thus ascertain their occupation. They may use rationalization to derive criteria that are driven by economics or social status, but this rationalization is not guided by the sacred-communal. In traditional societies, individual behaviour is regulated by religion, tribe and village, yielding to collective goals. Specialization, mobility and technology impact modern

society in a way that dissolves the relationship between individual and collective whole (Regehr, 1996).

Ambiguous boundaries between sacred and secular affairs resulted in two philosophical approaches by Mennonite churches (Regehr, 1996). The first believed modernization, and its associated characteristics, resulted in greater secularization, which was to be strictly prohibited. The preservation of tradition in such groups was fundamental. These beliefs formed the basis for the Old Order movements, and later appeared in the Holdeman church. The second approach advocated a more holistic approach to Anabaptist teachings, suggesting "God is a dimension which enters into every sphere of the Christian life, therefore there is nothing sacred for the Christian" (Regehr, 1996, p. 185). All things secular are to be treated as sacred. In theory, such an approach promotes discipleship, however, discipleship is difficult in a society whose values are supportive of a capitalist ideology (Regehr, 1996). There is an inherent struggle between church and society, simply because one is an institution of Gemeinschaft, and the other is quite literally Gesellschaft. Most churches in Steinbach, such as the Bruderthaler church, grapple with this opposition.

Emigration and Immigration in the 1950's

Those who maintained the view that rural life was a moral issue, left in 1948 for northern Alberta, and Central and South America to preserve their separatist way of life, including fifteen percent of the Kleine Gemeinde congregation (Reimer, 1962; Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*; Regehr, 1996).

> The groups which did not accept the evangelical theology, namely in Manitoba, the Chortitzer, Sommerfelder, and Old Colony...attempted to stem the influence of evangelical theology as much as possible. However, the more they resisted this theology, the more they became the object of subsequent evangelistic campaigns by those who had accepted the evangelical theology ... A common weakness of all the conserving Kanadier groups was that they frequently were unable to express their beliefs theologically, and thus the theology they were trying to express was misunderstood (Regehr, 1996, p. 131).

In addition, there were concerns regarding the availability and affordability of land, and the education of their children. Public schools offered no religious training and encouraged a productive lifestyle well integrated into Canadian urban culture. This did nothing to reinforce the traditional Mennonite tenets in biblicism, church and community integration, and sectarian agrarian lifestyles. Some of these conservatives remained in Manitoba but established new colonies in the Interlake, Whiteshell, and Swan River valley regions of the province (Loewen, 1993, Rurality).

In the same period, Mennonites of the Soviet Union, Poland, Danzig (now Gdansk), Prussia and Eastern Europe were forcibly relocated and evicted during the war. Those from Eastern Europe fled to Western Europe, and later immigrated to Canada between 1947 and 1951. Although some were able to settle in rural farming communities, few could establish their own farms, and thus became the advocates of the new Mennonite urbanism (Regehr, 1996). The new political refugees lacked the technical expertise necessary to accommodate mechanization, and the capital to acquire suitable land and machinery. In addition, the terror of the Soviet collectivization had weakened their commitment to traditional rural agricultural occupations, and they had become accustomed to factory and industrial work. Consequently, the number of landless

increased among the rural congregations, and Mennonite urbanism accelerated (Regehr, 1996).

Acculturation

The withdrawal of ethical occupational concerns connected with agrarianism marked the separation of the social, cultural and economic matters in which cultural continuity was reduced to various Mennonite institutions. Cultural cohesiveness was at once preserved through institutionalization, and cultural identity was reduced to bible schools, museums, and church programs (Loewen, 1993, Rurality). Mennonite ethnicity suffered from the loss of one of the most sacred traditions of discipleship. While certain cultural practices were preserved, culture was at the same time freed of its Anabaptist significance, and objectified in a new museum and the presentation of Mennonite artefacts (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*).

This new culture was a commercial culture where the landscape was viewed as external, not integral, as it was in the traditional agrarian ideology. The new agricultural ideology regarded the value of the landscape as productive rather than social. The landscape became increasingly alien to those who had established themselves in the rising business and market occupations, and understood Steinbach in terms of its urban context only (Loewen, 1993, Rurality). In 1960, an editor for the local paper, the Carillon, argued for the need for an urban park, stating it "would obviate the necessity of going out for a drive of many miles", saving the urban dweller from the unpleasant and "dangerous" qualities of the farming landscape. It would put "the beauties of nature right here within walking

distance" (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*, p.171). This bold statement reflected the common view that the beauties of nature could easily be extracted, like the removal of an artefact from a landscape that no longer carried profound social and religious implications.

Urban residents appreciated rurality as a means to the comfortable lifestyle that the years of prosperity had brought them. This lifestyle was distinguished by modern comforts and conveniences in the household, and the various stores and supermarkets that appeared in Steinbach in the 1950's. The "commercialized farm and consumer-oriented towns introduced new concepts of rural life which were no long self-sufficient ethnic enclaves", but rather integrated middle class communities (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*, p. 174). The identity as a distinct and separate people, *not of the world but in it*, was carried to the prairies in the 1870's. But, the social and economic shift that followed World War II forged a new ethnicity in the 1950's. In the culture of the 1950's, Mennonites no longer sought to adhere to the values of the past, but rather sought to move beyond the limitations of these values and embrace values that supported their newfound individualism and prosperity (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*).

By the 1960's, a new Mennonite ethnicity was generated, and the modern cultural expression that abandoned the ascetic characteristics, began to reflect the capitalist influence in an emphasis on a hard work ethic and ingenuity (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*).

Religious Accommodation

Unlike the migrants of the 1920's, those who arrived after 1945 did not greatly impact church organization. The Mennonite leaders who had remained in the Soviet Union in the 1920's had suffered at the hands of Stalin. Those who survived to emigrate, mostly women and their illegitimate children, did not resist or challenge existing leadership in Canada. Although persecution in the Soviet Union had inspired a religious renewal, and a re-establishment of traditional convictions in the face of division, the Mennonite immigrants were not as concerned with separatist preservation (Regehr, 1996). As Steinbach increasingly integrated into urban industrial society, residents began to embrace the attitudes of tolerance associated with Canadian nationalism. In addition, their reaffirmed Mennonite identity allowed them cultural security, with wider acceptance of the surrounding multiethnic region of French, German Lutheran, British and Ukrainian groups (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). Their willingness to accept the faith of others marked a shift in the attitude of Mennonites that had generally reflected the notion of one true faith. The Friedensfeld settlers had been incorporated into Steinbach society since their arrival in the early 1890's, but it was not until the formation of their church that they were incorporated in to religious society as well. Having initially organized St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Friedensfeld near the turn of the century, their growing population in Steinbach prompted the German Lutherans to form St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1949 (Harder, 1970).

Mennonite churches began to incorporate leadership forms from other denominations at this time, due in part to their increasing contact with outside English-speaking

neighbours. The new pastoral system introduced educated, trained and salaried pastors to the congregation, better equipped to serve the congregation and missionary and outreach initiatives (Regehr, 1996). Transformations in conference structure, church leadership and general attitudes towards Canadian society resulted in the renaming of many Canadian Mennonite churches to reflect the increasingly influential Canadian context. The strong evangelical emphasis prompted the Bruderthaler church to change their name to the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren early in 1937, and discard their Mennonite doctrines (Regehr, 1996). The influence of evangelicalism was felt later with the Kleine Gemeinde, which changed their name to the Evangelical Mennonite Conference in 1952.

Yet another symptom of acculturation was the creation of the Steinbach United church around 1955. The establishment of this church represented above all else "the desire of some second or third generation Mennonites to throw off the shackles of German ethnic identity and enter the mainstream of Anglo-Saxon Canadian culture" (Harder, 1970, p. 64). The ecumenical concerns of the North American Evangelical movement consolidated in the formation of the United Church of Canada (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1982). Through the United Church, the Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians were able to overcome their denominational differences in favour of unity, and merged in 1925. The United Church invited all members of society, and consequently emphasized the importance of community and serving those who are socially outcast through missions, donations, crisis and community care, and political involvement (Harder, 1970; Chevalier, 1996). Hence, when the Steinbach United Church was formed, it came to

represent a pariah minority of non-Mennonites and former Mennonites, some of who were ex-communicated for participation in the war (Harder, 1970).

After 1945, practices that had been previously forbidden became necessary in the new urban and professional environment. The result was a redefinition of discipleship in a manner that allowed the abandonment of distinctive Anabaptist concepts of discipleship, justified by a concern for impeded evangelism (Regehr, 1996). By the late 1950's, most of the churches in Steinbach had incorporated a strong evangelical emphasis, and were able to unite to some extent under the trans-denominational title of *evangelical* (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). The traditional Anabaptist concerns for pacifism and non-conformity were replaced with emphasis on individual relationships with God, personal salvation, and spiritual victory as expressed in revival meetings and missionary reports. The new evangelism supported the middle-class lifestyle, an integrated economy, and a new stratified social structure manifested in discrete suburban development. Evangelism helped consolidate the Mennonite community by attracting young people, and establishing Steinbach within the context of the global community (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*).

Redefining Missions

Before World War II, Mennonite religious and cultural characteristics reflected strong communitarian ties which were not connected with the larger culture (Regehr, 1996). The missions up to that point involved "people living a considerable distance, geographically or otherwise, from Mennonite communities" (Regehr, 1996, p. 328).

Home missions began after the war as rural missions to new districts, to isolated Mennonite families, and later to serve the needs of the underprivileged. Although these missions were met with success, the absorption of the new converts into the church represented a problem, as the distinctive Mennonite doctrines and practices were often met with misunderstanding and rejection (Regehr, 1996). In an attempt to 'make the Gospel more relevant', Canadian Mennonites tended to abandon the distinctive cultural qualities along with their holistic theology in favour of mainstream North American Protestantism. This ideology not only expected acceptance of the gospel of salvation, but promoted materialistic ideologies that encourage economic and social success. Home mission programs for children were heavily supported in the 1940's and 1950's, and offered Sunday School, Daily Vacation Bible School (DVBS)[13], and later Christian camping programs (Regehr, 1996). The success in outreach led to an expansion in DVBS, and its acceptance in most Mennonite congregations in Steinbach.

International Missions were met with relative success, measured for the most part in terms of numbers of conversions. Large collections were taken at harvest thanksgiving and missions festivals, in support of missionaries who were "celebrated as a manifestation of faithful Christian life and witness" (Regehr, 1996, p. 355). Foreign religions were regarded as heathen religions, and there was general disregard for indigenous cultures, spiritual values and social customs. Postwar developments allowed for less intrusive, forceful missionary activities overseas which respected the local context while introducing the gospel[14]. Canadian Mennonites accepted foreign missions later than other Christian denominations, and only after extensive involvement in home

missions (Regehr, 1996). Interest in overseas missions arose in Steinbach after the reorganization of the Steinbach Bible College in 1938. EMC missionaries began to serve under other mission boards in 1939, until an EMC mission board was created in 1952. The Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, and its associated Gospel Fellowship Church in Steinbach, had always had a strong interest in missions from its inception in 1937. Before the EMMC commissioned its first missionary in 1940, members served under other mission boards, or were supported by local congregations and communities (Regehr, 1996).

Some regarded Missions as critical to the church, and were affected by the transformation in missions taking place overseas. Some Mennonites consequently rediscovered their Anabaptist roots, while others reaffirmed the ideology of the evangelical church (Regehr, 1996).

Anabaptism Rediscovered

The 1960's introduced young church leaders who were educated in various Mennonite institutes, with a restored foundation in Anabaptist and Mennonite doctrines (Regehr, 1996). Such leaders were able to engage their congregations and address their Anabaptist heritage, evangelicalism, and the greater Canadian context. Evangelicalism took on a character distinctly linked to Canadian Mennonite culture. Only a minority of Canadian Mennonites participated in religious literature distribution, street meetings, or generally the person-to-person approach of saturation evangelism. In the fashion of the segregated

Mennonite church, they regarded the church as a place of worship and fellowship, personal support and religious guidance (Regehr, 1996).

Some of those who resisted the prominence of the evangelical doctrine had joined the Steinbach United Church, but there were others who wished to maintain certain tenets of their Anabaptist heritage as advocated by the fundamentalist movement. Members from the Steinbach Mennonite Church, the Bergthaler Church, and the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church left to form the Grace Mennonite Church in 1959 (Harder, 1970; Steiner, 1989, *Grace*). It was a unique schism because it represented an amalgamation of several churches, and thus represented a desire for unity based on common beliefs rather than exceptional beliefs.

At the same time that Canadian Mennonites were redefining their Anabaptist distinctiveness, they were prompted by the missionary movement to reassess their role in global affairs (Regehr, 1996). Prior to the Second World War, the Mennonite peace position was largely restricted to non-resistance and refusing to bear arms (Driedger, 1994). The events of the 1960's, the civil rights movement, and the Vietnam War resulted in division amongst all Canadian Mennonites regarding peace, justice and social concerns (Regehr, 1996). Some Mennonites responded by shifting from pacifism to activism, with much more involvement (Regehr, 1996; Driedger, 2000). This was met with controversy in most Mennonite communities, allowing for further resurgence of Anabaptist doctrines, greater movement into mainstream religious and political ideology,

and a movement away from the "evangelical sub stream that adopted a belligerent anti-communist and pro-militarist position" (Regehr, 1996, p. 383).

The shift from pacifism to activism was facilitated through increased communication and discourse, in part assisted by new Mennonite newspapers that progressively addressed controversial issues (Regehr, 1996). The *Canadian Mennonite* newspaper began in 1953, and was a pioneer Mennonite journal that published in the interests of all Mennonite church groups, and absorbed an English-speaking readership. The journalistic approach advocated a Mennonite faith that was integrated with the urban environment, and was continued in papers that followed, like the *Mennonite Reporter* and the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* (Regehr, 1996).

The formation of MCC (Canada) in 1963 carried on the Anabaptist ideology of radical discipleship (Regehr, 1996). It consolidated various Canadian Mennonite relief, service, colonization, immigration, peace, disaster service, health-care and voluntary service organizations whose shear number resulted in bureaucratic proliferation. This single centralized body became a unified voice for the Mennonites when dealing with the government with regards to their peace position. The strength of the MCC (U.S.A.) Peace Section, allowed MCC (Canada) to form its own Peace and Social Concerns Committee that promoted activist peacemaking (Regehr, 1996). Those involved in voluntary service believed that simply providing relief and promoting non-resistance within countries that were already unjustly devastated by war, did little to bring about peace. The peace activists of the 1960's were met with opposition by some Canadian

Mennonites who supported the old separatist position that it was a responsibility of the state to maintain law and order. Amongst the opponents of peace activism was a shared view with many evangelical Christians that Soviet communism could only be defeated with military force (Regehr, 1996). The violence of the Vietnam War further heightened the debate between

> those who believed that secular governments, including that of the United States, should conduct their affairs in a civil and Christian way, and those who insisted that the primary duty of the American government was to stop the Godless and atheistic communist threat by any means necessary (Regehr, 1996, p. 403).

Prominent evangelicals, like Billy Graham, promoted a language that promoted American militarism, anti-communism, and equated western civilization with the cause of God. This "reinforced traditionalist, pro-German, and anti-communist sentiments" already present in Mennonite communities (Regehr, 1996, p. 405). Although the Mennonites equally considered communism an evil political system, they could not biblically justify the American actions in Vietnam. Both Mennonite peace activists and evangelicals responded to the issue of communist aggression with avoidance: the evangelicals focused on world-wide evangelism and soul-saving, and the Canadian Mennonite peace activists advocated peace but would endorse militarism, both leaving the upholding of law and order to the government.

5

AN IDENTITY TRANSFORMED: 1970 – 2000

The progression from a predominantly Gemeinschaft community to an increasingly Gesellschaft community continued in Steinbach, and manifested itself in secularism, individualism, and rationalism, which in turn manipulated the economic, religious and social domains. The economic realm was transformed after World War II into a capitalist system that altered the agricultural and market economy of Steinbach. The religious realm was displaced first by evangelicalism, then fundamentalism. Social structures disintegrated under political, capitalist and nationalist pressures, and were forged anew with every migration of Mennonites. It was only in the 1970's that attempts were made to recover the Gemeinschaft that was lost, through the reintroduction of Anabaptist tenets, and the reconnecting of community and church through the teachings of discipleship.

Mennonites have throughout their history precariously balanced Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. While they have maintained a slow and gradual progression beginning with an emphasis on Gemeinschaft, and shifting in emphasis to a Gesellschaft society, elements of both conditions have been evident at all stages. As a religious community

that continues to promote voluntarism and religious freedom from the established state, they have cultivated individualism (Driedger, 2000). As a strong collective, they have perpetuated tradition, communalism and sectarianism, preserving a cultural and institutional identity that allowed them to acculturate more slowly. The community tradition founded in their agricultural collectives de-emphasized the role of the individual such that individual leadership was attributed to the will of God. As a result, schisms became the religious manifestation of individualism.

The postwar trend towards increasing urbanism among the Mennonites continued, and by 1989, professionals outnumbered farmers four to one (Driedger, 2000). In addition, "modern trends towards higher education, occupational status, and income have contributed to a general rise in socio-economic status" (Driedger, 2000, p. 31). A study by Leo Driedger indicates less than half of Mennonites on the prairies surveyed were urban in 1972, and more than three quarters were urban in 1989. Not surprisingly, urban Mennonites are more politically involved, socially concerned, ecumenical, and open to interaction. Exposure to larger Canadian society has expanded the Mennonite view to encompass a concern for those outside of the group, and has recently generated openness to a diversity of ideologies including religious outreach and relief work (Driedger, 2000).

The conflict between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft is somewhat resolved by those Mennonites who choose to compete in the urban industrial economy by separating their economic and social responsibilities, but often resulting in an ethnic identity which lacks the holism of Gemeinschaft. Although Driedger (2000) suggests Mennonite identity can

thus be preserved in the context of Gemeinschaft, the capitalist economic realm, and its inherent Gesellschaft qualities, cannot simply be withdrawn from the typology of community. Community is structured heavily on its economic base, and as Tönnies suggests, the causal relationship between capitalism and Gemeinschaft suggests that capitalism is a result of the loss of community (Nisbet, 1966).

The dynamic of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft is such that one predominant state may exhibit qualities of the other, allowing for a post-Gesellschaft that may incorporate Gemeinschaft attributes. For example, the development of human relationships and social responsibility within the context of a Gesellschaft society is possible, allowing for economic relationships to develop communal interests (Driedger, 2000). The intrinsic tension is such that entrepreneurial opportunities tend to serve the public for private profit. Entrepreneurial individuals exhibit self-confidence, perseverance, determination, and leadership skills, essentially, the kinds of qualities that appear to oppose those of humility. As Mennonites increasingly move into the professions, conflicts between religious values and those of the capitalist society are somewhat resolved as professionals promote humanitarianism in their fields (Driedger, 2000). The role of the cultural and religious community is thus replaced by the professional community, which provides substitute resources for values and meaning.

Communications Technologies

Exposure to modern society has slowly introduced industrial technologies, such as communication, transportation, and household technologies, into the Mennonite community (Driedger, 2000). Since the 1970's, the most influential of these has been communication media. Driedger describes the traditional rural enclave as a 'time-bound' culture, which emphasized an oral tradition of communication amongst the group expressed at ritualized religious gatherings, with a strong sense of connection to the land. Contemporary Mennonite attitudes reflect a 'space-bound' culture, with increased awareness of outside cultures and social organizations (Driedger, 2000). This orientation to the greater Mennonite community and awareness of cultural centres beyond Mennonite communities, has resulted in a less traditional lifestyle, and an archiving of historical tradition, often described as 'heritage', denoted by historical artefacts.

Mennonite access to and use of communication media increased dramatically between 1972 and 1989. In 1989, 95 percent owned a television, 50 percent owned VCR's, 30 percent had cable television, and 20 percent had computers (Driedger, 2000). Increasing global awareness amongst the Mennonites is connected with increasing exposure to media, which overcomes Mennonite insularity. Driedger's study indicates a positive correlation between media access and attitudes endorsing Mennonite integration into the greater North American context[15]. The study also demonstrates that access to media is negatively correlated with Anabaptism, restrictive moral attitudes, religiosity, separatism, and communalism. Such qualities combine to enhance solidarity, indicating that in places of strong Mennonite communality, media access is restricted. Social and cultural

environments that are open to accommodation tend to incorporate communications technologies more readily (Driedger, 2000). In places like Steinbach, the tradition of readily accepting technological innovations such as telephones, vehicles, and televisions, is closely connected with the readiness of the community to absorb global cultures, social organizations, and religious affiliations.

Diverging Identity

Driedger found that Mennonites of the 1990's still identified strongly with their religious roots, and 75 percent maintained beliefs consistent with the doctrine (Driedger, 2000). This number has dropped since 1972, as Mennonites struggle to discover a denomination that resolves their post-modern conflicts of secularization and urbanism. Driedger points out that over half were 'happy' with being known as Mennonites, that almost half had their closest friends within the congregation, and that 25 percent felt they would remain in their current Mennonite denomination. In Driedger's opinion, "this illustrates that, for a basic core, there is solid social support for their church identification" (Driedger, 2000, p.107). While a vast majority might have indicated a strong social-religious interrelationship, these numbers denote a people divided. These results suggest that almost half found their Mennonite association restrictive, although in what way is not clear. A small majority of Mennonites found their network of friends outside of the church, indicating that the church continues to decline in its role as a social institution. Only 25 percent felt they would remain with their church, indicating that 75 percent were

unsure of the future and what their church will have to offer them. At the very least, this reveals an unclear Mennonite identity.

Social relations and communications in particular suggest that a vast majority of Mennonites are increasingly extending their relations into the larger society. The lifestyle that developed in Steinbach in the 1950's, continued to increase into the 1990's, as Mennonites increasingly incorporated hobbies, physical fitness, unions and associations into their lives.

Steinbach Bible College

Unlike the other Mennonite colleges in Canada, the SBC is the only one not operated by the three largest conferences, but is rather governed locally through the Chortitzer Mennonite Conference, the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, and the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (Manitoba) (Driedger, 2000; SBC, 2000, *Philosophy*). Traditional monastic qualities of this small college are still present in their ideology, which promotes reflection, retreat, and an alternative lifestyle. Unlike the monastic approach of the traditional Mennonite bible school, the SBC promotes an understanding of faith that is developed within the framework of the individual, not the community. Although it may aim to "prepare young people for a productive, competent and responsible life in the Christian community and in society", it reflects the evangelical doctrine of the churches who support it (SBC, 2000, *We*).

Today, the SBC places a strong emphasis on training for missions and ministries "in order to advance the global mission of the church" (SBC, 2000, *Philosophy*). Emphasis is placed on understanding Christianity in the context of modernity while upholding standards of public education and professional education, and encouraging critical inquiry of the Mennonite theology (Regehr, 1996). As among the evangelical Mennonite churches, the curriculum has become largely evangelical with little emphasis on Anabaptist theology or Mennonite history. There is clearly a concern for an understanding of the greater global Christian community, and as such, the college promotes a theology in which Anabaptism plays a minor role. In 1942, the SBC offered only one course in Mennonite history (Regehr, 1996). Today, it offers one core course in Anabaptist History and another course in Anabaptist Theology. The Steinbach Christian High School, as a division of the SBC, offers a Mennonite History course that is not compulsory (SBC, 2000, *Course*; SBC, 2000, *We*). This college remains the most comprehensive co-operative ministry in Steinbach in the area of Christian education.

The Post-modern Evangelical Church

The evangelical churches of Steinbach are characterized by the concept of individual salvation through conscious personal choice and voluntary membership. They emphasize an ethic of love as opposed to moral demand, with the ultimate authority placed in the Bible. Active participation of the congregation is encouraged, as this type of church is an "aggressive, evangelistic, missionary church, with freedom to develop new forms of religious education and worship" (Harder, 1970, p.36). In its recent history, this church

has developed an increasing concern for the welfare of others, and strong support for relief and service work, justice and peacemaking (Driedger, 2000). To some extent, the United Church has served as a catalyst for inter-church co-operation within the community (Harder, 1970). This has encouraged inter-church cooperation, which includes efforts like the Steinbach Ministerial Association, and youth initiatives like Pioneer Girls, the AWANA club program, and the Red Rock Bible Camp Program (Harder, 1970; Emmanuel, *Youth*). The seniors care facility established by the Evangelical Mennonite Church in the 1940's, now known as Rest Haven Nursing Home, has since rebuilt and expanded to include the Wood Haven senior's apartment. Another seniors apartment complex, Fernwood Place, was founded by eleven cooperating churches in 1983, followed by Linden Place apartment in 1991 (Magnusson, 1996).

Six churches in Steinbach were selected to participate in a survey conducted in 2000, which was intended to determine membership numbers from a cross-section of churches in Steinbach (Appendix B). The churches were selected to represent a range of evangelical Mennonite churches from traditional to more progressive, including the Church of God in Christ, the Steinbach Mennonite Church, the Gospel Fellowship Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Church, the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church, and the Southland Community Free Church respectively. Although the statistical information is incomplete for all churches, it serves to demonstrate trends in church growth, and religious and ideological development in Steinbach between 1950 and 2000 (Fig. 5.1).

Elements of the Mennonite tradition, such as conservative dress, are evident in some of the more conservative churches such as the Church of God in Christ and the Steinbach Sommerfeld Church (Harder, 1970; Epp, 1974), but these elements remain for the most part, cultural traditions. Although the Church of God in Christ was at one time recognized as the evangelical leader in Steinbach, it has been recognized since 1930 as one of the most conservative in Steinbach. This church also engages actively in church planting of members in rural communities of Manitoba (Loewen, 1993, *Rurality*). For this reason, it maintained a membership of between 100 and 200 through 1950 and 1970, and slightly dropped to 130 in 1985, as indicated in Fig. 5.1 (Harder, 1970; Steiner, 1986, *Church of God*).

The Evangelical churches that formed out of the evangelical renewal movement remain the predominant church type in Steinbach today. The Chortitzer Mennonite Church, the Christian Fellowship Church (formerly the Bergthaler Mennonite Church), and the Steinbach Mennonite Church still retained aspects of the traditional Gemeinschaft church at the time of Harder's study of Steinbach churches (Steiner, 1986, *Christian*; Harder, 1970). Since then, the evangelical movement has considerably influenced all of the Mennonite churches. The immigration of the more conservative element to Paraguay in 1948 resulted in the adoption of Sunday School, choirs, Bible studies, evangelistic meetings and mission conferences within the Chortitzer Mennonite Church (Harder, 1970; Steiner, 1990, *Chortitzer*). The preachers of this church are not paid, in keeping with the Anabaptist tradition, but the transition from German to both German and English

occurred in 1975, following considerable difficulties regarding the accommodation of English speaking children and relatives (Steiner, 1989, *Steinbach Chortitzer*).

The German language was a cultural manifestation, and was considered, particularly by Russlaender Mennonites, as a sacred literary, aesthetic and religious treasure. Others saw German as an obstacle to missionary and outreach efforts. Conflicting interests in separatism and evangelicalism led to a slow transition from German to English in the churches (Regehr, 1996). The Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church (formerly the Bruderthaler) was the first to change its language of instruction from German to English in the 1940's (Steiner, 1989, *Steinbach Evangelical*). This was followed by the Evangelical Mennonite Church (formerly Kleine Gemeinde) and Grace Mennonite in the 1950's, and the addition of English to the Mennonite Brethren Church and Steinbach Mennonite Church in the 1960's (Steiner, 1986, *Steinbach Evangelical*; Steiner, 1986, *Steinbach Mennonite Brethren*; Steiner, 1986, *Steinbach Mennonite*). An interesting addition to the church composition of Steinbach is the establishment of the Steinbach Gemiende Gottes (German Church of God) in 1998. The church is cultural manifestation of a small minority in Steinbach who still wish to preserve the sacred tradition of the German language, thus it primarily serves to accommodate the German-speaking population in Steinbach (Magnusson, 1996). Although the Steinbach Mennonite Church began with the traditional Gemeinschaft model brought with the Russlaender immigration, it has quickly adapted over the years to accommodate the evangelical church model and inter-church cooperation (Harder, 1970). As indicated in Figure 5.1, this congregation has experienced the most consistent increase in membership, in part

because of an influx of immigrants from Russia and Paraguay into the 1960's, and because of the readiness of this church to accommodate change (Harder, 1970).

The Gospel Fellowship Church made the transition from German to English later in the 1970's (Steiner, 1989, *Gospel*), in keeping with the more resistant approach of this church. A dramatic increase in the membership between 1970 and 1985 indicates the language transition was likely in response to pressures to modernize the approach of the church (Fig. 5.1). The move from the centralized ministerial, to the localized conference model in which local churches took on congregational responsibilities, marked a period of transition for the entire EMMC. By the late sixties, old patterns of organization were increasingly replaced with evangelical models of ministry as traditional senior ministers were gradually replaced with a younger, more contemporary ministerial (Heppner, 1987).

The emphasis on Sunday School, missions, and evangelistic outreach resulted in a dramatic growth in the EMC between 1950 and 1975 (Fig. 5.1). Despite its conservative beginnings, Sunday School attendance at the EMC was the highest in Steinbach by 1959 (Reimer, 1962). The congregation grew to such a size that a new church, the Evangelical Fellowship Church was planted in 1979. For this reason, both churches are affiliated with the Evangelical Mennonite Conference (Steiner, 1986, *Evangelical*). Currently, the EMC maintains one of the highest membership numbers in Steinbach (Fig. 5.1). Fig 5.1 indicates a trend in dramatic membership growth until 1975, and then a drop in 1985 due to a loss of members to the new church. The EMC today reflects an interesting blend of evangelical, Anabaptist and fundamentalist beliefs. The churches' Statement of Faith

clearly denotes an evangelical emphasis on personal salvation, the Holy Trinity[16], and the observation of water baptism and footwashing. Elements of fundamentalism are evident in the observation of the second coming of Christ and the divine inspiration of the bible. Most importantly, this church still recognizes the importance of three fundamental Anabaptist tenets of discipleship, nonconformity, and pacifism (Evangelical Mennonite, *Statement*).

As an affiliate of the Evangelical Free Church of Canada, the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church (EEFC) is autonomous and free to establish its own doctrine. As with most of the churches in Steinbach, the doctrine of the EEFC is typified by the evangelical tenets of divine scriptural inspiration, the Holy Trinity, salvation through the death of Christ, the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the second coming of Christ. This church has incorporated the fundamentalist doctrine of pre-millennialism[17], and has discarded Anabaptist beliefs in pacifism (EEFC, *This We*). This church has the freedom to accommodate change within the congregation, and therefore has experienced consistent growth in the last ten years. Although Figure 5.1 indicates a membership of 387 for 2000, these numbers almost double when the average attendance of 797 is considered (EEFC, 2000, *Annual*). This church experiences a reasonably high membership, with an average attendance that places this church in a position of leadership for Steinbach. It clearly reflects a trend in Steinbach in which evangelicalism is embraced and Anabaptist tenets are increasingly eliminated from church doctrine.

The establishment of the Bethel Christian Centre (formerly Bethel Pentecostal Tabernacle) in 1958 and the Full Gospel Fellowship Church in 1965 (Harder, 1970) marked the beginning of this evangelical development in Steinbach in which Pentecostal practices and fundamentalist doctrine were adopted by some. In a broad sense, fundamentalism was a resistance movement in response to ideological modernism. For some, this meant the re-affirmation of Anabaptist fundamentals, for others it meant the introduction of specific tenets of the fundamentalist movement as discussed above (Epp, 1982). Churches in Steinbach responded with mixed interest. Some churches embraced specific fundamentalist tenets such as pre-millennialism, some simply reinforced traditional Anabaptist beliefs, and some who welcomed the movement abandoned all foundation in traditional Mennonite faith.

The members of the Bethel Christian Centre and the Full Gospel Fellowship Church sought a pattern of worship beyond the traditional restrained patterns of worship, and were receptive to the Pentecostal representatives who had been sent to the community to conduct meetings and make converts (Harder, 1970). The revivalist experiences, including 'speaking in tongues'[18] and divine healing, along with the fundamentalist theology of the Pentecostal church was likely attractive to the converts because it allowed for a freedom of faith while reinforcing some traditional beliefs. While it is similar to the existing tenets of the evangelical Mennonite churches in the practice of baptism by emersion and foot washing, its emphasis on pre-millennialism and the second coming of Christ is distinct. Noticeably absent from their doctrine is any concern for non-resistance or non-conformity (Microsoft, 2000). Several churches founded since Harder's study of

1970, reflect strongly the tenets of Pentecostal doctrine, including the Calvary Chapel and the Southland Community Free Church in 1983, the Stony Brook Fellowship in 1995, and the Shalom Family Worship Centre in 1993. Figure 5.1 indicates that since its founding in 1983, membership has steadily increased for the Southland Community Free Church (Magnusson, 1996). Discipleship is a traditional Mennonite tenet that has had greater emphasis in these four churches, and the Stony Brook Fellowship has introduced a doctrine of non-resistance (Shalom; Stony; Southland).

Religious Freedom and Individualism

The evangelical movement is a powerful indicator of the changing religious nature of Steinbach, which is progressively informed by the Gesellschaft ideology of its socio-economic context. While institution building, such as that created by the Board of Trade in the 1940's, served to strengthen the economic basis of the community, it promoted a distinctly Gesellschaft ideology characterized as an *individualized, open society based on achieved status and contract, and the centralization of political power and the individual*. Institutions, such as the Mennonite co-operatives, educational institutions and conferences, possess all of these qualities. While they may serve to unite the larger Mennonite community and consolidate a new Mennonite ideology, they do so on an individual and rational level, resulting in the dissolution of the community amidst the institution and the individual.

The greater Canadian society has consistently represented the interests of the individual. Despite a history wrought with conflict and tension between the Canadian government and minority collective groups, the Canadian government has progressively come to recognize the rights of the individual as part of the collective whole. The 1960's created a political environment of tolerance for pacifist individuals, accommodating the interests of the Mennonites and recognizing the freedom of religion first offered by the government in the late 19th century (Regehr, 1996).

The liberal concept of religious freedom has undergone a great transformation in the last 50 years. Although some of the egalitarian values of the liberal system were sympathetic to concepts of freedom of religion, often the freedoms permitted an individual in belief and worship were limited initially, resulting in the defeat of the Mennonite private school (Janzen, 1990). In a broader sense, Mennonite religious beliefs were not reserved for worship, but determined their daily conduct, including at the time a strong desire to preserve their agricultural tradition and religious beliefs through the education of their children. Nonetheless, accommodation by the government secured military exemption, which indicates a somewhat broader interpretation of freedom and religion in some instances. The opinion held by the public, and expressed by Prime Minister Trudeau, advocated religious freedom for the Mennonites, but only if their practices and particular way of life were not prohibited by the larger society[19] (Janzen, 1990).

The Mennonites were willing to make compromises as well, in keeping with their beliefs in tolerance and public cooperation (Janzen, 1990; Francis, 1955). In the interests of

demonstrating their value in rendering national service, they compromised by introducing and participating the alternative service program of World War II. Through compromise, the Mennonites encourage "a significant measure of mutual accommodation", and as such, facilitated greater integration into larger society (Janzen, 1990, p.300).

Since the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, freedom of religion has broadened in its interpretation to include education of children, the right to observe a Christian Sabbath[20], and observation of cultural practices (Janzen, 1990). In this period, the Holdeman (Church of God in Christ) Mennonites were granted permission to operate a private school based on the Bill of Rights provisions for freedom of religion. Although in one sense the Charter may assist these groups, it "represents a liberal individualistic regime that serves to weaken the rights of groups" (Janzen, 1990, p. 303). In response to numerous court cases which have emerged since the Charter, the courts have gone to great lengths to deter discrimination against those who follow no religion or those who adhere to a minority religion, resulting in the removal of all religious references. There are concerns that the ultimate consequence will be a more secularized society, akin to the secular movement of the early 20th century (Janzen, 1990). While Janzen expresses doubt for further accommodation of minority religious groups, there is a question of greater concern to Mennonites who have already accommodated secular society. The influence of the greater Canadian society has been felt profoundly in places like Steinbach, and there is significant uncertainty whether pressures to secularize will engage a process to preserve what is fundamental, or to simply absorb the many influences of Canadian secular society.

The Uncertain Future

The Mennonite World Conference of 1962 did much to reinforce holistic Anabaptist ideology, including a reaffirmation of full and complete discipleship in the context of the modern Mennonite community (Regehr, 1996). A study conducted by Leland Harder in 1975 found that when compared to other religious groups, Mennonites maintained orthodox beliefs and practices (Kauffman, 1975). Regehr maintains that for the most part, the Mennonites have not abandoned their holistic and radical discipleship and have retained their fundamental principles (Regehr, 1996). However, the various schisms and church formations over the years suggest there is significant conflict surrounding issues of non-resistance, radical discipleship, and true conversion, involving the United Church, the EMB, and the Gospel Fellowship Church respectively. The result has been a diversity of expressions ranging from strong evangelical to fundamentalist to Pentecostal. There has been a re-addressing of political and government involvement, the swearing of oaths, and church discipline. Increased participation in politics by Canadian Mennonites is reflected in Steinbach with strong Mennonite involvement in municipal, provincial and federal government. Professions have diversified to include law among others, an occupation that was previously considered unacceptable, and is represented by Mennonite attorneys like Delbert Plett who actively promote Mennonite heritage.

Simultaneously, Mennonite ethnicity was archived and preserved through the creation of Mennonite Heritage Village museum in the 1970's. Robert Kreider (1974) spoke on behalf of many when he wrote:

> Here are a people who take seriously the biblical record and their dramatic Anabaptist-Mennonite Heritage... If the Mennonite Heritage is to speak to the need of people today, it cannot be a slavish imitation of Mennonite traditions. It calls for fresh translations of our heritage in the language of the day. Our need is not for copying of surface characteristics, but rather for a living out in fresh way of ideas and themes with the tradition (p. 31-32)

While the creation of the museum indicates the loss of the sectarian agricultural community and its associated Mennonite cultural traditions, Mennonite heritage has at the same time evolved to encompass its urban context. Some distinctive Mennonite principles have been lost, while others have been retained and rediscovered. As Mennonites have struggled to identify their place within the new Mennonite society, some have assimilated into modern secular society and into the evangelical church (Regehr, 1996). While evangelicalism is clearly strong in Steinbach, it remains a part of the gradient from sacred to secular and communal to individualistic that has expressed itself in the diversity of religious institutions that characterize the city. The post-modern age has brought with it the dialectics of "orthodoxy-reformation, church-state, love-hate, rural-urban, and sacred-secular" (Driedger, 2000, p. 232).

NOTES

Part II

[1] Variations on these concepts were introduced by various authors in the early 1800's, but the work of Tönnies in his book Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (Community and Society), 1887, is of greatest importance, as it consolidates these concepts and introduces the terms Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft.

[2] The works of Max Weber define an associative relationship as one that proceeds from rational calculation rather than from emotional identification, regardless of its reference to moral value. Examples include the free market, or the open society (Nisbet, 1966).

[3] The works of Max Weber define a communal relationship as one that is based on a "subjective feeling of the parties that they belong to each other" (Nisbet, 1966).

[4] Also known as biblicism.

[5] The Old Colony Mennonites are distinct from the Old Order Mennonites. The Old Colony Mennonite church was formed by a remnant group of the Reinlaender Church, who had suffered a loss of 75 percent of their membership following the migration to Mexico (Epp, 1982).

[6] Church leader, elder or bishop (Loewen, 1993, *Family*).

[7] "Revival meetings were annual, week-long affairs of intense preaching that encouraged adult members to undergo a rigorous self-examination, and teenaged youths...to experience spiritual conversion. It was an approach to religious faith that promised an emotional, personal experience" (Loewen, 1993, *Family*, p. 252).

[8] Mennonite immigrants of the 1870's (Janzen, 1990).

[9] In this case, there was a concern that young baptized members were no longer experiencing true conversion (Harder, 1970).

[10] News of drought and famine in India in 1897 and 1898 had prompted Mennonites in Russia and the United States to co-operate in the collection and distribution of foodstuffs and relief supplies to India (Regehr, 1996).

[11] The PAX Services Program was created in 1951 to provide service opportunities for Mennonite conscientious objectors to military service and to respond to needs in foreign countries. PAX initially involved house construction for refugees in Europe, but later expanded to other locations (MCC, 2000).

[12] Health care had gained acceptance as an occupation during World War I, in which Mennonites were trained in ambulance and hospital service (Regehr, 1996).

[13] DVBS began in the 1930's, in response to similar models in the United States, in order to provide two to four weeks of summer school which offered biblical education and instruction in the fundamentals of Christian faith (Regehr, 1996)

[14] See Regehr, 1996, for a discussion on the transformation of missions in this period, specifically pp. 380-381.

[15] Criteria for global involvement included political participation, participation of women, and political action (Driedger, 2000).

[16] The belief that God exists in three states of tri-unity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, all of whom are completely and equally God (Evangelical Mennonite, *Statement*).

[17] The belief that second coming of Christ will occur before the new millennium (the year 2000) (EEFC, This We Believe; Microsoft, 2000).

[18] "Ecstatic utterances frequently unintelligible to listeners" (Microsoft, 2000).

[19] Prime Minister Trudeau's comments arose out of the controversy surrounding the introduction of the CPP, which was viewed by conservative Mennonites and Amish as government interference in their communal responsibilities (Janzen, 1990).

[20] The right to observe a Christian Sabbath was granted in the Lord's Day Act (Janzen, 1990).

CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction it was suggested that this thesis serve as a basis for further investigation, in order to gain true insight into the community of Steinbach, and provide an opportunity for a consolidated approach to future physical modifications and growth. The examination of the historical, theological, cultural and sociological influences of Steinbach has served to enlighten and explain the true nature and complexity of human patterns of settlement. More broadly, this examination offers landscape architecture a systematic and holistic approach to understanding physical transformations in settlement patterns as a reflection of the cultural composition of a community. To truly provide for the needs of humans in the environment, landscape architects must first acknowledge human identity, since it is this identity that determines the nature of the human relationship to their physical environment. The specific focus on a particular Mennonite community serves to illustrate that this identity is unique, despite how indistinct a superficial assessment of the built environment may appear. Patterns of growth and development at local, regional and global scales should always be examined in the context of their influences, whether they are political, social, or cultural. Within such an

examination lies the opportunity to identify and create a physical morphology within any community that can inform, as much as it is informed by, community identity.

The growth and development of Steinbach until now has been unique and extensive. Examination of the shifting morphology of the settlement pattern of Steinbach has revealed a physical transformation informed strongly by social, cultural, religious, and economic changes. The period between 1874 and 1910 was a period of cultural resettlement in which the Steinbach Mennonites systematically transferred the social and physical structures consolidated in their Russian homeland. Figure 2.16 indicates the settlement pattern was simple, uniform and consistent, but distinct from its context. All lots were equal in size, and equitable in the distribution of arable land. A distinctive village pattern developed in response to a datum established parallel to the creek, but diagonal to the grid of the sectional survey of the province. As such, the settlement pattern reflected a sectarian society of religious uniformity, strict social ordering and equity. The influence of the free market economy in the 19th and 20th centuries allowed for the development of the open village plan, which was then increasingly manipulated and influenced by capitalist enterprise, or the Gesellschaft society.

The period between 1912 and 1924 was marked by the dissolution of the village commune, and was characterized by an increased desire for individual freedom, economic expansion, and religious reform, which accommodated that freedom. The "amenities of a prospering society" were now more than ever an attraction to the prospering Mennonites, who were feeling the effects of Canadian nationalism (Janzen,

1990, p. 215). Canadian organizations and institutions were accepted, as were Anglo-Saxon cultural customs and technological advances. The opportunity for expansion and growth outside of the commune provided economic advantage, and equity was abandoned in favour of stratified prosperity. The lots were sub-divided according to individual rather than communal investment, and the village pattern reflected increasing complexity borne of individualism and free market growth. The village pattern also began to reflect the Anglo-Saxon influences, evident in the adoption of the grid of the sectional survey in the Northeast corner, in Figure 2.17.

The most significant modification occurred in the post World War II development, which continued de-centralized sub-division in opposition to the unique datum established parallel to the creek (Fig. 2.18). In this period, external patterns of morphology were appropriated from the greater Canadian society, and the traditional Mennonite pattern of settlement was discarded. Sectarian attitudes were abandoned, and external religious and economic values significantly influenced the community. Increasing individualism, economic prosperity, and social stratification generated the remote, inaccessible sub-divisions detached from the core of the town, as seen in the North, East and West extremities of the town.

Steinbach continued to experience growth and expansion as it developed from an agricultural trade centre to an urban centre which today services many surrounding rural communities. The postwar pattern of development has continued on all peripheries of the town, although residential expansion on the East side of town has been somewhat

restricted by Hespeler St., which remains bound on the East side by agricultural and sparse industrial development (Fig. 2.19 and 2.20). Development to the west has been similarly restricted by agricultural development. However, residential expansion to the north and south of the town has been extensive, and a continuation of the low-density, exclusive pattern of development established after World War II.

Steinbach has evolved into an increasingly complex community, which is diverse in its religious, social and economic structure. The physical structure of it remains undistinguishable from its other urban counterparts in Manitoba, simply because it has allowed significant physical influence to be drawn from similar capitalist factors. The physical manifestations of Gemeinschaft remain few, but include a strong commercial and social structure that is evident along Main Street, a clear sense of community boundary on the East and West edges of the town, and reference to the initial datum that is evident in the prewar development of the town. The community identity, however, remains unique. The social structure continues to reflect a community with a strong Gemeinschaft component, evident in inter-church cooperatives and community support initiatives for the convalescent, elderly, and underprivileged. With respect to the physical manifestation of this social condition, there is the opportunity for a physical expression of this plurality and heterogeneity within a consolidated matrix. Therefore, care should be taken to ensure that Gemeinschaft, and its associated physical implications, are not completely abandoned in favour of the Gesellschaft patterns of physical development.

The progression from the closed village settlement to the open urban settlement is organic, as it follows the natural movement from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft. It is no more contrived to impose urban structure on a Gemeinschaft framework, than it is to impose village structure on a Gesellschaft framework. The preservation of historic structure for the sake of preservation is contrived, and consequently contributes nothing to the identity of the community. It is this archiving of Mennonite tradition that takes it out of its context, and as such, ceases to function as tradition. Therefore, it does no more to preserve Gemeinschaft than its contemporary structural counterparts. There is the opportunity to examine the appropriateness of peripheral expansion and sprawl, and consider opportunities for the physical expression of the Gemeinschaft as well as the Gesellschaft, as both have a presence in the community. The physical manifestation of Gemeinschaft may implicate further consolidation of the core and the strengthening of the datum, an element that remains characteristic of Steinbach to this day.

The work of Norris-Baker and Scheidt (1992) advocates the concept of *community covenants*, or "tenuous, informal agreements among a plurality of residents about what is most important to the town. These agreements are dynamic, responding to outside events, historical traditions, social structure, environment, and individual leadership, and can be embodied and read in architectonic messages" (Norris-Baker, 1992, p. 32). Although the intention behind community covenants is to revitalize towns facing rural crisis, the concept can equally be applied to any community struggling to identify existing covenants. The disparity between the consolidated heterogeneous community and the fragmented physical morphology may reflect such a struggle. In any case, the

city of Steinbach could only benefit from an exercise that would essentially identify fundamental principles that have clear physical implications. Such an exercise would be valuable in the secondary investigation of Steinbach, because it engages the community and its members in a subjective, but very valuable, way.

I anticipate that through the primary investigation conducted in this thesis, and further secondary study, true insight into the constitution of the community of Steinbach would be gained. Together, they can provide an opportunity for consolidating an approach to future physical modifications and growth within the city.

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APPENDIX A

STEINBACH CHURCH SURVEY AND RESULTS

Dear Gospel Fellowship Church,

I am a Master's student in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Manitoba, currently working on my thesis. My thesis focuses on the city of Steinbach, and particularly examines the sociological and theological nature of the community as it has developed through time, and its manifestation in the morphology of the settlement pattern of Steinbach. As such, I have examined the primary Anabaptist roots, the formation of various church splinter groups in Russia, and the transplanting and transformation of these groups in Steinbach. In an effort to gain a greater understanding of the theological transformation that has taken place in Steinbach, I am inviting several churches to participate in my study, with the intent of engaging the community in this research.

As such, I am collecting membership numbers from a few churches. These numbers will be published in my thesis, and all churches participating will be acknowledged in the thesis. If you would like to contribute, I would greatly appreciate it, as it would help provide accurate information on religious trends in Steinbach.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Please respond with your membership numbers for the following years if at all possible. If this is not possible, please indicate membership numbers for the closest possible years, and write the year beside it. If your church was established later than 1950, please indicate your establishing year on this form.

1950 ________________

1955 ________________

1960 *1963

1965 55

1970 70

1975 ________________

1980 ________________

1985 286

1990 ________________

1995 ________________

2000 135

Please return all responses to Box 1262, Steinbach, via mail at R0A 2A0, or via email at umhieber@cc.umanitoba.ca. Thank you in advance for your participation. Please contact me at (204)269-8431, or at the above email address if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

T. Goertzen

Dear Southland Community Free Church,

I am a Master's student in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Manitoba, currently working on my thesis. My thesis focuses on the city of Steinbach, and particularly examines the sociological and theological nature of the community as it has developed through time, and its manifestation in the morphology of the settlement pattern of Steinbach. As such, I have examined the primary Anabaptist roots, the formation of various church splinter groups in Russia, and the transplanting and transformation of these groups in Steinbach. In an effort to gain a greater understanding of the theological transformation that has taken place in Steinbach, I am inviting several churches to participate in my study, with the intent of engaging the community in this research.

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Please respond with your membership numbers for the following years if at all possible. If this is not possible, please indicate membership numbers for the closest possible years, and write the year beside it. If your church was established later than 1950, please indicate your establishing year on this form.

Year	Members	Year	Members
1950		1980	*1983 - 24
1955		1985	49
1960		1990	91
1965		1995	135
1970		2000	212
1975			

Please return all responses to Box 1262, Steinbach, via mail at R0A 2A0, or via email at umhieber@cc.umanitoba.ca. Thank you in advance for your participation. Please contact me at (204)269-8431, or at the above email address if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

T. Goertzen

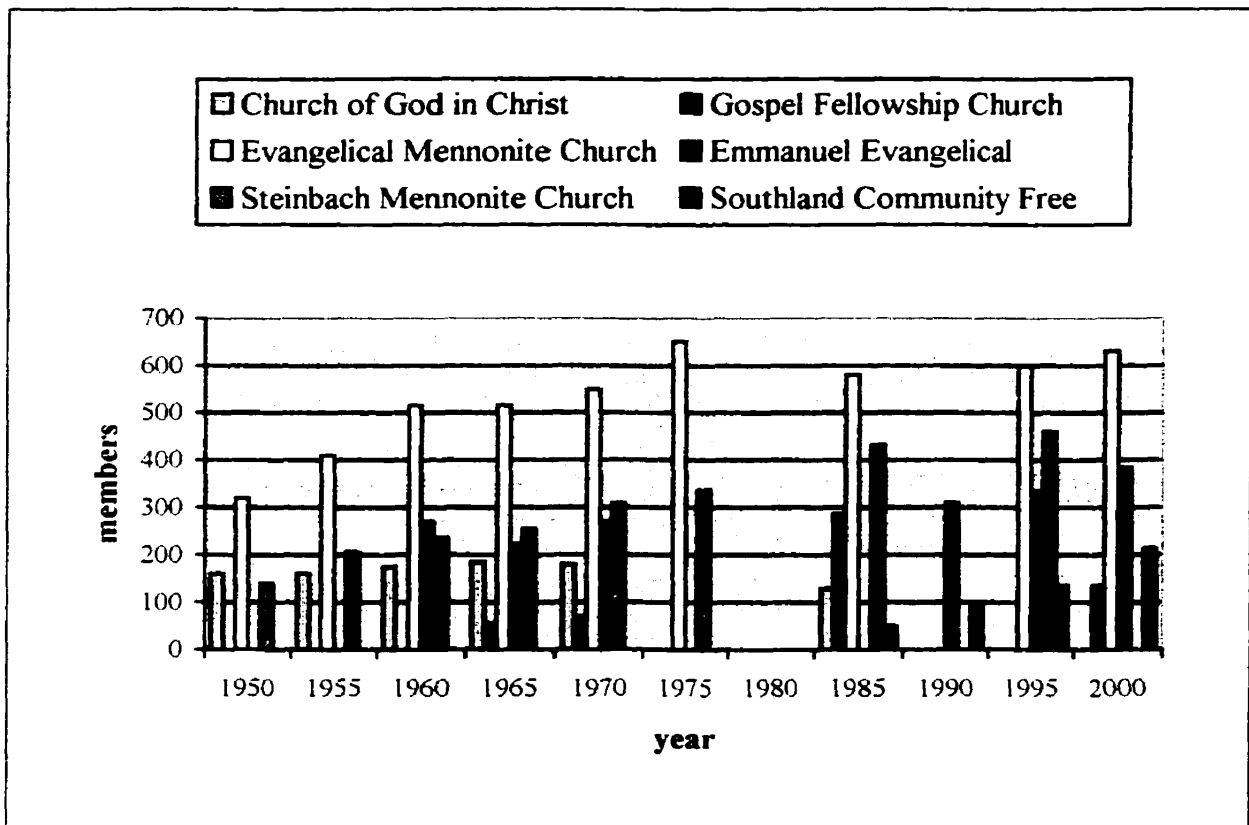

Figure 5.1 Church Membership*

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* Membership numbers for Church of God in Christ were compiled using Harder. 1970 and Steiner. 1986. *Steinbach Church of God in Christ.*
Membership numbers for the Gospel Fellowship Church were compiled using Harder. 1970; Steiner. 1989. *Gospel Fellowship Church*; and the survey (Appendix A).
Membership numbers for the Evangelical Mennonite Church were compiled using Harder. 1970; Steiner. 1986. *Steinbach Evangelical Mennonite Church*; and EMC. 2000. *Annual.*
Membership numbers for the Emmanuel Evangelical Mennonite Church were compiled using Harder. 1970; and EEFC. 2000. *Annual.*
Membership numbers for the Steinbach Mennonite Church were compiled using Steiner. 1986. *Steinbach Mennonite Church.*
Membership numbers for the Southland Community Church were compiled using the survey (Appendix A).