

The Return of the Kanadier Mennonites: A History of Accomplishments and Challenges

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Return of the Kanadier:

A History Conference on a Migrant People

October 3-October 5, 2002

2002 Weekend Symposium

Eckhardt Gramatte Hall

515 Portage Ave.

University of Winnipeg

This is an academic conference examining the history of the immigration and integration of Low German-speaking Kanadier Mennonites from Paraguay, Mexico and other Latin American countries into Canada. These migrants are the descendants of Mennonites who left Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the 1920s because of the schools question. During the last generation some 40,000 have 'returned' to places across Canada and in several states in the U.S. Here

they have transplanted their family life, rebuilt churches, and learned new skills. In the process they have had to face the difficult decision of leaving an old home and the dynamic challenges of finding a new community and integrating into a new state and society. It is our hope to pay special attention to the accomplishments of these recent Mennonite immigrants and the hurdles they faced as they integrated into Canada.

THURSDAY, OCT. 3

7:30-9:00 p.m. WHO ARE THE KANADIER?

Welcome: Dr. Patrick Dean, VP Academic,

University of Winnipeg

Conference Introduction:

Royden Loewen, Chair in Mennonite Studies

Chair: Abe Peters, MCC Canada

Keynote: William Janzen, MCC Canada, Ottawa.

Who are the Kanadier?

8:30-9:30 a.m. BOOK REVIEW SESSION

The book: *Old Colony Mennonites in Canada*

Chair: Adolf Ens, Canadian Mennonite University

Review: Rosabel Fast, University of Manitoba

Review: Ken Reddig, MCC Manitoba

Response: Delbert Plett

9:30-10:00 Coffee

10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

LATIN AMERICAN 'SENDING' SOCIETY

Chair: Wilder Robles, Menno Simons College

Pedro Castro, Metropolitan University-Tetapalapa,

Mexico City, *The Return of the Mennonites from Ciudad Cuauhtémoc to Canada*

David Quiring, University of Saskatchewan,

Enlightenment or Heresy: Two Conflicting Mennonite Visions in Mexico

Titus Guenther, Canadian Mennonite University,

Migration to and Emigration From Paraguay's Menno Colony

LUNCHEE, 12:00-1:00

1:00-3:00 p.m. MIGRATION CULTURE

Chair: Mary Friesen, University of Winnipeg

David Friesen, Cuauhtémoc, *Migration Culture*

from the Mexican Perspective

Marvin Dueck, Leamington, *Migration Culture*

from the Canadian Perspective

Robyn Dyck, University of Winnipeg student,

The Diaspora Networks According to the

Mennonitische Post

3:00-3:30 Coffee

3:30-5:30 p.m. BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Chair: Leonard Doell, MCC Saskatchewan

Dawn Bowen, Mary Washington College,

Virginia, *To Bolivia and Back: Migration and*

Community Formation in Alberta

Ilina Graeber, Texas Tech University, Lubbock.

FRIDAY, OCT. 4

The Mexico Mennonites of Texas

Karen Pauls, CBC Halifax, *The Belizian Kleine*

Gemeinde Mennonites of Nova Scotia

5:30-7:00 Supper

7:00-9:00 p.m.

COMMUNICATING THE KANADIER STORY

Chair: Ken Reddig, MCC Manitoba

Myron Dyck, University of Winnipeg student, *The*

Mennonitische Post: A History

Anne Froese, Mennonite Post, Steinbach,

Working at the 'Mennonitische Post': A

Reminiscence

Larry Towell, Bothwell, Ontario, *The Mennonites:*

An Audio Visual Performance

Reception for Honoured Guests

8:30-10:15 a.m. SOCIAL ISSUES

Chair: Merle Fast, St. Jacobs Family Support

Centre

Judith Kolig and Research Team, University of

Lethbridge, *Health and Illness Beliefs Among the Alberta Kanadier*

Cheryl Campbell, Pembina Valley Learning

Centre, Winkler, *Adult Education and Kanadier Immigrants*

Liam Good Gingrich, University of Toronto,

Social Exclusion and the Low German Population in Ontario

10:15-10:45 Coffee

10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Chair: Jake L. Peters, Manitoba Mennonite

Historical Society

Janis Thiessen, University of New Brunswick,

Mennonite Factory Workers: Ethnicity, Class

and Integration

Peter Epp, University of Winnipeg student,

Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Manitoba

Ted Regehr, University of Calgary, and Bill

Janzen, MCC Alberta, *Hurdles of Integration*

in Alberta

12:30-1:30 LUNCH

1:30-3:45 p.m. WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE

Chair: Esther Epp-Tiessen, MCC Canada

Tina Fehr Kehler, University of Manitoba, *A*

Gendered Study of the Mexican Mennonite

Immigrants in Southern Manitoba

Kerry Fast, University of Toronto, *If We Had*

Remained There? Religion and Family in the

Lives of Ontario Mennonite Immigrant Women

SATURDAY, OCT. 5

Patricia Harms, Arizona State University, *"God is*

here with us as well": Gendered Experiences of

Emigration from Paraguay."

3:45-4:15 'Faspa'/Nourishment Break

4:15-5:30 p.m. CHURCH LIFE IN CANADA

Chair: Abe Wiebe, Sommerfelder Church, Winkler

John I. Friesen, Canadian Mennonite University,

Kanadier. Theology and Church

Bruce Guenther, Trinity Western University, *The*

Evangelical Path of the Kanadier

5:30-6:00 p.m.

REFLECTIONS AND 'SCHLUSZ'

Reflection: Abe Reimpel, Old Colony Mennonite

Church, Winkler