

Idea and Practice of Care Extended by Anabaptist People: Cooperation toward Developing Various Methods of Communication

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Idea and Practice of Care Extended by Anabaptist People: Cooperation toward Developing Various Methods of Communication

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1. Introduction
2. The emergence of the Anabaptists and branching out to the various sects
 - 2.1 Radical reform of Anabaptists and persecution in Europe: Problem of religion and free will
 - 2.2 Expression of religion and sects diverged from Anabaptists
 - 2.3 Creation of a diverse community and lifestyle practices in North America
 - 2.3.1 “Traditional”
 - 2.3.2 “Transitional”
 - 2.3.3 “Transformational”
3. Caring for life
 - 3.1 Working and caring
 - 3.2 Caring for senior citizens and disabled people
 - 3.3 Importance of communication
 - 3.3.1 Face-to-face communication
 - 3.3.2 Creating a place for communication
4. Advancing the nonviolence principle and a variety of care practices
 - 4.1 Conscientious objection and development of alternative practices
 - 4.2 Discussion about nonviolence and pacifism
 - 4.3 Assistance to those hit by disaster or misfortune
 - 4.4 Development rooted in social justice
 - 4.4.1 Based on religious beliefs
 - 4.4.2 Collaboration with secular activities: Ten Thousand Villages
 - 4.4.3 Collaboration with secular activities: Establishment of facilities that all people can use
5. Conclusion

1. Introduction

Recently, efforts and dialogue regarding conflict resolution issues conducted by Christians, especially Protestant Anabaptists have attracted attention (Driedger 2000; Driedger and Kraybill 1994; Ishida 2007; Lippy ed. 2006; Suzuki 2003f; 2005; 2007; 2008b).

Anabaptist positions that denied the authority of contemporary church organizations and argued for separation from worldly power appeared in the 16th century. Anabaptists pronounced the Reformation led by Luther and Zwingli insufficient and insisted that real Christians had to be baptized only when the individual was convinced of his belief based on the Bible. These people have come to be called “Anabaptists” from the fact that they received an adult baptism as a secondary baptism¹). It was considered to be dangerous, though, both for worldly power and for the church to value conduct based on the belief in an individual soul and God, and Anabaptists were intensely persecuted.

In the 1700s, Anabaptists went to the New World seeking religious freedom, arrived in Philadelphia known for its religious tolerance in the United States, and after spending some time in Germantown, began to develop more (Kraybill 2003; 2010; Suzuki 2002; 2003a).

People called the “Old Order,” one of the Anabaptist sects known to have kept the most stringent norms of religious life, are skeptical of modernization, using a buggy instead of a car and declining to use electricity. Anabaptists’ refusal to participate in the draft and insistence on their way of educating their children have caused various disagreements among the people around them, and Anabaptists have experienced confrontations with the nation and state especially in the 20th century (Kraybill ed. 2003; Suzuki 2003c; 2003f)²).

Furthermore, the conduct of Old Order Amish who sent “forgiveness” to the criminal after ten Amish children were gunned down in a one-room school surprised not only people in the United States but also around the world (Kraybill, Nolt and Weaver-Zercher 2007). This attracted people’s attention and began a discussion about how Anabaptists have dealt with adversity. People wondered how Old Order Amish could forgive the criminal who gunned down young children unable to resist and how they found the reason for their forgiveness in their beliefs. In 2007, the “Amish in America” International Conference (Young Center for Pietists and Anabaptist Studies, Elizabethtown College) was held to discuss the future of Anabaptists in the 21st century, focusing on their growing diversity in practice on the one hand, and on the common beliefs they hold on the other hand.

In this chapter, I will explore what values and ideas Anabaptists have considered theirs as well as how they have practiced adjustment and coordination in order to be included in this changing modern society. I will examine what Anabaptists have much cared for, and in order to achieve their goal, how they have practiced and tended to environmental conditions. I will especially pay attention to the Anabaptist aim of creating and practicing alternative activities so that the people of this sect may carry out their belief in nonviolence based on religion. I am convinced that various expressions of and

the practice of the nonviolence principle that the Anabaptists have demonstrated provide findings of not only strategies to adjust to various confrontations but also ways to care for life.

I will examine the following points in this chapter based on the fieldwork research concerning Protestantism and the Anabaptists in North America that has been done since 1998. I trace the appearance of the Anabaptist sect in Europe and the separation of various sects in paragraph 2. In paragraph 3, I will trace details of the origin of change in the Anabaptists who immigrated to North America and their lifestyle. I will consider what devices and practices Anabaptists have used to stick to their insistence on nonviolence in paragraph 4. I will precisely look at the cooperation between different groups so that the Anabaptist sects remain able to defend their creed. I examine the relativity of the development of caring in the practice of nonviolence and daily life, and deepen consideration of the Anabaptists' wish concerning lifestyle through these processes.

2. The emergence of the Anabaptists and branching out to the various sects

2.1 Radical reform of Anabaptists and persecution in Europe: Problem of religion and free will

Anabaptist history starts when a group of young people in Switzerland, "Swiss Brethren," were mutually baptized (Kraybill 2003). In the early Reformation, the idea that adults who decided to follow Christ on the basis of their own free will challenged the norm, and these people were regarded as one of the radical Reformation sects³). The rebaptism sect assuming that only the Bible and the spirit were ultimate authorities insisted on clearly separating from the rotting church as well as world power⁴).

Menno Simons who was a convert of a Dutch Catholic priest started participating in Anabaptist activity in 1536. At that time, Zwingli who did not completely agree with Luther's Reformation began preaching in Zurich, Switzerland. Menno Simons, however, appealed for thoroughness in the Reformation assuming the cooperation of Zwingli and the civil authorities of Zurich. Simons insisted that a pure Christian had to demand the separation of the nation, or secular power, and the church, and refuse to take an oath and to worship idols. Not joining a government post and military service absolutely meant pacifism⁵).

The Anabaptists' experience of severe persecution such as torture, being burned at the stake, and drowning is drawn in *Martyrs Mirror* (1685), and has been transmitted. Anabaptist people hid themselves in caves, conducted worship, and finally, many of them escaped to Moravia, Alsace, Palatinate, the Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine, and North America. Their wish was to practice the teachings of Christ in daily life, and they hoped to lead the church in the New World only by those who practiced religion according to the scriptures.



Figure 1 “Burned at the stake” drawn in *Martyrs Mirror*
 (Source: Oyer John S. and Robert S. Kreider, “Noble Family Divided, Maria and Ursula van Beckum, Deventer, 1544”. *Mirror of the Martyrs: Stories of courage, inspiringly retold, of 16th century Anabaptists who gave their lives for their faith.* Intercourse: Good Books, 1990: 30.)

2.2 Expression of religion and sects diverged from Anabaptists

Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren diverged from Anabaptists and developed respectively (Kraybill 2003). They are called “plain people” because of their plain dress and the value they place on the practice of simple living based on the Bible.

The Hutterite sect was formed in 1528, in the initial stage of the Anabaptist movement, and many escaped to Moravia, in present-day Austria, from an intense persecution (Hostetler 1983)⁶. They reject private property and shared general merchandise based on the Acts of the Apostles in the Bible. In addition, the Hutterite sect moved to Russia in 1770 and migrated to the United States 100 years later.

Mennonites immigrated to Prussia, Russia, and North America, and they are forming churches in a lot of countries worldwide now.

The Amish, led by Jakob Ammann, were formed in 1693 about 170 years after the start of the Anabaptist movement. Ammann insisted that Anabaptists should wash each other’s feet and shun (socially avoid) ex-members companions who declined to practice this well. Ammann escaped to present-day Alsace and appealed for a further reformation of the church. However, his idea was not received to his satisfaction, and his sect, with an origin in Switzerland and the southern part of Germany, separated from the Mennonites.

The German Baptist sect, Brethren, was formed in the central part of Germany in 1708⁷. The belief in an adult baptism, the separation of church and world power, and the principles of nonviolence, among other beliefs were shared with an initial rebaptism sect

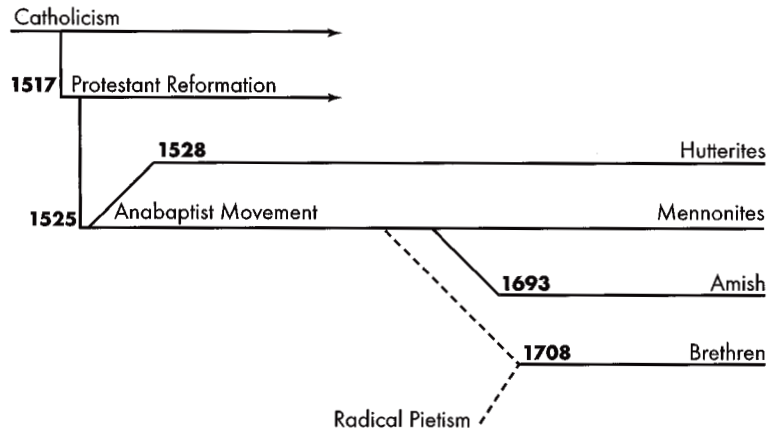


Figure 2 European Roots of the Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren
(Source: Kraybill, *Who Are the Anabaptists?*, 2003: 6)

and the Mennonites though the Brethren have not directly succeeded the genealogy of the rebaptism sect of the 16th century.

2.3 Creation of a diverse community and lifestyle practices in North America

Anabaptists, who immigrated to North America in the 19th century to escape religious persecution in Europe (Suzuki 2005), have formed four denominations: Hutterite, Mennonite, Amish, and Brethren (Kraybill 2003: 7). About 60 groups form 5,500 or more parishes and have about 578,195 members now⁸⁾ (Kraybill 2010: xii). Although Anabaptists who immigrated to the United States have focused on a radical reform of the old beliefs, the difference is seen by their interpretation of the Bible and the practice based on it. They are categorized in three groups: traditional (20%), transitional (13%), and transformational (67%) in terms of their practices in daily life⁹⁾ (Kraybill and Hostetter 2001: 55-57).

Mennonites who extend across 60 groups in North America are the largest in size and variety¹⁰⁾. Mennonites are regarded as having three groups: Old Order, conservatives, and assimilates (Kraybill 2003: 14-18). Recently, the number of members of Asian, Hispanic, and African American backgrounds has been growing in the U.S.A. and Canada. Amish are divided into four groups, each of which has subgroups.

2.3.1 “Traditional”

“Traditional” means holding attitudes that traditional Old Order Amish and Mennonites determined to maintain. Traditional people decline to use what seem to be necessities of civilized cultures in the modern world. They drive horse and buggies instead of cars, tend their fields with horses, and look at the use of electricity, television, and computers as taboo.



Figure 3 Distribution of Amish Congregations in North America
 (Source: Raber's Almanac (2009), settlement directories, and informants.)
 Note: Congregations in the following states are not shown: Colorado-3; Maine-3;
 Montana-5. (Kraybill, Donald B., *Concise Encyclopedia of Amish, Brethren, Hutterites,
 and Mennonites*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010: 8)

These traditional people follow *Ordnung*, which includes many rules about how to dress and behaves. Because pride is seen to upset the harmony in the community, each member should not be visible and humility is regarded as important. They insist much on non-resistance. If they break the rules after they are baptized based on their belief, they will be shunned until they repent.

Old Order Amish form their congregations with about 20 to 35 families¹¹⁾. Worship is held in Swiss or German dialects at a member's house, which traditional people believe to be the same way as depicted in the Bible (Suzuki 2003b)¹²⁾.

Though they consider the life of a farmer as the most preferable one, not everyone can afford the land to work on. Thus, Old Order people have developed shops and factories where they can work within the same region they were brought up in (Kraybill and Nolt 1995). They preserve their way of life, and they call people with other lifestyles "English." They count so much on mutual aid that they do not rely on Social Security.

Amish people have seven children on average, but families with ten children are not rare. New members are baptized at an older age than those of other Anabaptist churches— when they are between 16 and 22 years old. The population of Amish is growing from 5,000 in 1900 to 260,000, including both adults and children, these days.



Picture 1 Horse and buggy going on a country road, Indiana, 2010



Picture 2 An Old Order woman riding a bicycle, Indiana, 2010



Picture 3 Old Order people gathering to worship at one of the member's houses by their buggies, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 2007

Children go to school until they reach the eighth grade (Suzuki 2003c).

Old Order Mennonites make up 10% of all Mennonites. Some Old Order members did not want to live in the secularized and modernized environment of the U.S.A. and chose to move to Canada (Epp 1994).

Since coming to the United States in the 1870s, Hutterites have been engaged in communal living the longest in North America. The symbiotic colonies have increased from three to 460. They consider individual ownership to be a symbol of the seed of a selfish spirit, rationality, vanity, and other various evils. Among them, using machines is not particularly questioned, and huge tractors cultivate vast farmlands. Many migrated to Canada because they were persecuted as conscientious objectors during World War I (Epp 1994: 17).

2.3.2 “Transitional”

People who are called “Transitional” believe in changing their way of life according to the changes in society and their environment (Nolt and Meyers 2007; Hurst and McConnell 2010). Like Old Order People, they have their uniform. They do not think they need higher education or professional priests among them, and they insist on non-resistance. However, they are tolerant of other members’ religious experience and of the use of technologies other than television.



Picture 4 An Amish Mennonite family home-schooling session after their morning chores, Hutchinson, Kansas, 2009

In 1877, the Amish Mennonites separated from Old Order Amish and constructed their meeting houses for worship calling them “meeting house Amish.” These days they choose what they want to wear, their occupations, and their form of education from a variety of possibilities. Some work on farms and home-school their children, and others choose to go to college and to work in a city.

Also, in 1910, Peachy Amish whose leader’s name was Peachy separated from the Old Order group. They did not want to continue to shun others so severely and to wear the clothes prescribed by rigid rules. They came together with Beachy Amish whose members allow holding Sunday school and driving a car. People of both groups drive a car, use electricity, worship in meeting houses, and tolerate wearing different clothing. They do missionary work as well.

In 1966, New Order Amish separated from Old Order Amish, and they began to use tractors in the fields to pull harvesting equipment. What is interesting is that they often use a horse and buggy, especially on Sundays, and continue to worship in their houses, not a meeting house. One of these New Order Amish living in Kansas explained that he uses a horse and buggy because he would like to express his faith as much as he can.

There is not only one manner of applying a modern way of living, and each group has an explanation and identity based on what they have chosen.

Transitional Mennonites branched into 20 groups, and although many of them live

in rural regions, they do not necessarily make a living through agriculture. While they wear simple dress, use lay priests, and insist on separation from secular society, they make use of technologies in conducting their business.

2.3.3 “Transformational”

“Transformational” is a group that shows a positive posture in influencing and changing the general public by their religious beliefs. Although they are similar to the “Transitional” group in that they value evangelicalism, they differ greatly from other groups in the following points. They support higher education and organize large-scale churches employing professional clergy. Technology is widely used among them. They recognize individualism and have been involved in various political activities. They defend social justice and are participating in activities that mediate disputes positively.

About two thirds of the Mennonites have a high level of assimilation into the general society. They have actively accepted technology and higher education, the modern way of dressing, flexible thinking about gender roles and theological education, and acknowledgement of diversity and political activities¹³.

The Brethren have about 24 groups, and adult believers exceed 215,000 people¹⁴. The Brethren Church set up its headquarters in Ohio and has expanded its parishes to Indiana and Pennsylvania. Most groups are baptized by immersion. They wash each other’s feet and celebrate the love feast, including the sharing of bread and cup¹⁵. There is no insistence on the type of dress among them, except for the Old German Baptist and the Danker faction¹⁶.

Various subgroups’ having appeared means the following. That is, people are always examining their lifestyles and have been trying to clarify their identity.

3. Caring for life

3.1 Working and caring

The basis for the idea that agriculture is suitable as an occupation included the traditional idea of loving earth given by God. However, the key for the Anabaptists would be that sharing a job with everyone and working cannot be separated from family life. The way of farming of Old Order Amish without using agricultural machinery requires many hands. So it invites many people to work and live cooperatively. It is an expression of the idea of Old Order people that they will preserve the lives of everyone through the mutual aid extended by community members, not relying on public Social Security.

As a matter of fact, private insurance is available for use by Amish. Many of these insurance companies are run by the Mennonite people. For example, Mr. A who served as a spokesman in the shootings that occurred in October 2006 in Pennsylvania, was born in an Old Order Amish family, but chose himself to be a Mennonite and to get a job related to the well-being of the Anabaptist people. By choosing such a way of life, he thinks that both his work and private life are carried out with the same belief.

Of course, as in Lancaster, in areas with high land prices near big cities, such as Philadelphia and New York, inheriting agricultural land makes it difficult for all children.



Picture 5 Old Order Amish working in the field without using agricultural machines, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 2007



Picture 6 Woodworking Shop run by Old Order Amish selling bird feeders, Indiana, 2010



Picture 7 “Furniture” Shop run by Old Order Amish selling wood-working, Pennsylvania, 2008

Even in that case, they have tried to develop new types of work such as selling farm products in a shop installed in the corner of the farm, opening a restaurant to serve typical Amish cooking (Suzuki 2003d; 2008a), and producing and selling traditional Amish furniture. For Old Order Amish, who as part of their philosophy will not evangelize, leading an everyday life consists of thoughtful practices and is a way to fully express their beliefs.

3.2 Caring for senior citizens and disabled people

Human life from birth to death inevitably has times when practical assistance given by others is needed. Caring is recognized as an important aspect of life for Anabaptists. For example, when I visited one of the Old Order Amish schools in Lancaster, I was impressed to see children writing in their notes that one of their “favorite things” was “caring.” Caring is at the center of children’s lives as expressed in these words. Children help their grandparents, take care of small brothers/sisters and the animals, and maintain the field as well as the garden every day.

Old Order Amish people do not use facilities for the aged. In most cases, elderly care is given at home (Suzuki 2003b: 21). Home means a new part of a house extended for parents who retire. Among members of a family, children bear an important role accounting for caring for their grandparents, and they often visit the new house called “Gross daadi” Haus in Pennsylvania Dutch, meaning “the house of big father”¹⁷). It is



Picture 8 “Gross daadi” Haus (“the house of big father”) under construction in Lancaster, U.S.A. 2008

common for people not to take curative treatments even for senior citizens who have become weak. This practice is based on a common understanding of how to spend human life stages.

Of course, care for the elderly is not necessarily limited to that given by the family members. Because people can obtain insights from members’ appearance at any time in the church meetings every other Sunday, they are always ready to visit a person who is getting frail.

Caring for each other is not limited to the people of Old Order churches. Ms. B, an Amish Mennonite church member living in Lancaster, never forgets to deliver a present to the elderly living alone around her on their birthdays.

Care of friends or of acquaintances is also given out of consideration for people who have faced a change in their lifestyles such as those mourning the death of a spouse or a companion or who are taking care of a sick family member.

This kind of caring is shown as well among the Mennonite people. The Mennonite church members in Goshen, Indiana have a meeting after worship on Sundays and pass on members’ news to one another. The church was built on the site of a university that was founded by the Mennonites. Also, it is easy to walk from the university to the hospital and to facilities for the senior citizens. Therefore, people who have confirmed friends’ news in the church can go from there to the hospital for a quick visit as soon as they get the information. This meeting at the church plays an important role in people’s

interaction and caring.

3.3 Importance of communication

Communicating by talking face to face has been recognized as an important aspect of care.

3.3.1 Face-to-face communication

The care shown by an acquaintance might help a situation that cannot be solved only by the family. Old Order Amish, Mr. C, in Lancaster helps other families by taking care of young people who suffer mentally and whose parents are not able to figure out how to deal with their children. Since Old Order Amish people do not choose to leave their family members in an institution to be taken care of, they try to help each other in difficult times, and this tendency seems to provide everyone connected with the situation an opportunity to communicate with each other. Time and space for talking about changes in one's life and the exchange of information secured by the efforts of mutual care certainly help people not to be isolated.

People want to protect this time of caregiving by not having a television and telephone present, thinking that they will bring the bad influence of modern society as well as reduce the time of face-to-face talk among family members and other visitors.

The practice of face-to-face relationships is not only carried out by people of Old



Picture 9 A telephone booth located in the outskirts of a farmstead for use in an emergency by several families, Lancaster, U.S.A., 2007

Order groups. Most Anabaptists have a tendency to value speaking directly. I am always surprised to know that in general, people think they should stop and greet others when they are near their houses even if an appointment is not made beforehand. People think that it is a sign of ingratitude when passing in front of a house without greeting the people inside.

Not only Old Order Amish but also people from other groups frequently visited the suffering families of the Old Order Amish girls after they were shot in the one-room school in 2006 (Kraybill, Nolt and Weaver-Zercher 2007). I myself was accompanied by an Amish Mennonite woman to visit one of the families although she herself was not an acquaintance of the parents at all. Surprisingly, the family members were happy to see us for the first time and reported on the status of their daughter who suffered a head injury. They lost a daughter in the gunfire and took care of the daughter whose head was injured. In addition, there was another daughter who suffered mentally because of having seen the awful scene during the shooting. We spent some time together sitting around a plastic white table in front of the house, and the mother talked about how they had cared for their daughters. The mother's fingernails were filled with soil, and this showed that she continued to do her daily chores as she had been doing before the situation.

Meanwhile, the grandfather came back from his field, and he also welcomed us by smiling at us. He was known at that time for addressing "forgiveness" for the criminal who shot himself after he had shot the girls.

Afterwards, I was accompanied again by the Amish Mennonite woman, searching for people to answer my question about why and how the victims' families extended "forgiveness" to the criminal. A Mennonite woman, who was the wife of a high school teacher, welcomed us although we called on her without an appointment. Despite the fact that she had errands to do, she came out to the doorway to give her views on how "forgiveness" was done. She said that "forgiveness" was certainly taught in the Bible, but they, the people connected to that shooting, may have extended "forgiveness" in their determination to perform "forgiveness" just to continue to live the next day. She also said that the most difficult thing is to explain to their children how and why people should give "forgiveness" to others.

Sharing time together in order to consider issues related to life through conversations and questions about these issues seems to be important for people rather than doing their daily errands perfectly. Saving time for face-to-face communication works as a means of caring for living the life of each who participates in the conversation and this practice develops another practice of caring for someone who is not present. The practice of caring realized through the practice of communication is one of the purposes of life for Anabaptists.

3.3.2 Creating a place for communication

Such an attitude as the one above is being demonstrated when facilities for senior citizen are developed. In order to make face-to-face communication a reality for the frail elderly, a practical way for them to move around easily has been searched for (Stafford ed. 2003).



Picture 10 Residents eating lunch together and discussing about what they would like to have for their life care community, Goshen, Indiana, 2010

Assisted living housing for the elderly in Goshen, Indiana, developed through the efforts of the Mennonite people has one of the characteristic features of residential institutions for the aged in United States. It is a complex composed of various kinds of facilities located in one area and is often called a “life care community,” which is so common these days. The elderly can select one of the housing options and receive support based on the condition of their physical ability.

However, the characteristic point is not limited to the fact that it has various kinds of housing and support in one place. The life care community itself was developed next to Goshen College with a church and meeting rooms adjacent to the college. Thus, the elderly who want to participate in various activities can reach those places easily on foot or by wheelchair on sunny days. Ms. D who lives in this complex after having worked as a missionary for years in many places abroad enjoys attending church services as well as participating in various activities held there. She says that every event held in the church, in the meeting rooms, and at the college’s lifelong education program always allows her to feel joy and the change of seasons. She expects that even if she should become weaker, she will have visitors from nearby and continue to enjoy communicating with others.

Thus, importance is very much attached to communication. Communication is related to people’s concern for finding out about a way of life or how to create a place to live. Therefore, communication is valued in school training that Old Order Amish are receiving up to the eighth grader, in their upbringing at home, and in the education of the community (Suzuki 2003c). Teaching the next generation is an attempt to live correctly

with people who create a place to live together.

In the next section, I will examine how Anabaptists practice the principle of nonviolence and share the value they place on it with the next generation.

4. Advancing the nonviolence principle and a variety of care practices

4.1 Conscientious objection and development of alternative practices

The principle of nonresistance is a feature that Anabaptists have inherited. Many of the initial Anabaptist sects refused the exercise of all military power and violence following the teachings of Christ about loving the enemy and turning the other cheek¹⁸). However, friction with the outside world was not avoided, and the refusal to serve in the army was often assumed to be a problem. The draft program, which stationed troops in national defense, in West Germany and Japan, was begun in 1948. Public opinion about draft holdouts became strong in 1950 when the Korean War started. The alternative service program “I-W,” involved being engaged in social activities of national interest for two years, was presented in 1952. Penalties, penal servitude, and more were imposed on the person who refused this.

Young Anabaptists who served as I-Ws parted from the community, obtained a salary, and sometimes lived alone. Many of them had culture shock from living in a new environment, and the people who showed signs of depression from living solitarily also appeared one after another.

One hundred or more representatives of the church from nine states gathered, and a nationwide committee, National Amish Steering Committee, was organized in 1966. This committee negotiated with the government concerning the issue of young people working as I-Ws on a farm instead of in military service, and in the end, a mutual agreement was approved (Keim and Stoltzfus 1998; Suzuki 2003f; 2005). The Amish also exerted their ingenuity in the middle of the 1960’s. Beachy Amish made homes for retirees in the parishes of five states, and it was arranged to have I-Ws there. Later, this activity developed into the body known as “Amish Mennonite help organization”¹⁹).

4.2 Discussion about nonviolence and pacifism

Although the three groups mentioned above, “traditional,” “transitional,” and “transformational” follow a pacifistic mission and activities, the practice is different according to the group. There is a church that does not make any remarks at all with regard to the viewpoint of “peace.” There is a group that thinks it is not necessary to challenge injustice in society positively, whereas there is another group that thinks it should also consider actively challenging injustice in society while adhering to principles of nonviolence (Dicklitch and Heather Rice 2004; Driedger 2000; Driedger and Kraybill 1994).

There is a group that thinks that conscientious objection is a matter based on individual conscience, even if the church is formally declaring pacifism. There is a group that does not recommended joining military forces; however, it does not especially punish the person who does join.

In the group that is more assimilated, historical understanding concerning nonresistance has been converted into a positive program dealing with appeals and social justice to change society, making a program concerned with mediating wars and disputes (Ishida 2007; Ishida ed. 2011) for both victims and assailants. Thus, Mennonites and the Brethren were involved in financial and humanitarian help in Europe after World War II.

Since these discussions are related to the religious identity of Anabaptists or how much they will be involved in the world, emphasis on the issues has continued.

4.3 Assistance to those hit by disaster or misfortune

Based on evangelicalism, almost all the Anabaptist churches have helped in disaster areas and people who suffer²⁰. They bring relief funds to help rescue victims, orphans, refugees, and others (Bell et al. 1978).

The Brethren Service Center (BSC), which has organized the Brethren Church volunteer work, has held auctions to raise money for rebuilding and rescue supplies. Brethren Disaster Services (BDS) provides material support. From 1960, it has succeeded in raising millions of dollars from hundreds of auctions for the refugee and material help programs.

People of various Anabaptist groups are ardently offering the articles and the labor for these auctions. Earnings mounted up to 4.8 million dollars in a year when forty-one auctions were held. Old Order groups, such as the Amish, are also participating by helping through Christian Aid Ministries (CAM), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS). The vast majority that support CAM are conservative groups such as Old Order Amish and the Amish Mennonites. CAM delivers 130 million yen a year in monetary aid from contributions and auctions.



Picture 11 Mennonite volunteers making a comforter by quilting patchwork cloth in the meeting room of a church set up on the premises of a college, Goshen, Indiana, 2010



Picture 12 Amish Women doing patchwork, York, Indiana, 2009

There is a large-scale CAM in Akron, Pennsylvania. The donated comforters are made with patchwork quilting, which makes the best use of edge cutting (Suzuki 2003e: 21). Amish do not use fabric of a peculiar color; solid colors are used for making the support goods. Old Order Amish remarkably do the packing and other work in a secluded room. Various groups have been active in ways that are considered appropriate in light of their beliefs and lifestyle practices, and they complement one another and effectively work together.

The father of an Old Order Amish man, Mr. E of Lancaster, who has already retired, makes a handmade stationery case almost every evening for children who lack supplies. The Amish use a covering for their horses on rainy days made of a durable fabric; he makes use of the scraps of this fabric. He brings what he has made to MCC, and then MCC works with him to send the goods to those children in need. In this way, he is able to continue to do his helpful work without corresponding directly with the people living abroad. Such a support service is possible thanks to the cooperation of “traditional” Old Order people, and “transitional” and “transformational” Mennonites.

The Mennonites in Indiana make quilts for protection against the cold weather in the activity room of the church with a university on the premises every Wednesday evening. Members volunteer, and they are not only housewives. Some people come after work to participate. They are always provided with a simple meal of bread and soup prepared by one of the volunteers, and young college students seem to look forward to talking to friends outside the university while quilting and having tasty snacks. These quilts are sold in relief sales and auctions mostly held in autumn, especially in September in the Goshen area.

This season is also the time when Anabaptists from the cities and towns in the area



Picture 13 A truck for canning, Akron, Pennsylvania, 2011

where Anabaptist churches are active are anxiously waiting for the truck for “canning,” coming all the way from Pennsylvania. The truck with equipment goes around the United States for people to volunteer to can, and the canned goods produced will be sent to an area where people need good food. This kind of event consists of a sale and canning; it is one of the big events and open to the general public.

Those events have an atmosphere that is a mixture of a farmer’s market and a festival showing the characteristic features of local products and traditions of the area as well as the volunteer work. People have fun and an opportunity to communicate and to reconsider their identity as well as to express their faith by participating in those events.

4.4 Development rooted in social justice

4.4.1 Based on religious beliefs

There are people who try to develop a positive program to help others not remain in poverty due to disasters, to defend peace and social justice in the Anabaptist sect, and to deal with inside and outside problems concerning disproportionate wealth and the quality of life too. “The Third Way” emphasizes the meaning of an overall approach that considers spiritual ministry, social justice, caring, and economic development.

Mennonite Central Services (MCS) has trained a specialist in mediation and dispute resolution. The Christian peace activity group is offering a joint program that trains a peace activity person who promotes nonviolence in international disputes.

The network of Mennonite “Peaceful Evangelicalism Persons” insists on progress in peace and evangelicalism as an expression of their belief. The MCC projects inside and

outside of the country uphold activities that aim at peace and justice concerning violent situations, disputes, racism, and sexism (Naka 2008). The Brethren has also developed various programs. MCC supports refugee assistance, material supplies, and international development; it has aimed its support at the international relief fund and service organizations, and the activities of the volunteers and staff in 57 countries is supported by a budget of sixty million dollars a year.

In North America the largest MCC, which is in Akron, Pennsylvania, is responsible for the core support activities conducted by the members of the Mennonites who come from many parts of the world. It also has a place to stay for training and conferences. People who do the training to serve as the foundation in many parts of the world reside in the housing that features as a starting point the lifestyles of the places represented by the people residing there.

A conference room for children has been installed in such housing. The participants in training and in cultural exchanges are often accompanied by a child. Providing children an opportunity to talk about various situations around the world and the meaning of supporting others is one of purposes of the MCC activity geared toward sharing values with the next generation.

A patchwork quilt is exhibited in the plaza of the MCC facility in Akron. It was made in collaboration with people who came from various parts of the world, and this quilt expresses a cultural unity different from a feature pattern and the colors of Amish



Picture 14 Temporary housing for training people from abroad and those going abroad, Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania, 2007



Picture 15 A conference room for children with small chairs for children installed at the largest Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in North America, Akron, Pennsylvania, 2007



Picture 16 A quilt hangs at the largest Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in North America, Akron, Pennsylvania, 2008

and Mennonites living in the United States.

An activity practiced as a grassroots movement by making use of the church is also going on. For example, some churches of the Mennonites and other groups in Goshen make a schedule to provide shelter on Sunday evenings for those without a stable place to live. The purpose of this activity is to give the children of those people an opportunity to learn in a good and safe environment. With such an activity, the education of the next generation is observed not only in the family cared for but also in the family that stays in the church to look after the people.

4.4.2 Collaboration with secular activities: Ten Thousand Villages

4.4.2.1 Features of the Ten Thousand Villages

The MCC and the BSC have been taking part in international development by organizing the sale of handcrafted products that are produced mainly by Third World artisans. Ten Thousand Villages, fair trade stores developed by the MCC, have 120 stores in North America.

With respect to the United States, the Ten Thousand Villages of Akron, Pennsylvania has developed seasonal products. The following three points were related to the product development obtained during the field survey.

The first point is that, these days, in order to work together with people around the world who have various cultural backgrounds and a variety of religious beliefs, they are working as an NGO to earn independently instead of performing as part of the institution of the MCC based on the Mennonite group of Christianity.

In order to develop a commodity expected to be sold in the United States, the person who plays the role of adjusting the needs and the technology of local commodity producers is indispensable. Although the staff of MCC are Mennonites and have accumulated knowledge concerning the situation in the area they serve and may help to find an appropriate person to play the role, it does not matter at all whether a local staff member abroad or a domestic staff member holds the religious beliefs of Mennonites²¹). Thus, aiming at the effective enhancement of the situation of the local producer in the third world, Ten Thousand Villages has been developed to serve anyone who needs a system of fair trade.

The second point relates to the fact that the staff at Ten thousand Villages conduct a survey on the needs of people in North America, and they even make an effort to create new trends to increase sales. They say that they are not insisting upon the expression of the cultural characteristics of people in many parts of the world because their aim is to raise sales in order to help the people who are producing the commodities by giving them better payment.

The third interesting point relates to products that have a variety of features and messages. The first one is, of course, those products that express the cultural characteristics and cultural diversity around the world. The second is those that insist on “eco” as a universal value, for example. And the third is those that send a message that pushes people to consider domestic differences and discrimination in the United States. For example, chocolate is sold at the Ten Thousand Villages at Hutchinson that is



Picture 17 Ten Thousand Villages with a map of the world, Berlin, Ohio, 2004



Picture 18 A Mennonite director, the center, of the Ten Thousand Villages came from Egypt to explain the products to Amish Mennonites, Hutchinson, Kansas, 2009



Picture 19 Products made from recycled materials, Hutchinson, Kansas, 2009

produced by a woman who escaped domestic violence and is trying to become independent.

How to arrange those commodities is left to the judgment of the local buyer. Buyers can retrieve items from the MCC in Akron, or they may purchase the item by themselves.

4.4.2.2 Potential for Ten Thousand Villages as a multifunctional space

Another feature of the Ten Thousand Villages is that, thanks to its openness as a shop, in combination with other spaces it increases the functionality of the entire facility.

In Toronto, Canada where multiculturalism prevails, many groups of people from various cultural backgrounds have been developing living facilities for senior citizens. A facility for Mennonites is operated with a Ten Thousand Villages placed just at the entrance of it. This space is used as a coffee shop where any of the residents as well as nonresidents can enjoy themselves with cookies and fair trade coffee, though it is small-scale as a store. Although facilities for the elderly who have a common cultural context with Mennonites tend to be closed to outsiders, this multifunctional space helps to secure a passage for the facility opened to the outside.

4.4.3 Collaboration with secular activities: Establishment of facilities that all people can use

In order to keep the well-being of everyone in mind, activities related to the quality of life of older people— mental health issues and respectful support for Alzheimer’s



Picture 20 A life care community developing various facilities including a living space for Alzheimer’s patients and “Children’s Learning Centre” for children. Lititz, Pennsylvania, 2010

patients— have been developed by creating various facilities. This field has been ardently developed as an alternative service for conscientious objectors centering on Mennonites (Neufeld ed. 1983).

At the same time, these activities may raise the possibility that people working or volunteering feel included in their local community and get satisfaction from their lives because anyone has an opportunity to work for those facilities.

5. Conclusion

The Anabaptists insisted that individuals could become believers only according to the Bible and by their own intention, and they appeared as a radical faction in the age of the Reformation.

However, Anabaptists have divided into many groups because of differences of opinion such as the interpretation of the Bible and the life practice according to the Bible. The opinion is different as well for practices concerning nonviolence in each group.

This paper traced the history, considering the differences of opinion among the Anabaptists, and then it focused on contemporary situations that different groups have worked together on toward a common goal. It is the practice of nonviolence development that I especially paid attention to.

Service as practice of the nonviolence principle is done in most Anabaptist groups. Whether people practice the arrangement of non-violent activities related to support or

caring in daily life, their purpose is to create an environment where a relationship (mutual aid) is felt.

The first purpose of relations or caring is to support each other through transitions in life. The second objective of support is to give people a sense of security and confidence of being subsumed under the community, the world, or history. It is to share various environments that lend themselves to hope.

The third purpose of support is to make it so that all people may participate in the discussion. It is an attempt at normalization. At the base of such practice, there is the creed of the rebaptism sect that everyone is equal as a member of the community.

It is indispensable to practice communication in order to achieve the purposes surrounding relations or caring. Meeting is valued because it is thought that to actually see and to call on one another will promote greater understanding. The activity of mediation where other people tell about intentions and appearance is important for the person with debility and limited mobility.

To assist or to promote communication is a practice done to create a whole world in which a person would want to live.

New challenges are always undertaken, even by people of Old Order groups with the creed of living apart from the modern world by looking for ways toward communication. Developing communication styles might bring about a place of enjoyment and exchanges like relief sales and so on. Such places connote communication and become the seed of new ideas.

Strict rules such as “shunning” that are continued among the people of the Old Order have the meaning of expressing that they would never give up communicating by asking the one who is shunned to come back for communication or to live together again. Their insistence on giving forgiveness to criminals, which elicits surprise among people in the general society, has aimed to make a place where parties concerned about events live together again by communicating continuously. By caring for the mother affected by a shooting, a person visiting to read a book to the child who was shot is a means to reviving the place to live for both the mother of the criminal and the victim.

The development of ways to build relationships with others is one of communication, to express a way of life reconsidering each one’s identity. We reconsider how to share a place with others with whom we live in contemporary society and obtain courage to undertake the adjustment of complex issues by tracing the history of the Anabaptists who are interested in the quality of life.

Notes

- 1) The word “Anabaptist” is used nowadays to mean a believer in the church that flows from a theological tradition and the reform radical sect formed by a person who was baptized twice in the 1500s and the initial movement (Kraybill 2003: 7). Currently, in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Vancouver in Canada, people pray in various languages, such as Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish, and Anabaptists in North America show aspects of ethnic variety.

- 2) The controversy surrounding the school in Pennsylvania was taken up on a large scale by the media, such as *Time* and *The New York Times*, in the 1930's, and the problem concerning the draft was given attention in the 1950's.
- 3) They were called "Anabaptist" because they were rebaptized after they had received infant baptism.
- 4) Since infant baptism was a rite for people to become a church member and at the same was the basis for taxation and subjected the person to conscription, it was also an important ritual for worldly power.
- 5) Actually, Mennonite, Brethren, and Quaker have been often called historical, peace churches; the exercise of legal power is not allowed, and prosecution is prohibited among Old Order people of those groups (Keim and Stoltzfus 1998).
- 6) Jacob Hutter who led one of the groups was captured in 1535, burnt alive, and 2000 people or more died as martyrs.
- 7) They are called the Dunker faction from their adoption of immersion as baptism.
- 8) A lot of parishes are especially seen in Pennsylvania in the United States of America. Because this area is known for religious tolerance and was opened by the Quaker William Penn, not only the Anabaptists but also various Protestant sects such as the Moravians, Ephlata Cloister, and Shakers headed for this place (Suzuki 2010: 80).
- 9) These three kinds are expedient to the last classifications, and none of the groups has accomplished this transition in a straight line. A severer rule might be newly provided so that a conservative group may posture that it defends belief and is separate. A different group is invented, and their interpretations and expressions keep sending a message to the general society of nonviolence and pacifism and of being influenced by a common origin with the rebaptism sect.
- 10) Some of them came from Switzerland and southern Germany, and others, starting from the Netherlands or northern Germany, have been through Russia and Prussia. In Ontario, Canada, there are those who have traveled through Russia and Mexico from Europe.
- 11) They live chiefly in a small town in Ontario, Canada, and in the United States. About two-thirds of them live in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. Beachy Amish went south from Lancaster and live in more than 20 states of the United States, in one Canadian state, in Belize, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of El Salvador, and the Republic of Paraguay. In 2010, there were 153 Beachy Amish congregations throughout the world (Gameo).
- 12) Worship is held every other Sunday. People gather in one of the farm houses. Song, prayer, and preaching are done; instruments are not used. After a three-hour service, food and conversation are exchanged.
- 13) This large scale group is called Mennonite Church USA and has 105,941 members in 2009. Mennonite Brethren emigrated from Russia to Kansas, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota in the 1870s. As for the "Canadian Mennonite Church" and "Mennonite Brethren Church" (Canada Conference), they have about 35,000 (in 2004) and 37,000 (in 2010) believers respectively (Gameo).
- 14) The Brethren in Christ came to the eastern part of Pennsylvania in 1780. They maintain the traditions of the Mennonite Anabaptist and the genealogy of Brethren Pietist. They changed their name in the 1860s though they were first known as River Brethren. The Wesleyan

Holiness Movement also influenced the Brethren in Christ. It is assumed that they have three genealogies: a rebaptism sect, a pious principle, and the Wesley principle now.

The four biggest groups are Church of the Brethren, The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Church, the Brethren in Christ, and Brethren Church. Grace Brethren Church emphasizes evangelicalism, is expanding, and has 260 parishes in the United States of America located in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and California. Church of the Brethren set up its headquarters in Illinois. Its creed and identity are confirmed at an annual conference, and it has a monthly publication *Messenger*.

- 15) A simple “Love Feast” of the Holy Communion type is an important element of this church.
- 16) Old German Baptist Brethren the biggest group that wears simple clothes has about 6000 members in 50 parishes. Dunkard Brethren a smaller group also emphasizes simple dress.
- 17) This spelling of “Gross daadi” Haus was suggested to me by Stephen Scott during my fieldwork in Lancaster conducted in 2008. Since this word is mostly used orally, there is not a concrete rule for how to write this word.
- 18) A quiet nonresistance that refuses violence, war participation, political activity, lawsuits, etc. is emphasized in the traditional group, and there is a provision to expel the person who participated in military activity, too.
- 19) Old Order Amish began the periodical *Ambassador of Peace* and have sent it to children engaged in I-W since 1966. News of participants in the I-W and that of the church were put in this magazine.
- 20) The Anabaptists in North America organized mission agencies in the 1900s. There are people who help the Anabaptist church’s formation of the locale in many parts of the world, too. In a lot of mission programs, evangelicalism has been combined with service ministries. However, the more traditional churches are not very positive about such an activity. In the group of more traditional Brethren, such as Old German Baptist Brethren, Old Order River Brethren, and Dunkard Brethren, evangelicalism is not emphasized, and relief programs and disaster recovery support are ardently pursued. Although Hutterites also have people who participate in soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc., few of them go out of their colonies to participate in mission activities.
- 21) This information is based on an interview conducted in 2009 with Ms. A. who was serving as the product development manager at Ten Thousand Villages in Akron, Pennsylvania.

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