

# **Understanding Hutterian Perceptions of Nature: A Life History Approach**

by

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## Abstract

This thesis focus on the life histories of two Hutterite farmers from Southern Alberta with the central purpose of showing how they perceive of and understand their socionatural environment. Learning how individual Hutteite interact with and value the prairie landscape of which they are a part is important for shedding light on the validity of external representations of the Hutterites. For over a century the Hutterites of Western Canada have been at the centre of many disputes. They have been criticized by mainstream society for rural depopulation, the decline of local farming communities, and their highly competitive use of large-scale farming technology. These life histories provide, however, a window through which we can look beyond the narrative of economic progress to personal narratives that reflect a fundamental commitment to heeding the Biblical mandate for the responsible stewardship of community and nature.

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## Hutterite Pronunciation

In order to create an orthography that comes closest to the narrator's pronunciation, and the subtle nuances of their speech, I am not always consistent with the orthography developed by Dr. Walter Hoover in his third edition of the only extensive Hutterian-English Dictionary (2000).<sup>1</sup> While Hoover's dictionary, consisting of 6428 vocabulary, has been a useful resource, his orthography reflects what he refers to as, "rein Huttrisch" [pure Hutterite]. In a recent discussion with Dr. Hoover regarding the use and documentation of *Huttrisch* today, despite his lamentations about the disappearance of the "pure" Hutterite his grandmother (a *Prairieleut*)<sup>2</sup> used to speak, he nonetheless agreed that transcribing Hutterite life histories should be done to best reflect the language variations and the different "layers of language,"<sup>3</sup> used by the narrator (personal communication with Walter Hoover, Saskatoon, Sask., August 16, 2000). This explains why I blend Hutterite, High German, and English spelling throughout the original transcriptions of Zack and Elizabeth's stories.

For example, *Schrifthuttrisch*, or the written High German learned in German school, is often used in Elizabeth's and Zack's everyday speech,<sup>4</sup> while *Predigthuttrisch* (which closely resembles High German from the Bible) is commonly used when referring to Scriptural passages, songs, and prayers. The latter is generally indicated by using italics (such as *Christus der Herr in Garten ging*), and the former by simply using the German spelling (or equivalent). For example, instead of the traditional Hutterite form of *Hailont*, I might use *Heilund* or the German *Heiland*, depending on how it is pronounced. Frequently used Anglicisms are also italicized (such as *aingepitched*, or *trubl*) and tend to

<sup>1</sup> Another invaluable source of reference is Kurt Rein's lexicon "Die deutsche Mundart der Hutterischen Brueder in Nordamerika" (987).

<sup>2</sup> As defined in Hoover's dictionary, "prearilait," or "prairie people" is "a designation used for the independent Hutterites, specifically not in a colony . . . who arrived after 1901 from South Dakota and Manitoba . . ." (2000:115).

<sup>3</sup> Kurt Rein makes reference to four different "layers" or *Sprachschichten* of Hutterite. They are: *das Grundhutterische* [basic Hutterite], *das Schrifthuttrische* [written Hutterite], *das Standardhuttrisch* [standard Hutterite], *das Predigthuttrisch* [church Hutterite] (Rein, 1977: 270-279).

<sup>4</sup> Zack's and Elizabeth's use of *Schrifthuttrisch* is partly because of my own use of High German. At times they felt that for the sake of clarity it would be easier to pronounce certain words or phrases using High German rather than *Huttrisch*. This is especially true of Zack's narration. As the German schoolteacher he

be spelled closer to the English gloss from which they have been borrowed. For example, *Injine* is transcribed closer to the English *engine* than the Hutterite *intschain*. This was a practical choice because the English spelling is more familiar to Zack and Elizabeth than the Hutterite (which is only spoken today), and because it will be more accessible to readers when they come across them in the English translations as well.

## ORTHOGRAPHY

- ae As in the English pail. Sometimes this diphthong is drawn out, as in payment.
- ah As in blah. In Hutterite the 'h' draws out the vowel preceding it. For example, *nahmaschin*.
- ch As in cube, or the German *moeglich*.
- ck As in the English crack.
- ea As in the English pear.
- ei As in the English file.
- i As in need, or in Hutterite, *kitl* or *ibr*. Words like *bilt* or *tipfl* are not as drawn out. These would be closer to the English word knit.
- ie Words, such as *tiesch*, or *bierschtl* are close to the English field. In some cases the ie diphthong is more drawn out, as in *einriedn* or *ausdrieblen*. This is closer to the German *Biene*.
- uo As in (oo) + (ah), for example, nuance.
- oa As in (oo) + (oh), for example, in Hutterite *goatn*
- k Close to the /g/ sound in *Gemeinschaft*. NB. The only time /k/ is replaced by ch is when Biblical references such as *Christ* and *christlich*. Here the German spelling is used.
- m As in English market. When it is the last letter of a word following b or p, as in *zommklaubm*, or *auspumpm*.
- sch As in the English shoe.
- s Single consonants generally mean that the preceding vowel is long, as in, *saesl*
- ss Double consonants generally indicate that the vowel is short, as in *onpossn*.
- w As in the English vinegar.

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has an excellent command of High German, which is why, at times, his pronunciation sounds more German than Hutterite. Elizabeth's pronunciation is more consistently Hutterite than German.

## Part One

### PROLOGUE: “COWBOYS AND HUTTERITES”

The first day I arrived in Southern Alberta to do field research during the last year of my undergraduate degree, I went with my grandfather to the local tavern in Warner. In a town of four hundred, my grandfather, a lifelong resident, of course knew all five men sitting on the red vinyl chairs across from the bar. We sat down with them and he introduced me as “the granddaughter who was going to study the Hutterites.” Before the bartender made it back with my beer and clamato juice, the man across from me, wearing a cap advertising “Roundup Herbicide” and a burgundy jacket branded with two crossed rifles, the head of a big horned sheep, and “Silhouette Shooters” in bold letters across the top, had already finished his first joke.

So the Hutterites come up to St. Peter. St. Peter says who’s sittin’ out there? What? I never heard of the Hutterites before, but when he looked out, they were gone and so were the two pearly gates.

Swallowing the last of his Molson Canadian, he turned to me and said, “You’ve got to get to the inner core!” The inner core of what, I wondered.

You see, by the year 2020, they’ll own this whole area. I think they’ll annihilate this town and all the small farms. They swarm, and move to a new colony. They can pay a thousand dollars an acre, and in cash! Nobody can afford that! There are new colonies going up all the time. They just draw out of a hat who will stay and who will go. Then the women get together in the laundry room and decide on the name.<sup>5</sup>

When I asked if he thought that the Hutterites had any redeeming qualities, another man quickly responded:

Oh sure, they come into town and donate blood at the fire department when they know they’ve made you mad. They think they’re bein’ good Samaritans, but really they just know they’ll get free beer.

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<sup>5</sup> Personal communication with a Warner resident (Feb 18, 1997). Implicit in these last two sentences is the idea that, while the Hutterites randomly picked names, whether out of a hat or in the laundry room, a farmers’ fate was being decided. That is, every time a new daughter colony was built, another family farm was being displaced. My seemingly insensitive question, “But was it not their choice to sell?” brought a few sharp glances from across the table. I wondered if it wasn’t time to leave.

Another man from the bar yelled, “We call em’ crows!”

A reflection upon the history of the Hutterites reveals that distrust and animosity towards them is nothing new. Such sentiments were prevalent even at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the Hutterites began to establish their first communal *Bruderhoefe*, or brotherhoods, in Moravia (now part of present day Czech Republic). Early Anabaptist writer, Andreas Fischer documented the friction in an article entitled “Forty five reasons why the Anabaptists are not tolerated in this land”<sup>6</sup> (translation, Fischer, 1606, qtd. in Brednich 1998:46). In anthropologist Rolf Brednich’s reading of Fischer, the Hutterites were regarded with jealousy and contempt by their neighbors, and “at that time, the Jesuits were especially known for spreading cruel rumors about the Hutterites” (translation, Brednich, 1998:46). The Hutterites were envied for their expertise in medicine, their quality craftsmanship, or their frugality, but even more so for their wealth (Friedman, 1961). Similarly, today, there is a begrudging sense that their wealth has allowed them “easy access” to “the best” farmland. As a result, many fear that Hutterite competition for land will someday facilitate a Hutterite majority. Nowhere is this fear more predominant than in Alberta.<sup>7</sup>

Alberta has the highest concentration of Hutterites in North America,<sup>8</sup> and the expansion of Hutterite colonies is more visible there than in any other Canadian province or American state.<sup>9</sup> This expansion has been and continues to be at the root of many volatile social and political issues (to be discussed in Chapter 7) in several of the states and provinces in which the Hutterites live.<sup>10</sup> Alberta has been, and remains, however, particularly antagonistic (Miller, 1983:57).

The sad reality is the impact of this unrelenting hostility. As one young non-Hutterite man explained to me: “Around here you’re brought up playin’ ‘Cowboys and

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<sup>6</sup> For the original work, see Andreas Christopher Fischer, “*Vier und funftzig Erhebliche Ursacken Warumb die Widertauffer nicht sein im Land zu leyden*,” Ingolstadt, 1607. [Ben. Expl. HAB Wolfenbuettel 189.22 Th (2).]

<sup>7</sup> The Hutterites comprise 5.5% of the farming population in Alberta, and own 1.5% of Alberta’s agricultural land (Kiel, 1995:64).

<sup>8</sup> In Alberta there are approximately 400 Hutterite colonies. This makes up 70% of all Hutterite colonies in North America (Riverview Colony Directory, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> A colony branches, on the average, every 15 to 20 years, or once a colony reaches a population anywhere between 100 to 150 members.

Hutterites' instead of 'Cowboys and Indians'" (personal communication with Chris Ogg August 4, 1999).<sup>11</sup> Moreover, this hostility has led to a plethora of misconceptions about the Hutterites. Like the men in the tavern, who had a hard time finding any redeeming qualities in what they liked to call "goddamn Hoots," many people have a hard time seeing the value of Hutterite communities within the prairie landscape. Of course not all southern Albertans show the same intolerance. Like my grandfather, or the retired colony schoolteachers with whom I stayed, some people see the Hutterites as an asset to the local prairie economy, and regard them as "the best neighbors" and "some of the best farmers in the country." However, these latter views are in the minority.

Most people will generally agree with at least one of the main accusations made against the Hutterites: that they do not support the local economy, that they are no different from corporate farmers, and therefore have economic advantages which make them unfair competitors to small farmers, and that they threaten to take over vast rural areas if allowed to expand (Palmer, 1971:18).

While there is no question that the Hutterites are beneficiaries of the technological advancements of agriculture and various other aspects of the large corporate farm, what people often overlook is the fact that it takes more than the right technology to sustain a community of, on average, a hundred people. It also requires an extensive knowledge about what works and what does not work, along with a strong commitment to the religious principles that dominate the "Community of Goods." To assume that the Hutterites are merely a bunch of corporate farmers, "treating their land as radically and relentlessly" (Holzach, 1993:132) as other large-scale farmers, not only impedes our understanding of the deeply rooted religious consciousness that features prominently in their behavior and attitudes towards the land; it also precludes any notion of their having and applying local or traditional knowledge.

It is important, therefore, to look behind this corporate farming image at individual Hutterite farmers whose lives convey a sense of place on the prairies and a local knowledge of the land that has not been eroded by the "worldly" agribusiness image

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<sup>10</sup> The Hutterites also live in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia, the Dakotas, Montana, and Washington (see Figure 1).

<sup>11</sup> To protect his anonymity I have given him a pseudonym.

of the Hutterites. What makes Hutterite life histories valuable is that they provide us with a window through which we can look behind this image, and they enable us to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of what it is that orients these individuals in their world. It is in the interest of disseminating such an understanding, and in superseding some of the common misconceptions about Hutterites, that I turned to the life history approach.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### BACKGROUND

My reason for writing this thesis is a long-held interest in the Hutterites. This interest took root during my childhood in Southern Alberta, when my grandfather would take me with him to one of the neighboring Hutterite colonies to purchase fresh eggs or to have his boots repaired. As a student, twenty years later, I found myself sitting next to my grandfather, heading east of town in his white Ford to buy a couple dozen eggs from the now retired Hutterite chicken boss. The only other main difference between this trip and the earlier ones was that instead of a lollipop, I was now clutching a steno pad and a minidisc recorder. As we drove across the rolling coulees, my grandfather vividly recalled the day in 1929 from his childhood when the Hutterites arrived in Warner, Alberta, from South Dakota. Before his bus driver, the late John Lonsdale, dropped him off at school, he drove by the train depot where a strange looking group of black-clad men, women, and children stood waiting for Mr. Lonsdale to return and take them to their new home, the old Tenney brothers' farm.<sup>12</sup> My own direct involvement with the Hutterites came that day I drove with my grandfather in his Ford to the retired chicken boss, Mr. Mandel, who agreed to help me with my undergraduate thesis on the Hutterian language.<sup>13</sup> I was interested in finding out how successfully the Hutterites had retained their unique Carinthian-Tyrolian dialect.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The Elmspring Hutterite colony was the first to establish itself in Warner County. To this day it is still referred to as "Tenney." It was here that I was given the opportunity to immerse myself in Hutterite language and culture four weeks prior to starting my life history research.

<sup>13</sup> Shauna LaTosky, "Preservation of the Hutterian Dialect," unpub. honours thesis, Department of Germanic Studies, University of Victoria, April, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> The Hutterian German dialect is slowly being lost to more modern Anglicisms. In fact, compared with the number of non-indigenous words that the Hutterites have borrowed over their first 350 years, borrowings over the last century have progressively become more and more prominent in their everyday speech. See Herfried Scheer "The Hutterian German Dialect: A Study in Sociolinguistic Assimilation." *MQR* 54 (1980): 229-243.

Besides the motivation that came from my general interest in the Hutterites, and more specifically their use of language, my main interest for doing this thesis is a commitment to understanding how people value and perceive the prairies. My research is driven by three general questions:

- i) to what extent does the well-being of the prairie landscape depend on its relationship to human's understanding of and value of it?
- ii) to what extent does the Hutterite example provide insight into the qualities that affect the way they deal with things of the earth?
- iii) to what extent do outsider perceptions of Hutterites impede our understanding of how Hutterites see themselves in the prairie landscape?

## **PURPOSE**

Using the life history approach as a frame of reference, I shall look at various aspects of Hutterite perceptions of the environment. Through the process of telling one's life history a panoply of ideas, beliefs, stories, songs, prayers, maps, memories, and experiences are conceptualized and expressed, and come to validate the different ways and contexts in which people construe coherent understandings of their natural environment and their sense of place within it (Basso, 1996:106). By using this approach we can attend to such "conceptual and expressive instruments" (Basso, 1996:106).

In this thesis, I focus on two Hutterite farmers, Zack Wurz, and Elizabeth Wipf. I am particularly interested in their perceptions of the socionatural world of which they are a part, and their sense of place within it. While much of the scholarship to date has focused on the close tie between Hutterite ideas of nature and religion in shaping their ecological worldview, few studies have looked at the individual Hutterite's encounter with and perceptions of nature. The life history approach offers a method for stimulating memories that vivify one's ideas of nature within a specific historical and cultural context.

I use the life history as a conceptual and expressive tool for engaging in one's experiences with nature and for identifying one's ecological worldview or, "ecological identity," to adopt Mitchell Thomashaw's term (1995:3). For example, to begin the first

phase of Zack's and Elizabeth's life history interviews, I encouraged them to recollect childhood experiences and places in nature that were of significance to them (Thomashaw, 1995: 8-12; Corcoran, 1999).<sup>15</sup> These stories not only revealed the different activities Zack and Elizabeth carried out in these places, but their memories and impressions of these places evoked feelings of reverence for "the wonders of God" [*die Wunder Gottes*]. In the second "phase" of interviews, I asked them to share their experiences of growing up, and the important lessons they learned. This helped to unlock the basis of their values and commitments towards community and, as their stories of adulthood convey, their commitment to Creation (Thomashaw, 1995).

As we know, however, culture is not homogenous, but divergent and patterned, and these two life histories are not all that is needed to factor in everything which guides Hutterite perceptions of the environment (Nazarea, 1999:104). As Davies maintains, "it is possible to abstract various themes from the lives of individual members of a given social category that are indeed representative of most of the members of this category, without losing sight of the unique individual experiences" (Davies, 1999:170) characteristic of Zack's and Elizabeth's life stories. In other words, the common themes that emerge from their recollections of childhood, adolescence, and stories as adults may be representative of most Hutterites of the same age and gender, although at the core, Elizabeth's and Zack's stories are unique to them.

Their stories offer us the opportunity to reflect upon a wealth of local knowledge of the land, and a sense of place and community that may be of consequence in understanding the impact of communal living on the prairies. It is my belief that these stories are a stepping stone to a better understanding of the imprint the Hutterites are leaving upon the land, one that I will argue is less threatening than many people tend to believe.

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<sup>15</sup> In Peter Corcoran's work on "environmental autobiography," the value of childhood memory of places is considered vital for understanding one's ideas of nature, and one's sense of place recalled in adult reflections (1999:181). For other insightful works on children's experiences of place, see: Edith Cobb, *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1977, and Gary Nabhan and Stephen Trimble, *The Geography of Childhood: Why children need wild places*. Boston: Beacon, 1994.

## METHODS

In the summer of 1998 both Elizabeth and Zack agreed to share their life histories with me. I did not choose either of them in a random fashion. Zack emerged as a knowledgeable teacher and gardener when I met him during the last year of my undergraduate studies, and Elizabeth was recommended to me by her daughter-in-law as someone with a gift for storytelling, a great memory, and a tremendous knowledge of traditional Hutterite farming practices. Though both lamented the ordinariness of their lives, and questioned what their life histories could possibly contribute to my study, they were hopeful that, in the end, I would somehow make sense of their stories.

I recorded Zack's and Elizabeth's stories over two summers, in 1998 and 1999. For the first summer, I traveled the long and bumpy gravel roads every third or fourth day to their "colonies," as they (like all Hutterites) commonly refer to their communities. Some days I would arrive only to find out that Zack was away at a funeral in Saskatchewan, or that Elizabeth had to make an unexpected visit to a sick relative, or help one of her daughters at another colony. I had no choice of course but to cancel my research agenda and return the following day. However, even when we did manage to schedule an interview, a major challenge in my work with Zack and Elizabeth was finding necessary periods of "quiet time" away from colony activities. Seldom could we predict a time when we would be free of interruptions by curious neighbors, or calls to check the garden or to pick potatoes. In a community such as there's, time alone is rare. As Rolf Brednich explains:

The members of a Bruderhof live every moment of every hour in the community, and in every moment, the community keeps the individual busy. That is to say that seldom, or never, will you meet a community member alone, but rather always as a member of alternating groupings: family, school, work groups, gender groups, the collective community, and so on (1981:39).

This problem was alleviated, for the most part, by my participating in the daily work routine at both of their colonies during my second summer. I was granted permission by the preacher at Zack's colony to stay for part of the week at River Road Colony, and to use that as my "home base" for traveling to Elizabeth's colony

(approximately 40 miles away). Living in the colony and participating in colony life was not only more convenient, as it no longer involved risking the long trip out; this allowed for Zack and Elizabeth to share their stories on their own terms when colony work was at a low ebb.

As a participant, I also had the opportunity to work alongside both of them. I worked with Zack in the garden and at the Farmer's Market, where I gained a sense of his fondness for gardening and interacting with his customers. It was not until Zack's duties as schoolteacher and gardener were finished that we would sit down in his kitchen in the evening to record or edit his interviews. Without having to make the trip back to town, our interviews would often run late into the night – which I, as I am sure Zack too, usually regretted once five o'clock rolled around and the colony activities had already begun.

I also worked at Elizabeth's colony. I helped with the preparation of fruits and vegetables harvested from the colony garden (for example, topping carrots, shelling peas, bagging beans, canning beans and berries and so on), and worked in the slaughterhouse cutting the crops out of chickens or plucking pin feathers, while Elizabeth salvaged their egg yolks. Only once the morning tasks were complete could we conduct our interviews. This usually took place immediately after lunch while the others laid down for their afternoon naps. I found this time to be symbolic of Elizabeth's commitment to her community. Rather than wasting time "that could better serve the community," she chose to sacrifice her nap during the many afternoons that we spent together. This of course had its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand it was the "quiet time" I had hoped for; but, on the other hand, after roast duck, raisin and plum gravy, carrot cookies and coffee, it was also a difficult time for both of us to stay alert.

Interviews were carried out in both *Huttrisch* and English, but mainly in *Huttrisch*, their everyday spoken language.<sup>16</sup> Out of respect for the individuals involved them, who were just as interested in seeing their oral language written down as I was, I

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<sup>16</sup> Over the last century most of the research on Hutterites has appeared in English, and very little has been written on or in the Hutterites' spoken dialect (Brednich, 1981). It is important to mention here that, while the Hutterites use their Tyrolian-Carinthian dialect in everyday speech, High German is used in church, during prayer, and while singing. See Kurt Rein, *Religioese Minderheiten als Sprachgemeinschaftsmodele. Deutsche Sprachinseln taeuferischen Ursprungs in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, Wiesbaden 1977.

have included edited versions of the original Hutterite transcriptions, interspersed with English words and sentences (see Appendices B and C). I have also added my English translations. Although both Elizabeth and Zack spent time editing the translations, they requested that I do the final “tidying up” to make them readable. I have made certain grammatical and tense changes and deleted repetitions. I have also included my own questions where I felt it was necessary to maintain fluidity, or clarify a sudden shift in the conversation. Zack and Elizabeth have both read various drafts of this thesis, and have offered critical comments. The thesis is, therefore, a combination of Elizabeth’s and Zack’s voices and my own.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

The thesis is divided into four parts. **Part One** presents my initial observations on arriving in Southern Alberta. It opens with a personal reflection on how my own research interests moved toward the life history approach in Hutterite studies. Here I also outline the purpose, methodology, and structure of the thesis. In Chapter Two I review the literature on Hutterite perceptions of the environment, and give a brief theoretical discussion of the two perspectives that emerge from these studies. I then review the small body of literature on Hutterite life histories. The underlying question I ask here is: How can the life history documentation contribute to a better understanding of Hutterite perceptions of the environment?

**Part Two** addresses briefly the challenges of doing life history research. Chapter Three and Chapter Four present the stories of Zack and Elizabeth, paying particular attention to religion. My goal is to look at how they see themselves in relation to their community, the wider community, and their socionatural world. Rather than simply describing their lives as they were told, I begin by conveying the context in which their stories emerge: our first meetings, Zack’s and Elizabeth’s motivations for participating in the research, and our relationship with one another.

In using the life history approach, I strove to establish friendships with Zack and Elizabeth, which, as Rolf Brednich emphasises, “are vital to life history research among the Hutterites” (1981:6). This not only helped build good relations and trust, but allowed for all of us to participate in the process of telling and interpreting their lives (Klassen,

1994). Zack and Elizabeth constructed their stories in a particular way. Elizabeth's highlighted, for the most part, the life stages and transitions in Hutterite society. Although I did not know at first what these transitions were, through constant collaboration, and subsequent analysis of the translations of her story, the different stages emerged. While Zack also led me through his various life stages, he chose to centre his life history more on what he considered were his "calls of duty": teaching and gardening.

However, I also interpreted what they told me in a particular way, partly because I was interested in their ecological worldview, in particular, their perceptions of nature. So, all three of us shaped their stories, giving them a finality "that is to some extent stymied from the beginning" (Hoskins, 1998:4). The drama and discovery of this process could only be made fruitful through constant collaboration.

The work that has emerged is fully infused by this collaborative effort. Their styles were very different. While Elizabeth was not concerned with accuracy to the same level as Zack, both insisted on assisting with the editing of the original transcriptions and the translations of their stories. Despite busy schedules, they wanted a role in my project right to the end. To fulfill their wishes I conducted two separate trips to review details with them. I also double-checked details by letters, phone calls and faxes.

Before examining the two life stories in relation to their socionatural environment **Part Three** opens with a discussion of the role that my own expectations and interests played in influencing the data. For example, my interest in traditional medicinal plants prompted me to ask Elizabeth repeatedly about healing herbs. I asked numerous questions about how much she still used these in her day-to-day life, a topic she may not have addressed otherwise. My fascination with soil conservation resulted in lengthy discussions with Zack that sometimes caused us to digress from a topic or theme that was perhaps of more interest to him. I place this here because as one reads through my interpretations of their stories, one should consider the different motivations behind this research – my own as well as the narrator's. In Chapter 5, I analyse the key themes (the chapter headings and subtitles reflect these themes). These are specific to me. Another ethnographer might highlight very different themes. Some readers might be surprised, for example, that there are not more stories about baptism and marriage (two pivotal

experiences in Hutterite lives). This not only reflects my interests and motivations, but also the different relationships that I had with each person. In Chapter 6 I look at how their stories intersect with the key features of the “Community of Goods.” While my general approach in this chapter is to use Zack’s and Elizabeth’s religious lives as a springboard for discussion, I will begin by briefly recounting the historic events that precipitated the “Community of Goods,” and the arrival of Hutterites in North America.

In **Part Four** I pursue theoretical debates about Hutterite presence on the prairies before returning to the life histories. Of prime importance in the discussion in Chapter 7 is the validity of “outside” perceptions and how these impede our understanding of the deeply rooted religious consciousness underlying Zack’s and Elizabeth’s behavior and attitudes towards the land. Outsiders tend to look at Hutterites’ preoccupation with buying farming technology and selling items generally as commodity-driven. Such an understanding underestimates the value of such God-driven individuals and communities. Finally, Chapter 8 provides a summary of Zack’s and Elizabeth’s lives, focusing on the cultural and religious factors that have shaped their ecological understanding, as well as the environmental implications of their stories.

In examining how the Hutterites value and treat the landscape, my intention is *not* to romanticize or exaggerate their effectiveness in combating the many threats faced by the prairie environment today, but to focus on the divergent ways in which Hutterites process their own perceptions of the prairie environment. Such a complex phenomenon can be described in many ways and with varying degrees of specificity; thus the stories I offer are not exhaustive, but contribute to an understanding of how two individual Hutterites orient themselves within their environment.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE ON THE HUTTERITES

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

There are four extensive bibliographies (Friedmann, 1965; M.P. Riley, 1965; J. A. Hostetler, 1970; and D.E. Smucker, 1977, 1990) on Hutterites ranging from a detailed analysis of Hutterite history (Zieglschmid, 1947; Friedmann, 1965; Gross, 1970, Packull, 1994) and religion (Hofer et al., 1982; Peter, 1983; Stephenson, 1991) to descriptive ethnographies emphasizing various aspects of communal living, socialization practices (Hostetler, 1974; Hostetler, 1983; Hostetler and Huntington, 1980) and adaptive strategies (Bennett, 1967a, Boldt, 1978; Peter, 1987; Peters, 1992). The most obvious motivation for much of this scholarship has been an overwhelming curiosity to study a group who has maintained a way of life, despite centuries of persecution (Kiel, 1995:6).<sup>17</sup> Another reason for the large number of works is due to academic interests in anthropology, history, and sociology. Studies have also been conducted in the areas of geography, biology, education, music, medicine, economics, linguistics, and law but these have not been as central to the literature as those disciplines previously mentioned. Even less prominent are studies in ecology, or, more specifically, studies that have focused on Hutterite perceptions of the socionatural environment.

#### ECOLOGICAL LITERATURE ON THE HUTTERITES

Of the handful of works related to Hutterites and the environment, the first to capture my attention (although only remotely “ecological”) was the late Michael Holzach’s *The Forgotten People* (1993).<sup>18</sup> Holzach claimed that the Hutterites were not

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<sup>17</sup> This is evident in the many attempts which try to explain the survival of this “16<sup>th</sup> century peasant culture in the heart of the most 20<sup>th</sup>-century-minded continent” (Eaton and Weil, 1955:237, In Diener, 1974: 603). While most researcher’s point to the power of values and beliefs, many also regard the Hutterites’ child-rearing practices (Kaplan and Plaut, 1956; Hostetler and Huntington, 1980), and adaptive strategies (Eaton, 1953; Conkin, 1964, Bennett, 1967; Hostetler, 1974; Peter, 1983; Bennett, 1977) as keys to understanding their survival over almost five centuries.

<sup>18</sup> The original German title is *Das Vergessene Volk* which was first published in 1984.

concerned with protecting their environment because, “the earth is just a valley of sorrows anyway, a place which will soon be ‘burned up with all the works that are therein’” (1993:131, taken from 2 Peter 3:10). So, “why then protect it?” (1993:131). This compelling question triggered my inquiry into Hutterian perceptions of nature.

Given their foundationally Biblical way of life and their close interaction with the physical environment, I questioned Holzach’s claim that they were as indifferent toward the welfare of the earth, if life on earth is nothing but an interlude before humans are united with God (Hallman, 1989:27). If Christianity teaches us that the land is a symbol of God’s goodness, providence, and faithfulness, then why would the Hutterites not care to protect it?

Some answers can be found in John Hostetler’s (1974, 1983) and Hostetler and Huntington’s (1980). These present extensive descriptions of Hutterite society highlighting general themes relevant to Hutterite perceptions of the environment. Two aspects of Hutterite views of nature, or Creation emerge: that “man was made to worship God, the Creator, and not to worship the Creation or things made by God,” (Hostetler and Huntington, 1980:6-7), and

God is Lord over man, man is over woman, and the elder over the younger. Man has power over the animals. Man is ruler over material things, inventions and machines, and he may use them as long as the proper relationship and function are observed. Man may not change the order of God (1980:7).

While Hostetler’s work provides some views of the Hutterites position on Creation, few others explain how the Hutterites orient themselves within their sociocultural environment.

The only works which extensively focus on Hutterites and the environment are anthropologist John Bennett’s studies in cultural ecology.<sup>19</sup> Among Bennett’s pioneering works (1967, 1969, 1975b) is his analysis of the Hutterian colonies’ (Jasper region of Saskatchewan) adaptation to the physical environment. Bennett insisted that the

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<sup>19</sup> John Ryan’s (1975) work should also be mentioned here, as his extensive analysis of the agricultural practices of Manitoba Hutterites provides insightful information on Hutterite land use and management. See also Karl Peter (1987) for a brief discussion on Hutterites adapting to new environmental settings.

Hutterite's ability to adapt to their environment could only be explained by first looking at their past.

The ability to balance or juggle conflicting systems is an old Hutterian strategy. It is the basic reason they have survived for so long and in so many, from their standpoint, basically hostile social and natural environments (Bennett, 1969:308).

In these early studies Bennett provides overwhelming evidence that "the Hutterites are more successfully adapted to the local environment they inhabit than any other neighboring group" (1969:247). To support this claim, Bennett points to a variety of technological and economic advantages of Hutterite colonies: their purchase of relatively large tracts of land, the diversification of crops, their large-scale operation, their large labor pool and so on (Bennett, 1969, In Diener, 1994:605). However, Bennett was not only interested in emphasising "objective conditions such as soil type and level of technology" (see Stewart, 1955; Rappaport, 1967); his cultural ecology framework "focused primarily on the subjective factors, showing how people's values, assumptions and local knowledge shaped the adaptive process of culture and nature" (Kuhn and Duerden 1996:72).

An emphasis on "subjective factors" becomes more evident in Bennett's influential article "Frames of Reference for the Study of Hutterian Brethren" (1979). Here he proposes six theoretical directions in which Hutterite studies ought to move. He suggests that a study is needed on "Hutterite conservationist practices, and the way these are reinforced or created by cultural values and economic practices . . ." (1979:36). This is an important early statement on Hutterite's relationship to their environment:

Geographer, Paul Simpson-Housley follows a different line, arguing that Hutterite perceptions of the environment are a direct response to their understanding of Genesis (1974:6; 1978:148). He claims that the Hutterites advocate a more anthropocentric interpretation of Genesis, where man's role is to dominate and control nature. John Bennett puts forward a contrasting view. He argues that the religious beliefs of the Hutterites generally make them better stewards of the land. Although Bennett does not refer to Genesis, his ideas are more aligned with what is commonly referred to as "the second interpretation of Genesis" (Hillel, 1991:12-13), which argues that man's role is to

serve as a caring steward of the land.<sup>20</sup> These contrasting perspectives are worthy of closer examination, as they are integral to this thesis.

In 1974, Simpson-Housley analysed and compared data collected from questionnaires distributed to 32 members of Hutterian colonies and 28 non-Hutterite farmers. His goal was to demonstrate how religion influences Hutterian perceptions toward farming and the environment. Among the topics covered in his mainly statistical study were: Hutterite attitudes towards weather and God, wildlife preservation, irrigation, crop expectations, drought, and science. His findings were revealing. On wildlife preservation, for instance, he noted that 50% of the Hutterites interviewed were not in favor of preserving wildlife, as opposed to 90% of non-Hutterites who were in favor (1978:148):

A belief in the primacy of man in Creation explains Hutterian lack of concern with wildlife preservation. The Brethren find confirmation of man's dominion over animals in the second chapter of Genesis. Indeed, Huron colony members averred with pride that since their foundation they had destroyed much of the native wildlife (1978:148).

John Bennett's more recent work on Hutterian concepts of sustainability and common property presents a contrasting perspective.<sup>21</sup> In studying the complex interactions between the Hutterites and their natural environment, Bennett's work also provides insights into the role religion plays in sanctioning the Hutterites' management of resources. However, unlike Simpson-Housley, Bennett asserts that the Hutterites take care of their resources (including animals) for obvious reasons associated with their religious beliefs (Bennett, 1996:183). Bennett claims that the Hutterites are better "protectors" or "stewards" of the land than those without intentional collective controls. He bases his premise on three primary religious tenets: the Hutterites' desire for

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<sup>20</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the two accounts of Creation, see Richard Elliot Friedman, "Who Wrote the Bible," New York: Summit Books, 1987.

<sup>21</sup> John Bennett's earlier works on agriculture and farming include: *Hutterian Brethren: The Agriculture and Social Organization Process of a Communal Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967a); "Microcosm-Macrocosm Relationships in North America Agrarian Society," *American Anthropologist* 69 (1967b), "The Hutterian Colony: A Traditional Voluntary Agrarian Commune with Large Economic Scale," In Peter Dorner ed. *Cooperative and Commune: Group Farming in the Economic Development of Agriculture* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977a).

continuous self-sufficiency, their concept of the colony as eternal, and the joint responsibility of maintaining communal property (Bennett, 1995:183).

In many ways, one could argue that this debate in the literature parallels the environmental-theological debate today.<sup>22</sup> Spurred in the late 1960s by Lynn White's influential article "The Roots of our Ecologic Crisis," (1967)<sup>23</sup> this discussion is divided between, on the one hand, those that see the environmental crisis as brought about by human activity as a direct result of the domination explicitly stated in Genesis, and those, on the other hand, who view Christianity as encouraging responsible and caring stewardship of the land. A key concern expressed in critiques of this debate is that many "complainants" tend to oversimplify a very complex and diversified historical phenomenon (Nash, 1970:79; Coward, 2000:52). My concern is that to claim that the Hutterites are either "abusers" or "caring users" of the land for reasons associated with their religious beliefs is also to oversimplify the complex relationship between the Hutterites and their physical environment.<sup>24</sup>

This "oversimplification" is particularly evident in Simpson-Housley's work. What the author fails to include is insight into the real experiences and background assumptions of those being interviewed. In the end, the results obtained from the 32 individual Hutterites interviewed are deemed as representative for all Hutterites.

Since the Hutterites have a common background of experience and a common ideology, a conformity of opinions is passed on; thus creating common environmental interpretations (Simpson-Housley, 1974:2).

For example, one such interpretation is represented by members of the Huron Hutterite colony who "averred with pride that since their foundation they had destroyed much native wildlife" (Simpson-Housley, 1978:148). However, what this group

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<sup>22</sup> For an overview of this debate see James Barr, "Man and Nature: The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament," In David and Eileen Spring eds. *Ecology and Religion in History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

<sup>23</sup> This is not to say that White was the first or only one to make such a complaint against Christianity, but, rather, one of the first to popularize the idea. Since White's article, an enormous body of literature has built up around the ecological dimensions of Christian teachings regarding nature and society. One noteworthy source, which traces the literature surrounding this debate, is Peter Bakken, *Ecology, Justice and Christian Faith: A Critical Guide to the Literature*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995.

<sup>24</sup> While neither Simpson-Housley, nor Bennett label the Hutterites, respectively, as either "abusers" or "caring users" of the land, these assumptions are nonetheless implicit in both.

understood by “native wildlife,” or the extent to which they “destroyed” it, and for what purpose is not clear. Likewise, how the author’s results might have differed depending on whether or not the Hutterite informants were farm bosses, preachers, or women also remains unclear. My consultant Elizabeth’s comment that, “If I was a boy I might have mistreated animals, but we [girls] didn’t mistreat animals. . .” hints at the importance of understanding the context from within which such “environmental interpretations” emerge.

In summary, the Biblical explanation the author gives to support the Hutterian lack of concern with wildlife preservation suggests that the non-Hutterite farmers have not harmed wildlife. It also implies that destruction of wildlife is somehow peculiar to the Hutterites. While I agree with Simpson-Housley that certain [religious] “principles exist which greatly affect the opinions, perceptions, behaviors and work attitudes of the Hutterites,” I would disagree with his assumption that such opinions and perceptions are unvarying from one individual to the next (1974:2). As Virginia Nazarea reminds us, “the role that people’s cultural perspectives play in guiding individual actions within a particular environment are significant” (1999:18).

While Bennett’s study does not oversimplify Hutterite perceptions of the socionatural environment in the same way, unfortunately the scope of his study allows him to focus only on Hutterite “religio-ecological” principles within a general context. It ignores the particular contexts of individuals - which he himself views as critically important.<sup>25</sup> This is not to say that religion, as Bennett (and Simspon-Housley) suggests, is not an important guidepost for marking Hutterite views of the environment, (because it is), but that the interactions which contribute to the intricate workings of something as complex as Hutterian perceptions of nature must be further explored in relation to the cultural contexts from which they emerge. In order to do so, a new methodological approach is needed that will allow the Hutterites to bring their own ideas about how the

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<sup>25</sup> John Bennett’s chapter, “Research on Farmer Behavior and Social Organization,” considers the critical importance of researching the behavior (i.e. thoughts and actions) of individual farmers ( Bennett, 1986:372-373), and argues that the field of ethnosience offers a useful approach to address the cultural dimensions of farmer behavior. This is presumably also a direction in which Hutterite behavior in the environment.

individual comes to comprehend and value the natural world. The life history approach, I will argue, is important for cultivating such awareness.

## **LIFE HISTORY AND HUTTERITES**

The importance of the life history approach emerges when surveying the literature on Hutterite ethnology. On reading numerous ethnographies, in preparation to undertake fieldwork in two Hutterite colonies in southern Alberta, I noticed that most ignored the individual Hutterite's lived experience (Cruikshank, 1998). Anthropologist, Peter Stephenson explains why in his critique of the conventional ethnographic writing that has dominated the literature on Hutterites:

One would think them difficult to keep off the page; walking on like so many gregarious peasants with lilting accents and stories to tell. I know some of these people but they never appear because neither individuals, nor dialogue, are really the subjects of these works – society and economy are their themes and so neither Paul, nor Rebecca (not their real names anyway, right?) say or do much in them (1986:97).

Written “within the framework of rock-bottom empirical thought” (Stephenson, 1986:97) most ethnographic research on the Hutterites, he continues, “has been concerned with descriptive aspects of their culture . . .” (Bennett, 1976:23). That is, a considerable portion of the information which ethnographers have accumulated on Hutterite culture has been passed on as more-or-less objective data (Hostetler, 1974; Bennett, 1967; Peters, 1965; Eaton and Weil, 1955; Kaplan and Plant, 1956; Friedman, 1961). While Stephenson points out that “judged within the canons of conventional ethnography these are among the best books ever written about any people,” (1986:97) few attempted to challenge this “genre” of ethnographic writing in Hutterite studies.

New work in interpretive and experimental ethnographic writing in the past twenty years (Degh, 1975; Geertz, 1983; Cruikshank, 1990; Dumont, 1992; McBeth, 1993) has pushed the boundaries of anthropological conventions. No longer can the ethnographer who prefers to vanish behind a descriptive narrative (Van Maanen, 1988:44) be the reason for the scarcity of Hutterite life history writing.

Many anthropologists would agree that the use of the life history approach does not work well for Hutterite research for the following reasons: the Hutterites' social

control over individual members, and b) the Hutterite's "rejection" of the use of recording technology, such as the tape recorder (Brednich, 1981:4). German folklorist, Rolf Brednich, for example, notes that:

Even after a long stay in a colony, the contacts with some of its members will hardly become close enough to allow the scientific recording of life history interviews. The members of a Hutterite colony live in a community which may place demands on the individual at any time of the day. A resident can always be approached as a member of the various groups, family, generation, school, labour, or the greater community, but rarely or never as individual. Never alone, the Hutterite is continuously taken care of by the diverse groups and is always socially controlled by them. These are constellations not favourable to a life history interviewer who has precisely the intention of picking an individual out of the group. In fact, it is difficult enough to recognize a personality as suitable for a life history interview. Finally, another hindrance is that the Hutterites' rejection of the technical media such as radio, television and records renders even the use of a tape recorder an apparently hopeless undertaking (translation, Brednich, 1974: 9-10).

While here Brednich points to two important cultural conditions (the restriction of individual autonomy and recording equipment)<sup>26</sup> that have hindered the use of the life history method in Hutterite studies, he offers a third reason for this: the labour-intensive nature of life-history research.

An autobiographical endeavor . . . poses many demands on the fieldworker. There are no aides to help instruct either the recording or the analysis of this type of interview, and for purely economic reasons, there are few opportunities to conduct such recordings. Based on the fact that autobiographical research of this kind is very labour-intensive, in no way can it be completed as a series. They are in and of themselves, a complete research tool . . . (translation, Brednich, 1981:322).

Although he refers here to Mennonites, Brednich's points apply to Hutterite's. With few sources available on *Huttrisch*,<sup>27</sup> there is much need for life histories. But this

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<sup>26</sup> In the past the use of recording equipment, or any equipment for that matter - like projectors, films, slides, tapes, radio, and television in English school - were strictly forbidden, particularly among the Lehrleut (Hostetler, 1980: 109). Although Hutterites are still suspicious of the use of recording technology, there is more leniency today about using it for the purpose of research. In my case, Zack and Elizabeth both agreed that it was far more efficient, especially when recording in *Huttrisch*, than writing longhand.

<sup>27</sup> Other than a few linguistic articles (Rein, 1992; Scheer, 1993); and Walter Hoover's recent edition of the "Hutterite-English Dictionary" (2000), few sources exist in the literature to assist one in documenting the Hutterian language.

work will take time, given the editing, analysing, and transcribing along with consultations with one's Hutterite consultants. For example, the process of transcribing and editing Elizabeth's and Zack's life histories took over six months. To edit the original transcriptions required a total of three thorough proofreading sessions with Zack and Elizabeth. The English translations required another two review sessions – and we still have not established the spelling of certain words. Indeed the time commitment involved in conducting collaborative life history research is not something that many individual Hutterites would be willing to commit to. In retrospect, I often wonder if Zack and Elizabeth<sup>28</sup> would have agreed to share their life histories if they had known in the beginning how time-consuming the editing process would be.

However, the reasons outlined here should not presuppose that the life history is incompatible with Hutterite culture, or an inappropriate means of coming to understand the lives and perspectives of Hutterites. Providing the researcher has: a) been granted permission to use recording equipment, b) worked out a timeframe that does not prevent the individual from forsaking their daily communal activities, and c) made his/her informants aware of the time-commitment involved (which can be difficult to predict at the onset), the life history can be a valuable methodological tool.

In fact, life histories, like other narrative genres, have had, and continue to have, a considerable influence within Hutterite education and everyday life (Brednich, 1981:4). Embedded in Hutterite culture is a rich literary tradition. It is this tradition that has been, and remains, the most important tool for transmitting the past, for educating the young, and for guiding people throughout life. The Bible is the first and most important narrative with which all Hutterites become intimately acquainted. Biblical stories are learned by heart at an early age, when one enters Little School, [*die klane Schul*].<sup>28</sup> They are repeatedly chanted throughout the course of one's adult life, becoming "the guiding companion of life that resides in one's deepest layers of consciousness; influencing one even when one is not aware of its presence" (Coward, 2000:6).

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<sup>28</sup> The Little School and the Big School, or German school (*die klane Schule und die grosse Schule*) are provided by every Hutterite community. Both are devoted to teaching the children to learn the Scriptures by heart, and to become capable of reading and writing the Bible using the Gothic script. Before German school and bedtime, every Hutterite family sings "Morning" and "Evening" songs [*Morgen und Abendlieder*]. The father of the family leads these.

Similarly, the stories of the lives of Hutterite martyrs, which can be traced as far back as their Anabaptist beginnings over four centuries ago, are deeply rooted within the psyches of children and adults alike. The most popular of these historical narratives is: *Der blutige Schauplatz, or Maertyre-Spiegel Taufegesinnten* (Brednich, 1981:4), a story that tells of early Anabaptist martyrs (pre-1600) (Brednich, 1981:4).

Miller and Stephenson point to the importance of the story of Jakob Hutter, one of the first Hutterian bishops (1980:238). They find striking similarities between Hutter and the Biblical Paul. They claim that “Pauline thought” provided a framework for Hutter’s personal life experiences (Miller and Stephenson, 1980:238). Similarly, stories in the Bible, and of martyrs, combined with stories of the past continue to provide the framework for Hutterite pedagogy and for the personal life experiences of Hutterites. This is also evident in Brednich’s groundbreaking work on Hutterites and the life history.

No other author brings the Hutterite life history to the center of inquiry like Brednich’s *The Bible and the Plough* (1976).<sup>29</sup> It is the only work that captures the voice and lived experience of individual Hutterites.<sup>30</sup> Brednich conveys the importance of storytelling in Hutterite culture in his life history recording of a Hutterite minister. This becomes apparent in the first page of Reverend Mike Stahl’s story.

At first I should tell you how my forefathers joined the community. I have heard this story from the Reverend Samuel Waldner. He asked me one day, “Do you know why you are a member of this community?” “No,” I replied. “Did you ever hear of Grandpa Michael?” “Yes.” He said, “I will tell you now, and it is the truth.” He said, “I have heard it from my father, and my father came over from Russia and he himself knew Grandpa Michael.” He said, “Your grandpa Michael was a Reverend in Russia, but in the village where they all lived on their own property. They only

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<sup>29</sup> Only two other ethnographic works have published ‘autobiographical’ material (Peter, 1980; Peters, 1965). However, the use and interpretation of these stories is not the focus of these inquiries. In fact, common in both works is their use of the life history as a way of supplementing, or “breathing life,” into their writing (Julie Cruikshank, 1991). The first narrative of Ruth Baer, an ex-Hutterite woman who wrote her autobiography some years after leaving the colony can be found in the appendix to Victor Peter’s *All Things Common* (1965). Karl Peter’s article “Problems in the Family Community, and Culture of Hutterites” (1980), also contains a fragmentary episode of a Hutterite autobiography.

<sup>30</sup> The latter half of this work is dedicated to the life history of a Mennonite farmer, John Neudorf. One of the primary differences Brednich discovers is in their ability to narrate. “Whereas Reverend Mike S. Stahl is only capable of expressing himself rather imperfectly in writing, but is a gifted storyteller, J. J. Neudorf expresses himself equally well in speaking and writing” (Brednich, 1981:5). Brednich explains that the storytelling talent of Hutterites is due to centuries of uninterrupted oral communication (1981:51).

gathered for worship on Sundays; after the worship everybody wen back unto his own land, back into his house.”

He said, “Your grandpa had a dream in Russia. He dreamed that he went unto a hill and that there was a big rock where he sat down for a rest. He looked to his left-hand side, there were many small houses. As he looked, a man came to him. He said to him, ‘You see those small houses? Do you know what this is? Those are the owners which all live on their own property.’ ‘What is the big building on the right side?’ He said, ‘That is the community.’ ‘What does that mean – the community?’ He said, ‘They live all together there. That is how it was said in the Bible, in Acts two it is wriitten “They had all things in common.”’ ‘They have a Reverend who is preaching the Holy Bible to them as their forefathers used to do who wrote it in prison where they were separated from each other like Jakob Hutter, and Peter Riedemann, and Andreas Ehrenpreis, they were in prison, they were tortured, they composed the sermons and have written them down.’ And at that moment he awoke and the dream was gone (Brednich, 1976:33).

In a culture that “has remained largely on the level of an oral tradition,” (Brednich, 1976:3) not only are the personal experiences of individual Hutterites shaped by storytelling, but the ability to narrate stories is highly valued as well. This is not to say that, like Reverend Stahl, all Hutterites are gifted storytellers like Reverend Stahl, but that storytelling (whether through scriptures, songs, or orally transmitted stories of the past) is the grounding source of individual thought and behavior, and functions as the baseline of the Hutterites’ communal consciousness (Coward, 2000).<sup>31</sup> This renders the life history approach more suitable for Hutterite research than has generally been perceived in the predominantly qualitative research on the Hutterites.

Following in Rolf Brednich’s footsteps, I believe that the life history is key to gaining deeper insight into the value system, the attitudes, and the views of individual Hutterites (Brednich, 1981:6), particularly in relation to their socionatural environment. The life history not only allows the Hutterite’s own voices and perceptions to emerge

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<sup>31</sup> One can come to appreciate the impressive storytelling talent of most Hutterites by attending a Hutterite engagement (*shivalree*) or wedding celebration (*Hulba*). Occasions such as this bring out the individual Hutterite’s rich and varied repertoire of stories, jokes, and songs. In an attempt to ascertain the average number of melodies and songs Hutterites have committed to heart, Brednich’s study “Beharrung und Wandel im Liedgut der hutterischen Brueder. Ein Beitrag zur empirischen Hymnologie,” revealed an average repertoire of roughly 51 melodies and 255 songs (1981:55). See also Martens (1974).

from the text; it also provides a means for sharing the authority of representing and interpreting the final written product.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The direction life history models take in converting spoken conversations into written texts varies depending on the editing decisions made between the research and the narrator. While some life history writers feel that the narrator should maintain maximum control over certain sections of the final product (McBeth, 1993: 146-147; Klassen, 1994;), others feel that the narrator should be a full-fledged partner in the editing and production of the text (Cruikshank, 1990). The narrative strategy which I subscribe to here takes from both approaches. While Zack and Elizabeth share full authority over their life histories, with their permission, I take full responsibility for the analysis of their stories. However, it should be mentioned that they were involved in giving feedback and comments on the analysis.

## Part Two

### PRESENTING THEIR STORIES

The challenge in producing life histories is to determine how to balance the narrator's telling of his or her story and the reader's needs for historical and cultural context (Schneider, 1991:185). In the recording of a life history the narrator typically provides the recorder with details based on his or her perception of what the recorder needs to know to understand, just as the recorder prompts the narrator to remember things that might not have been triggered on their own, or which seemed of little significance until an interested audience appeared. However, As William Schneider points out, "the amount of detail is often insufficient for a wider audience unfamiliar with the narrator or the narrator's culture" (1991:185).

This is certainly the case for Zack and Elizabeth. For example, neither gives a detailed description of Hutterite history; nor do they discuss the cultural particularities of many of their stories - either because it is assumed that I am already familiar with them, or because they feel they are self-evident. For example, one might ask why Elizabeth begins and ends her narrative with the story about the boy killed by the binder. One might wonder too what the cultural meaning of death is among the Hutterites. Or the reader might wish to learn more about the extent to which corporal punishment is used on Hutterite colonies, after reading Zack's frequent references to strappings and spankings. While it would be difficult to cover all of these cultural details without overshadowing the telling of their stories, explanations are included where I felt clarity was necessary. Historical details, on the other hand, follow their stories. I felt that it was important to hear their voices first and the contexts in which they revealed their stories before reading about Hutterite history.

## Chapter 3

### THE LIFE HISTORY OF ZACHARIUS WURZ

#### MEETING ZACK

To reach the schoolhouse, I drive past grain silos bound side-to-side like the columns of a cathedral, then onto a narrow gravel road that takes me past a row of longhouses to the two-room schoolhouse. A slender man with clear blue eyes, a well-manicured beard, and a deep crack in his bottom lip approaches me as I sit on the steps gazing across a rippling landscape, the grasses like a luxurious covering of fur. He speaks readily and, in a Hutterite accent, asks me if I am “Schowna.” “Come on in, I’m Zack the schoolteacher,” he says as he gestures for me to follow him into the schoolhouse. He is eager to introduce me to the children who file in behind us, the boys hanging up their *Katuser* [hats] at the door, and the girls securing the knots of their *Kopftiechle* [kerchiefs]. He explains to them that I am interested in learning *Huttrisch* [Hutterite] and that I can already speak German, their holy language. It was not until a year later that I returned to Zack’s colony, to begin a new topic, this time a collaborative venture, the recording of his life history.

Zack has welcomed numerous outsiders and tourists interested in Hutterite culture into his home. It did not seem unusual then, to him, or anyone else at his colony that I would seek him out. He was aware of outside interest in his culture. But he was also interested in outsiders. The first day he pulled out an address book with all the people who had visited him, and pointed at the name of a geographer from Germany, the last researcher he had enjoyed helping two years before. This interest was sparked early on by the many stories and adventures his father told him about the outside world when he worked as a conscientious objector, unloading grain cars at the lake heads, and working in the Forest Service at the National Parks during the war. His interest in outsiders became more evident throughout the interview process when Zack would suddenly reverse our roles by interviewing me. “So after spending time out here at the Hutterite

colonies, what do you have to say about our lifestyle? What do you find funny about it? What do you disagree with? Could you see yourself living like a Hutterite?"

When we began our first interview on August 19, 1998, sitting at his kitchen table, Zack began by asking me, "What is a life history? Just an interview of personal things or what? – *Was ist'n Lebenslauf? Kola en interview of personal Dinge oder wie?* Of course personalizing events is not characteristic of a culture which focuses on the collective. But Zack's appetite for learning, experimenting, and taking on any new challenge - as reflected in his "personal motto," adopted from Paul, who said, "Test everything<sup>3</sup>; hold fast to what is good" – *Prüfet alles aber das Gute behalten* (1. Thess. 5:12) – seemed to only pique his interest in relaying personal stories in a manner compatible with Hutterite values. "As long as it isn't publicized . . . and you're not makin' money off of it. Jesus said, 'Let your light shine so that every man can see it.' Maybe someday it will be of value to us, but I don't know that yet." Zack's motivation for sharing his life history came not only from a curiosity of what might become of his story someday, but a genuine commitment he felt to helping me with my studies.

At times, Zack guided the direction he wished to take his story. For the most part, however, he preferred that I guide the interview. There were, however, several occasions where his wife, children and grandchildren, relatives, and neighbors were present. This inevitably influenced the direction of the interview.

## **ZACK**

### **From Knee-high to a Grasshopper**

Z: I was born in 1947, in March. Well, I was born in a big family. In our family there were eleven children. I was the oldest. I had five sisters. No, we were five brothers and six sisters. One boy died, the youngest. He was 29 years old. He wasn't completely healthy; he had epilepsy and died. And because he was just about the youngest, he stayed home with the parents. Sometimes they didn't have good days, but overall it was a healthy family. Everyone married except for one girl who stayed home. She [still] cares for my father and mother. That was at Rocklake.

S: How did you get your name?

Z: My Mother had a *Vettr* (a *Vettr* is an uncle) who she always called Paul, but they gave him a nickname, *Zech*. And this was one of her favourite uncles, so she also called me that. I'm named after him. I have to say one thing. Today I think a lot of my name. But then, because there weren't too many in the colonies [*Gmane*] that were called that, I was always troubled by that. I always thought, there is hardly a single person at another *Gman*, where, I don't care where, who is called the same as me. It seemed as though I was the only one in the world with that name. And that can have an effect on you; it did on me. But when I got older, I realized that way up there at that colony was someone named *Zech*, and there in Montana was also a boy who was also called [*Zech*], and then I was relieved. Well, that's when I got over it.

I guess sometimes [you feel] a little bit of peer pressure; you want to be just like all the others. Back then it seemed they were either named Jacob, or Joseph, or George, and when you had a completely different name, it seemed like you were a black bird among all the white [ones]. But the others they all had a nickname and I never did. Why? I was the only one with that name. Well when you have five Johannes', well you have to give them a nickname so that you know one from the other. With me, they never needed one. I was the only one with that name.

S: Would you have preferred a nickname?

Z: A nickname, no I never wanted one. I can remember that it bothered me sometimes, but today I like the name. You tell a person once and he'll never forget it.

## **CHILDHOOD MEMORIES**

### **Little School**

S: What kind of a student were you?

Z: Well in general, I must have been, one could say, likeable. Why? I always got along with everyone and I always trusted others. I don't know maybe I was friendly and maybe

I was willing to help. I was always good and particularly with my schoolteachers: the German schoolteacher, the English schoolteacher, and even as I recall in *der klane Schul*.

*Die klane Schul* is kindergarten. You begin when you are two and a half years old until you are six years old. There I can remember back to sitting on the *Klanchulankela*'s ["kindergarten grandma's"] lap when she would tell us a story. Today, one of them is still living; *Rebecca Basl* [Aunt Rebecca] is her name. When I drive down to Brant, I always go over, over to *Rebecca Basl* and greet her and hug her and say: "*My olte Klanchesulankela!*" And she still enjoys that. That is nice for someone her age, you know? It gives her a lift to think that I still think of her since I was a small child, and [remember] that she was my *Schulankela*. I always go to her and she will pour a little bit of *Schnapps!* [spirits] and we'll sit on the swing and drink, and is it ever amusing! And I do it to cheer her up [*aufcheeren*]. You know the old people they also get sad once in a while. So when you can do something good for that person then you bring them a good feeling.

S: Do you still remember the stories she used to tell you?

Z: Oh yeah, she told us stories back then, especially her, *Rebecca Basl* always told us the story about *Die Graue Anna* [Grey Annie]. Grey Annie was an imaginary being. Way back one would have said a witch in the [outside] world, but she was called Grey Annie. And Grey Annie was there to scare the children. Now when Aunt Rebecca wanted for all of the children to be quiet and, you know, a little bit of respect, then she told us about Grey Annie. "There she is sitting up there!" pointing up to the ceiling where there was storage with boxes or cloth (back then the houses had two levels). "There she is up there!" she would say and look up. We were as quiet as mice. And sometimes a cobweb that a spider had made was hanging from the ceiling; it would hang down. And then she'd say, "Look, up there is Grey Annie, can you see her tail hanging down?" We felt nothing but fear and just sat there. And when the story was over and when she was finished [with whatever she was working on] – she was always sewing, or mending, knitting socks or something – she would say, "Now be very quiet!" She took her scissors

and got up. "I will cut off the tail!" She went over and cut the thing off. Then we thought that a bunch of blood would start coming out. That I will never forget about her.

So in the *klane Schul*, it was nice. There were always three *klane Schulankela*; a different one every third day: die *Maria Basl*, die *Sanna Basl*, und die *Rebecca Basl*. I liked *Rebecca Basl* the most. I was never afraid of her. You know when you are a small child you are a bit afraid of someone different.

And from there, after kindergarten, then you come out into *die grosse Schul* [the big school]. You start going to the table in the kitchen to eat with the children at the table. Before that, when you went to kindergarten, you ate your breakfast and lunch in *die klane Schul* and afterwards you went home to your house with your mother, because the mother looks after that, she feeds you.

Food . . . nowadays the children eat a lot differently, a lot better. When I was born, the colony was very poor. But at that time everyone was poor. After the Dirty Thirties, as we say, it took a long time before people started to become better off. When I was born in forty-seven, the times were already better, but we only ate half of what we eat today. When you were at supper you only had a piece of bread with butter and syrup and maybe a small piece of sausage. That was supper. But you never went to bed hungry. Going to sleep, that was a time that we always liked. And we all went into one bed and all of the children slept in one big room. I slept together with my oldest brother, the second [oldest] sister in another bed there, and the small children on the *Schlofbank* [sleeping bench].

### **Storytelling**

And we always hoped that Father would tell us a story before going to bed. One story that I always remember, one that he often told us – well, when the winters were long there were many nights to tell stories and it was often the same one. And when I got older, I told the children that story. Do you know the story of the boy who watched over the sheep up on the mountain so that the wolf wouldn't kill them, or the coyote? And we really understood that well. When I was a boy, my father was the sheep boss. Sometimes I helped him to look after the sheep during the day, [to] watch them outside. And I really

understood what you had to do to be a shepherd. Sometimes one day ran into the next and then you were bored.

And you could relate to the boy when he stood up one day and looked down on the town and thought he could play a trick on them and cry “Wolf! Wolf!” He started screaming, “Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!” and ran back and forth and they all came up at once; one grabbed a club, another a rake, the other a broom, and the other an axe. They went up the mountain to kill the wolf. When they got to the top, up on the hill, they asked, “Where is the wolf?” He laughed and said, “There isn’t one!” “You good-for-nothing, why did you scream like that?” “I just wanted to have a little fun; I wanted to watch [you] come up.” They took him and shook him [and said], “And don’t you do that again!” Well, they all went down and he stood there and laughed at them. Yeah, it didn’t take more than an about an hour when he looked back [to see] the sheep really running around that there was really a wolf among the sheep. So he screamed down below for them to come up but they didn’t. “He’s lying to us again that *Taugenichts* [good-for-nothing].” they said.

And so they never went up and the poor thing had a serious problem; the wolf had killed such and such a number of sheep. When he returned home that night he cried: “Why didn’t you come up?” Well the moral of the story is: “Nobody believes a liar when he suddenly speaks the truth” – *Einen Liegner glaubt man nicht, wenn er gleich die Wahrheit spricht*. That’s what my father tried to teach us by telling that story, [to] “Always be honest.” Yeah, often I told that story to my siblings at night. And they always said: “And don’t tell us about wolf today, we’ve heard it so many times.” Well, I started it differently, from a different path, until I came back to “Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!” and they screamed “Papa, come and take over!”

## The Woods

But one of the fondest memories that I have is, about a third of a mile from the farm, [it] was what we called “*die Woods*.”<sup>33</sup> There were trees there and a big ditch ran through a canal. And in that low-lying area there willows had started to grow. And when I was a young boy they were already very tall trees, oh about four acres on pastureland

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<sup>33</sup> *Die woods* actually refers here to wild saskatoon and chokecherry bushes. As children, an acre of saskatoon bushes seemed like a forest [*Wold*] through their eyes.

(where the cows were). We spent our time there in those trees. There we played Robin Hood. Do you know the story of Robin Hood? We made bow and arrows there. We weren't allowed to have them, you know, "One shalt not shoot." And we built our own tree houses there for ourselves.

And one thing, oh I remember this one thing. You know how there was the war in Korea? The Korean War . . . well I was born in forty-seven, so it must have been in about 1955. It was always being said that there would be a World War. A World War would come out of the Korean War, and the soldiers would come and take us away. We always thought . . . you know our history books tell us about how the soldiers went to the farms and pillaged them, took the children and put the mothers and fathers in prison. We were afraid that something [similar] would happen, and so we thought we would hide ourselves when the soldiers came. So down in those woods we made caves, dug deep caves, put a roof over top, and underneath, we put in shelves. And we also took things over from home. We took over a clock, we took dishes there, [and] a couple of chickens, and from the kitchen, a couple jars of preserved carrots, cucumbers, everything to store out there. When the soldiers would come, we would go out there and down into the cave. We made a door, and if they came we would put turf, you know, just like lawn over top. And when the soldiers would walk over they wouldn't know anything was down there. That's what we thought, we would hide in there when the soldiers came. Yeah, only the children fit inside.

Little did we know about wars, or how long wars could last. The little bit of food we had stored there wouldn't have lasted for more than a couple of days. But we thought that in half a day, once the soldiers had passed by, it would be safe. Oh well, child's play.

And one time we built a house out there of wood. Behind the shop there was always a woodpile, where the carpenter would throw his old wood. And we took pieces from there and built a huge house – a little shack really. For us it was really something; we put a padlock on it so that it closed and that was our own house. So when I think back to those years when I was six years old until I came to adulthood [*zu Leit bin kummn*] at fifteen years of age, down there in the woods, we spent a lot of time there. Every tree even had its own name. One was *der Wissele Bamm* [the weasel tree].

## Trapping

In winter we trapped. We caught rabbits and weasels. I can still recall . . . you know how the rabbits would begin to turn white in the fall? In summer they were brown and blended in with the brown soil; in winter they were white. Now when they are white that's when they are prime; you can skin them and then sell the fur. So we could make a little money of our own selling rabbit furs. We sent them to the Hudson Bay Fur Company in Edmonton, yeah, very secretively. We had to be very secretive.<sup>34</sup>

And there were also weasels. They started in about November. When someone saw one that was already white, we would start trapping weasels. In order to catch a weasel you needed to make a little house out of stone and put bait in it and the trap inside; then its foot in the trap catches it. Everyday we went over to the woods to check our traps - hardly ever caught anything, but we were busy. We caught maybe five rabbits in a winter. They were about fifty cents. And we caught maybe one weasel. [It] brought a good [profit] when it was skinned, maybe three dollars. And if you were really lucky, you might catch a mink; that was like winning a lottery. He brought about twenty dollars. Yeah, I caught two in my entire history.

Oh *Rotsen* [muskrats], they were easy to catch. They live underwater in the cattails in the ditch, or in the lake. We had a big lake, it was a slough. And there they were in the cattails. The muskrats made a pile out of the cattails and inside was a nest. The best time to catch them is when there is ice. The muskrat didn't have any other way to go than out of the nest under the ice, and so we dug it up. You have to get to their [traps] quickly, when you wait too long he'll eat himself loose. When he's scared he'll gnaw his leg off with his teeth. So you have to check the muskrat traps every hour for sure. If you didn't, he'd gnaw himself loose [and] was gone. That is too cold-hearted and cruel. Once we caught a muskrat that had only two feet; the other two he'd already gnawed off and had already healed up. That is merciless, the poor muskrats, really.

Oh yeah, cattails, they were along there where the muskrats were. When I drive up to Rocklake, a big lake that was always there, that has all been drained and nicely

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<sup>34</sup> While private gain is forbidden among Hutterites, young Hutterites feel that small transactions are excusable since they have not been baptised. As Hostetler points out "all such subversiveness must be confessed before baptism (1974:270).

leveled and filled in. Now there stands a nice wheat field (wheat fields or barley). So that's one thing that I miss, that was always full with *Böse sendr corn* [the devil's corncocks]. That's what we called cattails, *die Böse sendr corn*. Do you know what the *Böse* is? The evil spirits, the devil. You know cattails? When you stand and rub and hit them together, well a bunch of stuff blows away. We'd always say that we've made the evil spirits angry as we'd hit the corn together.

Oh we were little boys. Well in the morning at seven was breakfast. Before breakfast we already went over to check the traps – got up at six and ran over while [everyone] was at breakfast. After breakfast was German school for an hour, and then a half-hour recess until the English school began. We went in between. And in the afternoon there was also an hour. Sometimes we didn't go to the table, [instead we] went into the woods to see if we'd caught anything. And we always went in the evening after German school (that was between four thirty until about five thirty). In winter, church [*Gebet*] is at five-thirty, and we all had to be at church, [but] we often had a good hour after supper. So there were those times when you could [go to the woods]. And mother was happy when we were there. You can imagine that eleven children in the house at once is not very quiet. They were happy when they'd see us running over there. Even my father [was happy], even though he would say, "You're not allowed to trap. Personal possessions are forbidden in the community!" But he knew that we wouldn't catch much and wouldn't make a lot of money. Well, as we've often said, "We'll choose the lesser of two evils." So it never made us rich, but one was very busy and you learn a lot from that.

Well in a religious sense the wild animals are just like the pests. You have to clean them up, you have to clear them out and you have to keep them under control so that they do not take the upper hand. Why? A good shepherd must keep his flock from the vicious animals, right? So in the Bible when David, King David, was a shepherd, he once killed a lion, a *Löb*, when it tried to kill his father's sheep. And a bear came the next time, and he went after it with a stick to push it away and beat the bear to death. So that fits in with how you also ought to take care of your livestock.

And the muskrats, what they did when you had a dam: they dug so many holes in it that they destroyed the dam. You know the dam where they live is actually a pond

where the geese and ducks swim. And next to the goose barn there is a dyke to keep them in, and the muskrats would make holes in it. Well you have to catch the muskrats because they destroy the bank and the water comes through. And the weasels, if you have too many of them; they come in and steal your chickens and kill your chickens.

The rabbits, actually, the rabbits I discovered once I became gardener that they were in the garden by the fruit trees. The fruit trees have a sweet skin, they eat it off, and when it's all eaten off, your tree dies. When I became gardener at Rocklake, I planted ten apple trees and they grew nicely. The first winter, the garden was full of rabbits there. You could go out in winter and shoo away fifty rabbits. They were taking the outside bark off and eating it until I put up a snow fence around the bottom of every tree. Besides that you had to catch the rabbits. That way you protected yourself from your pests. And even the skin was worth a dollar or fifty cents (laughing). Well there is another reason.

Years ago, if you wanted to have a warm coat to wear in winter, you had to put a fine fur collar on it. Coyote fur was the best. So it was just like when the Heavenly Father, God, drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. From what did he make their clothes? He made them coats from goat's fur and from the pelts of the wild animals. So one could say, that when you slaughtered a sheep and skinned it, you used its wool to make clothing, a warm coat, or a weasel lining on his jacket. That's why God made these animals: for clothing or for whatever man needs.

What Christianity teaches you with respect to wildlife is, "Never cause an animal to suffer, because like you it feels the pain" – *Quäle nie ein Tier zum Scherz, denn es fühlt wie du den Schmerz*. Don't torture it. If you were to shoot or kill what you needed, or wanted to eat it, that is justifiable, but not if it is malicious act of murder or torture. That is what Christianity teaches you. In other words, why do we raise cows, or hogs? Because we think of the good *Wurst* [sausage] and the delicious *Garchasuppen* [potato soup made with boiled sausage] and the beefsteak they will make.

### **Ponies, Pike Fish, and Berry Picking**

And as I got older, I went to the garden. See the young boys always go with the gardener/schoolteacher to help in the garden. All the teenagers go to the jobs, to the pigs . . . depends on how many there are. [A granddaughter asks if Elizabeth (Zack's wife) is

home. “No, she’s in the garden, honey, picking tomatoes.”] Those [boys] are the ones who are already *bei Leit* (with the older men), but who don’t have a job yet. When I joined the others [*zu Leit gkummn*] there were thirty boys. That is a lot. The field boss has to give them a job every day. In winter you send the [teenage] boys to the jobs: five to help the pig boss, four to help the chicken boss remove the eggs, and you also send a boy to help milk the cows. While they are there in the spring, the little boys [*Mandele*] go to school and not to the jobs. But in the spring, the *Mandele* couldn’t wait for the *Leit* to leave their jobs. That’s when the [oldest of] the [younger] boys went to the jobs: two went to the pigs, two to the cows, [and] two to the chickens. So I had to go to the garden until I was twelve years old. And then my turn came, and I went to the cows and helped with milking. And that was the best job ever. Everybody wanted to go to the cows, there were ponies there to ride there. So I was lucky I got to go to the cows. And then we rode ponies. I broke in three ponies; one of them was my favorite, and that was also the toughest. His name was “Red.” That was a fine pony. The other one was called “*Weisskopf*,” and the other was “Pinto.” Those three were a little wild. All the horses had names at that time. My team was called Will and Jerry. Every person had to look after a pair of horses. I am sure I was the last who had a pair of horses. Then the tractors came into use.

When I think back, you could say that was one of the highlights of my days as a boy - [being] with the cows, riding and breaking in the ponies. That was a challenge. We rode all over with those ponies. That was just like having a car today. From the colony to the bridge (that was built in about 1955) is where we rode to with the ponies. The boy with the horses had a pony. The one with the sheep had a pony. And the boy with the cows had two, so I could always give one pony away. So there we grew up on those ponies.

Chin Lake was there. If you look on the map of the colony, it runs like that. There is the colony and the lake runs around. There is the bridge, and from there it’s a mile to Chin Lake. Chin Lake is about one half mile wide. So along that lake there where we spent our time, a lot took place. Right there in the lake is where we went bathing [whispering]. And those who had ponies were the first to be down there. The others ran

over one mile. Yeah, Chin Lake had lots of bays, you know, like inlets? And that was the place to go fishing. There were fish in the Chin: pike and whitefish. Now those bays where we swam, this was the first bay [*der Erschte bay*], and around that hill was the second bay [*der Zwatte bay*]. And then there was a third bay [*der Dritte bay*] where we always caught the biggest pike, because it was deep and the others were shallow. So when you went fishing, you always went over to the first bay, and you went along from one bay to the next until you caught a fish. Sometimes you didn't catch any fish.

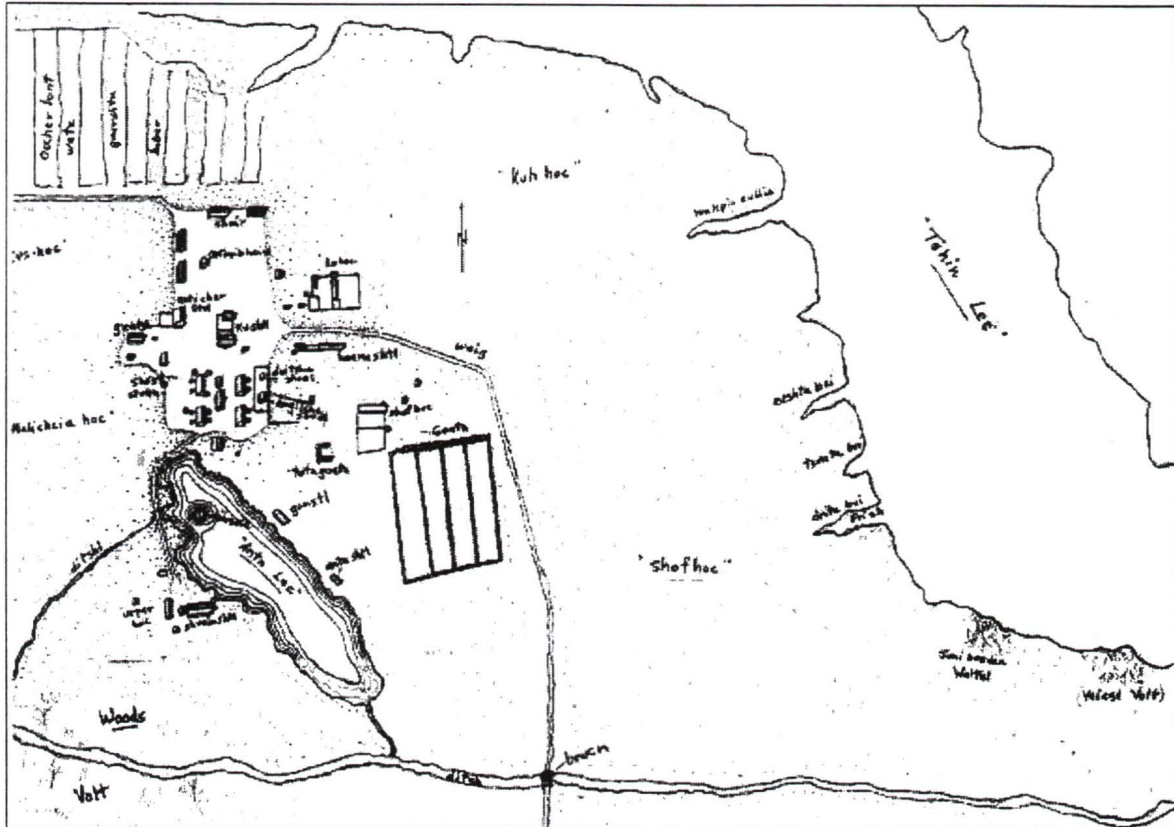
*Die Englisch Leit* [the English people] always came and also fished along there. And we went over and watched with big eyes, the tongue hanging out, mouths watering. That's how much we longed to have a fishing reel and rod, but we could never afford them. Back then we were all poor, except for the English people. And we made *Zillela*. A *Zillela* is a little thing just like a sled. And when you attached a piece of twine to it to pull it, you could go along the water and the *Zillela* would pull itself inward. You went along pulling and the *Zillela* always went at a bit of an angle when you pulled it inwards. Behind the *Zillela* you had a hook attached, a spoon (it was a blade spinning around with three hooks attached to the back) and to the fish it looks like a little fish. Then we went along the water, along the shore, and pulled the *Zillela*. That's why we went from one bay to the second bay and then along to the third bay so that you could keep it steady. And when you went along you could sense when the hook inside started 'spooning.' You could notice by the way it was vibratin'. And you waited for a *Rix* [a jerk]. When it jerked, you ran up on the hill to pull out the *Zillela*, with the fish flapping behind it. That is how we caught fish. But that meant running back and forth and when you got there, you gave it a good swing so that you turned yourself around and you went back. We put on miles like that. We were never bored – either it was kites, or stilts, or bow and arrows, or *Zillela*. Today I have a fishing rod if I was to ever go fishing. But once I grew up, I forgot about fishing. I never had time to do it.

And at that lake we had a two-gallon pail – a *zwa gallonig's Emerla*. You know, there was always Roger's Golden Syrup inside those two-gallon pails with the lids? Well, you used that pail, the one with the good handle on it, for lots of things: you used it for frying fish and *beim cricknlaufen*, for picking chokecherries or saskatoons [along the

creeks]. There [at Chin Lake] were real coulees and hills, and there were the woods. There were saskatoons and chokecherries. When you went to “the creek,” we always said the creek, (the woods were always the creeks) to pick chokecherries or saskatoons you had to watch that you didn’t come across any *Brennisol* [poison ivy] because they really burn. The feet got swollen and in the evening your mother would have to put rubbing alcohol on them.

The woods along there also had names. The first was, well there was a fence; on this side of the fence, on our land, there was no longer forest, and right there by the fence is *der Erschte Wold* [the first forest]. The first forest had saskatoons, the second [*der Zwatte Wold*] had a few saskatoons, and there is the third forest [*der dritte Wold*]. It had big chokecherries. And there was one more further along where the ditch ran. Now there was a forest that nobody ever knew was a little forest there.

My *Taurus Vettr* [uncle Darius], that was the sheep boss, he spent a lot of time [in the woods] and he often went home with nice chokecherries. And we could never talk him into telling us where he got them from. Not at the first, not at the second, and also not at the third . . . [but] he always found lots of chokecherries. So one time we watched him. We saw him come from over along there where there only seemed to be some sort of coulee and a ditch that ran through there. We went back there and found some bushes with lots of chokecherries. So what should we call those bushes? We said ‘*der Taurusa Wold*’ [Darius woods], after my uncle who was a Darius. So we knew which place we were talking about: the first, or the second, or the third, or over by *Taurusa Wold*. And that was all on the way to the [Tabor] bridge.



**Illus. 1: Zack's childhood map of his colony, the coulees, and Chin Lake**

## BECOMING AN ADULT

### Apprenticeship

As time went on, well I was first with the cows, helping with milking, and then I got a tractor. You should have seen how proud I was when I got my first tractor. And from there I got a backhoe. When there was something to dig that was my job. I dug out all the basements with the backhoe before the houses went over top. Or we put in a new waterline and when everything was finished I would make a map of where everything was: where all the waterlines go, the gas lines, the power lines, everything was underground. So that's how it was from childhood on: you go from one job to another and you learn something every time.

So when you get older and become boss, or minister, well you have to be knowledgeable, or have a feeling for all the different jobs. Why? It is your job to tell the young people how to do it, apprenticeship. Everyone is under (we say it in English)

apprenticeship throughout his youth; we say learn this and that. And so in winter, I was at every one of the jobs, like the jobs with the animals: one year with the pigs, the next winter with the sheep, and the next winter with the chickens (gathering the eggs), the other winter outside on the steppe with the calves. And that's how it goes, every boy takes turns in winter to help one of the *Jobleit* [stockjob men] and that's how he learns all those things. Once he gets older and comes to that job, one which he is responsible for, for example, if he becomes the chicken boss, he already has an idea of how you handle chickens, just like in the blacksmith's shop [*Schmitten*], or in the shops [*Werkstubbm*]. Only the schoolteacher, that's a job where they don't give any help. When one becomes schoolteacher, well you have to start with a new beginning, but that can also be learned.

### **Work**

Yeah, work. It is said that the way the Heavenly Father has made a person enjoy his life is through his work. Well when you start something and you are successful, there is no better feeling than knowing that you started something and you can carry through with it, and that it turned out, right? That's the greatest reward there is! So work is one of the best things a person can experience.

S: What was your favorite job?

Z: Well, I can't say that I liked one [job] more than the other. I liked all of them during that time. I had a backhoe, a tractor, I had a combine, I had a swather, I had a baler, I had all of those and I enjoyed all of them. Which one was my favorite, I don't know. If you had asked me thirty years ago which job I wanted to have, I wouldn't have been able to say which one I'd want. But in the colony it's like that, you don't have to select; it will be given to you. And sometimes it's the job that is next in line that you might get. You know it goes a little according to turn. So I couldn't say for sure which one I would have chosen. And so then I became schoolteacher and now I think that it is the best job.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN ADULT

### Teaching the Children

My duty here on the colony is schoolteacher for already twenty-two years. That is really my highest, and most important duty. So a schoolteacher, is someone who puts his effort into teaching the children, both spiritually and mentally. The spiritual includes knowledge of life, you know, like, how one should be towards others. And everything has to be taught, and everyone has to learn to work, and to follow the authorities, as we say, the directors. The directors are there for the children, the schoolteacher, the father, the mother, and the parents especially. And that comes later on when they get older and also have to follow the preacher and farm boss who will give them their work. So from childhood on they are taught to be subordinate, to obey. And it should not be forced. It is like that because you see that within [the colony] there has to be order. As our saying says, “Keep order over all, order saves time and energy” – *Halte Ordnung über Sie, Ordnung spart dr Zeit und Mühe.*

It is no different outside in the world when children go to school together and learn how to be, as one says, ‘socializen’, right? The same thing. And all of that has to be introduced to them and myself in order to take teachings out of it, the ones that we take from the Biblical stories. You know that story that we read aloud that time? Those are informative teachings and through them we learn a lot about God’s men who are in the Bible, like, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, or David, Daniel. Those are only a few of them. There are lots more. All of them lived together with their troubles because they believed in God, respected and feared him. They left us with nice examples. And we also see that when they followed him, they were true and honest, and God the Almighty blessed them. And their entire lives went well because they were true to God. Now when you see them, well you can think to yourself, I want to be like that too. Then God will also be pleased with me.

On the contrary, we also have a lot of examples out of the writings of the ungodly, those who did not obey in the Bible. The story of Absalom who put on a revolution against his father King David in order to dethrone him and become King. We also learn of Esau, the brother of Jacob who wanted to kill him, [and] also of Ananias and of King

Saul who was filled with envy towards David. All of those show us the contrast between those who followed God and those who didn't. And we see what happened to them. A lot of them didn't even get old; God had already punished them, took them away already during their youth. That is how we learn the Biblical stories, [and] also where our beliefs or our religion comes from. And that's also how we have to teach the children our Hutterite religion, such as, the orders and the customs, [and] to teach them and make them familiar with them and the goods of the community. They have to learn how they should keep them up and look after them with diligence so that nothing gets damaged in the work stations, or in the shops, in the fields, in the garden, in the kitchen, in the school, and even the animals, the pigs, cows, and also in the granary, and in the fields. All of that has to be taught to them from childhood on, until they have to or should take care of them; not because, let's say, because it belongs to the colony, but because it belongs to you. Everyone is himself the colony, right?

### **Lessons from my Schoolteacher**

When I was a boy, when I was small, we had a good schoolteacher. He was teacher for 25 years. He started almost the same time I started German school. That's when one, say, when one is six years old, you come out of the *klane Schul* and go straight into the *grosse Schul*, in the *deitsche Schul* [German school] we say. And he taught us good things. He was very good to me because I learned easily. I never had a problem with laziness, such as not learning. And I got along well with him. A child will often be a big mouth to his teacher. He wants to be smarter than the teacher. I never did that. Why? It's not that I was afraid of him, but one could say, I respected him. And that brought me a long way with him. I notice today I have children that work with me, [and] that they are real little *Baesgeister* [devils] sometimes, [bad] spirits if you like. But when they are around me and work with me, they are quite well mannered and they are helpful. How can you be angry towards such a child? You understand? How can you have bad thoughts about that child? When he is a good-for-nothing, but behaves when he is around me: he knows it's mealtime, he comes in well mannered and eats politely at the table. Why? I have to watch over the children during meals. Well, you think then, that child had fun but

he knows that there is a time when one has to be well behaved. You know what Solomon says in his saying?

*To every thing there is a season, a time to work and a time to play, a time for fun and a time for good behavior (Ecclesiastes 3:1).*

So, then, if he is well mannered at the table, during church [*Lehr*] and prayer [*Gebet*] (both at church and at school), and during work (he is diligent and performs his work well) then once in a while you can overlook other times when he isn't doing what he should be. And you ask of my teacher, and that's the way I got on well with my teacher. Some of them really didn't like him because he often gave them a good spanking. But he strapped them because they didn't want to obey him.

### **Learning from my Father**

I can remember as a kid that if I ever went home from German school and *geschwatz* . . . do you know what *geschwatz* means? To tattle about what I did at school, or what my teacher did to me: "He beat me today, hit me really hard." You know what my father did? He took the strap and laid me over and hit me again. "You shouldn't have got a beating. You have to obey!" So I never went home and tattled on my teacher because my father and mother help the teacher before they would me. That means a lot once a person grows up. If you haven't already learned to follow the schoolteacher, nor will you be able to follow the Field Boss, or the Farm Boss, or even the preacher. That's why it is necessary that from early on the rules are, as one says, ingrained in you. You have to understand it yourself. It is not something that you are forced into. You have to understand that it is the best thing for all people.

Well, I know I was quick to get into trouble [but] my father was really strict with me so I couldn't do anything very easily. You know what kids are like - they try everything - they also want to try things . . . well, everyone tries to smoke once. And they were made with alfalfa leaves for tobacco and then rolled with newspaper. Or our first smokes were made with pencil sharpener stuff. It looks like tobacco, eh? And that made a terrible smoke. We didn't like it. So my father found out and I can still remember when he laid me [over his knee] for smoking. So when I see the children today, I always think

back, that is about the same thing I did. It's one thing I'm not proud of, that I smoked, but when you are a child you do childish things. When you are a man you realize you did childish things.

I was easily hurt. My father never really beat me, but the words that he used would hurt much more. I didn't dare go to him for three weeks. That was worse than taking the punishment and being forgiven immediately. Today, if I strap or punish a child for something, as soon as the punishment is over, I have forgiven the child. No child should still feel guilt afterwards. Once you have been punished then you should be free. I am sure that my father also felt that way, but I guess you could say I was a sensitive type. I could never allow myself to forget about it. I think if my father had put me over his knee, if he had a 'deutsch duchgiert' [to get the strap] . . . it's a saying: "You'll get a 'Deutsch!'" A 'Deutsch' is a "German beating." If he had given me a German beating, then I would have gotten over it more quickly than when he did it with words. But he meant well, because when I think back, he had a good method with us. Today, I often try to do the same thing, do it the same way. I will give out something that will take longer for them – writing a line out a hundred times. That takes them time! Then he has to think about what he has done.

I always liked school. That's maybe why I'm here now at this job. How many teachers are there that probably should have never become teachers at the colonies in the first place? Everyone has to be forced a little to do this job, but of course in a year or two you begin to settle down. For me it was never a problem. When I became schoolteacher, I liked it immediately. I pretended as if I didn't, but I really enjoyed it. You know what Paul says? I always think of this verse and I tell it to all the new schoolteachers. Paul says:

*For though I preach this gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me (1 Corinthians 9: 16-17).*

So I have to do it and I might as well enjoy it! To be forced to obey God is not pleasing to God – *Ein gezwungener Diener tut Gott leid.*

## The Garden

Besides my teaching job, I have another job and that is looking after the garden. You know, you have to plant watermelons, all sorts of vegetables every year, trees and do everything that belongs to gardening. And what is interesting about that is it [gardening] goes good together, schoolteacher with the garden. When you think about it, looking after the children . . . well, if I am working in the garden, it seems to me as though the little plants are just like the children. From the time they are little one has to look after them, just like with the children who are carefully cared for from childhood on until they have finally reached maturity. You can take a small child from the time it is little and treat it so that when one gets older he is properly educated. Exactly the same with a little tree, you have to raise it slowly. And we always think it's the same thing in the school as in the garden – the little plants, the children are also little plants.

So hopefully, when we've looked after the nice watermelon in spring, and we now have twenty-pound watermelons in the fall, we also hope that the children we teach (from the time they are little to when they get older), that we will also see their good fruits. It doesn't always work right away, sometimes it takes longer until it "sticks." But that is where it points to, setting good examples of the good.

Like the children, you have to leave the garden in a better state than it was when you got it. I put in green manure (which is raising a barley crop and just using it as tilth to plow into the soil). Your cabbage, carrots, tomatoes they take certain nutrients out of the soil. By rotating with a forage crop like barley or clover you're using up some of the nutrients that are in excess. Because your traditional root crops do not require some of the nutrients that barley or wheat does. You constantly have to keep your soil in mind, you're also protecting yourself from diseases and deficiencies that plants need.

It can even be a poor soil. You can make good soil out of poor soil. You can take a Shauna who doesn't know anything about religion and plant a lot of good *Verslen* [verses] and things into her and it will enrich her mind and her life and her religion and you can do the same thing with soil. You can take a poor sandy soil and make a good rich soil out of it by adding nutrients and by adding tilth. On our farm we have many different types of soils: sandy (or coarse soil), loam (or loose soil with tilth), and clay (a harder

soil), but not in the garden as much, the garden is very small: the vegetable area is six acres and the summer fallow is four. It's taught to you from childhood on you could say, to always look after your investment, whether it's land or whether it's your hogs, or your cows, or you children which is your biggest investment.

S: How old were you when you became gardener?

Z: I was twenty-nine. Now I am fifty-one. So now for twenty-two years, I have been in the garden. Every year there's something new. If there was nothing new then you no longer have the desire. I try every year something new: a new variety of something, and a new way of doing something. This year I did something so that we could have *Gietsch*. Do you know what *Gietsch* are? Watermelons. I bought a blanket, a big row cover. And I planted my *Gietsch* and put the blanket over top in the spring. There under the blanket the sun can get through and that keeps out the cold and protects from frost. So then the plants will sprout up quickly and grow big. And when it gets hot, you already have big plants. Now here we already have such a big watermelon. Today, in the kitchen, we cut open the first watermelon to eat – a seventeen pounder! Most of the time we have *Gietsch* that's about eight pounds and those will be around the middle of September. Here we are a whole month ahead and that is a little bit exciting right? So and then you have more pep! Every year we plant a lot of carrots and a lot of beans and corn, and when they're finished, ploughed under, then you have nothing to look forward to if that's all you ever do.

I don't know, for me I did things and tried stuff on my own. I drove to the research stations, to see what was in the field, and to look at how they raised stuff. Over by Brooks there is a federal research station, and I drove a lot to that one. That's what they are there for, to see what you can try in that area. They have all sorts of things on trial, all sorts of corn, peas, and onions. And at the end of the year they have a list of what they planted and how well they did, and then they'll say whether or not they'll recommend it for that area. I can say I have learned most of my stuff from them. And because I learned it from them, a lot of *Gmane* [colonies] then learned it from me. So I could probably say that I was more open-minded, to look further out rather than just

going to other *Gmane* to see how they do things. Just as they say at the research centres: “We learn so much from our Hutterite friends.” Why? Every Hutterite tries something new in his garden, something different, what works for them. Everyone recognizes that and looks [to see what they are growing]. In a way [then] the Hutterites are also like research stations. So the research stations have also learned a lot from the Hutterites. They try everything. They aren’t there for just one or two years; they stay there.

And when somebody dies, that is the time when we socialize all the more. Then you have a reason to go to that colony, to the wake. People are there from practically every *Gman* [colony] in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and down from Montana. It’s open, anyone can go who is baptised. And there you find, you meet a lot of people, and naturally, well if you had good watermelon this year, well everyone will want to know what variety you used this year. “Well, I used Crimson Sweet.” “Yeah, I’m going to try that next year, how did you get it?” Well then you tell them that you put a row cover over top. “That will bring you ahead three to four weeks.” So that way one learns from another. The women come together and talk. “This year we’ve already had so many watermelons and so many cantaloupe, and cucumbers so early.” Well then it begins, a bulb goes on inside, and you begin to wonder, how did they do it?

Many years ago one of the old gardeners said to me, “Don’t forget your old friends” – *dey alten Freunden nicht vergiss!* That means that when you try something new, retain that which you had. That was purdy good, eh? That brought you this far. When you try something new don’t just go with the new. It’s like Apostle Paul said: “Try everything and hold fast to what is good.” (1 Thess. 5:21). No, so far I’ve been lucky. I never had any disasters where I had to go to another colony; that’s one thing the colonies do. Now if a colony didn’t have anything in their garden, let’s say, no corn, well, the other colonies have more than they need and so you can drive over and pick for nothing, tomatoes or something else.

### **Farmer’s Market**

We do what a lot of colonies don’t do, we have a market garden. Since I’ve been gardener, I’ve sold a lot of vegetables and I’ve been going to the Farmer’s Market since the very first year (twenty-two years this year). That means preparing things during the

week, [and] packaging them nicely. That's a place where I gain perhaps more exposure to the outside world than many other gardeners do. Why? I come in contact with a lot of *Weltleit* [worldly people] through selling produce. When I drive to Lethbridge on Saturday to Farmer's Market, I actually have a longing to see those customers that come to the table. I know them already. I know exactly what they'll choose when they come to the table. And I know how big their eyes will get when they see the baby potatoes [*Katuffele*] or when they see the baby dill. That's my reward for a whole week's worth of work: to see those people with a smile on their faces. So in that respect, I think of my Christian duty, or obligation to those people. Well, what I should do for my fellow man; not only there in the colony, also the other people with whom I do business.

Many outsiders are anti-Hutterite by nature. And the reason for that is they know nothing about the Hutterites. How does that go: "Ignorance breeds contempt, right?" (It's something like that). The less you know about something, the more negative your feelings are about someone. But start talking to the people, speak to them about who you are [and] "Oh we never knew you were this type of people!" "What did you think?" In some of their expressions, it appears as if they thought you were from Mars. They don't know if you have horns or what. But in daily business at the Farmer's Market, or somewhere, they learn that we are people just like they. So that way you, well, as we say:

*No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven (Matthew 5: 15-16).*

## **The Bees**

And I have yet another job, the bees. The beehive, or, *die Bayer*, as we say, the bees. And *das Bienenvolk* [bee folk] is a very interesting thing. If you watch the way they carry together, all together. The way they work is they bring everything into the *Kosten* [hive]. They bring honey and wax and pollen all into the hive, or into the frames to build and fill them up, to fill up, *anfillen*. And when we consider how they do things, well, I always think of our Hutterite colony here. Just as the bees carry together [*zommtrogn*] to the hive so that they have everything, that's exactly the way we do it in the colonies. All

people that work here do everything together, not for oneself but one for the other so that they have everything. In the colony, just as the bees do, nothing is forced; everything is voluntary. In the Gmane nobody actually owns anything, but everyone owns everything. So those three jobs keep me busy the whole year long, quite busy.

Well in winter it is the busiest time with the children, with teaching in the school. That is all I do then besides binding books (you know, those needed by the colony, or the school, or new books). So, that's why, with the children, the winter is the most demanding time. But with the garden in summer, that is naturally the busiest time. And also by early spring, the bees require the most work when you start to build it up again, and have to check to see that they are populated so that when the crops are ready, they can carry honey to fill the combs. Crop, I say crop, *die Ernte*; when it is harvest time, that is, they are ready and prepared to go out and collect. When all the flowers blossom, well you have to have a big stock, a well-populated hive, where there are a lot of bees. When the hive or crate with the bees is poor, or there are few bees and you have lots of flowers outside, then there aren't many to carry it in. But when you feed them from spring on and really build them up (so there are lots of bees), when the flowers blossom and they go out, they can bring in a hundred pounds of honey in a very short time. Just like a lot of people can bring in a big harvest in a short time – it's the same thing. And if one bee is lazy the rest will drive her away or kill her. They are very clean and keep their hives clean. In short, they work themselves to death for the welfare of the hive or colony.

### **The Heavenly Father**

So in summer, you could say, it is physically more difficult. And in winter it is mentally more difficult. But one can say it is always a busy thing. It's a good change, a *Veraenderung*. The Heavenly Father set up everything nicely; he made four seasons. When you're fed up, summer comes. When that's over you're also happy when fall comes. When you are already tired of all the work in fall, winter comes. You're always happy when a new season comes. Everything is set up very wisely.

The Psalms say:

*Oh Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom thou hast made them all:  
the earth is full of thy riches (Psalm 104:24).*

You just have to recognize it.

So in closing on this part of my life history, I feel that even though I have undoubtedly made many mistakes, I have nevertheless tried to do my best, and with the Heavenly Father's blessing, accomplished a lot. I hope to be able to continue and in passing on, when my last days have come, I can look back and with the apostle Paul say:

*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give me on that day! (taken from 2. Timothy 4:6-8).*

Amen.

## Chapter 4

### THE LIFE HISTORY OF ELIZABETH WIPF

#### MEETING ELIZABETH

The *Book of Ruth* is a story from the Hebrew scriptures about loyalty, friendship, generosity, responsibility, and hard work. It is a narrative included in the Christian Scriptures<sup>3</sup> as well. The story recounts how the young widow Ruth leaves her own land of Moab and goes with her mother-in-law Naomi to Bethlehem. She supports both of them with her gleanings from barley in the field of Boaz. Not only does Ruth fully commit herself to her mother-in-law, she becomes a true follower of the Hebrew faith. The Story of Ruth occupies a privileged place in my relationship with Elizabeth. Not only did it grant me inclusion into Elizabeth's life; it served as a metaphor for finding my place within Elizabeth's community.

I wasn't familiar with the narrative of Ruth until one month into my research. It was a scorching summer day - similar perhaps to the many days Ruth endured as she gleaned in the hot sun for a small harvest of grain - when my pickup pulled into Elizabeth's colony where I was to deliver leftover apples. Sam, the colony gardener, had been expecting me and immediately emerged from the slaughterhouse to greet me and help unload the boxes. Inside, a group of Hutterite women stood around a large stainless-steel table canning raspberries and giggling as they saw me in my Hutterite garb. The same question was burning inside all of them as to who had given me my dress. But Sam's wife, whom I had met before, took the liberty of asking first. Another asked where I had learned to speak *Huttrisch*. And Elizabeth, one of the elderly women, wanted to know if I had been attending church at the other colony. Before I could answer another question Sam was leading me outside insisting that I have a sip of homemade wine before heading back. It was during these few moments together sipping chokecherry wine that Sam told me what Elizabeth had whispered to him. Her words were: "She reminds me of Ruth!" – *Dey iss sowie die Ruth!*

Elizabeth was one of the women with whom I had hoped to spend some time and so I took this as an invitation to approach her. When I finally went to visit her the following week to see if she would be interested, she repeated what she had previously told Sam: that is, that I reminded her of Ruth in the Bible. Her words had a significant impact on our relationship and the interview process itself.

Not only was this the first feedback on Elizabeth's perception of me; but my role as "Ruth" seemed to be a useful way to strike up friendly exchange with Elizabeth. Like many anthropologists looking for a way to connect with their "informants," I pursued the "Ruth-like" qualities I seemed to be expressing. I tried to identify with Ruth's character, and to analyse how it was that the qualities that made me acceptable to Elizabeth were even remotely similar to Ruth's.

Ruth's foreignness and mine was of course one obvious association. This is repeatedly stressed in the Book of Ruth. Elizabeth obviously saw this: "Shauna die Englischa," "Schowna, Russell Dannatt's granddaughter," or "Shauna, the Manitoba Hutterite," which Elizabeth would sometimes say jokingly if I was wearing white (rather than dark) socks with my dress. More to the point, however, is the main message of the Story of Ruth: the plea to inculcate kindness towards foreigners, or the plea for the inclusion of foreigners (Dean, 1955: 82). Elizabeth's acceptance of me was grounded in this message, for I was a good candidate to test such pleas on.

The less obvious association with Ruth, but one that became evident throughout my time with Elizabeth, was the ability to perform my work well. Like Ruth, I was willing to perform "the lowliest of tasks." In Ruth's case, this meant following the reapers and gathering up the fragments of grain which fell and were left behind for the poor. In my case, this meant cutting the 'crops' out of hundreds of chickens, or topping carrots for hours on end. Although on a colony there is no such thing as a "lowly task" – for all duties are deemed equal in the eyes of the Lord – this is not to say that more mundane or less popular jobs do not exist for the less experienced workers like myself. Every now and again Elizabeth would comment on how hardworking I was, how I never complained, or how I always returned joyful at the end of a long day in the garden with my one or two jars of preserves. "Just like Ruth with her small harvest."

However, what seemed to be the most significant quality of Ruth's character that made an impression on Elizabeth was that, despite being a foreigner, I was keen on participating in the daily religious rituals, such as attending church. My having understood the language of the service became highly significant for Elizabeth. She felt that by speaking her holy language she could more readily refer to Biblical passages, sayings, and songs, and trust that it would be communicated, or interpreted in a more meaningful way than if she spoke to someone who did not understand Hutterite, and the language of the scriptures. This became evident after editing our second interview together when Elizabeth told me that she was "*sehr zufrieden*" [very satisfied]. When I asked her why, she replied: "I was afraid that it wouldn't make sense, but I see that you understand it."

Through my personal involvement in her day-to-day life, Elizabeth developed a trust, which inevitably influenced what she shared with me about her life. When I asked why she thought there were so few contemporary life histories of Hutterites she said, "We don't need a life history, God is our witness," and emphasised that "a person does not need to prove to anyone but God, our *Lebenswandel*" because "our course of life shows it." Her primary reason then for sharing her life history with me was embedded in the same scriptural source Zack quoted:

*Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:15).*

Elizabeth felt that by agreeing to share her life story she was fulfilling her Christian duty to enlighten and help another person, just as the Israelites had helped the Moabitess Ruth. This was apparent during our interviews when she would say: "Well if that's of any use," or "If that helps you at all," but also in the way she would fuss over me to make sure that I was well fed, and properly clothed.

As requested by Elizabeth, the topics we followed were mostly my own family, childhood, growing up, and adulthood. However, the topics we discussed were also tailored by Elizabeth to suit her own interests, and to shield her from uncomfortable discussions. Her daughter Lydia, who was almost always present with us at the kitchen

table, also guided the interview. There were also several occasions when the various activities Elizabeth would be working on - either knitting, crocheting, or mending one of her forty-three grandchildren's socks - would spark a memory and cause us to digress to a new topic. Other times, curious neighbors, or grandchildren would drop in, also affecting the direction she would take her story. From these fragmentary episodes, I try to piece together Elizabeth's story to best reflect the way in which she told it to me.

## **ELIZABETH**

### **Family History**

My mother's mother died when she was 14 years old. She was the youngest one and she was feeling hurt because she lost her mother so fast and so young. And she always told us, "Dad, we thought he'd get as old as ninety, but he only lived five years after her Mom." When she was nineteen, her Dad also died and then she married my Dad the same year. My Dad was five or six years older than she was but they said, what else should they do, he was alone, his Mom and Dad had died, and her Mom and Dad died. So they married. They raised a big family, fifteen children. We were eleven sisters and four brothers. Four of us were born in the U.S., in South Dakota, but then we moved to Canada in 1932 and we lived at Hutterville colony at Magrath. That's where we grew up. My Dad was the schoolteacher and my Mom had all those children.

She wasn't well with some of the children. I remember with one of my sisters - she was the eighth of the family - she was very sick after she was born. She had pneumonia. We all feared for her, were so afraid she was going to die. I remember in those days there wasn't antibiotic and things like that, or intravenous. They put flax on her whole body, upper body you know. They put cooked flaxseed in bags and that helped that pneumonia. Well she got up again, cause she had six more children after this one. And she had to work hard and we had to help her too. She was a good Mother. She was a very good person, I think at least. She was liked by everybody.

## CHILDHOOD

### Coming to Canada

We came to Canada on the account of the war. Mother always told us about two young men that were in concentration camps that died. They lived on the colony where she was. Have you ever heard about that? [Elizabeth's husband comes in and she asks: "You want something to eat father? Go into your room." That's okay he can eat in there.] Oh that was a very very sad story. They mistreated those people so much. That's why they died. They wanted them to put the uniform on and they refused. And they only had their light underclothes on and they got pneumonia. And they brought 'em to the hospital and there they died. And they had families at home. But one had only one child and the other one only two. One was 24 and one was 26. The wives both remarried [Her husband tells their grandson to come in]. These two men were in Alcatraz. They write about that in our history books.

When we came to Canada I was just one and a half years old and, in thirty-seven, it was really dry. I was too young to tell much about it. We didn't have as much as we had today; there was a bushel of apples divided up every year. That is practically all the fruit that we had, and hardly a orange. In the late forties we started to get bananas and oranges. When we were small, we didn't see anything like that. [Her husband comes out of his room and says: "Imagine dat, eating a bushel of apples in a week!"]

### Earliest Memory: The boy and the binder

I'll be 68 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, okay, if that's any use. I was born in South Dakota in 1930 and we moved to Canada in 1932. I was one and a half years old. You know I don't remember that, that's just what they told me. But I can remember when I was four years old . . . [sighing] it happened in August, one of the colony boys got killed with a binder, *mit dre Binder*. In Deadly Coulee, you know that's where we had our sheep. And there was a really big hill there, he drove over there with the binder [and] his *Tucks* came off. What does that mean, *die Tucks*? Reigns. See the horses were simply tied up to it. That's the best way I can describe it. And they came loose and apparently the binder went into the ground and he fell down underneath the horses. He was unconscious.

That happened before *lunsch* at nine-thirty. And then they apparently brought him home. I was in kindergarten; I was barely four years old. I think it happened on the twenty-second of August. I can't say for sure, but one could easily trace back to when the boy died. We were at the north cellar, sitting there on the steps (the small schoolchildren) and watched him as the ambulance took him. That was by Hutterville, there where we lived. And that, that I can still remember today. He died at two o'clock in the morning. And I also know the other days well, when they brought him home. They brought him home before lunch, and after our nap, the other *Schulankela* took us over to look at him. You know I remember the dead body. But the wake, I don't remember.

He was placed in ice. Back then we had a big house, a icehouse. They did that after New Years, when the ice was really thick, the men made it. And that ice, it was just crushed up, and when someone died they put it all around the body in jars so that the body was kept cool, so that it wouldn't smell. That was changed three times per day - it would melt you know. And I still remember that well. I don't know why, but I don't remember anything about the wake. See the wake was a couple days later. Even the burial, I can't recall that. But I remember how he was killed and how they brought him home and drove him away.

### **Deadly Coulee**

And then when we grew up, when we went to school, in the summer we went to Deadly Coulee on the weekends, where the boy was killed, to pick choke cherries, *na Junipern* and choke cherries. Saskatoon berries, that's what we went to pick in the *Criechsle* (small creeks), that was a mile from our farm. In the Deadly Coulee there we had our sheep. That was a really enjoyable thing, just picking saskatoons and chokecherries, in the Deadly Coulee and also in the Meeks Coulee. They were connected. The Deadly belonged to us, but not the Meeks. Oh they had nice chokecherries. We never picked so many saskatoons [there] - in Deadly Coulee there were more. Milford dried and cooked them in winter. And further back it wasn't like that, Mother would take a bowl of chokecherries and put sliced apples in it and boiled them. Yeah, wild choke cherries and wild saskatoons. Yo, umhum.

By Bock Ranch, they had all sorts of *Schweschpen* [plum cherries] in the creeks with incredibly big chokecherries, so big that they were like plums. And then they had another name. I don't know it anymore. There were all sorts of names for their bushes, like *Schweschperwold* [plum bushes] . . . I can't think of anymore. The Sanna Basl would know them better.

### *Cricknlaufen*

I mean we always did that in summer there because we were kids. And once we got a bit older, well then they went over by Magrath, to *Patol Crick* is what it was called. We also went there to pick saskatoons. They weren't just put in jars, they also made *Juniberrn* jelly, you know, the old grandmothers make it and was it ever good. Saskatoon jelly is actually good. Yeah, those were nothing but *wilde crickn* [wild bushes along the creeks]. We call those *crickn*. What you call that in German or in English I don't know. I don't know the way to say it. There were sloughs [*Schlichten*] there. Do you know what slough water [*Sloughwosser*] is? It is always really rich for those sort of things [to grow].

S: If you had to describe the landscape what do you remember most clearly in your mind?

E: I can remember *die crickn* very clearly in my mind. *Iss a großer Berg gwesn* . . . or should I speak English? There were big hills and on the side of these that's where the trees were, where the berries were. We had to climb quite high to get them. Sometimes the trees were so high and you had to climb up and picked those ones. You pick them like . . . I can't speak English very well. [She switches to *Huttrisch*]. But that was such a pleasure for us, *cricknlaufen*. That's what we called it, *cricknlaufen*. You know, picking when we were kids?

And then when we were fourteen years old, we joined the older ones – *san mer bei dr Leit gwesn* – and often drove places and did things like that, [like] picking. We even drove out to the reserve, where the Indians were and picked cherries [*Weigsele klaubm*], wild chokecherries to make wine. Or should I not say that? It doesn't seem to me like there's anything wrong with that. I mean that was such a pleasure to do that, you know? We got up already at four o'clock in the morning and two men drove along with us. And we drove on the wagon (with high sides on it and pulled by horses) and, together

with the boys, picked the cherries and put them inside [the wagon]. There were a lot of cherries. You needed a lot in order to make wine. Our boss made wine. That was really a pleasure for the girls to do that. There were always four that looked after that. It seemed to me as though you saw the Heavenly Father more when we were in those creeks.

While you are asking, I saw on the weekend, there at the wake in Saskatchewan, or even on the way there that it really reminded me of how it used to be. You know there were coulees and *crickn*. I mean you know how the hills are. There were trees, one was a dark green, the other black, the other had yellow on it, and along there water was running, you know, sloughs. When you go on a trip somewhere, then you think a lot more than when you stay at home and work. But even at Milford, we had big *crickn* where we went and picked chokecherries. They were simply much nicer bushes - saskatoons and rose bushes [*Hatschaputscha*] - they all had a different color . . . but when there was a bush with stinging nettle [*Brennisol*], you didn't touch it. That is the most poisonous thing there is.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES GROWING UP**

### **Milking, Gardening, and Babysitting**

When we were children we milked the cows – *mer hobn gmoliche*. And in summer, if you were under fourteen, while the women were carrying stooks, the girls from ten on (the ten-year-olds up to fourteen) then we had to do the women's work. We milked the cows and did the gardening. We had more responsibilities you know then. They really depended on us. We peeled potatoes, washed the dishes, and the women went out right after breakfast and stayed till noon. After noon they went out again and they even had their supper on the field. Everybody had their supper on the field. Like the binder people, they never came home for their meals because they had to be ahead of the stokers. But the evening meals were brought to all of them. We had to tend the babies, they were left for the children at home. The ones who had to nurse the children, they came home once in the afternoon.

## Farming

I just told them before you came that I was fourteen years old on the twentieth of August, on a Sunday, and on the next day I had to go stooking. I only weighed a hundred and six pounds. I was very small. And I said, you know the rows, the way the binder<sup>35</sup> lays out the sheaves? We divided those up between us, so and so many rows; the women stooked two and two, and I know we were with one of my cousins who pitched grain. I cried, I know that. That was hard work because I was such a small child . . . still just a girl. The grain wasn't cut all that well when it was wet. It hung together and that made the stooks heavier.<sup>36</sup> But I know how that grain smelled, oh sure [laughing]! When it was nice and quiet, it was really fun, but when there was wind, it was a lot more difficult - even carrying sheaves varied. When there was such wind, oh gosh that was lots harder. But that was our policy, when we were fourteen years old, (well we went to school until fifteen) but if it was summer time you had to go work with the women, whatever they did carrying sheaves and all that.

We had to, you know, the girls and the women, stand the stooks up.<sup>37</sup> During the Second World War our men and boys were in the camps. They took all the young people away so the girls had to pitch in. [But] not my father, actually (I say that word too often) just my cousins; their men were the ones who left. They were enlisted [*eingzugn*]. That's what they called it "enlisted," pulled into the labor camps. I remember well when they drove them out of here. It was actually really sad for the young married people. They had to leave their children. So our girls had to haul the wheat [*watzfiehrn*], and load the sheaves. We always did that with a binder.

I mean during my childhood years, I didn't know as much about the land until after I was fourteen and we simply had to use the binder to cut [*mahne*] and make *Gorbn*. *Gorbn* are bundles. See the binder cut and bound,<sup>38</sup> and then you had to stand them up so

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<sup>35</sup> A binder was a machine (drawn by two or four horses and operated by one man) used for cutting grain and mechanically binding bundles of the stalks into sheaves (Hoover, 1997:21).

<sup>36</sup> When first cut, the heads of grain had a very high water content, thus were heavy (Ward, 1996:25).

<sup>37</sup> After the bundles of grain were dropped, they were collected in groups of eight to ten women, (or two per row) and stood on end about ten to fifteen days for the grain to dry (Ward, 1996:25).

<sup>38</sup> Twine binders automatically tied the cut stalks into bundles with *Binder Goadn* [binder twine], "a durable insect and rodent repellent cord used to bind sheaves" (Hoover, 1997:21). These binders typically cut and bound about thirteen hectares per day (Ward, 1996:24).

that they could dry. So that's how you started a *Häcke*. I don't know what you call that in English. I guess a stook.<sup>39</sup> Yeah, that's right. See they stood in the stubble and then you piled them together until you had made a nice stook. And that was really something to try and make the row as straight as you could. And it was even better when the *Schieflader*<sup>40</sup> picked them up. When the stooks were dry, the *Häcke*, then they came along with the *stookloadr*. That picked up the stooks and put them in the *Oustwogn*, in the grain wagon. Maybe you don't know what a *stookloadr* is. I guess not. That simply means a harvest wagon. When they were dry, dry enough to combine, those stooks were put into the *stookloadr*. They did all of that with horses and then there was also a threshing machine and they drove at the same time and shook it into the threshing machine. In one [end] the straw came out, and in the other, the grain also into grain tanks (I guess grain wagons) to be put in the elevator, in the granary. Threshing took a lot longer. Today there is a big machine, or a combine. And the girls had to take a grain wagon and *watzfiehrn*, haul wheat. That's what we called it, *watzgfiehr*. Instead of the menfolk, because there weren't anymore, the girls had to [do it]. They drove into the granary, to the elevator. What is that called now, or is it called elevator? What do you call the thing that they unload with, the long thing [asking Lydia] . . . the auger?

S: Do you remember the different crops?

E: I know that from carrying sheaves. There was *Rupn* [rye] first, then oats; we called that *Hobr*. And there was also barley [*Gerschn*] and winter wheat [*Winterwatz*] and also spring wheat [*Friehlingwatz*]. We had those five varieties when we were carrying stooks. Back then there was no durum. I know though that a field of durum has a darker color than the other grains. When there was a nice wheat field and such a crop, when it was as thick as your finger, you knew that and could recognize it. I think I see more now when I drive, but I don't do that anymore. A ripe wheat field, when it was standing, sixty bushels and so, I can picture me that better than any other. But it was different in those years, you never heard much about yield.

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<sup>39</sup> A stook is a group of bound sheaves standing on end.

*Flox*, I can think back to when the people had it. At Hutterville, where I grew up, we never had flax. But then when I went to Milford I know they had flax the first year. [Lydia asks: “Winifred always had flax?”] Even Rosedale, I remember when I was there with my father for four months, they also raised flax. We didn’t hear much about it. [Lydia interrupts and says, “I have flax lotion.”] Flax lotion for her rough hands. That’s from all that scrubbing, the hands get irritated and sore. You rub it on your hands. Look at how nice they are now. Put a little on and rub it in, it’s really smooth. Her aunt gave her the recipe. [Lydia goes to get the recipe].

Here is the recipe:

5 spoons of flax  
 1 quart water  
 2 spoons of sweet oil (glycerin)  
 2 spoon fulls of vinegar  
 cook flax over heat and let stand a day or two

You mix that together and let it boil and then set.

That is a real old recipe. It makes the hands really nice and it is cheap. I have to say, I don’t hear much now of women with sore hands. They were a real mess, everyone had splitting, chapped hands . . . too much washing. Now in summer when there is not as much as in the winter it’s not so bad. Maybe that’s why the hands are better. But I think it really has helped. We couldn’t afford so much lotion. We get one bottle at Christmas time from the boss and we need that plus another two bottles. But next week we begin with our fall cleaning. [Lydia says, “You better believe we’ll need lots of lotion!”] Now where was I . . . the women had to help the older men a lot.

S: What did you like most about farming?

E: Working together was the nicest thing. Now in *Hutterville*, as I told you, the rows were counted and divided. But when I got married, those people did it different. Okay, they had a group of women and a group of men going through. There was a lot more walking. They did it (the colony I married into) that colony did it different than at

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<sup>40</sup> Some binders were fitted with bundle carriers, also called a stook loader, which held up to six sheaves. As Ward also explains that “releasing the sheaves in one pile greatly reduced the work of collection” (1997: 25).

*Hutterville*. We did it together, but there, there was lots more walking. Okay me and my sister had ten rows to pick up at *Hutterville*. When the binders came along we stoked that and then we could sit. We had knitting along and crocheting in our spare time. We spent our time in the fields when they were “mowing” (when they “mowed” is how you say it in Hutterite). You got more tired than when you had your own rows. I’ve said that many times already, but farming the land was the best time, when we were together hauling stooks. That was the best thing in life. I don’t know what else I can tell you.

### Slicing Feathers

And slicing feathers [*Feder schleissen*] was a good time when we did that together. We learned our verses quickly so that we could go right after supper to slice feathers. When we went to school we were allowed to help the women during the evening. Those who were already out of school got to split feathers for the entire day.<sup>41</sup> That took definitely four to five days, sometimes even a week. When there was a big family and two or three pounds were divided, we spread them out on a long table and sat around it with a pail and picked out the ones with a nice hard stem. Yes, oh we enjoyed that. We simply enjoyed doing that together. It’s not the same as today . . .

### Spinning Wool

And back then I told you about spinning (that was in June). That was what the men did, sheep shearing.

S: Schof . . . schären?

E: See that’s just the way our language is. Can you write in German (*af deitsch*)<sup>42</sup> or are you doing it in *lateinisch* [the Latin alphabet]? The older women, the grandmothers, they went to the nice lambs and they knew the spinning wool (they knew her), and they picked out the nice spinning wool. See some had incredibly crimped hair; you couldn’t spin

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<sup>41</sup> Elizabeth noted that, like most young Hutterites, she could hardly wait to turn fifteen so that she could join the “people” as a full worker. This meant working with the women splitting feathers, spinning wool, in the slaughterhouse, and so on. For more on the typical roles and responsibilities of Hutterite women, see Patricia Looney’s *Hutterite Women and Work* (1983).

<sup>42</sup> *Deitsch* here refers to the German or Gothic alphabet as opposed to Latin orthography; that is, the Latin alphabet as used in English (Hoover, 1997:99).

those. Those that were long were what they picked out, and again they were divided. The *große Leit*, from fourteen on, they got a pound and three quarters, and the ten year olds, one and a half, and the little ones got three quarters of a pound. And every colony had to spin its own wool.

When a girl is fourteen years old, then the carpenter made her a spinning wheel. At first all of us worked it by foot. I remember I also had to use one with a foot [pedal], but later they had ones with a little motor on it; it was simply easier. Oh my, I still see my mother when we still didn't know how to spin, watching her with her swollen feet. She had terribly thick feet; she had varicose veins. Her feet were swollen from pushing the pedal all day. I mean, when my mother was home alone, my father even helped her put spin the wool – *die Wulle zommlossn*. I still have some wool for socks. [She goes and gets it]. See this is three-ply wool. Sheep's wool is black (dirty) and we had to wash it by hand until it was clean. We enjoyed that. We didn't just spin for ourselves we spun for relatives who had a lot of children. So every year we spun wool and sliced feathers and when they were ready we sent them off. A mother with a lot of girls [meant] they had to help out more.

### **Raising Goslings, Ducks, and Chicks**

Every family had their own geese. Four laying geese had to be tended by the one family. We had *Hietne* (lodges for the chickens and geese) and the eggs that they laid in spring, we had to collect them all. And when the goslings hatched, and when they were ready, you had to carry them to the *Gonsstohl*, the geese centre. That was such a pleasure, when you had something to carry up . . . in their little box. They were really pretty the little goslings. And those were incredibly clear eggs, but some of them fell out (all depends how big the goose was). We had one, a grey one. I still remember that well, we called her Red Ring. That was a heavy goose. She had twelve goslings every time. That is a lot. When you got six or eight you did well. That was simply a special *Gons* [goose].

And even the little chicks [*Hähndle*], they hatched in their little lodges at home. Do you understand that? Every family received six laying hens and so and so many eggs came out. And when they hatched (the chicks) that family had to continue raising them over the summer. We just had little lodges outside for the animals, you know, for the

chicks and for the goslings? There was a pair (a man and woman) in every colony. A couple that looked after them. But the chicks, the little ones, were looked after by every housewife who had hers to raise in the summer. That was good Lydia, you fed them and gave them water. That was so terribly cute and *onratslich* [interesting]. You had them for ten weeks. It actually was a challenge, it was. Just those little chicks, watching them grow, feeding them, and at night you made sure that they came in, that they wouldn't get too cold.

And then when fall came, the person in charge of the chickens would say, "Today is the day<sup>3</sup> to carry the chicks up." And we took them down to the chicken barn and the chicken boss looked after them. You know some of them also died. Even the little ducks they also have chicks, *die Fossilanten* [ducklings]. What do you call those? The mallards and the ducks, they were also at the colony, together with the people who had geese. You know that individual couple they also hatched them. And when they hatched, the ducks just as the geese, every family got a goose, but with the ducks, we only got the eggs. And we also put those up there in the *Antenstohl*, in the duck pond. And down there we had a big dam and the couple (the man and woman) they looked after them for the whole summer. In summer, she didn't have to cook, or wash up, or anything, the *Antenmuitttr* [duck mother].

But my mother had a lot of girls. A mother that has a lot of girls, well, then we had to have that many more [chicks]. The minimum was eight. My two oldest sisters, they had to hatch *a Sots*, just two sets. So that's how it went. If there were more girls, they had to have so and so many. Now things are different. It's not that there isn't any work anymore, but it is much easier. I mean that is a big job to clean out the *Huitten* ["little huts" or small chicken coups]. The girls had to do that. [Three of the five grandchildren in the room are screaming and crying in the background. Lydia and Elizabeth's husband are also present, and reprimand the children for not getting along].

S: Did you have to worry about predators?

E: Sometimes geese were killed. Well there was nothing you could do. Sure they would tell the police or something like that. But if the wildlife comes in you would kill them if they did harm to you. They tried to get the coyotes. They set out traps to get them.

Even now if that happens, if a coyote gets into a flock of geese, they set out traps for them. Maybe I should not say that but the boys they set out traps to catch wildlife and to sell the furs. Sure they caught wolves too. But there are colonies still now that have geese and sometimes you hear there were 300 dead in the morning. That's not against our religion to get the . . . what did you call, predators.

The [young] women they would carry sheaves, peel potatoes, and milk the cows. I mean things like that seem to me like things I have told my children about. Those were typical things. And those children were also babysitters [*Luckele*] just as we looked after the children when we were girls: put them to bed at night and everything, washed the dishes, did the laundry, and milked the cows . . . that was a hard thing to do. You had to learn that from those who were older than you. Anyway it seems to me like those were typical things from the old days: hatching gees and raising ducks, cleaning the coup out and putting new straw inside.

## LESSONS OF WOMANHOOD

### **Working together**

So that's how it is today dear. If we don't have work, like today with slaughtering, and yesterday we picked corn the whole day, husked it, creamed it, and put it in jars - the whole day! It seems like it brings us even closer together when we work together. We really like it because it seems if your alone in your house (just Lydia and me now – every family for itself, you know?) there isn't as much trust even when you go to eat. But when you work hard together, that keeps us together. I mean people are people. We all make mistakes. And you see maybe more mistakes in others, but when you do it together there's more trust. It is much much better. I wouldn't want to look for any other life in the world.

### Picking Herbs [*Kreitr klaubm*]

*Hatschaputscha* [rose hips], I don't know who talked us into that at Milford, but there was a time when we all used to pick *Hatschaputscha* and dry it for tea. That was also something that was used for the children, for bedwetting. There were many families that used those sorts of things; my children never wet their beds. When they were one and a half years old, it was over with.

When the *Hutterviller* colony moved up to Caster, there they always had a lot of wild strawberries. Oh yeah we also picked like, *Schofgorm* [yarrow] to wash the head. What's that called in *Englisch*? I have a book in there, a green book of herbs, look inside there. And purple sage was for, that was good for . . . [whispering] for women. They used it for when they had stomachaches, you just boil it. We had a whole bunch, we really thought a lot of it. It doesn't look like we use it anymore. [Lydia is still looking up *Schofgorm* in Elizabeth's little green herb book entitled *Alpenpflanzen* but can't identify the plant.] Don't you know *Schofgorm*? You don't know any? You know, with the little white heads? I don't have any time now to do that . . . [Lydia giggles at how irritated her mother is that she can't find *Schofgorm*].

### Using Traditional Remedies

S: Can you recall many of the traditional remedies that your mother used?

E: Oh yes back then they all used those sorts of things. When mother had pneumonia we covered her with flax. We had more things for stomachaches, fever, [and] for diarrhea they used boiled *Wermitt*. It smelled really good, like peppermint. We drank it as a tea. There were a lot of remedies that they used. I can't name just now what they all were. We don't use those anymore; one takes antibiotics or other medicines. It looks like it's the way the world is turning. The world is simply different now.

But actually my Lydia takes herbs. She was so depressed two years ago, but now she's on herbs. Maybe that's why she's so plump, I don't know. We also go with the times. Now many are onto herbs. It's not as if we don't believe in them and use them. In the colonies there are a lot who have things like that. For example, there at Winifred there is a *Ankela*, a midwife; she has a lot, she has a lot of remedies. You know the small

children, when they refuse to breastfeed . . . I was there with little David a week ago, [and] she said that he was simply too swollen back there. So she said we just had to mix together two spoonfulls of glycerin and two spoonfulls of Vaseline and two teaspoons of green drops and mix it together and smear it on. Or even with geese fat if there is a sore body part. She does that properly and you find that it does help. And even when the women drive to her before they give birth, she can set the baby properly. They always delivered in the colonies. My aunt was a midwife. There at the colony, in my house. I was in the hospital with the last three. They let her (the midwife from Winifred) in the hospital when the women are driven to Medicine Hat.

It's not that nothing is used. I mean often something comes up for an ulcer or something, and they also use old remedies. I can't name them now what's used, but there are people that use them. They have now a solution for cataracts in the eye: apple cider vinegar and honey and distilled water. You mix those together, and wash the eye with it. It was for cataracts. I don't know if it has already helped, [but] there are people who use it. I even had this eye cut on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April this year (1998). And this one [the other eye] will probably develop in another year, but I'm trying now this remedy. I put it on, but it burns - not where I had surgery I don't use it. I got it from my brother-in-law. I met him recently at the colony where the uncle [*dr Vettr*] died. He says that it makes the eye feel nice. If it burns all the time, you have to blink thirty times. I mean things like that are still quite common in the colony. They also have remedies for ulcers or even for piles (for hemorrhoids).

I mean I am sure there are people who wrote those things down. They can't remember everything. I didn't have enough time to ask them this time [referring here to her cousin who has written down many medicinal plant and home remedies]. Just like the peppermint herb [*Wermitt*]. My aunt, a midwife, used peppermint (it really smelled like peppermint) and boiled it and put it in the toilet bowl in the washroom to sit on before the baby came. She cooked cocoa butter and put it in. Before labour, the cocoa butter was put inside . . . [she goes to close her husband's bedroom door] if it was a false labor - it seemed like contractions but nothing happened. [Whispering] I think there are people that still do that. But if there was a miscarriage or something, there were a lot of remedies,

that I don't know [of], and that I have forgotten. But they were used if that is of any help at all. Maybe when you come back in a year, maybe I won't be living, you never know, but maybe I'll have, you know come together with the older people to talk, and make a few notes from them so that I can tell you the names better. At the funeral they were there, but there was not enough time for that, because so many people came.

### **Learning from my Mother**

In one way I know I am exactly like my mother. My mother could say anything from *das Klane Biechl* [The Little Songbook] when my father would sing something with us and that's the way I am today. Well she was in the house. She showed us how to sew and cook and everything. All mothers teach their children to knit and sew. I was nine years old when my mother taught me to knit. [Seven of her grandchildren come into the house and the conversation shifts for a moment]. Do you know how many grandchildren I have? Forty-three, I have ten married children.

In one way it's mother who taught us a lot. But my father, I have great respect for him that he was the way he was and that he brought us up properly. My dad he was very religious. My father was a schoolteacher. He always always told us to never forget the Heavenly Father, and that lives on. He told us a lot more from the Bible than my mother. She didn't have a lot of time. The father can teach the children more because the mother must sew and knit. Every girl has to learn how to knit and cross-stitch.<sup>43</sup> Every girl has a cross-stitch with ABC's and flowers, and we would cross-stitch handkerchiefs for the boys – *hobn mer die Buah Hontiechl gmerkt*.<sup>44</sup> [Elizabeth's husband comes out of his bedroom and teasingly asks; "Did you tell her that you were pretty *windich*?"]

*Buabisch*, boyish . . . and I was the third oldest. I helped my oldest sister. Yeah, that was my nature. I helped my mother. I always said, she had fifteen children and naturally a mother like that does not have the same amount of milk she did when she had

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<sup>43</sup> Girls are taught to use needle and thread to write their first letters and numbers, their first verses, homely bits of folk wisdom and Biblical texts (Goa, 1993:21). For more information on Hutterian folk art, see David Goa's article "The Hutterian Brethren Aesthetic," In Einarsson, Magnus and Helga B. Taylor, *Just For Nice: German-Canadian Folk Art*, Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1993, 18-23.

<sup>44</sup> It is interesting to note that handkerchiefs have been a symbol of love and friendship since the sixteenth century. Married couples and sweethearts carried specially embroidered handkerchiefs. The Hutterites have continued this tradition in the present century (Klymask, 1993:24).

her first. In those days you didn't have bottles. And those poor kids, when they didn't get enough they couldn't sleep at night. [The grandchildren are whispering louder and louder into the recorder]. And father was also old. He was already six years older than she He would hit the kids, and so I would often take them into my bed with me. She always said, "Oh if I didn't have my Elizabeth." It was simply in my nature, I couldn't see father hit the kids. The four youngest were girls so I braided the youngest ones hair. Have you seen braiding [*zeppfen*]?

### **Cornblutschne, Bockfetsn, and the Bible**

S: What did your parents teach you growing up?

E: Our mother and father they taught us so that we saved everything and stayed together and you don't forget that. Saving, we learned that from childhood on. That's just passed on further in me. We learned that you have to work for everything: "Save when you can so you'll always have when you're in need" – *Spar in der Zeit dann host du in der Not*. No matter how much I have from cloth and everything, I can't throw away anything used. I always try to use something else out of it; even with foodstuff. It was my mother that taught me that.

We even still had corn stalks [*Cornblutschne*]. The corn stalks, you know, the outside, the husks? We dried those. In those days there wasn't a lot and we had sacks with dried cornstalks [*Blutschnesäcke*] instead of feathers. Now we have sponges to sleep on. Instead of a boxspring there were cornhusks under your bed and you had a feather cover over top [*Untrpulschtr*]. So then, when we married, you got a mattress and *buckspring* set, and also a feather cover when we didn't have boxsprings. I don't know about a lot of changes during our time, but I know that mother had that. But then when we were more advanced, then she used sliced feathers (the big feathers were put inside). Then we still had the little stems from the smaller feathers and we mixed those in. After the cornhusks we had those. If you only had sliced feathers it was really soft, so then we mixed in stalks. That is one thing we didn't waste because those big feathers would have been thrown away otherwise. I bet you that my first *Schlofbonk* [sleeping bench] when I

married still had those sorts of stalks in it down underneath. See a *Schlofbonk* is just a board. I mean that change I remember.

The more I talk, the more these things come home to me. When you think about it, it doesn't come to you the same as when you speak; then it comes back to you. Oh yes dear [to Lydia] we had dried cornstalks underneath [Lydia laughs in disbelief and asks, "Did they make noise?"]. Sure they made noise! Later it was a little better with feather stems mixed in. See, then it also wasn't so *muisig* (soft). [She holds up a boy's suit that she is mending and the conversation changes].

The first suit that a boy wears, it doesn't get worn for long, and then it's passed onto his sibling. Usually they go down to the younger brother if it's not of any use anymore then for garage rags. That's how they do it: you make it into something smaller when the material is still good. If it's a big family like ours, they reuse the little shirts, pants for rags or even for making rugs. If the dress material is still fit then we turn them into *Injinefetsen* (tractor rags), you know, to wipe the hands off. The interlock is not so good for cleaning the way sheer is. An apron, for example, this side cleans well. I give them to the garage to the truck boss as wash rags, and to my son Joe (the mechanic) to wipe his greasy hands. And the skirt we use those to make *Kehdnsaecke*, bags to dry sunflower seeds, and *Bockfetsen*, baking pads for when we take [something] out of the hot oven. Gardening gloves are also made from skirts. [Lydia comes out with an old skirt and a pattern for gardening gloves made from a used calendar]. Gardening gloves are also good for sleeping.

We also give old clothes to the Mexico Mennonites. Mennonites come and tell us they do not have any material, that they are poor. We give them what we no longer use but that we can't throw away. They say they make dresses out of it. We do everything that we can. Today there are lots who no longer have anything. [She begins organizing the *Kappela* (hats for baby boys) by size, and laughs when she sees one that is numbered zero]. Isn't that sweet? That is a piece of art!

And even more clearly we can turn and look at our forefathers. Just when they thought they had built something up, the robbers came and burned and stole everything. How they must have lived. You know that stays with you. What you are taught from

small on. That had a big influence on me what our forefathers told us. So if they had nothing, why would we go and waste. In that way we're doing it right. That is where we learned the most about saving. There would be more to say about it if there was time. It seems to me that had a huge influence on me. You're doing a good job dear.

There are so many passages in the Bible that tell us that we should not waste. But a person has to read the Bible. As is written in the New Testament. In St. Luke 12:

*There was a man whose acres had brought forth plentiful. And he thought by himself. What shall I do? I know what I'll do, I'll pull down my barns and build greater ones and there I'll bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul. Eat and drink and be merry. But God said unto him that night. Thou fool, thy soul shall be required of thee then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided. So is he that layeth up treasures, for himself and is not rich towards God.*

Some think now I want to eat and drink well from my goods, but he doesn't know that his hour is near and will have to leave everyone and die. So we shall be rich in God and at the same time we should not waste. Read the whole chapter [of Luke] or also all of Sirach. At one place Sirach says: "Spar in der Zeit so hast du in der Not." And St. John 6 verse 12 says:

*Collect all the extra fragments so that nothing should go to waste.*

That teaches us to save doesn't it Shauna. Just like Sirach says in Chapter 18:25,

*If you have enough think when you can get poor again. If you're full think when you can get hungry again. From morning to evening time can change. A wise man is always sure of himself and thinks on that.*

So it's better not to waste.

## **ADULT REFLECTIONS**

### **My Mother's Ordeal and Prayer**

My mother's name was Sanna. When mom was 49 and a half years old she had a stroke on the right side that left her paralyzed. She couldn't do anything anymore and lived two months less than twenty-five years after that. She was a big woman, one

hundred and seventy pounds. My father took good care of her: dressed her all the years, said their prayers with her out loud, read and sang to her without stopping. My mother couldn't do it herself, I mean she could understand everything fine, but she couldn't read. That was hard for my father. Since the four oldest were married, the single ones took care of her. Her also had sisters come and they would take turns every two weeks. She couldn't talk the first four to six months. There was a midwife, one who had lost her husband in the war, on the same colony and she had lots of remedies. She steamed her entire body with towels and blankets, so in time she started to talk. She massaged her as well. She got better so that she could walk with her cane but there was always somebody near who watched her. Then three years before she died she had another stroke on her left side that took her speech. She couldn't use her left hand anymore, so from then on she was bedridden 'til she died. She was forty-nine years old. We weren't with our Mother when it happened. We had already married off and I already had three children.

She was always singing, but she could not sing after that stroke. She always told me that when she was alone in the house she would recite "*Christus dr Herr in Goatn ging.*" Do you know what kind of song that is? From the crucifixion (when they crucified our Lord). I didn't sleep at night if that wasn't recited to me. There are twelve verses. I say it every day before I go to sleep. Even my mother always said she said it once a day when she was alone. That was the most important to her. [She says the first two verses].

Christus der Herr im Garten ging.  
 Sein bittres Leiden da anfang.  
 Das ihn sein Haupt von Blutschweiß naß.  
 Da trauet Laub und grünes Grass.  
 Should I recite it to you?  
 Da kamen die folschen Juden gegangen  
 Do you understand it?  
 Sie täten den Herrn im Garten fangen  
 Sie täten ihn Geiseln und Krönen  
 Sein heiliges Haut auch sehr verhöhen

[She forgets a line and surprises herself and goes to get her songbook (*Liedrbiechl*)] My and I never have any problems when I do this in bed! And a person who always thinks of that can't fall, can he? Hopefully not. [She continues reading it aloud].

### **My Father's Faith**

I remember well, I always sang at home. My mother sometimes called me Professor. That meant I was to quit singing, and my father always said, "Let her sing if she wants to sing." My father was a religious man and he was that way until the very end. The Heavenly Father already said, "He who persists to the end will be blessed" – *Wer beharret bis das Ende der wird selig*. And that was he. He never gave in; if someone went out without a hat or didn't have a kerchief on in the house, he never let up, nah! You know if someone came for a visit, you weren't allowed to get out of bed when they came [without him saying]: "Your kerchief, put your kerchief on!" – *Dein Tiechl, setz dei Tiechl af!* That's just how he was [laughing]. Well he was faithful until the end. He raised us properly. The things that he told you, the good and the bad, you don't forget that.

### **Baptism, Marriage, and Family**

S: What were the most important events in your life?

E: Well baptism is the most important thing in my life from what I know. That's when you promise the Heavenly Father to be true in the community. I mean to live with another person is also important and to raise children. We also saw to it that we raised the children properly. I suppose everybody is dreaming about having a boyfriend. I guess so, because we're all human. We aren't much different from the outsiders.

[Laughing] I had a crush on my husband ever since I laid eyes on him and I guess he had it to. [He yells from the bedroom "Is that about me?"] Well, yeah, I think that that's what we thought of when one was a young girl, marriage. One would feel left out if one didn't have such thoughts because it seemed as though you wouldn't belong anywhere if you didn't marry. When I saw him for the first time, I thought I could love him. It's for the boys to come and see the girls; he came over to Hutterville [whispering] four years before we were married. We get married only after you're baptised. You can't get married before you're baptised.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Of course, as David Goa explains, no one is fit for marriage who has not "personally claimed Jesus Christ as the Saviour, the disciplines of the church as the guide and the community as the greatest asset in the growth in sanctity" (1993:21).

I married and had twelve children. I had a child every year: seven boys and five girls. They are all married except one, and have their own nests. One of the oldest was born in sixty-six. He is already five years with the pigs. The youngest he's now twenty-eight. He got married in June. And we left three at Milford, also married. The girls are married and spread out over the colonies (four of them). And this one [Lydia] is home with us. She had epilepsy from time she was three years old. She always had seizures and now six years ago she had head surgery. She doesn't have it anymore. She also has celiac disease. You know what that is? She has to be on a gluten-free diet (extra bread, extra noodle soup); everything that you cook can't have white flour in it.

### **The Path to Heaven**

I am now sixty-eight, but every year I am reminded more and more of how the Heavenly Father was there with the children from Israel. There it was strict, stricter than we are today. On Sunday if one brought in wood and split it for the fire on Sabbath Day, when another saw him, he had to go to Moses who punished and stoned him. What was he thinking, it was Sabbath Day? Think of the Sabbath Day – six days were made to work and the seventh was holy. It was in their laws that they shouldn't work on Sundays and if they saw somebody even pick up a bundle of wood for the fire, they told Moses and they took that person and the children of Israel stoned him – *hobn ihn gstanigt!* That's how strict the Heavenly Father was. When we hear that every year, we have all the bad examples of what the Heavenly Father punished them for. When every year you hear this year after year, it makes you even more certain that we are on the right path. He didn't do it only to the children of Israel, even among us things often happen. He also punishes us.

Just like the runaway [*weggluffene*] (the one that ran away from the colony) what happened [to him] two weeks ago? The one from Crystal Colony was burned to ashes! That was a bad one [sighing]. Did you already see it in the newspaper? And [he] wasn't the first; that has happened to a lot of our people. I was taught that from two years on to think I was lost without *die Gman*. Yeah, it seems to me that if we act the way the Heavenly Father wanted us to, whether we'll get there . . . perhaps there is something missing, but we try and try. Where would we be if we didn't have the Heavenly Father?

My Lydia was an exceptional child. She was sick, from three on she had seizures, epilepsy and celiac disease. She was terribly skinny and weak. That took everything out of her body. And such a thing brings us closer to the Heavenly Father, not further away. When I think of that dear, I believe that we are on the right path. I would not want to damn anyone. And don't do that. But we are on the right path. The community is the right way. No other person has it as good as we do. That's the way I see it.

I don't know what I should tell you more. I was telling you about that boy that got killed in 1934. His brother got killed in 1943, nine years later, same family. Oh it was so hard. Oh <sup>3</sup>yo they went to Heaven. They were only 15 years old. You're not baptised? Well if you're old enough and know what's right and wrong, then you should be. Oh yo, you believe. "He who believes and is baptised will be blessed" – *Wer glaubet und getauft wird, der wird selig sein.*

Here is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm I would like you to end my story with.

*The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and they staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou annointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen.*

May the good Lord lead us till the end.

## Part Three

### INTERPRETING THEIR STORIES

*In the process of crafting life histories, methodology constantly emerges, as lives are told, recorded and interpreted within relationships. The methodologies used are negotiated between two or more people and cannot be fully determined at the beginning of a project (nor perhaps at the end) (Klassen, 1994:119).*

When I began recording Zack and Elizabeth's stories, I had high hopes that my Hutterite narrators would provide me with radically different notions of caring for the land, stewardship, and conservationist practices than those absorbed in the prairies rapid "corporatization." However my specific (perhaps overly eager) line of questioning on "ecological reflections" did not uncover the novel attitudes towards farming that I had expected. Nor did Elizabeth discuss perennial-mixed-species-agriculture, or Zack the virtues of organic farming. In fact, it seemed as though questions like: "How do you see your community as contributing to the well-being of the prairies?" or "What has religion taught you about farming?" generated responses, which were, at times, contrary to my own understanding of stewardship. For example, in her response to the former, Elizabeth tended to idealize the use of chemicals as a way of contributing to the overall well-being of the prairie landscape:

I think our men are helping with everything, like using chemicals and fertilizer just like the rest of the world. Hasn't that helped too? Is the world not more advanced? Oh yeah, our men also believe in putting Green Drop on; there's also Anhydrous. And you can tell the *Weltleit* [worldly people] the Hutterites are advanced as far as can be.

Although Zack was better at negotiating the complications of chemicals, his response to the latter describes the use of chemicals in farming as something willed by God: "God gave the people the wisdom to use chemicals," he explained,

because there are more people coming into the world, therefore, you have to have more grain; more for everyone so that everyone can eat. How do you do it? Through fertilizers of course, well, chemicals to protect your crops.

Against the background of such ambiguities and contradictions, I realized that my questions clearly marked my own desire to construct a particular image of the Hutterites, rather than particular individuals within specific contexts. Moreover, by confining myself to the analysis of what constitutes “a good life and a good environment,” (Nazarea, 1998) I was missing the very practical ecological knowledge embedded in their childhood stories and maps, in their emotional involvement with the garden, and in their reverent caring for one another.

In what follows, I try to convey the different contexts in which Zack and Elizabeth’s life experiences thrive. Although common themes run through both of their life stories, differences in gender, age, upbringing, and personality influence their experiences as children, adolescents, and adults, and, in turn, shape their knowledge and perceptions of the environment in different ways. For example, descriptions of the coulees, farming, and gardening, are common themes in both of their stories, but their experiences differ in numerous ways. In the following chapters, I will interpret these experiences as Zack and Elizabeth told them to me.

## Chapter 5

### STORIES OF CRICKNLAUFEN, GROWING UP, AND GARDENING

Below I use Mitchell Thomashaw’s explanation of “the different ways people construe themselves in relationship to the earth as manifested in personality, values, actions, and sense of self” (1996:3) to show the various interactions which shape Zack’s and Elizabeth’s “ecological identities” or perceptions of nature.<sup>46</sup> As Thomashaw explains,

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<sup>46</sup> In environmentalist writing, “nature” is generally used as a synonym for “environment” or, in modern discourse, “ecology,” in other words all non-human beings and processes (Relph, 1993:86). Here I do not adhere to an anti-humanistic view that sets people apart from nature, but rather one that portrays human beings in their local relationship to the earth (Riordan, 1997).

The purpose of ecological identity work is to provide the language and context that connect a person's life choices with his or her ecological worldview, serving as a guide that coordinates meaning . . . This work is important because it provides a moral anchor, lodged in reflective learning, a trail map for the difficult decisions that may lie ahead, a way to reiterate what's important, and a means for interpreting the experience of nature" (Thomashaw, 1996:6-7).

Similarly, the purpose of understanding and interpreting how Zack and Elizabeth see themselves in relation to their socionatural environment is to provide the language and context that connects the themes in their life stories to their perceptions of nature. In highlighting certain aspects of their stories, I have had to make personal judgements. I highlight those themes which come closest to conveying their ecological identity.<sup>47</sup> While subjectivity plays a role in my choice of themes, Zack and Elizabeth had the final input in deciding on which aspects of their lives were most relevant to their ecological worldview. Their experiences of childhood, their relationships with others growing up, and their roles and responsibilities as adults are central to understanding how it is they have come to learn about their prairie ecosystem, and how their individual experiences guide their interactions in the environment.

What first emerges from Zack's and Elizabeth's life histories is an emphasis on childhood activities and places. While both describe their most memorable activities as those which involved going to the creeks, or the coulees, their experiences of *cricknlaufen* (which I will define in a moment) were markedly different. The wild coulees of their childhood represent different things to each. This of course is because, as John Hostetler describes, Hutterite "boys and girls are taught to play differently" (1980:78). For Zack, the coulees of his childhood were places where he learned about trapping and fishing; for Elizabeth, the creeks were places "for [berry] picking together" [*zommklaubm*] with the other girls. Nevertheless, in both of their stories, *cricknlaufen* serves as a locating device for the special places of their childhood (Nazarea, 1999). The memories of these physical places allow them to access a local knowledge base, which is significant for understanding how they themselves share, use, and value this knowledge.

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<sup>47</sup> "Ecological identity" will be used interchangeably with "ecological worldview."

Their stories of “growing up” provide another means for coming to understand their ecological identity. Not only do these stories reflect the diversity of male and female skills learned throughout their youth; they embody pivotal relationships with the people who have passed on such skills. Elizabeth’s mother, for instance, was important for teaching her various domestic skills, but also for teaching her one of the Hutterites’ most prized virtues: thrift. Zack’s schoolteacher, on the other hand, passed on a tremendous amount of knowledge about farming and gardening, but also taught him about the virtues of discipline and hard work. While Elizabeth’s concern for thriftiness and Zack’s concern for industriousness merely hint at their feelings of responsibility towards the community and the environment, their significance becomes more apparent in their reflections as adults.

Stories of their community roles as adults are also main themes in both of their life histories. Zack’s stories highlight his duties as colony gardener, teacher, and beekeeper; Elizabeth highlights her domestic duties and obligations as a mother and grandmother. Embedded in these discussions are personal reflections on relationships to others, connecting them not only to the workplace, but to their communities, and, above all, to God and Creation (Thomashaw, 1995:173). These relationships are an integral part of Zack’s stories of gardening, and in Elizabeth’s songs and prayers.

### ***CRICKNLAUFEN***

One of the most significant childhood memories for both Zack and Elizabeth is *cricknlaufen*. *Cricknlaufen* is one of those uniquely “hutterized” words which means ‘running along the creeks.’ For Zack and Elizabeth, this term conjures up a number of fond childhood memories, as it refers to various recreational activities carried out in the stream-carved valleys of the prairies, otherwise known as coulees.<sup>48</sup> Among the most common activities both associated with *cricknlaufen* were: berry picking, typically for girls, and trapping and fishing, typically for boys.

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<sup>48</sup> A coulee is a dry creek bed, or a steep-walled valley that often has a stream at the bottom. Within them you can find the finest remnants of the great grassland ecosystem. For an informative description of the role of the coulee in the prairie ecosystem see, Thomas Wilcock, *Prairie Coulee*, Edmonton: Lone Pine Publishing, 1990.

Elizabeth's early childhood experiences of *cricknlaufen* centered on picking saskatoons and chokecherries in the Deadly Coulee and Meeks Coulee. Later on, as a teenager, she (along with several other boys and girls) would travel by horse and buggy further from the colony to an Indian reserve to pick chokecherries for making wine.<sup>49</sup> As an adult, she went even further out with the other married women, either to Patol *Crick*, or to Bockranch Coulee to gather medicinal plants as well as berries. The former were used for everything from home remedies to medicinal herbs "that were good for women" – *san guet gwesn fr die Weibr* – as she would often whisper to me.

Home remedies included things like rose hips [*Hatschaputscha*] for bedwetting, yarrow [*Schofgorbm*] and fennel [*Finkl*] for ulcers, infections, and stomach flues. These were dried and prepared as teas. She also spoke of medicinal plants for women. These included things like boiled cattails [*Kutznschwaenz*] for yeast infections, and chamomile for "post-pregnancy," or for "cleaning out the woman." In her stories she more frequently describes the types of plants she once picked in the coulees, than the ways in which each plant was used (i.e. harvested, stored, and prepared), and the kinds of medical conditions they addressed. Throughout our first few recordings of Elizabeth's life history she tended to skim over the latter details regarding medicinal plant preparation. Why she included certain details (like plant names) while leaving out others (like how they were used) is important for understanding the context in which she shared these stories with me.

Particularly illustrative was Elizabeth's awareness that the final product (my thesis) was to be a public document. This seemed to influence what she related to me about folk healing and traditional medicinal plant use. She would often shorten her description of the ways in which she used herbs and other medicinal plants and focus rather on how "advanced" the Hutterites are today. In our first conversation about plants she once collected in the coulees, her ambivalent tone indicates that she did not want to give the impression that the Hutterites were backwards or old-fashioned.

Back then they all used those sorts of things. . . . We had more things for stomachaches, fever [and] for diarrhea they used boiled *Wermitt*. It smelled

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<sup>49</sup> Hutterite wine is made either from chokecherries, rhubarb, or dandelions. Among the Carinthian and Tyrolese Hutterites, it was a staple beverage with their meals (Hoover, 2000:156). In the colonies of North American Hutterites, it is typically consumed on special occasions, or when guests arrive. Of course it is one might also drink a small glass for a pick-me-up at some point throughout the day.

really good, like peppermint. We drank it as tea. There were a lot of remedies that they used. I can't name just now what they all were. We don't use those anymore; one takes antibiotics or other medicines. It looks like it's the way the world is turning. The world is simply different now.

But actually my Lydia takes herbs. She was so depressed two years ago, but now she's on herbs. Maybe that's why she's so plump, I don't know. We also go with the times. Now many are onto herbs.

Elizabeth's reluctance to discuss plant details was not only because she felt vulnerable, not fully understanding how I might use such information, but also because she was afraid of giving inaccurate information about plant names and their healing properties. On several occasions she made it clear that she would prefer to consult with her cousin or aunt who were both midwives to ensure that her own information about medicinal plants was accurate.

It's not that nothing is used. I mean often something comes up for an ulcer, or even piles (for hemorrhoids), and they use old remedies. I can't name them now what's used, but there are people that use them. . . . I mean I am sure there are people who wrote those things down. They can't remember everything. I didn't have enough time to ask them this time [referring to her aunt and cousin] . . . [I will] make a few notes from them so that I can tell you the names better.

The plant names that she did briefly describe were those used for things like "child birth" or "cleaning out the woman." However, she did not always feel comfortable discussing the details of these remedies either. In my interaction with Elizabeth as a young, unwed, and childless woman, it seemed as though I did not always give her the reassurance she needed to reveal such information. Even when I did manage to convince her that I understood the nature of what she was describing,<sup>50</sup> the presence of her husband, who was often home having his afternoon nap when we recorded her stories, also affected how and what she told me about various traditional remedies for women.

[Before the baby came] she cooked cocoa butter. Before labor, the cocoa butter was put inside [She goes and closes her husband's bedroom door] if it was a false labor - it seemed like contractions but nothing happened.

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<sup>50</sup> Her confidence in my ability to understand the various ways in which remedies for women are used did not occur until I had transcribed them onto paper. After reading our conversation about "cleaning out the woman" she said: *Du tuist guit Liebr!* [You're doing a good job dear!]

[Whispering] I think there are people that still do that. If there was a miscarriage or something, there were a lot of remedies that I don't know and I have forgotten. But they were used if that is of any help at all. [The conversation quickly shifts to why the pea sheller is not working].

Furthermore, Elizabeth expressed to me that her experiences of *cricknlaufen* as an adult did not evoke the same fond memories as when she went to the coulees to pick berries as a child or adolescent. Once she had children of her own, she no longer enjoyed having to go to the coulees as much, because she would have preferred to stay home with her children.

Even at Milford there were big creeks and we picked them ourselves. But there we picked the Bockranch creek. Even the women had to go. It was our policy. We had to do that, that's all! I don't know if you want to write about that now. It seemed to us as though it was a little unnecessary to have to leave the small children at home. We obeyed. Once you're married there's no longer any pleasure in it because I had children. I no longer went because I wanted to, but because I had to. I didn't like it; but when I was young, well, doing things together.

Her memories of going to the coulees as an adult seemed to influence what she remembered and shared with me about *cricknlaufen*. The fact that she places more stress on the coulees of her childhood indicates that the creeks she visited once she was older do not conjure up the same fond memories.

That was a really enjoyable thing, just picking saskatoons and chokecherries in the Deadly Coulee and also in the Meeks coulee. They were connected. The Deadly belonged to us, but not the Meeks. Oh they had nice big chokecherries. And we never picked so many saskatoons – in Deadly there were more . . . I can remember die *crickn* very clearly in my mind, but I remember more about from where I grew up . . . It seemed to me as though you saw the Heavenly Father more when we were in those creeks. It never occurred to me that there could be another life apart from this one.

Elizabeth's description of *cricknlaufen* seemed to occur on a more subconscious level. It was not until we began to edit the interviews together that she began to see the value of what she was describing on a more conscious level. As we worked through some of the gaps in her descriptions of medicinal plants and traditional remedies, I asked her how valuable she thought a locally oriented and illustrated booklet of therapeutic plant

use among the Hutterites would be.<sup>51</sup> Her initial response was, “In the colonies there are a lot who have things like that. For example, there at Winifred there is an *Ankela*, [grandmother] a midwife. She has a lot of remedies.”

Subsequently, Elizabeth promised to collect all of the written materials she could find and give them to me the following year. However, she was surprised to find that a lot of what she thought would have been written down was not. Most of the women she asked had committed many of the traditional remedies they used to memory and some could only remember a few. She wrote down as many as she could for me, and when she gave me the list, she agreed with the idea of putting them into a booklet.<sup>52</sup> In my opinion, this was a turning point for her in terms of understanding the value of the local knowledge she has gained over the many summers spent in the coulees. She discovered the degree to which this largely oral body of knowledge is being forgotten.<sup>53</sup>

Zack’s experiences of *cricknlaufen* are different in many ways from Elizabeth’s. Although, as a boy, he too recalls picking berries with the women, for Zack, *cricknlaufen* conjured up many memories of “the woods,” trapping, fishing, and building underground caves (just in case the Korean war were to spread to Canada). He delighted in drawing maps of where he and the other boys used to go *cricknlaufen*, and regaling me with childhood stories in which names for berry bushes, bays, and trees figured prominently. Examples of some of the place-names he used were: *dr Wissela Bamm* [the weasel tree] which was used as a marker for setting traps to catch weasels, or *dos Erschte* [first],

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<sup>51</sup> The idea of producing such a booklet was given to me by Dr. Patricia Clark, Professor of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria, whose present research focuses on Cretan folk-healing and medicinal plant use. In our discussions of collecting local plant knowledge, she explained to me that a locally oriented booklet of medicinal herbs was her way of giving something back to her consultants.

<sup>52</sup> This booklet is something I hope to produce privately and will then distribute to the Hutterite communities who have contributed to my study. It is by no means the first of its kind. For example, copies of an illustrated booklet called “Alpenpflanzen” can be found in most Hutterite colonies. The plants mentioned are those found in the Swiss Alps, leaving out much of the plant vegetation found in the prairie coulees. Another booklet with general information on gathering, storing, and preparing herbs can also be found in some Hutterite households. In one section “Medicinal Herbs from God’s Pharmacy” the author discusses 31 herbs (from Agrimony to Yellow Dead Nettle) and includes illustrations of each. While this booklet proved to be a useful reference, it still does not contain the Hutterite names of plants and traditional remedies.

<sup>53</sup> The Hutterites’ disposition to use herbs has decreased significantly due to an ever-increasing reliance upon conventional medicine. However, like Elizabeth, there are still many who believe in the efficacy of “traditional” remedies and use them to supplement conventional medicine. A historical analysis of plant-use and folk-healing among the Hutterites might give a more accurate sense of what is “traditional” medicinal plant use among the Hutterites and what is not.

*Zwatte* [second], and *Dritte* [third] bay, which correspond to the order in which he would run from one end of Chin Lake to the other with his home-made *Zillela* [fishing “sled”]. Zack also recalled features in the landscape in which he grew up, where the “*Boese sendr corn*” [cattail] once flourished, or special places like, “There where the filly of Heart lies.”

And another thing that I always remember . . . we had a horse that was named Heart. It was not a pony, it was a horse that you hooked up behind a buggy. Heart was a mother horse, a mare. She had a filly every year. That was the most famous horse on the farm. And you know the boys (little boys), how interested they are in a new filly? One year Heart had a new filly, it died, croaked [*gfreckt*]. It was laying up there in the middle of one of the pastures, way out past the Tabor Bridge. And every time when we wanted to go up there we said, “Let’s go to Heart’s filly.” We always went over where the dead filly was lying. At the beginning there was still the whole body, but over time there were only bones leftover and the skull. That place was always “There where the filly of Heart lies.” Sometimes, even ten years later, when we go that way somebody says, “Let’s go to where Heart’s filly is buried!” And we would go and could always find something from the filly of Heart.

Zack’s most vivid childhood memories were in “*die Woods*.” Like Elizabeth’s knowledge of the rich vegetation of the coulees and their medicinal uses, Zack’s stories of “the woods” (also situated in the coulees) convey a connection to the land, and a deep knowledge of the animals and their habitats. Zack gives particularly elaborate details when discussing his experiences in the woods. His story of trapping coyotes exemplifies this.

Coyotes were also there. Yeah we caught them. We caught them in winter, well, not the boys. No, we did that once we got older. Their pelt was also worth a few dollars. But those coyotes could do a lot of damage. He can kill a sheep just like a wolf. So we trapped them. You had to lay down the bait and hide it. They have a sharp nose. You had to boil the traps so that they didn’t have a scent. And when you handled them you had to wear gloves so that a coyote could never smell where there was a human scent. They have such a sharp nose that you had to bury it a little (with waxed paper on top and a little soil on top of it). So when you buried some bait in the soil he would go over to the trap and get his paw caught in the trap. And that’s when they howled, already in the evening. By nighttime you already knew if you’d have a coyote in the morning. You heard it screaming! And you went out and they were very fierce. You know, you

had a stick to clobber, and stones to hit them with until they were unconscious or dead or whatever.

Skinning was easy. The older boys always taught the younger ones – hand me down. So once you knew that you had to skin, you would hang it up by its hind legs. Once you did that you could start skinning from there. Then you put it on the stretcher – you made such a thing from wood – and pulled it across it as wide as you possibly could and on the other side as wide as you could and tacked and dried it like that: the pelt inside, the skin outside. Then when it dried, you had to turn it over so that the fur was outside. Then you combed it, and it really had a nice shine. And when you sent it to Hudson Bay, you had a nice fur.

As a schoolteacher Zack has had many opportunities to tell and refine his stories. As he explains, his childhood stories are always a good way to keep the children busy, especially when they are working with him in the garden. Zack sees his stories about riding ponies, trapping, and fishing of particular interest to the children because they no longer have the same opportunities that he had as a child.

But the children like to ride ponies too. But we don't have any so they just dream about them. I like it when I'm down there with them picking potatoes, and it seems as though they have no "pep." So then I think, I'll make them interested. Then I'll tell them a story like that, about how we always used to ride the ponies to the coulees. And they work! They don't even notice that they're working, that's how much they listen to it. Oh yeah, and before you know it, they've picked all the potatoes, and they've enjoyed it!

It would be nice to show the children, to teach them about fishing, but there is no lake here. You would have to be by a lake, just like Chin Lake. It was a good place for the boys to grow up. The farm where I grew up, it was much better than the farm that we are at here because it had woods, and it had Chin Lake. We also have a river here, but it is a ways out and the kids don't want to run anymore.

Although Zack is sadly discovering that most children would no longer take advantage of the same opportunities even if, for example, they had a lake to fish in, he is still hopeful that his stories will encourage them to use their leisure time in different ways.

Today, the kids no longer want to run a mile. They want to drive with the tractor or the pickup. Well, you don't give them a pickup . . . . But when

we had an hour's time it was nothing for us to run half a mile over to Chin Lake, fish for a half hour, and then run home to church, and then after supper to run back again.

Now if the children also had to do that today, well I think it would be good for them. They'd be more occupied, and not just with me in the garden. But today they help in other ways. They're helping in the shops. We are a lot bigger today. They weld a lot more now. And even building, we build a lot bigger and more now than we did in my time. So the children today are busier. And now to drive out to the combines, well, we did that too, but it's to a much greater extent than in the past. The kids are much busier with that today.

In short, the detail with which he tells his stories is linked to his job as colony schoolteacher.

As a schoolteacher it is also Zack's responsibility to teach the children lessons in morality. One such lesson is the consequences of abusive or otherwise inappropriate behavior, like mistreating animals. His own stories of trapping and skinning animals are sometimes used to supplement the Biblical teachings. Not only do his own stories keep the children's attention peaked, as they provide a context with which they can more readily identify, attaching his own stories is more practical in that they describe the local prairie animals and their habitats. By retelling these stories throughout his twenty-two years of teaching, Zack has not only become more intimately acquainted with a knowledge of the places he once trapped coyotes, muskrats, minks, and rabbits, he has also been able to constantly validate his religious understanding of the treatment of animals. As he would always say: "*Quaele nie ein Tier zum Scherz, denn es fuehlt wie du den Schmerz.*"

Zack and Elizabeth's stories of *cricknlaufen*, or going to the creeks/coulees, signify their connection to physical places. It is through remembering these particular places that their rich and varied repertoire of situated knowledge is evoked (Nazarea, 1999). Although, at times, telling these stories had a constraining effect on Elizabeth who was afraid that her local or peasant knowledge of medicinal plants might be construed in a derogatory way, their stories of *cricknlaufen* also had a liberating effect. Not only did Elizabeth begin to see the value of her local knowledge of plants, Zack's stories of trapping and fishing made him more fully aware of the importance of sharing such

knowledge with the younger generation whose more modern lifestyle has derailed them from learning the same “survival skills” he learned. Gazing out the window at his grandchildren playing, Zack shakes his head and says, “Now you see they’re out there digging tunnels in the sandbox with Tonka trucks. We used to dig tunnels big enough to hide in.”

**GROWING UP: “ONE LEARNS A LOT FROM OTHERS” – *ANDR LERNT VON ONDR VIEL***

As Zack and Elizabeth grew older, they were assigned very different jobs. In Elizabeth’s case, however, there were exceptions to the “gendered” nature of colony work due to the shortage of men during the war. Once she turned fourteen she joined the other young women in the fields to perform many of the typically male tasks like carrying sheaves, loading stooks, and hauling grain. Before this, she was expected to fill the shoes of the women who were out working in the fields. This meant milking the cows, gardening, and delivering food to the fields. For the most part, though, Elizabeth’s responsibilities were typical for most females growing up during the 1940s and 1950s: slicing feathers, spinning wool, raising goslings, ducks, and chicks, babysitting, knitting and sewing.

Zack’s responsibilities, on the other hand, involved working under the supervision of many *Jobleit* [stockjob men]. Every winter he had a different job: one year he was with the pigs; the next year with the sheep; the next year with the chickens; and the following year out on the steppe with the calves, and breaking in ponies. During the spring and summer months until age fourteen he was under the supervision of the schoolteacher with whom he and the other boys worked in the garden. This was the time when he finished school and joined the ranks of the other working men [*zu Leit kummn*]. As he grew older his responsibilities included jobs with less supervision like operating the heavy machinery, such as: tractors, backhoes, swathers, combines, balers, and grain trucks.

In learning such a diversity of skills, Zack and Elizabeth have also been influenced by a number of people, but their relationships with certain people stand out in their stories. For example, Elizabeth’s relationship with her mother seemed to have a

significant impact on her life, and Zack's relationship with his schoolteacher greatly influenced what he learned growing up. This is not to say that others have not influenced them in equally significant ways, but that these people have been particularly influential in helping shape their values. These values also indirectly shape their ecological worldview.

### **Save in times of plenty . . .**

Despite many health complications, Elizabeth's mother taught her a number of domestic skills. Like most Hutterite girls, learning how to crochet, cross-stitch, knit, and sew was passed on to her by her mother. Elizabeth also learned to care for her younger siblings: to feed them, and to braid their hair. However, one of the most important lessons Elizabeth claims to have learned from her mother was how to be thrifty. Although her father also played a role in teaching her the meaning of providence, it was her mother who taught her this important Hutterite virtue by example.

I can't throw away something used. I always try to use something else out of it. It was my mother that taught me that.

To exemplify this Elizabeth recalls the dried cornstalks [*gtrickelte Cornblutschne*] her mother once used underneath their beds instead of a boxspring, or, *buckspring*, as she would say.

We even still had corn stalks. The corn stalks, you know, the outside, the husks? We dried those. In those days there wasn't a lot and we had dried cornstalks instead of feathers. Now we have sponges to sleep on. Instead of a *buckspring* there were husks under your bed and you had a feather cover [*Untrpulschter*] on top.

Even the *Untrpulschter* that her mother made for her was made from big feathers that "would have been thrown away otherwise." This was yet another example of her mother's thriftiness. Once she married, she realized how similar she was to her mother. Despite the more modern beds that were being used at that time (like the "more advanced" mattress and boxspring she received as a wedding gift), Elizabeth recalls how she still used dried cornhusks underneath her first child's *Schlofbonk* [sleeping bench] just as her mother had.

Her narrative is rife with examples of how she applies her thriftiness in everyday life. That such emphasis is placed on ‘saving’ has of course to do with her strong religious beliefs, but also the fact that during our interviews Elizabeth was always busy mending socks [*Stimpf*] and slippers [*Binsch*], or making old cloth [*Tsaich*] and clothing [*Kladr*] into something new.<sup>54</sup> My own curiosity would naturally lead me to ask: “Now what are you making?” This usually caused us to digress and discuss her ideas about thrift and its religious significance. For example, during one of our interviews, Elizabeth and her daughter (who was visiting from another colony) sat at the table unraveling a purple wool sweater (bought from a second hand store) into ten balls of yarn. As she wound the yarn, destined to become socks for ten grandchildren, she explained how her Christian upbringing influenced her ideas of frugality.

There are so many passages in the Bible that tell us that we should not waste. But a person has to read the Bible. As is written in the New Testament. [She puts down her yarn and opens her well-used German Bible to (St. Luke, 12:18)].

*There was a man whose acres had brought forth plentiful. And he thought by himself, What shall I do? I know what I'll do, I'll pull down my barns and build greater ones and there I'll bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Eat and drink and be merry. But God said unto him that night. Thou fool, thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided. So is he that layeth up treasures, for himself and is not rich towards God. So we shall be rich in God and at the same time we should not waste.*

At one place Sirach says, “*Spar in der Zeit so host du in dr Not,*” and (St John, 6:12) says,

*Collect all the extra fragments so that nothing should go to waste.*

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<sup>54</sup> Activities such as turning cloth into clothing, and clothing into rugs, gardening gloves, rags (among other things) is done with great care and is in itself an act of devotion. The longer you can make something last the better you are serving the community, and thus God. Learning of the numerous ways in which cloth is used and reused triggered my own fascination with tracing the life history of the Hutterite dress [*dos huttrische Klad*]. For example, from the time a Hutterite woman receives cloth to make her new dress of the season (i.e. Sunday dress [*Sontigsklad*]) to the time it becomes, for example, tractor rags [*Injinefetsen*] it passes through five stages, i) “everyday church dress” [*olle Tog Gebetsklad*], ii) “everyday dress” [*olle Togsklad*]; iii) “kitchen dress” [*Kuchlklad*]; iv) “work dress” [*Orbetsklad*]; v) “painting dress” [*Ferbrklad*] (personal communication with Frieda Mandel and Katie Entz, March 22, 1999).

That teaches us to save doesn't it Shauna?

After reading the second draft of her life history, she asked me to add another quote from (Sirach 18:25) to help encapsulate her thoughts on why we must use our material goods sparingly and wisely.

*If you have enough think when you can get poor again. If you are full think when you can get hungry again. From morning to evening time can change. A wise man is always sure of himself and thinks on that. So it's better not to waste.*

Even looking around the room we sat in during our interviews one can see the wisdom her mother passed onto her in the colorful “zigzag” rug on the floor made from scrap pieces of cloth, the floral sewing machine cover made from an old dress, or the sausage on the table that she had neatly packaged for me to take home in an old Hostess potato chip bag.

### **Gelassenheit**

Growing up, Zack was influenced by many people, especially his father. However, the way he distills his relationship with his schoolteacher points to valuable lessons Zack learned as he got older about obedience and hard work.<sup>55</sup> These themes are significant for understanding two important values underlying his ecological identity.

When I was a boy, when I was small, we had a good schoolteacher. He was teacher for 25 years. He started almost the same time I started German school . . . . And he taught us good things. He was very good to me because I learned easily. I never had a problem with laziness, such as not learning. And I got along with him well. A child will often be a big mouth [*grossmaulig*] – he wants to be smarter than the teacher. I never did that. Why? It's not that I was afraid of him, but one would say, I respected him. And that brought me a long way with him . . . . Some of them really didn't like him just because he often gave them a good beating. But he beat them because they didn't want to obey him. So I don't know, one could say it would be smart in that sense when you are obedient. You get along so much easier, right?

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<sup>55</sup> Teaching children to be obedient and to follow one's superiors is the responsibility of all Hutterite schoolteachers.

Zack was quick to catch on to the benefits of obedience once he began to see the harmonious relationship develop between him and his schoolteacher as a result of his hard work. This relationship was especially important for learning to work under his superiors as he grew older. As Zack explains, "If you haven't already learned to follow the schoolteacher, nor will you be able to follow the field boss, or the farm boss, or even the preacher". According to Zack, learning obedience involves learning the meaning of *Gelassenheit*.<sup>56</sup>

There is a word that covers everything. And the word is *Gelassenheit*. *Gelassenheit* is what the community is: you keep yourself available for everything that needs to be done. *Gelassenheit*. That is something that you learn from the time you are young. You have to learn to be subordinate and obey.

This term also applies to the way in which one should carry out the duties assigned to him growing up. That is, one should simply take what is handed to him and perform each job to the best of one's ability.

See let's take for example, if you were to send a boy to the pigs this year. He might not want to go to the pigs, but he won't complain. Why? He knows that the person before me also went to the pigs when his turn came around. Now it's my turn. Next year it will be his, and this year I'll do my job so well that I won't be ashamed if the next one comes and does it better, and I slopped it off. Yeah, that's really the way it is: one measures himself against another. And you don't want to be left out. You want to leave it in as good a state as it was when you took it. Some people can do a thing better. There is always one who can do it better than you can, but there is always something that you can do better than somebody else. You have to apply the best that you can do.

In his stories about learning the virtues of obedience and work, Zack stresses how he always strove to leave his workplace in as good of a state as it was when he started. Growing up this had to do with not wanting to be "showed up," or feeling ashamed if he had simply "slopped off" his work, but mainly because it is what the Heavenly Father expected of him.

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<sup>56</sup> As Karl Peter notes, *Gelassenheit* is "an all but untranslatable term" (1983:228). Stephenson defines it as "literally a 'giving-up-ness' or self-possessed calm; resigned composure; deliberate patience" (1991:26). Teaching children the spiritual content of *Gelassenheit* is a major part of Hutterite socialization (Peter, 1983:235).

Paul says also (in *Colossians 3:23*):

*Everything you do, you do it heartily, for the Lord, and not for other people.*

You'll often wonder what do those little sayings or Biblical stories that you learn at school from your childhood on do to you. They are what form you thoughts.

The skills and values passed on to Zack and Elizabeth as they were growing up add another layer of meaning to the ways in which they construe themselves in relation to their environment. The notion of thrift, for example, gives a sense of Elizabeth's ideas of conservation. Her stories about using ones resources wisely encompass an ethical attitude towards consumption that is applied in all aspects of her day-to-day life. For Elizabeth, making used goods into new ones is not only practical, but sacramental. Zack's stories of work and obedience are also marked my moralistic overtones. His emphasis on the meaning of *Gelassenheit*: to accept whatever job came his way, and to perform it to the best of his ability, hints at the locus of his ideas of stewardship today. Whereas, he once strove to leave his workplace "in as good a state" as when he started, as an adult, he strives even harder "to keep it in a better state" than when he began.

## **GARDENING**

In discussions with Zack and Elizabeth about their roles and responsibilities as adults, gardening frequently came up. The fact that our interviews were carried out during the summer months could account partly for this. However, for Zack, gardening was more than an aspect of his life with which he was fully occupied; it was a metaphor for describing himself, his relationship to the children, the community, and Creation itself. Although gardening did not have the same dominant presence in Elizabeth's narrative, it was nonetheless a recurring theme in her everyday actions, songs, and prayers.

Through his stories of gardening Zack expresses how he feels he is different from many other Hutterite gardeners.

Maybe if you take me in the garden, for example, [you will see that] we do what a lot of colonies don't do. We have a market garden. Since I've been

in the garden, I've sold a lot of vegetables, and I've been going since the very first year (twenty-two years this year) to the Farmer's Market. That means preparing things during the week, and packaging them nicely. That's a place where I gain more exposure to the outside world than many other gardeners. So in that way, I think I am maybe different from a lot of other people, from a lot of my colleagues, who haven't had that experience. I'm not saying I'm better or more advanced, but that I experienced that.

As one of the first producers, and Hutterite members on the Farmer's Market Executive Committee, and later on, the Selecting Committee, Zack has come into contact with more *Weltleit* [worldly people] than the average Hutterite. In his twenty-two years of selling produce, attending workshops, and visiting agricultural research stations, Zack feels that he is more open-minded than most Hutterite gardeners, particularly about learning from the *Weltleit* [outsiders].

Yeah, when I think back, if there was a new gardener or a new schoolteacher, they'd phone me or they'd come over and ask this and that. I did things and tried stuff on my own. I drove a lot to the . . . like the province has research stations. Over by Brooks is a federal research station. I drove to that one to see what was in the field, and look how they raised stuff. And that's what they are there for: to look at what you can try in that area. They have a lot of things on trial – all sorts of corn, all sorts of peas, all sorts of onions. And at the end of the year they have a list of why they planted and how well it did. And then they'll say whether or not they'll recommend it for that area. So you can do your things according to them. I can say, I have learned most of my stuff from them. And because I learned it from them, a lot of *Gmane* [colonies] then learned it from me. So I could probably say that I was more open-minded: to look out rather than just going to other *Gmane* to see how they do things. And so I picked up a lot there, just as they say at the research centres: "We learn so much from our Hutterite friends." Why? Every Hutterite tries something new in his garden. Everybody notices and looks. The Hutterites, in a way, are also a research station. They try everything. They aren't there for just one or two years; they stay there. They have to have corn; they have to have cabbage; they have to have carrots and onions. They always try something better. What didn't work this year . . . well, you'd be dumb if you were to plant the same thing next year.

Besides learning a tremendous amount from the research stations he has visited, he has also learned a lot from his customers at the Farmers Market. They have taught him not only how to experiment with new crops like squash and garlic - which his colony

never used to grow or eat - but how to market various products, such as, dill and baby potatoes. In response to my question "What are you famous for at the Farmer's Market?" Zack replied:

The baby potatoes. And I have two customers who say to me, "I taught you that!" I remember that. About ten years ago they wanted baby potatoes. "Oh we throw those away." "You save some, bring them in. I'd like some; I'll pay you for them." Well, now, during summer this year, I made most of my money at the Market from the baby potatoes – up to two dollars a pound for such little potatoes. Before we used to throw them away. And those people really mean it when they say, "I taught you that!" See that's another good feeling again.

The exposure Zack has gained to the outside world through his work as gardener has also made him conscious of the chemicals he uses.

When I first became gardener, I went into the sunflower seeds and I saw a bunch of ladybugs on them. Oh my, I thought they were a bad thing. I thought, I better spray them, they'll eat all my sunflower seeds. And I did, I sprayed them. The next thing I realized under the big leaves on the sunflowers were a bunch of aphids. And those aphids they suck all the juice out of the flower. So then I went to a chemical salesman and told him I needed something for those awful aphids. He said to me, "The best thing to do is find yourself some ladybugs." And I thought to myself, I sprayed those ladybugs and now I have the aphids. If I leave the ladybugs, they'll eat the aphids. This is the biological way. It is God's way through nature. I use as few chemicals as I possibly can. Chemicals are good. You have to use them; but chemicals remain. Where do you think all of the cancer comes from? If you can find a natural way to do something do it. And I do.

There are a lot of people who come to me and say, "I am so full of chemicals, that I really have to be careful of what I eat. When you spray chemicals, they can cause such a reaction in me that I'll be sick for a month!" So I must tell that person, "Don't buy this. Why? I spray that. I have to. If I hadn't, I wouldn't have anything to sell." So I have to be fair to that person, honest with that person. You have to be considerate of your fellowman. You have to be as concerned about him as yourself. That is the way of living as God wants you to.

That the chemical salesman taught Zack that spraying aphids with an insecticide was doing more harm than good to his sunflowers, or that his loyal customers at the Farmer's Market helped to make him conscious of the amount of chemicals he uses in his

garden, are examples which point to the cultural forces outside of the colony influencing Zack's behavior in the garden.

Although the knowledge Zack has gained from "outsiders" has contributed significantly to his practical gardening knowledge (i.e. the commercialization of production, the procurement of agricultural inputs, the use of chemicals and so on) he still holds strongly to his Hutterite beliefs and farming practices of the past.

Yeah, I feel different in many ways, but I try to remain on the same *Pfad* [path], as we say. When I look into certain things, you always have to look at the end. If I have a radical idea, well, Paul says:

*Test everything; hold fast to what is good (1. Thess. 5:12).*

Many years ago the old gardener said to me, "Don't forget your old friends"—*Den alten Freunden nicht vergiss*. That means that when you try something new retain that which you had. That was purdy good, eh? That brought you this far. When you try something new, don't just go with the new. Always try it: when it's good it's good, but you know, like you say, when it's a disaster, well, you still have what you had until now. And what is better, you can eventually, with time, replace it with that and leave the other alone. So I have always retained that one thing that the old uncle told me, "Don't forget the old friends." No, so far I've been lucky, I never had to go to another colony. That's one thing the colonies do. Now if a colony didn't have anything in their garden, let's say no corn, well the other colonies have more than they need. And so you can drive over and pick for nothing, corn, tomatoes, or something else.

The emphasis Zack places on the importance of learning and experimenting with new crops, while at the same time carefully retaining information about what has and has not worked in the past (i.e. past yields, seed types, weather, and soil conditions)<sup>57</sup> points to his personal long-term commitment to the garden, and the communities it serves (both his own and the local community outside the colony).

<sup>57</sup> Zack has kept a diary for the past 15 years. As one typical daily entry show, his diary is used more as a means for recording the weather and keeping track of planting and harvesting conditions, than as a personal testimony of his own life.

Mon. '94            Had a busy day. Dug and packaged carrots. Picked lots of beans and  
8°                    packaged them. Picked peas the last time and hand shelled and  
breezy             packaged them for sale. Also cut off lots of broccoli and sold 7 cases of  
28°                   it 50 cents/lb. Also cut off lots of beautiful cauliflower. After supper Ruben took the  
teenage girls to Starbrite colony.

Every year I try something new, like brussel sprouts, or celery . . . but you have to leave it in a better state than it was when you got it, so I put in green manure (which is raising a barley crop and just using it as tilth to plow into the soil). Your cabbage, carrots, tomatoes, they take nutrients out of the soil. By rotating with a forage crop like barley or clover, you're using up some of the nutrients that are in excess. Because your traditional root crops do not require some nutrients that barley or wheat does. You constantly have to have your soil in mind. By taking good care of your soil, you're also protecting yourself from diseases and deficiencies that plants need.

Zack's long-term commitment to the garden is even more apparent in his comparison of the garden and the school.

On several occasions Zack draws a parallel between his job as gardener and his highest duty as colony schoolteacher, as both involve "weeding the garden at home" (Hostetler, 1980:8).<sup>58</sup>

The garden is just like my school. Just like you have to plant the garden and carefully nurture every little plant within it, water them at the right time, and pull out all the weeds so that they don't take over . . . That is exactly how it is in my school with the children. You have to start the child out. Every one of us has sinful ways in us. Those are the weeds within us. You have to get rid of them: "No, you mustn't do that!" "You shouldn't do that!" "I'll give you the strap for that so that you don't do it anymore!" These actions are just like using the hoe. There is a saying that goes: "The more aggressive the gardener is with his hoe in the soil, the cleaner the garden is of weeds" – *Je aerger der Gaertner sei Grubschaufel eu tuit in die weeds, des Unkraut aussrjaeht tuit, je reiner bleibt der Goatn*. And that is exactly how it is with the children: the stricter, and *lehrhafter* (the more properly you teach them), the more proper they will be. Hopefully. See if the gardener doesn't go in to check on his garden, it will soon go down with the weeds. The same applies when you don't look after your people, they will soon go wild in their ways, undisciplined.

Zack's involvement in the garden is a way of expressing his responsibility to the children, and, ultimately, to the community to which he belongs. As the schoolteacher he is responsible for planting "a lot of good *Verslen*" [little verses] into the children in order to enrichen their minds, just as adding tilth enrichens a poor soil.

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<sup>58</sup> On most *Lehrerleut* colonies, the schoolteacher is also the gardener.

His reverent caring for the children and the community is also reflected in his sense of stewardship to the soil. By protecting the soil he sees himself as also protecting “the children and the children’s children”.

We tend to think a bit like when the Israelites went into the Holy Land, . . . when God made them rules as to how to treat that soil. You have to take care of that soil, not just mine it, and get everything you want out of it that you can. You have to treat it every year so that the following year and the sub years you will be constantly building up your soil. So if anyone doesn’t follow that and he’s not up onto it, it reflects onto their crops and on the way that the colony survives. God teaches you that. It’s taught to you from childhood on to always look after your investment, whether it’s land or whether it’s your hogs or your cows, or you garden, or your children, which is your biggest investment that you have.

If God gives you something, now you are supposed to be a wise servant. That is kind of like our motto or my motto as a German schoolteacher, or as a gardener, or in anything I do: whatever I start, I want to leave it in a better state than it was when I took it over; definitely not in a worse state. It is like the Parable of Talents – *Das Gleichnes von der anvertrauten Pfunden* (14-16). Because we are farmers we apply it to farming. It’s the best farm guide there is isn’t it?

The ten-acre plot of land that Zack has plowed over the last fourteen years is the “talent” with which he feels God has entrusted him, and which he is expected to use and care for as a wise servant. For Zack this involves building up the soil in order to protect it for future generations.

Elizabeth’s emotional attachment to gardening was linked less to the soil than to the strong sense of community it cultivated. During the many hours we spent together picking corn, topping carrots, and canning beets, she would often turn to me and say:

So that’s how it is dear . . . Like yesterday when we picked corn the whole day, husked it, creamed it, and put it in jars . . . It seems like it brings us even closer together when we work together.

Also, the singing that accompanied our gardening work not only gave a feeling of solidarity with one another, but with God. The daily gardening activities focused on, for example, the singing of hymns, such as the Psalms, which constantly celebrate the splendor of God in nature, and especially the singing of Hutterite songs, which typically stress following God.

*Wo mich Gott hinfuehret will ich folgen.*

*Lobe meinen Heiland Tag fuer Tag. Denn wo Gott mich brauchet will ich kaempfen. Will tragen gern das Kreuz den Heiland nach. Wenn die Wolken immer dunkel werden. Dann vertraue ich Gott und fuercht mich nicht. Wenn die Menschen alle mich verlassen. Weiss ich gewiss mein Gott verlaesst mich nicht.*

*[Wherever God leads me I shall follow. Praise the Holy Father day after day. Because wherever God needs me I will fight. [I'll] gladly carry the Lord's cross after him. When the clouds become dark, I will trust God and I will not be afraid. When all the people have left me, I am certain that my God will not leave me.]*

Hearing fifteen women sing this song as you pick peas at dawn, your fingers hardly able to move from the cold morning dew, gives you a powerful sense of strength to carry out your task together. For Elizabeth, the garden (and the activities associated with it) is a place that brings everyone together, and where through the harvesting and preparations of plants, fruits and vegetables, they can respond to God through their hard work.

What is different about Zack and Elizabeth's stories and experiences of gardening is how they intersect with notions of community. To Zack, soil stewardship is the most genuine way of physically protecting the community and future generations; to Elizabeth the garden is the perfect setting in which the community is brought together, and thus, protected spiritually.

## **SUMMARY**

My starting point in this chapter was the notion of ecological identity: to connect the common themes in these two life stories with attitudes towards the landscape and living. Memories of childhood places are key (Thomashaw, 1995:9). Zack's and Elizabeth's interactions and relationships with the animals and plants in the wild coulees of their childhood not only established the grounds for mutual respect, but also helped

them to acquire a local knowledge<sup>59</sup> of these particular places. Their ecological identities are bound to these places.

A second pathway was the various life lessons learned during childhood. Elizabeth emphasised thrift, while Zack stressed industriousness.<sup>60</sup> Both concepts provide guidelines for how to act and behave in the “Community of Goods,” and for sanctioning moral codes that have implications in the physical environment as well. A major part of Zack’s socialization had to do with gaining a sense of *Gelassenheit* where “you do what the spirit of the community asks of you, not what your born nature or desire prompts you to do.” Elizabeth was taught that you are to have what you need and nothing more; that which you receive is to be used judiciously. Biblical teachings are paramount in the lessons Zack and Elizabeth learned growing up.

In discussing their roles and responsibilities as adults, I chose gardening as a means to explore the various cultural and religious forces affecting their relationship with the community and Creation. Zack’s stories of gardening, for instance, underscore the depth of consciousness regarding the value of the soil in protecting future generations. Elizabeth’s perspective on the symbolism of the garden as the overwhelming manifestation of God is key. Her view is that it brings people together and welds them into a community. While Elizabeth’s intimate interaction with the garden is achieved through the rituals of prayers, and songs, Zack achieves this deep intimacy with nature through his keen long-term observation and communication (with both “outsiders” and other Hutterites), and through his stewarding and judicious use of the garden (Anderson, 1997).<sup>61</sup>

Working against the background of these themes, Zack and Elizabeth have formulated their own versions of what these aspects of their lives signify, just as I have

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<sup>59</sup> Local knowledge refers to experiential knowledge about the local environment – about its plant and animal species, about its soil and weather (Hunn, 1993:14). More succinctly, (Kuhn and Duerden, 1996:74) describe local knowledge as “that which is gained from astute observation of the local environment, and the internalization of detailed information about local topography, climate, resources, biotic and abiotic characteristics, animal and plant life cycles and other environmental features.

<sup>60</sup> For more on industriousness and thrift in Hutterite society see Hostetler (1980:111) and Friedmann (1960).

<sup>61</sup> It should be mentioned here that Zack was also constantly singing in the garden with the women, and especially in the slaughterhouse where we would prepare the vegetables for the Farmer’s Market. While

formulated my own interpretation of how these particular themes express their “ecological identity.” Perhaps the most succinct way to describe Zack and Elizabeth’s ecological worldview is to say that it is informed by their own perceptions and personal experiences of places, their relationship to their community, and most of all their relationship to God.

Various themes discussed here are not only completely entangled in subjectivity; they are also profoundly influenced by religion. As Zack explains,

So nature, we always call it nature, *Natur*, right? Well *Natur* is God. You can see God in Nature but you never see God. It is not a being like I see you. I can say this is Shauna, but I cannot say, yo this is God, right? God is everywhere, he is in us – *in ihm leben und weben wir*. Through him we live and exist. In our *Gesangbuechlein* [Songbook 5:5:6] it says:

Ich hoere Dich in Sturm	I hear you in the storms
Ich sehe Dich in Tau	I see you in the dew
In Adler	in the eagles
In der Wurm	in the worms
Auch in der Stillen Au	and in the peaceful pasture
	too.

What Zack expresses here is a view that nature is not sacred in itself; it becomes something that is worthy of respect (without worshipping it) when it is brought into association with what is holy, with God. In order to gain a better understanding of the spiritual underpinnings of their stories, let us now turn to a consideration of the religious principles guiding their stories.

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driving to the Farmer’s Market or to pick berries, the younger girls would always ask Zack to sing his special repertoire of songs. Two of my favorites are: “Flowers for Mother” and “The Father Song.”

## Chapter 6

### LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY OF GOODS

“The beliefs that matter for how people choose to live and act are those embodied in the narratives they are living out . . .” (Gare, 1998:7).

Before discussing the influence of Christianity on Zack and Elizabeth’s lives, I shall sketch briefly Hutterite history,<sup>62</sup> in particular two key principles that have formed the basis of the Hutterian religion and way of life for over 450 years: living in the “Community of Goods” [*leben in Guetergemeinschaft*] and “withdrawal from the world” [*Absonderung von der Welt*] (Kiel, 1995:49; Perterer, 1998:4)). These principles help place Zack and Elizabeth’s lives within a historical framework, and lay the groundwork for the second and main part of the chapter.<sup>63</sup> Here I will present an interpretation of Zack and Elizabeth’s life histories against the backdrop of the key features of the Community of Goods, such as self-sufficiency, simplicity of living, notions of the colony as eternal, collective management of resources.

#### HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Hutterites trace their roots to the 16<sup>th</sup> century Radical Reformation, which also came to be known as the Anabaptist Movement. According to Hutterite historian Werner Packull, “from its inception and at its core Anabaptism was a consciously religious movement premised on following Christ, on discipleship, and on attempts to reinstitute the New Testament church” (1996:185).<sup>64</sup> In short, Anabaptism “was a new-old form of Christianity” (Bennett, 1996:173). It was new in the sense that the

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<sup>62</sup> As Hostetler reminds us, “a knowledge of the history of the Hutterites and of how they incorporate the past into the present is central to understanding Hutterite society” (1974:xiii). For a more extensive analysis of Hutterite history see (Wolkan, 1918; Hostetler, 1974; Horsch, 1985; Hutterian Brethren, 1987; Stephenson, 1991; Packull, 1996).

<sup>63</sup> I am aware that a chapter of this sort typically appears at the beginning of a thesis, to provide a framework for the reader to understand the narrator and the stories that follow. I have instead placed it here, because I want readers to encounter Zack and Elizabeth’s words first, and only afterward to consider their narratives in light of my interpretation.

<sup>64</sup> The so-called Anabaptists identified with neither Catholic nor Protestant theology, but sought to create their own theology by creating a “new” voluntary church free from the state (see Hostetler, 1974:1-5).

Anabaptists rejected infant baptism and believed that only adult baptism was “true baptism;” it was old in the sense that it stressed a return to a communal way of living as practiced in Apostolic times.

Based on Christ’s command to his followers to rid themselves of their worldly goods, the *Wiedertäufer*,<sup>65</sup> as they were referred to in German-speaking areas, or Brethren, as they referred to themselves, lived out this command by living austerely, and by sharing all things in common (Bennett, 1996). The scriptural source which the Brethren commonly use to describe Christ’s followers giving up their personal property is the passage<sup>3</sup> which states:

*And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need (Acts 2: 44-45)*

For the Brethren, or *Täufer*, salvation could only be attained by turning away from the world and its material possessions<sup>66</sup> and by living in the Community of Goods.

By 1525, *Täufer* beliefs and practices spread rapidly from Switzerland into southern Germany and Austria. Leaders who endeavored to establish the New Testament church faced harsh persecution and moved to a more hospitable home when persecution became unbearable (Jensen, 1992:111). Moravia, a historical region of the former Czechoslovakia, proved to be particularly “Anabaptist-friendly” (Packull, 1991). It was here that Jacob Wiedemann introduced the Christian practice of the Community of Goods after the early Christians in Jerusalem. Once Bohemia came under Habsburg rule, Ferdinand I sought to root out heresy. Wiedemann and his followers immediately fled Nikolsburg and moved forty miles north to Austerlitz (Jensen, 1992). Only under the protection of the nobility, in this case, Lord Kaunitz, could they escape persecution (Jensen, 1992:112).<sup>67</sup> After being forced to flee Nikolsburg, the oppressed *Täufer* pooled

<sup>65</sup> *Wiedertäufer*, or Anabaptists was and remains a derogatory term which means “re-baptizer” (Hostetler, 1974:5). This was the name given to them by their enemies because of their refusal to accept infant baptism in the state churches. They usually referred to themselves as, *Täufer*, or “baptizer” (Stephenson, 1990), “Brethren,” or simply as “Christians” (Jensen, 1992:108).

<sup>66</sup> The Anabaptist “Confession of Schleithem” (1527) proclaimed withdrawal from the larger society as a way of mitigating the devastating effects of developing capitalism on the poor (See Diener, 1974:611).

<sup>67</sup> The Hutterites were considered by the Moravian nobles to be industrious and valuable tenants and were thus protected by them. However, once the Moravian nobles lost much of their power in 1620, the

their possessions and money and formed the first *Bruderhof*, or communal settlement at Austerlitz in 1529.<sup>68</sup> This particular community expanded under the charismatic leadership of Jacob Hutter, who reorganized the Moravian Brethren into some of the most powerful and closely-knit congregations with common ownership of all goods (Jensen, 1992; Packull, 1996). Only after their leader's execution in 1536 would they come to be known as the Hutterian Brethren.

Many of the Hutterian Brethren were martyred because of their nonconformist religious beliefs<sup>69</sup> (for example, pacifism, refusing to take oaths, adult baptism, separation of church<sup>a</sup> and state, communal living, among others). Not only did the established religions agree that emerging *Täufer* groups like the Hutterites were evil, and should be exterminated, the provision of the Treaty of Westphalia "*Cuius regio, eius religio*" declared that the ruling prince would determine the religion of his subject (Diener, 1974:6). This extensive persecution forced the Hutterites to abandon the Community of Goods, and, for the next three centuries, they lived a nomadic life, seeking refuge in Hungary and Transylvania, and then in the eighteenth century in Ukraine (Russia).<sup>70</sup>

In the late eighteenth century the Hutterites were accepted into Russia, where Catherine the Great granted them complete religious freedom and exemption from military service. Once again, the Hutterites, like other sects emerging from this period,<sup>71</sup> were able to develop their own self-regulated, tightly-knit *Bruderschaft*, or brotherhood and network of supporters which has characterized them ever since (Peter, 1983:222; Packull, 1996).<sup>72</sup>

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Hutterites could no longer be housed, employed and protected by them. In 1622, all of the remaining Hutterites were expelled from Moravia (Hostetler and Huntington, 1980:2). For more on the history of the Hutterites in Moravia see (Gross, 1980).

<sup>68</sup> As Hostetler describes, "With the collapse of feudalism of the Middle Ages, there were many landless persons – artisans and craftsmen along with scholars – who joined newly formed movements such as Anabaptists" (1980:2).

<sup>69</sup> Central to their beliefs was the reconstruction of the church according to the New Testament, and the entire separation from the state.

<sup>70</sup> A detailed sketch of the Hutterites' long and winding migration route – from their homeland in Tyrol to North America – can be found in John Hofer, David Wiebe, and Gerhard Ens, *The History of the Hutterites*, Winnipeg: W.K. Printer's Aid, 1982, or John Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*, Baltimore: Hopkins University Press, 1974.

<sup>71</sup> Three principal sects emerging from this radical wing of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century are the Mennonites, the Swiss Brethren and the Amish.

<sup>72</sup> As Packull describes, the Hutterites' "organizational habits left their mark on the nature and structure of the surviving Hutterite community" (1996:196). In fact, the Hutterites are the only sectarian group (in

When their military exemption was repealed in the 1870s, the Hutterites migrated to the United States to establish new colonies free from the oppressive regimes of the Old World. On the prairies of South Dakota approximately 400 Hutterites started a new life. Here three colonies were established (all at slightly different times) that were recognized later on as three autonomous subgroups, or *Leut* [people].<sup>73</sup> The first colonies to be established were the Bon Homme and Wolf Creek colonies under the leadership of Michael Waldner, a blacksmith by trade. This group became the *Schmiedeleut*. An offshoot of the Wolf Creek colony was established under Darius Walther, and the colony members were soon known as the *Dariusleut*. A third group founded in 1877 by Jakob Wipf was called the *Lehrerleut* after their founder who was a teacher (Peters 1965:41-42). During the early years the three *Leut* rapidly expanded their colonies and times were peaceful until the outbreak of World War I.

The Hutterites' refusal to bear arms was unacceptable to their neighbors and the U.S. military authorities. As a result, many Hutterites endured harsh treatment in army camps and prisons, and several of them died. These events caused an exodus of Hutterites to Canada,<sup>74</sup> where they were granted military exemption due to the Canadian government's desire to populate its prairie provinces (Hartse, 1993). They established colonies first in Alberta, Manitoba, and, later, in Saskatchewan.

During World War II, the Hutterites once again refused to do military service. Although they and other conscientious objectors performed alternate services, public resentment and hostility was rampant. In both Alberta and Manitoba, legislation was

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North America) to still live in *Bruderhoefen*, or village communes, and to still practice the complete *Guetergemeinschaft*, or Community of Goods. There are over 400 colonies in North America, seventy percent of which are dispersed across Canada's prairie provinces. All of them have maintained a relatively high degree of self-sufficiency on their secluded village colonies, while engaging in highly mechanized farming and agriculture (Bennett, 1996:177).

<sup>73</sup> Taking their names from their leaders, all three distinct *Leut* share common religious doctrines, language, and social patterns, but they are not identical (Hostetler and Huntington, 1980:3).

<sup>74</sup> With the exception of Bon Homme, there was an exodus of Hutterite colonies to Canada in 1918. Since this time the Hutterites have resettled in South Dakota, and other part of the U.S., including North Dakota, Montana, and Washington.

passed to restrict both the maximum amount of land allowed per colony and the minimum distance between them (Phillips, 1992:75).<sup>75</sup>

### **Living in the Community of Goods**

For the Hutterites, living in the “Community of Goods” has been, and remains, the only valid form of Christianity. Like their forefathers who, in 1528, decided to model their communities after the early Christian communes, Hutterites today continue to base their communal way of life on these early Christian doctrines.

*Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common (Acts 4:32)*

Because faithful participation in the *Guetergemeinschaft* is believed to be essential for salvation, the sharing of goods and personal property permeates all aspects of the Hutterite way of life (Hostetler, 1974:1-2; Peter, 1983:224).<sup>76</sup>

The practice of the “Community of Goods” is unique in Western Canada in that it runs against the grain of our own socioeconomic organization (Bennett, 1996:187). This is clearly reflected in the Hutterites’ communally owned settlements dotted across the prairie landscape, which lie in stark contrast to the single-family farmsteads owned by individuals, not by entire communities. Elizabeth’s colony, for example, which branched out from Milford colony in 1992, supports 21 families, or a total of 93 members, and holds 11000 acres of land in common, and plants and harvests primarily 6000 acres. Zack’s colony, which branched from Rocklake colony 15 years ago, occupies a total of 12000 acres (with hay, barley, peas, canola, and wheat as their primary crops), and supports 15 families, or a total of 75 members. The capital earnings of their colonies provide for the welfare of the entire community (Hostetler, 1974).

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<sup>75</sup> Because of the “Communal Property Act” (see chapter 7) the Hutterites were “encouraged” to branch out into the neighboring province of Saskatchewan and into the states of Montana and Washington. From 1940-1952 eight colonies were established in Saskatchewan, and twelve in Montana.

<sup>76</sup> Today, as in the past, the Hutterites radical repudiation of the world and strict form of communalism separates them from other Baptist sects, such as the Amish and the Mennonites (Peter, 1983:224). In fact, the Hutterites are arguably the most successful communal movement in modern history (Goa, 1993: 19).

## Withdrawal from the World

The Hutterites consider themselves as “God’s chosen people.”<sup>77</sup> As such, they take the Scriptures of the Bible as “the revealed word of God which has a basic plan for living” (Stephenson, 1991:153). To deviate from this plan by living in the “ungodly” world would be “to violate the injunctions of the New Testament” (Hostetler, 1974:8).

In their early stages of development the Hutterites’ withdrawal from the world was, as Pirker points out, more cultural than geographical (1982:55). Even holding onto their German language was an important factor for their cultural separation from the world. A spatial or geographical separation did not take place until they had given up their rigorous missionary activities due to the great dangers of missionary work and the Hutterites’ continued persecution which forced them eastward, away from German-speaking regions (Kiel, 1995:50).<sup>78</sup> Subsequent to this harsh persecution in Europe, they insisted on an extreme spatial separation from the rest of society (Stephenson, 1991:152).

The *Bruderhoefe*, or Hutterite colonies in North America are indicative of this physical separation from the sinful “outside world.”<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth’s colony, for example, is situated 30 miles from the nearest rural community, and Zack’s colony is approximately 25 miles from the nearest township. At an even more immediate level, the separation between the spiritual and secular world is reflected in the distinct spatial pattern of their colonies. At both Zack and Elizabeth’s colonies (like almost all Hutterite settlement patterns) the main buildings associated with the colonies’ daily and spiritual lives are located away from those with secular, economic, and trade functions (Simpson-Housley, 1978:145). The former, which include the kitchen complex (as well as the church), the long houses, and the kindergarten, are centrally located. These buildings generally have a

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<sup>77</sup> A Hutterite children’s prayer describes the Hutterites as “God’s holy people that He has chosen from all over the world and has called on of all peoples” (qtd. in Holzach, 1982:10).

<sup>78</sup> Hostetler claims that “the Hutterites were the most aggressive missionaries of the sixteenth century” (1974:57). In their more recent history, however, the Hutterites became, and remain, an “introversionist” type of sect that avoids missionary work or “converting” outsiders (Hostetler and Huntington, 1980:2).

<sup>79</sup> With land becoming increasingly scarce, it is not always possible, however, to build colonies far away from rural or urban centres. Also, the increased number of roads has allowed for easier access to many Hutterite colonies.

north-south orientation, whereas buildings of the secular world, such as the barns,<sup>80</sup> mechanical shops, and the English school, are aligned east to west.<sup>81</sup>

Like Zack and Elizabeth's communities, the Hutterite's separation from the world is only possible under conditions of economic self-reliance and self-sufficiency. However, as Peters explains, "the latter by no means imply the absence of an economic interrelationship with non-Hutterites" (1983:236).

### **KEY FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY OF GOODS**

In order to live separately from the "outside world," Hutterites are aware of the strict sanctions required to live in accordance with the Community of Goods (Bennett, 1996:183). Several of the key theological principles indispensable for participation in group life are: self-sufficiency, simplicity of living, notions of the colony as eternal, and the collective management of resources (Bennett, 1996:183; see also Hostetler, 1974; Peter, 1983). Not only are these pragmatic principles necessary for preserving the "precious storehouse which bestows salvation on its participants" (Peter, 1983:224), they are also necessary for the sustaining the community's resource base (Bennett, 1996).

As is true of many religions, a general notion of "stewardship" is found in the Hutterites religious principles.<sup>82</sup> For instance, the Hutterites' strong belief in the interdependence and "intentional" collective control of property is said to have a "built in" ecological function, which helps them to avoid over-exploitation of their resources (Bennett, 1996:184). Bennett bases this "on the proposition that when a group of users has joint title and responsibility they will be disinclined to abuse the resources" (1996:184). One example of how the Hutterites ensure that resources are not abused, is the use of an "intercolony assistance and information system" which allows younger

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<sup>80</sup> As Peter Stephenson also describes "the hog barns of the brethren are often more luxurious in comparison to their own houses" (1991:155). Similarly, this points to another physical distinction between those buildings belonging to the secular realm and those belonging to realm of the "sacred".

<sup>81</sup> I would like to comment here that Hutterite architecture is solid and worthy, rather than innovative and inspired.

<sup>82</sup> For a brief analysis of "stewardship" and the world's religions see Scott Dunham and Harold Coward. "World Religions and Ecosystem Justice," In eds. Harold Coward, Rosemary Ommer and Tony Pitcher, *Just Fish: Ethics and Canadian Marine Fisheries*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, Newfoundland, 47-65, 2000.

colonies<sup>83</sup> (with perhaps less experienced farmers) to seek advice and help from older, more experienced colonies (Bennett, 1996:184).<sup>84</sup>

Bennett also highlights the Hutterites' belief in the colony as eternal, or, their belief in sustaining the "holy ark" and future generations as a way of protecting their resources (1996:182). A practical example of this can be found in the Hutterian practice of "colony fissioning." This not only prevents a colony from becoming too big for its resource base, it allows younger members the opportunity to gain management positions at the new daughter colony, thus giving them a stronger sense of responsibility for ensuring the survival of the colony.<sup>85</sup>

Bennett's analysis makes a significant contribution to a broad understanding of how Hutterite religious ideals influence their perceptions of the socionatural environment by sanctioning their management of resources. However, his analysis does not afford him the space to communicate the different ways in which these key features of the Community of Goods influence the lives of individual Hutterites, and the extent to which they guide their actions and behavior in the physical environment. Although he acknowledges that "Hutterites, like any other group, vary considerably in ability and motivation," he does not directly address why "some are far more inclined or able to establish conservationist practices than others . . ." (1996:183). It is my belief that it is more than, as Bennett points out, "the age of the colony, the nature of its land and water, the bank balance, and the skills of its managers," (1996:183) that determine a colony's "resource-sustaining" practices, it is also the religious beliefs and behaviors of individuals and the cultural contexts in which they are embedded. I shall turn now to a consideration of how these religious principles are woven into Zack and Elizabeth's life histories and shape their perceptions of the environment.

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<sup>83</sup> Bennett's research reveals that new colonies "regularly over-use their land because they need big crops for the first few years to liquidate the debt" (1996:182). Hence, an intercolony information system is especially useful for minimizing such exploitative practices.

<sup>84</sup> Of course these controls are no absolute guarantee against over-exploitation, but Bennett insists that "they come closer to a sustainable way of living than a society which lacks intentional collective control" (Bennett, 1996:180).

<sup>85</sup> Colony fissioning occurs on the average every 15-20 years, or once a colony reaches a population anywhere between 100-150 members. According to Bennett, "Hutterites have always fissioned, because they discovered early on that the maintenance of conformity is more easily achieved with smaller numbers"

## Self-Sufficiency

Self-sufficiency is a fundamental principle of the “Community of Goods.” Economically it is a means for limiting dependence on the societies existing outside of the *Bruderhof* (Cobb, 1970; Peter, 1983). Culturally, it ensures more complete separation of the Hutterites from the outside world.<sup>86</sup> This desire for continuous self-sufficiency is, for example, what guided Zack and Elizabeth’s interactions within the wild coulees of their childhood. Zack’s stories of the woods, trapping, fishing, and Elizabeth’s stories of collecting berries in the creeks are all lessons in “living off the land,” and learning to become self-sufficient. From an early age these experiences taught them to provide for the needs of their peer groups - like the caves Zack once dug to protect the children from “invading soldiers” - or for the needs of the entire community. For example, just as Elizabeth was responsible for collecting chokecherries for making the colony wine, Zack was responsible for fishing for the entire colony with the other boys.

“I know one year when we were a bit older,” he explained, “the boss (that’s the farm boss) said, ‘We are going to help the boys out. I’m going to give them a string and hooks, and they will catch fish, and the *Gman* can eat fish.’ Before that when you caught one, you would fry it up yourself and eat it – it was often still quite raw when you ate it!”

From an early age Zack and Elizabeth were taught that in order to be self-sufficient “everybody must give what he can in order to get what he needs” (personal communication with Zack Wurz, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1998). To illustrate this motto, Zack showed me one of the many baby booster chairs he had crafted from a five-gallon grease pail, and explained in his own words the meaning of (1 Peter 4:10-11) wherein it states: “*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*”

That is what the community is good for. Everyone works together just like the parts of the body: the eyes, they look at the whole body, right? The ears, they hear from the whole body. The feet carry the entire body back and forth where it has to go. So that way if the feet and the eyes and the

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(Bennett, 1996:180). This ultimately means that the management of resources is more easily held in check as well.

<sup>86</sup> This cultural separation is apparent in their language and dress. Both have always been important for achieving a certain distance from mainstream society (Hofer, 1999).

ears and the hands work all together, they do well, right? That's exactly the way it is in the community. He who is handy in the one thing, he helps the one who isn't, and the other is good at something else that he isn't good at. Everyone has the best.

Diversity is fundamental to the principle of self-sufficiency (Cobb, 1970). This is reflected in the vast number of local skills Elizabeth and Zack have learned throughout their lives. Whereas, Elizabeth was introduced to various aspects of farming and a plethora of domestic skills, Zack was introduced to almost every aspect of farming and agriculture.

While the influence of such a "diversification ethic"<sup>87</sup> may seem slight in terms of guiding Zack and Elizabeth's perceptions of the environment, the importance lies in the fact that such diversity brings a vast arrangement of personal resources, and a varying level of environmental skills to their communities. Zack's knowledge of bookbinding, beekeeping, and plant husbandry, or Elizabeth's knowledge of herbs, home remedies, and thrifty living, promote a local self-sufficiency which contributes to the wholeness of health of the community and the land (Berry, 1995). As Breuilly notes:

When you have washed a floor and fixed a chair and painted a wall and cleared an acre and cleaned a machine, the floor and the chair and the wall and the land become important to you. You have made yourself responsible for its life (1992:72).

Similarly, the time which Zack and Elizabeth spend preserving the integrity and well-being of their communities and the land with their own hands (cleaning, making, mending, cultivating and so on) is time spent in the physical care of the physical world (Breuilly, 1992:72).

Despite the many ways in which they use their skills to better serve their communities, both Zack and Elizabeth note that they "can never do enough for the colony." Such a belief derives from their belief in "God giving grace only to the humble."

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<sup>87</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the functioning of the Hutterites "diversification ethic" within the larger socioeconomic system see (Bennett, 1996:177).

Both see work as spiritual sustenance, a goal towards harmony among family, community, nature and God.<sup>88</sup> Zack quotes from (Hebrew 6:11) to illustrate this point:

*And we want each one of you to show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end, so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

### **Simplicity Living**

Another fundamental aspect of the principle of the “Community of Goods” is simplicity of living. Austerity, as Bennett describes, “is a way of living with less, and doing so with dignity and purpose” (Bennett, 1967:173). Elizabeth’s creative transformation of used goods into new ones is indicative of how she strives to lead an austere life. She validates her stories of consumptive patterns by drawing from Scriptural sources, especially Sirach, John, and Luke (see Chapter 5). She also draws on knowledge of the sufferings of her European forefathers to illustrate why she tries not to waste.

S: Why is it important [to be thrifty]?

E: So that our youth, the next generation, also has something. And even more clearly we can turn and look to our forefathers. They only lived from one day to the next. Just when they thought they had built something up, the robbers came and burned and stole everything. How they must have lived. You know that stays with you. What you are taught from small on . . . that had a big influence on me what our forefathers told us. So if they had nothing, why would we go and waste. What will the good Lord say to us? That is where we learned the most about saving. There are many more examples, if only there were more time. [She asks Lydia to bring out an old polka-dotted kerchief]. Shauna, see how this piece is already old. We take the inside part and pin it or sew a new piece over top, and it looks like new. And that’s the way we do it with everything. When a mother has a lot of children she has to cut out a little piece here from a shirt or dress, or even men’s pants.

S: What is your idea of having less?

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<sup>88</sup> As Stephenson succinctly states, “The Hutterian experience of what we call work or labour is truly incommensurate with our own. It is not a commodity-based enterprise; they are rather ascetic communalists. It is not valued extremely as a means of self-expression or “self-actualization . . .” (1986:96).

E: We do have enough, and we are concerned about that, at least the older people. It's too much, just like you. If we were poor we might be still closer to God, I don't know, at least I hope everything we're doing is the right thing. You know what they say, God has all kinds of ways to try people. He's watching us what we are to do with our leftovers, if we will help the poor.

Elizabeth's ideas of living an austere life, "so that by the grace of God one will go to Heaven" – *dos mon aus Gnod im Himml waed kummn* – is reflected in her everyday actions. From clothing to food, she was always especially conscious of waste. On many occasions, she would lament about the amount of food being wasted on the colonies today. Often this would take her back to the oppressive times of the early Hutterites, or to her own memories of hardship during the 1930s.

I was just one and a half years old and in thirty-seven it was really dry. I was too young to tell much about it. We didn't have as much as we have today. There was a bushel of apples divided up every year. That is practically all the fruit we had, and hardly an orange. In the late 40s we started to get bananas and oranges, but when we were small we didn't see anything like that.

While Elizabeth's memory of the scarcity of food during the "Dirty Thirties" made her conscious of the importance of saving food, she was quick to explain the difference between saving and hoarding. She explains the difference in her telling of "The Parable of the Rich Fool" (Luke 12:13-21; see also Chapter 5).

Some think, now I want to eat and drink from my goods, but he doesn't know that his hour [*Stundlein*] is near, and that he will have to leave everyone and die. Read the whole chapter, or also all of Sirach.

Elizabeth believes that spending energy storing goods for one's self merely takes away from one's duty towards God (see Luke 12:13). Instead, "we have to give to those in need, and," as she continues, this time reading aloud from the Bible,

*. . . not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! . . . Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these (Luke 12:22-28).*

In other words, if these fragile lives flourished in God's care, why should human beings be worried about saving money and possessions for the sake of personal security (Breuilly et al., 1992:32). "If I put my clothes and my shoes on," she noted "that's all I have – I have to wear something! As long as I don't make a *Gut* [good] out of it and just think of the other life . . ." What she expresses here is the same thing that the early Hutterite leaders encouraged their members to do: to live simply and frugally. As Klassen states:

Each member of the group was expected to be industrious, but retain only what was needed for himself and his family. The other income was to be given to those in distress . . . (Klassen, 1964: 42-43).

Indeed one effect the teaching of "The Parable of Rich Fool" has had on Elizabeth is that one is to live lightly upon the earth; not creating surpluses for ones own comfort or weighing oneself down with riches (Luke 12:16-21).

For Zack, living a simple life derives from his belief in the power of the Heavenly Father - "the Creator of all," and "the maker and instigator of adverse weather." He paraphrased Deuteronomy 28 to illustrate. When Moses took farewell from his people, Zack noted, he was told that one must follow the rules of God, which includes living austere.

He knew he was going to die, so on his 120<sup>th</sup> birthday he gathered them all there and he told 'em of all the things that God has taught them, and he says: "Now you be careful that you obey all the rules and the laws of God. If you will:

*The Lord will bless you with your crops. The Lord will bless you in your home when you come and go. The Lord will bless everything you do. But if you disobey, the Lord will strike you with infectious diseases. The Lord will curse your land. The Lord will curse your house. Once you have already seeded, he'll send grasshoppers to eat up all the land and he'll send in drought. Everything that you deserved so that you won't be successful no matter what you try to do (Deuteronomy 28).*

So God controls all of it.

Zack's belief that everything is under God's control, God's care, and when necessary, God's judgement, as manifested in his ability to "punish people with adverse

weather conditions, or sickness, or wars, or whatever,” guides his actions and behavior in the environment. For example, his simultaneous fascination with and suspicion of technology, as well as chemical fertilizers is indicative of how he tries to remain on “the right path.” Zack claims that he never adopts anything too radical and attributes the successful outcome of his methods to God.

I think it [the garden] is a wonder of God, a blessing from the Heavenly Father. Why? It’s just like Apostle Paul said:

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the blessing for everything to grow (1 Corinthians 3:6).*

I don’t know, I’ve been lucky that I can say yes to a lot of things. When I meet other gardeners, they complain about all sorts of problems they have in their gardens, either worms or beetles. And I have been fortunate enough that I haven’t encountered many of the problems that they have. They always ask me how I manage to avoid these problems that they have. And I tell them, “I thank the good Lord that I never had that problem.” And it’s possible if you work your garden very carefully, without putting too many chemical fertilizers on it, you know, those chemicals that kill the useful beetles. They are also a type of control.

No matter how you think you have conquered Nature, it always remains stronger than you, or in charge . . . Say you have a hundred bushels per acre crop sittin’ there and after a hail storm you have nothing. That is the extent that the human being exists in Nature. If Nature, which is actually God, is not in favor, then you will not get a crop or a poor crop. Prove me wrong on that one.

Whether it is using lady bugs to control the aphids, or simply a row cover to grow his record-breaking *Gietsch*, according to Zack, such rewards can only be achieved through keen, long-term observation, and, above all, judicious use of new technology. Reflecting on his time as the colony gardener, Zack confirms that using things in moderation is the best approach to successful gardening.

So now, 22 years as gardener, when I look around at everything in the garden, it was all meant to grow that way.

*Alle Kreaturen Gottes ist gut, und ist nichts verwerflich, so lang man es mit Danksagen geniesset.*

Translated,

*Everything that God created is good, let's say you use it in moderation, as a gift from God (1. Timothy 4:4)*

### **The Colony as Eternal**

If, as Hostetler explains, “all that is of God is considered to be spiritual, unchanging, and eternal,” (1974:140) then the colony is “something that should not disappear, but continue to produce agricultural products and people” (Bennett, 1996:182). Zack confirms this in his explanation that Hutterite colonies are agricultural research centres in their own right: “They aren’t there for just one or two years; they stay there!” Directly linked to his idea that the colony is a permanent fixture in the landscape is a strong concern for protecting future generations. This manifests itself in his attitude towards protecting soil fertility, which has been strongly influenced by “The Parable of the Talents.” Zack strives to continuously build up the soil “by adding trace minerals, such as phosphorous or potash.” He explains the deeper meaning underlying his actions.

If God gives you something, now you are supposed to be a wise servant. “Here, I’m giving you this, but I’ll want it back sometime because it’s mine. You are just a living person on this thing and I want this back in good shape someday!” That is kind of like our motto, or my motto as a German schoolteacher, or as a gardener, or anything I do: Whatever I start, I want to leave it in a better state than it was when I took it over; definitely not in a worse state. Because how would you feel . . . well, in ‘The Parable of Talents’ it says . . . do you want me to read it to you? I’ll read it to you and then I’ll explain it. This will teach you a lot as well and that is one of our Bible stories.

*“For it is as if a man, going on a journey . . .”*

That means he was leaving to go on a trip, but he left a farm at home that needs to be looked after.

He summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another one two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying,

‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’

You understand?

His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter in the joy of your master.’

He was going to reward him.

And the one with two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two or more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in many things; enter into the joy of our master.’

You could say that in a way he tried to test his slaves - see how true they would be to him. I’ll give them five talents, let’s say, five dollars, and see what they’ll do with it. Now the one who had received the five talents went off. I’m not gonna just sit here, I’ll invest it. And he would have to do it wisely, why? He invested in – I always lay it out for the children this way – maybe he thought, I’ll buy some cows, I’ll feed them, I’ll look after them well, I’ll sell them, and I’ll make money. So that way he was really successful, he worked properly. He was diligent, and had more money than he had in the beginning. When the master came, he was able to give him ten instead of five. That’s how much that little bit multiplied itself, right? And his master was so pleased with him he says, “*Enter into the joy of your master.*” He’ll prepare a meal for you, and he’ll be happy.

And the one who had the two talents invested the same way. Maybe he bought wheat and sold it on the stock market. In one way or another he doubled his money and could give back four. His master was so pleased with him. He was trustworthy and really tried. His master would have still been satisfied if he had give two and had really tried - let’s say he planted wheat, but it was hailed out and he couldn’t make anymore. But at least he tried and just didn’t have any luck. But what he doesn’t want is what is stated further on:

Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’

There was only one talent the same one that he was given. His master answered:

*'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? They you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (taken from Matthew 25:14-30).*

Zack's belief that God will punish him if he does not use his own "talents" wisely serves as a strong incentive for protecting, in this case, soil fertility, and, thereby, protecting the most precious resource, the community.

Another way in which Zack strives to care for that which God has bestowed upon him is by staying abreast of the latest technology and farming techniques. Zack has attended numerous workshops and lectures on how different countries grow various garden crops. In one lecture he attended on irrigation techniques in Israel, he learned much about growing crops where only a limited supply of water is available:

Through irrigation you can waste a lot of water by just splashing it on and letting it run off, or you can put it on wisely – not putting it on any faster than your soil can absorb it. That goes back to the types of soil: if you have a sandy loam (pretty well the best sort you can get) . . . I mean when you're irrigating you have to know what sort of soil you're putting the water into. Israel has the least amount of rainfall and still they raise tremendous crops, on half an inch! The area around the Dead Sea is so arid they hardly get rain. They were the first to develop drip irrigation, where you put black mulch (you take black plastic and cut a slit into it) over your soil to conserve moisture and so there are no weeds. And underneath runs a drip line. In some cases, I use drip irrigation. It's labor intensive. You use it if you don't have much water. The reason I don't always use it is we have an abundance of water. I would be a different gardener if I was in a different area.

Zack recognizes that resources are not inexhaustible. Learning from countries like Israel, where crops are grown with very little moisture also reminds him of how the abundance of water in southern Alberta could someday change. After all, "you never know what God will do. You can only pray to the Heavenly Father for rain or nice

weather, so that one can do his work.” By keeping in touch with the times, and learning techniques such as drip irrigation in Israel, Zack is able to learn techniques for gardening under harsh weather conditions. This knowledge, he believes, contributes to the long-term survival of the colony.

While, on the one hand, Zack’s comments confirm John Bennett’s theory that “the Hutterites’ concern for posterity results in a strong incentive to guard their protective resources” (Bennett, 1996:171), Elizabeth reminds us that “protective resources” do not only refer to soil fertility and water, but also to the community. Elizabeth’s belief in the colony as something permanent has less to do with “building up the soil” than with “building trust” in the community. Throughout the telling of her life history, Elizabeth stressed the idea of how community bonds must not disappear, but continue to be strengthened through communal activities like picking herbs, cleaning, slaughtering animals, slicing and sorting feathers, farming, and gardening.

So that’s how it is today, dear. If we don’t have work . . . like today with slaughtering, and yesterday when we picked corn the whole day, husked and creamed it, and put it in jars. The whole day! It seems like it brings us even closer together when we work together. We really like it because if you’re alone in your house there isn’t as much trust, even when you go to eat. But when you work hard together, there’s more trust. It is much, much better!

In another conversation, I asked Elizabeth what she enjoyed most about farming, and she replied:

Working together. Now in *Hutterville*, as I told you, the rows were counted and divided. But when I got married those people did it different. Okay, they had a group of women and a group of men going through. We did it together, but there was a lot more walking. Before me and my sister had ten rows to pick up. When the binders came along, we stoked that and then we could sit. We had knitting along and crocheting in our spare time. We spent our time in the fields when they were “mowing” (*gmaht* is what they call it in Hutterite). You got more tired than when you had your own rows.

It was only after picking fruits and vegetables with the women in the garden all summer that I could understand the feeling Elizabeth implicitly describes here. The “stoking system” at the colony she married into was not only more strenuous, than the

“row dividing;” it did not give her the same sort of feeling of “togetherness” as when the rows were divided up. The latter allowed for more time to be spent with the other girls in her peer group. Likewise, in the garden, the rows are divided up and picked in sets of two or four (depending on the length of the row). Like Elizabeth, I also felt a stronger sense of connectedness picking [*zommklaubm*] with a “row partner(s)” than when the entire group randomly picks, for example, a row of saskatoonberries.

Implicit in both Elizabeth and Zack’s stories is a sense that God intended Creation to survive, but also to be fulfilled. For Elizabeth fulfilling the physical world comes about by building it into a community of trusting relationships, and for Zack, it is by carefully cultivating it and building up the soil.

### **Collective sharing and management of resources**

If communal life is believed to be the divine order of God, then so too is collective ownership, production, and consumption of the community’s resources (Melnyk, 1985:81). These religiously enforced values tie in with the fourth major principle of living in the Community of Goods: the collective sharing and management of resources. Elizabeth’s story does not explicitly discuss the communal management of resources, or the cultivation of land to the same extent as Zack, but she does place emphasis on the Hutterites’ ability to till the land and enhance it and live from it, whatever the quality. In describing the value of communal ownership, Elizabeth explains how the members of her colony worked together to put land back into cultivation that had been left barren and sterile.

S: How do you think your colony treats the land with respect?

E: Oh they do that! For example they bought eleven hundred acres just this year. Half of it was crop last year and they seeded it. Half of it was turned over in pasture and broke. But they tried to go in and there were lumps that big. They could not seed that so they brought in a harrow and used that to break it up. And at first it appeared as though they couldn’t do anything with it and one of our people who had already worked on breaking up pasture before, he said, all that it needs is speed. That was this year, in spring. They rented a big tractor from Lethbridge and broke up all the clumps with an auger and they got seventy bushels out of it. We got eight thousand bushels from that land this year. Didn’t that help? You

know dear, the English, the outsiders, they all watched in the spring what our people were going to do with that land. The one who sold it, the sales agent, he said so many people looked at it and they don't want it. They said that the land was so bad, that not even the gophers could survive! They all watched to see what would happen and how it would turn out. We have such a smart people among us, just like the worldly people, and they tried it. As I said, it gets better every year.

Unlike individual farmers who had the opportunity to purchase the land, but were not willing to risk reclaiming it, the ability of her colony to salvage misused land and bring it back to productivity confirms her belief in the importance of communal ownership of land.

Zack's attitude towards the value of collectively sharing resources is embodied in his stories of how it safeguards against destructive practices. According to Zack, those who relinquish their responsibilities towards the communal management of property will be punished by both the community and God. This is made explicit in Zack's analogy of the colony and the beehive (see Chapter 3). "If one bee is lazy, the rest will drive her away or *kill* her!"<sup>89</sup> The point Zack makes here is that the members of a colony must "work themselves to death for the welfare of the hive or the colony," otherwise:

If anyone doesn't follow that and he's not up onto it, it reflects onto their crops and on the way that the colony survives. So if the colony is very poor and managerial practices probably aren't very sound . . . well, there could be many reasons for failures. Well often, you can be a poor manager because you may be drinking too much or abusing either yourself, or abusing the soil, or your animals that are supposed to work for you. So all that has to be in perspective. Well if you were to just think about what I can get out of this crop today you probably won't put any phosphorous into your soil. If [on the other hand] you go out in the spring and you're soil is in pretty good shape, you might think "We'll give this soil nitrogen! It's all we'll need for a big crop this year. See if you put on phosphorous this year or potash it's not going to benefit too much this year. Phosphorous is something that (like potash) slowly breaks down your soil. If you're adding phosphorous today, you'll reap the most benefits two years down the road and a lot of it three years down the road.

So if you were just concerned about today you wouldn't be putting those on. But because you want to continuously build these up then you add

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<sup>89</sup> Frequent references are made in the literature comparing a *Bruderhof* to a beehive. See, for example, (Friedman, 1961:116).

these trace minerals. Okay, let's say we have a field out there with lots of straw. The straw is very important to be put back into the soil. But if you are just thinking about today, you're mining your land. "We'll harvest this, we'll take off all the grain, we'll bale all the straw and sell it to that feed lot up the road, and then we're getting money for our straw as well. And whatever else . . . there's a gold course going up in Milk River. They need lots of good topsoil and we'll make money this year eh! What would you have two years down the road? You'd have a poor quality land because you didn't put your straw back in, you didn't work that in and moved your topsoil off. That's the difference between mining your land and tending to your land. . . God teaches you that. You may do it subconsciously because I may not be able to quote you the correct scripture or points, but it's still there. It's taught to you from early on, *von Jugend auf*, you could say, to always look after your investment.

Although Zack did not explicitly discuss how the colony might force its own will on bad managers, he did allude to how destructive practices (that may come about as a result of poor management), such as mining the land, are better kept in check within the context of collective sharing. Whereas an individual farmer might consider selling his straw to the feedlot or his topsoil to the new golf course,<sup>90</sup> Zack conveyed the idea that a collectively managed farm tries to avoid short-term profit, as it would only hurt the community in the long run. For Zack and Elizabeth, then, to take from the land and not replace it, to destroy it without reclaiming it, to have it without improving it is to violate the covenant of communal life (Breuilly, 1992:70).

## SUMMARY

Most essential to Zack and Elizabeth's perceptions of their socionatural environment is religion. However, even though they share the same basic religious principles they experience and apply them in different ways in their life histories. The theological orientation underlying Zack's ecological identity is a strong belief in the land as a God-given trust. As Zack claims, "we are just borrowing the land" and, therefore, "it must be treated as if it were to last forever." By recognizing God's ownership, Zack believes that Creation is brought into relationship with God. In this way it is to be treated

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<sup>90</sup> Another example he refers to is farmers who try to boost their productive area by farming land that should have never been farmed, such as salinized areas. As he describes, this causes saline seeps to appear "like sores on the land."

with reverence, as befits what belongs to God (Breuilly et al., 1992:61). This is manifest in his attitude towards protecting soil fertility, just as he protects the children from “becoming wild in their ways.”

Elizabeth’s beliefs invest community with value and an ethical responsibility towards it. The ethical actions she takes in her daily life to cultivate community are: hard work, simplistic living (that is, hoarding nothing so that others too can have the goods of life), and caring for the household. When I asked her if she personally felt an ethical responsibility to the land, she responded:

I don’t think so Shauna, because we had such a big family, we had to just put our heads down and help our mother. And in winter we were in the houses a lot and sewed, helped mother - fifteen children are a lot.

That Elizabeth commends care for the community over the land does not mean that she does not give consideration to the latter, as her reference to land reclamation indicates. However, having come from a family of fifteen, and having had twelve children of her own, she describes herself as having always felt a closer proximity and responsibility to the household than to the land.

The major theological implication of Zack’s and Elizabeth’s life histories is that the world is the Creation of God, and, therefore, must be treated in a way that God would want. Living in relation to the natural world then is to make no heavy demands on natural resources, to always conserve material goods wisely, and to find in the world parables of relationships with God. Through “The Parable of the Rich Fool,” and “The Parable of Talents,” for example, Zack and Elizabeth extend the notion of stewardship to their communities and to Creation. If we think of stewardship in terms of taking care of something that belongs to another (Breuilly, 1992:71), then this is a virtue they both uphold. As Zack states:

Paul says to the Corinthians:

*Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).*

And in another verse Jesus says:

*From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded (Luke 12:48).*

## Part Four

### UNDERSTANDING THE HUTTERITE'S ROLE ON THE PRAIRIES

The prairie supports a wealth of wildlife, holds water, recycles, fixes nitrogen, builds soil, and supports communities and individuals. It is important to incorporate humans into this picture. Zack's and Elizabeth's stories about their landscape provide a unique opportunity to look at human/nature relations. Their sense of place on the prairies and religious commitment incorporates a special relationship that motivates them to function effectively in the landscape around them.

Many people today have a transitory "sense of place." Their experience of it is superficial. Like most Hutterites, Zack and Elizabeth have long-term roots in a single setting (Relph, 1993:86). Knowing that they will be bound to their communities and the same piece of land for the rest of their lives evokes a sense of loyalty and benevolence. As Jennifer Welchman points out, both are "virtues crucial of good stewardship" (1999:411).<sup>91</sup> Coupled with their stories and experiences, these virtues have a respected place in the lives of Zack and Elizabeth.

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<sup>91</sup> See Jennifer Welchman's article, "The Virtues of Stewardship," *Environmental Ethics* 21, 1999, 411-423. Here she seeks to find virtues which motivate people to be concerned about the environment, and concludes that benevolence and loyalty are crucial for good stewardship. A host of other virtues she claims as being necessary for good stewardship are: patience, self-discipline, courage, and thrift (1999: 415). Although in this thesis I do not follow up on how all of these moral dispositions motivate Zack and Elizabeth to act as stewards, I think it is adequate enough to say that their characters are strongly marked by them.

## Chapter 7

### STEWARDS VS. SCAPEGOATS

*Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How dare you say to your brother, "Let me take the splinter out of your eye", when all the time there is a plank in your own? . . . Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye (Matthias 7:4-5).*

Just as many ecologists have viewed the influence of Christianity as negative,<sup>92</sup> members of the dominant culture hold mixed feelings about the value of Hutterite communities on the prairies. These attitudes were evident in a recently tabled (and highly controversial) Private Members Bill designed to restrict the size of farms within a municipality or county. In his first reading of the proposed bill, Alberta MLA Barry McFarland states the following:

Bill 204, the Agricultural and Recreational Land Ownership Amendment Act, 2000, would propose a reasonable restriction on the amount of deeded arable land that could be owned in any one of the 66 municipal districts or counties in Alberta. This ownership could be limited to 15 percent of the total arable acres in the municipality or county by any individual, by any corporation, or by any religious group (2000:1).

Although McFarland vehemently denied allegations that his bill was "a thinly veiled disguise to attack one religious group," (McFarland, 2000:1) he pointed out that statistical studies show that the Hutterian Brethren Church is approaching closer than any of the other groups the 15 percent limitation in one of the 66 municipalities.

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<sup>92</sup> While many ecologists have endorsed the Christian tradition as anthropocentric - that is, it conceives of man as superior to all other Creation and of everything else as created for his use and enjoyment (Moncrief, 1970:509) - others have begun to reread the first pages of the Old Testament where God commands man to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish and of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Genesis 1:28). This rereading, spurred by ecotheologians such as (Wilkinson, 1980; Hall, 1982; Austin, 1988 and Barton, 1998) has shed light on ecologically positive themes, that emerge from the "dominion" granted in Genesis 1:28. For a sympathetic critique of these themes see Santmire, Paul H. *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology*.

It is significant to note that all individual operators and corporations that make up 53,000 farm operations today, there are 162 arms of one church that controls in excess of 1.6 million acres (McFarland, 2000).

In fact, despite McFarland's initial claims that the bill is not an assault on freedom of religion, and is not focused on the Hutterian Brethren, "the entire second reading speech by the sponsor of the bill was replete with references to the Hutterite colonies and particularly to Hutterite colonies in southern Alberta" (Dickson, 2000:20). As a result of McFarland's contradictory tone, many Hutterites fear that the proposed bill carries with it sentiments reminiscent of previous restrictive laws targeting the Hutterites.<sup>93</sup>

The publicity generated by the proposed bill is itself symbolic of the fears that continue to permeate Western Canada's prairie provinces, and particularly Alberta, where the highest population of Hutterites exists. A resultant letter to the editor of the Lethbridge Herald is typical: "the Hutterites don't help the economy, . . . contribute to depopulation of small-town Alberta, . . . are a community among themselves who care usually only about their own and future colonies, [and] . . . don't visit my establishment as a customer" (Arnold, 2000). However, this is not to say that all Albertans share the same stereotypical beliefs.

In response to the first two complaints, a resident of Cardston, Alberta states:

You mean even less than the absentee corporate landowners who are gradually owning more and more of rural Alberta are contributing? I can't be bothered to waste time getting accurate statistics on this drivel, but my guess would be that a Hutterite colony supports several dozen times more people than a vast piece of corporate farmland does. And, please! Let us not confuse the family farm with a corporate farm! It's the corporate farmer who is the main cause for you losing your elevator, not the

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<sup>93</sup> As Elizabeth briefly mentions in the beginning of her life history, in 1942, the Alberta legislature passed the Land Sales Prohibition Act in response to the growing public discontentment towards the Hutterites. This act prohibited all land sales (and later even the lease of land) to "enemy aliens" and Hutterites until 1947 (Hostetler, 1966:155-158). Further limitations on Hutterite land expansion were enforced when the Alberta government introduced the Communal Property Act in 1947. This was legislated in order to prevent: a) any Hutterite colony from purchasing or leasing any land beyond the acreage held in 1944, b) new colonies from being established within 40 miles from another colony, or containing more than 6,400 acres, and c) any person from selling land to a Hutterite colony without first offering it for sale for sixty days under the Veteran's Land Act of 1942 (Palmer, 1971:28-29). Hutterite expansion was limited by law until the first conservative government of Alberta repealed the Communal Property Act in 1972. The Loughheed government found that the act conflicted with the principle of freedom of religion, and freedom of religion by association because communal living was one of the principal tenets of the Hutterian faith (Dickson, 2000).

Hutterites. The corporate farmer is the one who couldn't care less if you have to truck your grain to Montana rather than deliver it locally (Schindler, 2000).

Arguing against the last two accusations, that the Hutterites only take care of themselves and don't help the local businesses, Schindler further states:

Right! Like our corporate farmers are so altruistic, they are the first source of contact for our charities! Please give me a break! We have several Hutterite colonies in the Cardston vicinity and I challenge anyone to walk down Main Street in Cardston (or Lethbridge, if you wish) on a weekday and not see a Hutterite. And what are they doing? They're buying things, Mr. Arnold! That's one hundred per cent more than the absentee corporate farmer is doing in Cardston – or Lethbridge – and at least 90 percent more than the two or three employees on an enormous corporate spread are doing. Certainly, the Hutterites are a very self-sustaining, practical and frugal people – maybe it's time more of us took lessons from them – but they too, like shoes, lumber, farmer machinery, computers, etc. etc., that they come and buy from us “more normal” folk. If the Hutterites aren't visiting your establishment, well maybe it's time you reexamined the product or service you are selling. As a small businessman in Cardston, I can vouch for the fact that the Hutterites certainly do a lot of buying. If MLA Barry McFarland's bill, limiting ownership to 15 percent to Hutterites, even gets a serious review in the Legislature, all I can say is God help us! (Schindler, 2000).

The controversy reinforces the stereotype about the Hutterites high level of productivity, their state-of-the-art machinery, and their so-called corporate farming model.

Two obvious distinctions between the Hutterites and corporate farmers have to do with crop specialization and absentee ownership. The Hutterites highly diversified model of farming and agriculture is a primary example of how they have managed to take what they need from corporate farming without falling prey to monocropping, or overspecialization in grain or cattle (Bennett, 1996). It is this mixed economy that allows all of the members to participate so that the income is generated collectively, and not only by a few members (Kiel, 1995:167). Unlike a substantial proportion of land on the prairies which is largely owned in absentia by corporate farmers and operated by tenants who hold either cash or share leases (Wilson et al., 1995:32), the present pattern of land tenure among the Hutterites is that of permanent ownership. As (Wilson et al., 1995:32) suggests, “unless the person operating the land is credited with the value of any

improvements made,” the former land tenure pattern typical of many corporate farms results in “little incentive to invest in long term measures such as soil conservation” (1995:32).

The life histories presented here suggest one way in which people can begin to see the Hutterites in new light, not merely as a homogenous group of technocratic/corporate farmers, but as a group of individuals steeped in local knowledge of the physical world, and a religious understanding, and a view of the land based on humility, respect, and skill (Berry, 1991). As one of the few Alberta MLA's to oppose Bill 204 argued, “In the long run, the family farm is far more challenged by the threat of corporate farming, alien ownership of land or absentee ownership of land, than it is by the expansion of Hutterite colonies” (Dickson, LA Feb 29, 2000).

If the Alberta government was (again) to limit the Hutterites' potential to expand their communities, how will the qualities of those who take their place affect the way they deal with things of the earth? Will they work in the long-term interests of their communities? Will they gain spiritual sustenance through their work, and not through ecologically damaging consumerism? Will Biblical commands and the community reinforce how they are to care for the land, and each other? In an age that preaches the gospel of individualism, how will the notion of stewardship, for instance, be expressed by non-Hutterite farmers? Where will the contrasts and similarities lie? Certain features of Zack's and Elizabeth's narratives may shed light on some of the unacknowledged particularities of our own cultural ideas with our rugged individualism, and secular attitudes towards nature.

The life history approach encourages us to look beyond the narrative of economic progress that is the reference point from which “the Hutterites” are viewed, to the narratives of individual farmers like Zack and Elizabeth. By learning about their history on the prairies, their local knowledge of places, their perceptions of the socionatural environment, and their deeply rooted religious consciousness, we can hopefully begin to recognize individual Hutterites as stewards rather than scapegoats.

## Chapter 8

### CONCLUSION

#### ELIZABETH'S AND ZACK'S ROLE ON GOD'S EARTH

In this thesis, I bring together the lives of two Hutterite farmers, to highlight and interpret their relations to nature. Such work involves looking directly at Elizabeth Wipf's and Zack Wurz's personal narratives and the themes about ecological identity that emerged from them. My goal is to show that the life histories in the Hutterite context offer a method for helping to deconstruct regional stereotypes about the Hutterites place in Western Canada.

Investigating the lives of individual Hutterites has generally been conceived of as incompatible with Hutterite culture due to the lack of emphasis on individuality. However, my collaboration with Zack and Elizabeth over the past three years not only exposes a culture rife with life history narratives; it reveals the importance of a method. Conducting contemporary life history research among the Hutterites necessitates becoming involved in the lives of these individuals and their communities. By actively participating in their communities and recording their stories when colony work was at a low ebb, not only did my participants share their lives on their own terms, they also mitigated problems that could arise from working too closely with individuals within a closed community (such as jealousy, competition, suspicion and so on). Although I admit that I was not always successful at striking a delicate balance between "active" participation in the community and "passive" participation in the lives of my participants, I negotiated my research carefully. They, in turn, saw it is valuable, as did other members of the community. They were very motivated by the idea that their stories would be written in *Huttrisch* and could be passed on to future generations.

Besides revealing the Hutterite's unique language and storytelling abilities, which have largely been neglected in the literature (Brednich, 1981:203), the life history provides a useful methodological framework for coming to understand Hutterian perceptions of the environment. Zack's and Elizabeth's perceptions of the socionatural

world were interpreted in relation to the key themes highlighted in their stories: childhood experiences of places, lessons growing up, and responsibilities of adulthood. Their vivid recollections of the coulees of their childhood (where they spent time either collecting berries, digging caves, or trapping animals) were key to connecting them to places and to nature. In such places they experienced their first interactions and relationships with other animals and plants.

Growing up they learned how to be attentive to the obligations of the community, particularly, how to organize, protect, and conserve the goods of the community, as reflected in the diverse skills they learned (from stooking and shepherding to raising goslings and a garden by hand). Aside from learning many important practical and locally oriented skills, they also learned lessons about valuing and protecting the goods of the community. For example, the most significant lesson Elizabeth learned while growing up was an expectation that she is to make no heavy demands on the goods of the community. One of the fundamental lessons Zack learned was always to strive to leave the goods of the community in as good of a state as when they were found. This disposition to care for the goods of the community was tested and sustained through the various jobs he was given throughout his youth.

Both Zack and Elizabeth's responsibilities and reflections as adults reinforce the lessons they learned growing up, and hint at an ethical attitude towards the environment.<sup>94</sup> Reflected, for example, in Elizabeth's home life, a tidy, pristine dwelling space, and her strong sense of gratitude towards food is the notion that nothing is expendable, and that everything is good and is to be honored and revered. Similarly, Zack's responsibilities as schoolteacher, gardener, and beekeeper reflect an attitude towards maintaining the fertility of the soil (by using, for instance, nitrogen-fixing legumes, or the application of manure) and socializing the children (by teaching them the Scriptures, how to work for the community, and how to be obedient).

The discussion in Chapter 6 widens this "ethical lens" by focussing on how their religious lives are brought to bear upon the key principles of the "Community of Goods:"

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<sup>94</sup> Returning to Lynn White's contention that traditional Christianity opposed an ethical attitude toward nature (see Chapter 1), Zack and Elizabeth's stories are reflective of a fundamental commitment to heeding the Biblical mandate for the responsible stewardship of nature.

self-sufficiency, simplicity of living, notions of the colony as eternal, and collective management of resources. Implicit in these religious beliefs, which have helped shape Zack and Elizabeth's ecological worldview, is the notion of stewardship. Using the broad definition of "steward" as one who is entrusted with the care of something, their stories reveal that their religious beliefs motivate them to be caretakers of the community (which includes the land and its protective resources). They do not feel it is their right to use, use up, and abuse the goods of God's Creation at will. In contrast, they embrace a practical theology that sees the goal of the "Community of Goods" as maintaining harmony among God, nature, family, and community.

For instance, Zack's views of the environment are that it belongs to God. Humans are merely its custodians. Such an attitude reflects his belief in the colony as something eternal, or something that God created to last. It serves as a directive for his actions in the garden (from applying green manure to learning about more efficient irrigation systems). Failure to fulfil his obligation as a faithful trustee of the gifts of God's Creation, (meaning here the garden and its productive soil) will inevitably bring God's judgement upon him, and thus upon the entire community (Nash, 1996). Elizabeth's religious beliefs, reveal a powerful sense that to be a good Christian or member of the "Community of Goods" [*Gmahschoftr*] is to live a life of simplicity. This also provides her with a directive for carrying out her daily communal and household duties (from salvaging the egg yolks of slaughtered chickens to turning old skirts into sunflower sacks).

The formative influence that the principles of the "Community of Goods" have had, and continue to have, on the way Zack and Elizabeth perceive of and act in their socionatural world tell us as much about their religious beliefs as the cultural contexts in which these beliefs are embedded, and in which their stories were told. As the German schoolteacher and colony gardener, Zack is more active in the reading of the Scriptures and in caring for the garden and the children than Elizabeth. This explains perhaps why he places more emphasis on husbandry and stewardship of the soil (and the children) than Elizabeth does. This also has to do, however, with the context in which Zack told me his

story. During the two summers in which we recorded his life history, tending the garden (which encompasses tending the children) was the primary focus of Zack's life.

Having helped raise her younger siblings and having had twelve children of her own, Elizabeth's close proximity to family, domestic duties, and the household, on the other hand, have significantly shaped her understanding of the importance of self-sufficiency and simplicity of living. Unlike Zack, who has had more opportunities to look outside of the colony for new ways of doing things, and new things to try. Elizabeth has had to rely almost exclusively on knowledge that has been passed down to her from her parents, relatives, and other Hutterites, and the goods she has been given.

Over the years she has learned, for example, how to help maintain the health of her family using medicinal remedies. These she learned from her experiences picking plant materials in the creeks with the other women, and especially from the midwives who cared for her mother and delivered nine of her children. Indicated in her stories about the trips she still makes with her grandchildren to visit midwives, or how her youngest daughter's health complications have been alleviated since she went back "on herbs," is her belief that medicinal plants have been and continue to be an effective means of maintaining the health of her family. It is within the context of experimenting and observing what other Hutterite women do that she has learned to be self-sufficient.

Growing up during the turbulent times of WWII, where she was inculcated with the religious past of her ancestors' persecution and suffering, Elizabeth developed clear ideas about austerity. From the beginning Elizabeth was also aware of my fascination with the divergent ways in which she was able to transform used goods into new ones. Whether it was the "Rhubarb Glo" (made from fermented rhubarb) she would use to scrub floors, or the old Sunday dresses [*Sontigskladr*] she would cut up to make children's caps [*Kappella*] – she was constantly pointing out signs of her thrifty home life. This seemed to be partly because she felt it was her Christian duty to pass on the virtues of austerity to me, but also because she knew that I was interested in learning about her thrifty ways.

Along with interpreting these life stories, and suggesting that they provide a framework for communicating and understanding the individual Hutterite's knowledge of

his/her environment and his/her beliefs concerning it, these stories also offer a way of reimagining the Hutterites place in Western Canada and, in general, their imprint on God's earth. Outsider views of Hutterites are colored by the ubiquity of modern farming technology and their large-scale farming operations. As Zack's and Elizabeth's stories convey, however, Hutterites are not just a homogenous group of monopolistic agriculturists who see earth as merely a portal before they are to become united with God. They are individuals with a close connection to community and the land. To come to a full understanding, then, of their local knowledge of the land and what it is that orients them in the physical world, to sidestep the stereotypic representations overshadowing the Hutterites' sense of place, is to hear the stories they tell, the songs they sing, the places they remember, and understand the experience and skills they have gained through years of observation, and the behavior and actions that follow.

While Zack's story of applying green manure to the garden, and Elizabeth's act of singing songs of praise while picking peas do not automatically make them stewards, "just as one swallow does not make a summer" (Welchman, 1999:415), but that, combined, their actions undoubtedly have an effect on the long-term survival of the prairie environment. Although the effects of their farming practices on the local environment has not been the central issue here, it is my belief that Hutterite life histories can be used as a springboard for future studies. While the former describes their knowledge and their culturally defined understandings of the environments, the latter could demonstrate how productive, sustainable, and equitable the outcome of their actions and behaviors are.

In order to examine the Hutterites' impress upon the land one must first gain an understanding of the cultural processes and the particular contexts in which individuals are moved to act and behave. For example, it not enough to quantify the amount of chemical fertilizers that Zack uses in his garden without understanding why he uses them or limits their use. Likewise, it is not enough to calculate the amount of locally grown food consumed by Elizabeth's family, without listening to the songs that accompany its preparation. While the ecological elements that emerge from these two life histories cannot be easily translated into quantifiable form, they are important for understanding

how we as “outsiders” perceive of the Hutterite’s role on the prairies, and how the Hutterites themselves perceive of their role on God’s earth.

Since the well-being of the prairie landscape will depend on how humans use it, the recording of life histories provides as essential window on how people understand and value it. The most appropriate question, is to what extent the natural landscape in the mind of a Hutterite is made *real* through the process of revealing and fully realizing their own perceptions and understanding of nature. For Zack and Elizabeth this process led them to question whether or not trappings of the modern world were bringing them closer to or further away from God, (thus closer and further away from nature), and to reflect on what is nearest, on what is so close that they did not otherwise see it or think it. In fact, it is so near that it did not occur to them to attend to it: their religious sense of place in the landscape around them.

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## APPENDIX A

### DIE LEBENSGESCHICHTE VON ZACK WURZ

#### ZACK

##### Als ein klanr Bub

Ich bin in *nineteen-fortyseven* gburn, in März. Well ich bin geburn in a grosser *family*. In unsr *family* sei alf Kinder gwesn. Ich bin dr älteste gwesn. Ich hob fünf Schwester, na mir sein fünf Bruder gwesn und sechs Schwester; a Bua iss gstorbn, der jüngste. Der ist neunundzwanzig Johr olt gwesn. Der ist nit ganz Gesund gwesn, der hot *epilepsy* ghobt, [und] iss gstorbn, Dey hobn manixsmol keine guitr Togn ghobt, obr anderweg sag mir, kannst sogn a *healthy family* blieben. Olla hobn gheiratet bis auf ein Dia ist da Heim gbliebn. Die sorgt my Votr und Muittr. Das ist bei Rocklake gwesn.

S: How did you get your name?

Z: My Muittr hot a Vetr ghobt (Vetr iss a Onkel) was sie olba Paul Vetr ghasn, Paul, obr sie hobn ihn a Spitznome gebn, Zech. Und dass ist ander von ihre oller besten Vetrn gwesn, hat sie mich ach so ghasn. Nach den hasse ich. Ei Ding muss ich sogn, heit denk ich von mein Name viel. Weil es sei nicht viel in die Gmane was so heissen, das hot mir olba viel geben zu ton, zu schoffn. Ich hob olba gdocht, es iss kein andrer Mensch auf der ander Gman, wu (*I don't care* wu) wos so heissen tuit wie ich. Es hot glossn ich bin dr einsige in der Welt von der Name und doss kann a *effect* hobn auf dir; auf mir hots ghobt. Obr wenn ich bin älter wordn, ich bemerkte ja ganz do oben in der colony der heist Zech und da in Montana ist ach a *boy*, er sei ach so; da bin ich *relieved* gwesn. Well, da bin ich das überkommen.

I *guess* manixsmol [du fehlst] ei Bissel *peer pressure*; du willst so sein wie die ondre olla. Weiterhinter hot's glossn, sie heissen entweder Jakob, oder Jusep, unter George, unter jetzt wenn du a ganze ondere Name host ghobt hots glossen du bist a schwarze Vogel unter die ganze Weisse. Obr die onder hobn da olla a Sputname ghobt

und i hob nier. Warum? Ich bin der einsige gwesn mit der Name. Wenn du fünf Johannes host, *well* musst a Sputname gebn dass du weisst Welch von einander ist. Bei mir hobn sie nier gbraucht, ich bin der einsige gwesn mit der Name.

S: Would you have preferred a nickname?

Z: A Sputname, na ich hob kein gwählt. Ich kann *remembern*, dass es mich manixsmol *gebothered* hot, obr heit ich gleichs den Name. Der sogts den Mensch a Mol und der vergisst des nie.

3

## GEDANKEN VON MEINER KINDHEIT

### Die klane Schul

Well ich muss in der Weg, man könnt sogn, *likeable* sei gwesn. Warum? Ich bin olba guit abgekummn mit ollr Leit. Ich hob mich guit getraut zu jedermann. *I don't know* vielleicht bin ich *friendly*, freindlich gwesn und vielleicht bin ich willig gwesn, zu hilfen. Obr ich bin olba guit obkummn, überhaupt mit meiner Schullehrern: der deutsche Schullehrer, der englische Schullehrer, und ach so wie ich kann gedenken in der klane Schul.

Die klane Schul ist Kindergarten. Wenn du zwei und a holbes Jahr olt bist fangst du an bis du sechs Jahre olt bist. Duit kann ich nachgdenkn af der Klansschulankela ihr Schuss sitzen und uns a Tschichtl verzählt. Heit lebt nuch eine von dey, die Revecca Basl heisst sie. Wenn ich aufenfohr zu Brant, da gehe ich olba hin, hin zu Revecca Basl und begriesse und driecke sie und sog ich, "My olte Klansschulankela!" Und dey meint's nah. Dos ist wos vor der in ihr Älter. Wos es gibt ihr a *lift* zu denke, dass ich nuch denke tue, doss ich a klein Kind bin gwesn, dass sey my Schulankela ist gwesn. Ich geh olba hin zu ihr und schüttelt sie e Bissele Schnapsl ein und auf dem Rants trinken mir und na ist sie lustig. Und ich tue es zu sey *aufcheeren*. Weist die oltn Leit die werdn ach Mal so traurig. So wenn du wos kannst guit bringen für den Mensch dann machst du den Mensch a guites Gfiehl.

S: Do you still remember the stories she used to tell you?

E: Oh jo, dey hot uns dr sebm verzählt, dey, die Revecca Basl, überhaupt hot uns olba verzählt von dre graue Anna, *Grey Annie*. Die graue Anna is a *imaginary being* gwesn. Weiter hinter in der Welt wird mann sogn a *witch*, obr dey hots ghossn die graue Anna. Und dey graue Anna ist gwesn zu die Kinder angstign. Jetzt wenn die Revecca Basl wird hobn, doss mir in der klane Schul gonz Stille sein und weiss, a Bissele Respekt hobn, dann hot sie uns von der graue Anna verzählt. "Da oben sitzt sie!" auf'rgezeigt auf der Tiela, daoben wo *storage* ist gwesn, wo der Kasten unter Zeich san (weiter hinter hobn die Häuser zwei levels ghobt). "Da oben ist sie!" dey lust. Wir seien Stille gwesn grad so wie die *mice*. Und hot sie uns Tschichtle verzählt von der *Cinderella* und von den, obr dos von der graue Anna, das vergesse ich nie. Und manixsmol hängt von der Tiela a *cobweb* was a Craca gmocht hot, a *spider*, der hängt oi. Na sogt sie, "Schau, da oben ist der graue Anna, siegst ihr Schwanz oi hängn?" Da hobn wir nur jo Angst ghobt und da hobn mir gesessn. Und wie dos Tschichtl ist gar gwesn - die hot olba genaht, stoppet, Stimpf geflegt oder so wos - und wenn sie gar ist gwesn sogt sie, "Jetzt sei gonz Stille!" und hot die Scharre gnomme und ist aufgestandn. "Ich werd dos Schwanz abschneidn!" Ist sie auf'r und hot dos Ding obgschnittn. Na hobn mir gedocht duit wird jetzt a *bunch* Blut aussrkummen. Dos vergesse ich nie von der.

So in der klane Schul, duit ist fein gwesn. Es sei drei Klaneschulankela olba; olla dritte Tog ist a ondr: die Maria Basl ist eine gwesn, die Sanna Basl eine, und die Revecca Basl. Die Revecca Basl hob ich es best geglichn. Vor der hobe ich nie Angst ghobt. Weisst du wenn man a klein Kind ist host du vor ein fremder Mensch a Bissele Angst.

Und von duit, nach der klane Schul, dann kommst du ausser sowie ich dos letzte mol gsogt hot, in der grosse Schul. Fangst du an zur Tiesch gehn in der Küche, mit die Kinder bei Tisch essen. Vor den, wenn du in der klane Schul gehst, esst in die klane Schul dein Frühsting, dein Mittag und nochden gehst du da Heim in Haus mit da Muitter, weil die Muitter unter die Sorger, dey fuitet dich.

Dos Essen . . . heizutog essen die Kinder schon viel anders, viel besser. Sowie ich geburen bin, ist die Gmah ghärig orm gwesn. Obr dr sebm, ist jederman orm gwesn. Noch die *Dirty Thirties* wie monn sogt, ie hots long gnommn bis die Leit hobn angefangen besser ob sein. Sowie ich geburn bin, in forty-seven, ist schon besser Zeiten gwesn, obr

es iss nur holbr so viel gessen wie mir Heit tiem. Wenn du bei Nachtblink host du nur a Stückel Brot ghobt mit Butter drauf und Syrup und vielleicht a klein Stieckel Wurst. Das ist der Nachtblink gwesn.

Obr mr sei nie hungrig gonge schlofen. Wenn mr bei schlofen, das ist die Zeit gwesn den wir olba geglichen hobn. Und da seien mir olla in ein Bett und die gonze Kinder hobm in ein grosser *room* gschloffen - drei grosse Bett untr nuch a Schlofbonk. Und ich hob zommngschlofen mit my ältesten Brüder, die zweite Schwester in a ondr Bett duit, und die kleine Kinder in der Schlofbonk.

### **Tschichtl verzaehn**

Und da hobn mir olba ghofft das der Votr uns a Tschichtl verzählt voren einschloffn. Und ein Geschichtl wos ich olba erholtn hob, das hat er uns oft verzählt, na wenn der Winter lang ist na sei viel Nächter zu Tschichtl verzähl'n und ist oft das gleicher Tschichtl. Und wenn ich bin älter wordn, hob ich des Tschichtl dey Kinder verzählt. *Anyway*, des Tschichtl, kennst du das Tschichtl von den Mandel wos Schof gholtn hot oben auf dem Berg wo die Schofhirde sa gwesn? Nemmt sie auf, aufen gehn auf den Berg die Schof *watchin*, dass der Wolf sey nit umbringn tuit unter die Coyotze. Und das hobn mir guit verstanden.

Warum? Wie ich a Mandel bin gwesn ist mein Votr a Schofmensch gwesn. Der ist bei die Schof gwesn und i hob ihn manixsmol gholfn, die Schof holten bei Tog, draus *watchin*'. Und hob ich guit verstanden wie du des orbeitn tuit, a Schofholter sein. Manixmol iss a Tog über in nächste Tog dann bist du *bored*. Und tust du das Mandel gwesn und is er a Tag gstondn unter von Berg und schaut oi auf dr Stodt. Na jo wollte er könne a *Trick* spielen af seyn. Hot er angfangen schreie, "Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!" hin und her glaufn und "Auf'r kummst auf'r tuts der Wolf do!" Sei sie mol oller aufkumme: ander hots Hauer erwischt, ondr a *rake*, der ondr a Besen, und ondre a *axe*; wen i Wolf umbringen. Wie sie obn sei gwesn auf der Berge, auf der Riggele, kummen sie auf'r, "Wo ist der Wolf?" Hot er glocht, "Da ist kandr!" "Du Taugenichts, warum host du da gschrie?" "Ich hob kola gwollt Sposs hobn; ich will [sie] *watchin* auf'r kummn do." Hobn sie gnomn und ihn guit gschüttel, "Und nimmer tue du dos!" Na ja, dann sind sie eu gongen wieder und oh der stand und locht sich eins vor. Jo es dauert nichts, a ungefähr

a Stunde nachden, schauge auf laufen da mol richtig rum und er schaut: wirklick iss a Wolf unter die Schoff. Na hot er eu gschrien, sie sulln auf'rkummn obr dey sei nit auf'rgongn. "Der liegt uns wieder vor der Taugenichts," sogn sie. Und der arme Bua ist beinah in Zweifel kumme; der Wolf hot so und so viel Schof umgebracht.

Wie er Heim gongen ist af der Nacht hot er gweint, "Warum seid ihr nit auf'rkummn?" Drum hot mein Voter prowiert verzähln mit den Gschichte: "Einen Liegner glaubt man nicht, wenn er gleich die Warheit spricht." "Sei olba ehrlich."

Jo dos Tschichtl hobe ich meine Geschwister oft verzählt auf der Nocht. Und hobn sie olba gsogt: "Und nit erzählen uns von Wolf heit, doss hobn mir schon oft gehört." Well, da hobe ich onderscht anfonge, von ein onder Weg, bis ich wieder mol kumm hintr auf Wolf! Wolf! Wolf! [und] bis sie gschrien hobn, "Voter, komm ein über den!"

### Die Woods

Obr eins von die *fondesten memories* gwesn wos ich hob ist vo Hof a drei viertel *mile* ob, ist ach wos mir hobn "die woods" gehassen. Duit san Bamme gwesn und es lauft a grosser *ditch* durch a *canal*. Und duit in der Niedung hobn angefangen *willows* wochse. Und wie ich a Mandel bin gwesn seien schon gehärrig huche Bamme gwesn, oh *about* vier Ocker gwesn auf Wadland (wo die Kieh san gwesn). Duit hobn mir uns aufgeholt in dey Bamme. Duit seien mir der Robin Hood gwesn. Kennst du die Gschichten von Robin Hood? Duit hobn mir *bow and arrows* gmocht. Die hobn mir nit gedärft hobn, weisst du, "Mann därfte nit schiessen." Und duit hobn mir uns *treehouses* gmocht.

Und ein Ding, oh das eine Ding *remembere* ich. Weiss du wie das Krieg ist gwesn in Korea? *The Korean war* - well ich bin in *forty-seven* geboren - es musst about in 1955 sei gwesn. Na hots olba gheissn da wird a Weltkrieg. Es wird a Weltkrieg entstehen aus der *Korean war* und da wird die Kriegsleit kummen und wird uns dado wegfiere. Mir hobn olba gedocht . . . weisst du die Gschichtsbiechel verzählt wie die Kriegsleit sei kummn und die Hof beraubt, die Kinder weggefiert und die Mütter und die Voter oft in Gefängnis geton. Und hobn mir Ongst ghobt, dass etwas [wie dos] passieren wird und werden mir uns verstecken wenn die Kriegsleit [wäd] kumme. Na unten in dey *woods* hobn mir *caves* gmocht, tiefer *caves* gegroben, a Doch übergeton und unten in die *caves*

hobn mir noch Gstellele eingmocht. Und duit hobn mir noch von der Heim Stoff aufgenommen. A Uhre auf'rgnommen, und hobn mir Geschirre auf'rgnommen, a paar Hähne und von der Kuchel a paar Tiegel eingekuchte Mädal, hobn Kratzawitz auf'r, olles *auf'rgestored*. Wenn die Kriegsleit da kumme, werden mir auf'r und unter in die *cave* und mir hobn jetzt a Tiedel (Tür) gmocht und wenn dey sei gwesn hobn wir *turf*, weisst, grad sowie *lawn* drüber gton. Und wann die Kriegsleit werden übergehen und nit wissen, dass da unten wos ist. So hobn mir gedocht, duit werden mir uns verstecken wenn die Kriegsleit wäd kummen. Jo, kola die Kinder passen darein.

Wir<sup>a</sup> hobn nichts gewisst von Krieg *or how long it could last*. Krieg ist nit übrig in der holben Tog. Und duit werden mir bald, wasst dos Essen und doss olles onderscht wär bald verzehrt. Ober guit genug, duit hobn mir uns verweilt in dey *woods*. So wenn ich hinter denke auf dey Johren von *about* wenn ich sechs Johr bin olt gwesn bis ich zu Leit bin kummen mit fünfzehner Johr olt, unten in die *woods*, duit hobn mir viel Zeit zugebracht. Jeder Bamm hot obn san Name ghobt. Andr ist der Wissele Bamm gwesn.

### Traepn

Im Winter hobn mir *getraeped*. Wir hobn Hose gefangen und Wissele. Ich kann noch gedenken, weisst im Herbst wie die Hosen anfangen weiss werden? In Sommer sei sie braun und da *blindin* sie eine mit die braune Erde; im Winter sei sie weiss. Jetzt wenn sie weiss werd da sei sie *prime*, dann kannst du ableden und die Haut verkaufen. So hobn mir gekennt a Bissele eignütziges Geld mochn bei Hose verkauf. Mir hobn sie nach der *Hudson Bay Fur Company* geschickt nach Edmonton - jo ganz heimlich, mir müssen heimlich zugehn.

Und da sei Wissele ach gwesn. Die hobn ach angefangen *about* November. Hot ondere a Wissele gsehn, die ist schon weiss, hobn mir angefangen Wissele *trappin*. Und duit in dey *woods* ist a Bamm gwesn, dr Wissele Bamm. Zu a Wissele fonge host du a klan Haisl gmocht mit Stanr und host du *bait* einegeton und host du der *trap* hingeton. Noh ist dos bei der *trap* hängengbliebn mit sei Fuiss. Mir sind oller Tog auf'rgelaufen in die *woods* unsr *traps checken* – beihnah nier nichts gefongen, obr mir seien beschäftigt gwesn. Veleicht hobn mir fünf Hosen gefangen in Winter - die seien *about fifty cents* gwesn- und vielleicht hobn mir ei Wissele gefangen, dos hot, wonn es guit abgledet iss

gwesn, vielleicht drei *dollar* gebracht. Und wenn du *really lucky* bist gwesn, host du ein Mink gfongen. Das ist gwesn wie ein *lottery* gewinnen - der hot *about* zwanzig *dollar* gebracht. Jo ich hob zwei gefongen in meiner ganze *history*. Vielleicht fünf [Hosen] oller Johr.

Oh Rotsen, muskrats, dey sei leicht gwesn zu fangen. Seine *habitat*: die leben unter Wosser, in der *cattails* in dr *ditch* untr in dr *lake*. Mir hobn a grosser *lake* ghobt, es ist a *slough* gwesn. Und duit sein in dey *cattails* hobn die Rotsen sich a Haufen mochn von der *cattails* und da drinne ist a Nest. Die beste Zeit gwesn den fangen ist wann Eis ist gwesn. Hot dr Rots niendisht onderscht hingekennt als wie kola ein in den Haufen wos er gmocht hot und mir hoben dos aufgegoben. Und der Rots, der ist oi aus'r Haus unter Eis weggeschwommen. Obr er kann nit long wegbleiben weil er kummt aus'r Luf so hobn mir das *trap* einegeton und hobn wieder por Stieckene über und wieder zugmocht. Da hots gedocht ist olles gut, schwimmt er wieder hinter, krackelt eine und "poops" ist er bei sein *paw* gfongen, bei sei Fuss. Du musst schnell hin; wenn du zu long wartest, hot er sich obgfressen - in seiner Ongst hot er sich gonz mit die Zähnt obgfressen. So host du dey Rotsen *traps* müsst *checkin* oller Stund *for sure*, wann nit, hot er sich obgfressen, ist weg. Dos ist zu kaltherzig und *cruel*. Mir hobn a Mol a gfonge dr hot nur zwa Fiessel ghobt; die onder zwei hot er schon gfressen ghobt und die onder sei schon zughalt gwesn wieder. Das ist unbaumherzig gwesn, die arme Rotsen, *really*.

Oh jo, duit wu dey Rotsen san gwesn, sa viel *cattails*. Ja, wenn ich heit auf'rfohr zu Rocklake, a grossr lake wos olba ist gwesn, das ist olles *gedrained* und schön *glevelt* und hintergefüllt. Duit steht heut a schöner Watzfeld (Weizenfelder oder Gerscht). So dos ei Ding wos ich *missen* tue . . . duit sei, doss ist olba voll gwesn mit 'Böse sendr *corn*' - *cattails* hobn mr geheissen "Böse sendr *corn*." Weisst du wos der Böse ist? *The evil spirits*, der Teifel. Kennst *cattails*? Und wenn du stehst und dey reibst und schlugst dey zommen, na tiem a *bunch* Dinger wegblosen. Da sogn mir olba, "Mr hobn die Böse zörnig gmocht!" und hobn die *corn* zommgschlogn.

Oh mir sein Mandele gwesn. *Well* in der Friehe, um siebene ist Friehestück. Voren Friehestück seien mr schon oi glufen, die *traps checkin* - um sechs aufgstonden und oi glufen weil die Leit bei Essen gwesn sein. Nach Friehestückn ist deitsche Schul a Stund

und na ist a holber Stund *recess* bis die englische Schul anfang; mir luften *in between*. Und auf Mittog ist ach a Stund gwesn. Manixsmol sind mir nit zu Tisch gonge, sind eingelufen in die *woods*, schaugn ob mr wos gfrongen hobn. Und sein mir olba nach der deutsche Schul auf der Nocht (das ist von holber fünfer bis um holber sechser). Im Winter ist um holba sechser Gebet und mir olla miessn bei Gebet san, [obr] mr hobn a guiter Stunde Zeit ghobt uft noch der Nochtblink. So dey Zeiten sei gwesn wo du dos gekennt host [in die *woods* gehn]. Und die Mwitter ist fruh gwesn wenn mir duit sein. Kannst du gdenken alf Kinder ie Haus auf a Mol ist nit sehr Stille. Dey sei froh gwesn wenn sie hobn gseh<sup>a</sup>n uns oi glufen. Der Voter iss ach [fruh], ach wie wenn er gsogt [hot] "Das därf nit trappen. Eigenutz ist in der Gmeine ihr verderben!" Obr der hot gwisst, doss mir nit viel werd fonge und nit viel Geld werden hobn. *Well*, wie mir oft gsogt hob, "*Well, we'll choose the lesser of two evils.*" So reich seien mir nit gwordn, obr mon sei sehr beschafftigt gwesn und du lernst ach viel von dos.

*Well in a religious sense* die wilden Tieren *san* grad so wie die *pests*. Dey musst du aufräume, musst du wegraumen und du musst sey ach unterholtn, doss sie nit überhond nehmen tiem. Warum? A guiter Hirt muss sei Herd bewohrden von die reissende Tieren, nit? So in der Bibel hot der David, der König David, wie er Schoffholter ist gwesn, a Mol a Löb umgebracht (a Löb, a *lion*) wie er sein Voter sein Schoff will umbringe. Und dos nächse Mol iss a Bär kumme ist er hin mit sei Steckn (Stock) und hot er der Bär weggetriebn und hot er den tot gschlogn. So doss ghört hin, doss du miesst dein Stoff ach so unterholtn.

Und die Rotsen, wos dey gton hobn wenn du a *dom* (dam) host ghobt, dey hobn so viel Lecher einegegrob, doss sie der *dom* zu os gmocht. Weisst du der *dom actually* wo dey lebn ist a *pond* gwesn wo die Gons und Anten zu drauf schwimme. Und nebm Gonsstohl, doss ist e Bissele aufgedykt gwesn zu's drin holtn und die Rotsen hobn es Lecher eingmocht. *Well* die Rotsen musst du fange, dey mochn dey *bank* zu os und da kommt dos Wosser durch. Und die Wissele, wann holt zu viel von dey san, dey kumme ein [in] die Hähnestohl und bringen deine Hähne um.

Die Hosen, *actually* wos die Hosen tiem, doss hobe ich erst nochher ausgefunden als ich bin Gärtner gwordn, dass die Hosen san in Goatn bei die Fruchtbamblen. Die

Früchtbambeln hobn a siesser *skin*, die fressen sie ob und wenn dey obgfressn ist geht dein Baum tot. Wie ich Gärtner bin wordn bei Rocklake hob ich zehen Äpfelbamble gsetzt und dey sei schön gewochsn. Die erschten Winter der Goatn ist gonz voll gwesn mit Hosen duit. Du host gekennt aussergehn im Winter und fünfzig Hosen auserjagen. Sey hobn my *bark* gonz ausenrund es gefressn bis ich hob a *snowfence* runter jeden Bamm gton. Ausserden, du musst die Hose fongen; denweg host du dich *protected* von deine *pests*. Und ach die Haut ist a *dollar* untr fünfzig *cents* wert [*laughing*]. Ist dos nit ach a Ursach?

Weiter hinter wann du host gewullt a warmer Pelz mochn zu in Winter anlegn, host du da obn a feiner Kragn dran getan. A coyotze Fell ist dos olla Besta gwesn. So es ist wie der Himmelvoter, Gott, die Menschen aus der Goatn Eden aussergetriebrn hot, von wos hot er sein Gwond gmocht? Er mochte sie Rücken von Ziegenfellen und von die wilden Tieren seine Haut. So man könnet sogn, wenn du a Schoff host schlochtet und ablade und die Haut brauchn zu der Gwond mochn, a worme Rock. Dos ist *why* Gott *made these animals: for clothing* oder für wos man sich braucht.

Wos *Christianity* dir lerne tuit von *wildlife* ist, "Quäle nie ein Tier zum Scherz, denn es fühlt wie du den Schmerz." Nit *torturn*! Wenn du wärst erschiessen untr schlochtn wos du gebraucht host oder willst essen dos ist *justifiable*, obr nit mutwillige Dinge mörder untr quälen. Dos ist wos *Christianity* lerne tuit. Anderweg, zu wos tiem mir die Kiehe ziegle, unter die Schwein? Mir denken auf der Kraft der Wurst wos sie werd'n mochn, und auf der guita Gerschtsuppen untr auf dre *beef steak*.

### **Ponies, Pike Fisch, und Cricknlaufen**

Und wie ich bin älter worden, ich bin in Gorten gonge. *See*, die Mandele gehen olba miten Gärtner/Schullehrer olba in Garten, helfen in Garten. [*A grandchild asks if Elizabeth is home and Zack answers*, "Nein, die ist i Goatn honey, klaubt grod Vaglischan"]. Die *teenagers* gehn zu die Jobs, zu Schwein - komm drauf wie viel es sei. *Let's say* wie ich zu Leit gkummen hobn mir dreizig Buabn ghobt. Da sei viel. Da sei suligr wo schon bei Leit sein obr noch kei Job hobn. Dey muiss der Weinsedl ollertoge Orbeit geben.

Im Winter tuist du die Buabn hinschicken zu die Jobs. Da ist Orbeit noch von gonze Winter: sowie Schwein Mensch kann a fünfer helfen, a Hähne Mensch kann a vier helfen die Ale ausnehme, und zur Kiehe melichen, host duit noh ach a *boy* hingshickt. Jetzt weil die duit sei im Winter, dann gehn die Mandele in die Schule olba und nit zu die Jobs. Obr in Friebling, doss hobn die Mandele nier gekennt erworten, wann die Leit weggehn von die Jobs. Da seien die Mandele, die ältere Mandele: zwei zu Schwein gton, zwei zur Kiehe, zwei zu Hühne Mensch.

So ich hob miesst in Garten gehn bis ich zwölf Johre bin olt gwesn und dann ist mein Ränd kummen und dann bin ich zur Kiehe kummen. Und doss ist die oller beste Job gwesn. Duit sei ponies gwesn zu reiten. Bei Roos is a pony gwesen, und bei Schoff, da ist ach a pony gwesn obr zur Kiehe hot *everybody* gwählt - duit seien die ponies gwesn zu reiten. So mir hot's geglieckt, ich bin zur Kiehe kumme. Na sein mir ponies geritten. Ich hob drei ponies gebruchen. Ander hot my favorite, und doss ist ach der toughest gwesn, der hot "Red" gheissen. Das ist a feiner pony gwesn. Der ondr hot "Wiesskopf" gheissen (der hot a weisser Kopf ghobt) und der onder ist der "Pinto" gwesn. Die drei san e Bissel wild gwesn. I bin *sure* ich bin dr letzte gwesn, der a poor Roos hot. Noh dann hobn mr Injine ghobt.

Wenn ich hinterdenke, könnt mon sogen, doss ist eins von die *highlights* gwesn von meine Mandel Tog – bei Kiehe, pony reiten, ponies lernen (dos ist a challenge gwesn). Mit dey seien mir überoll hingeritten. Dos ist grad so gwesn wenn du heit a cor hast. Von der colony bis die Brücke, (dey in *about* 1955 gbaut ist) duit sein mir oi geritten mit die Ponies. Der wos bei Roos ist gwesn hot a pony ghobt, der wos bei Schoff ist gwesn a Pony ghobt, der wos bei Kiehe ist gwesn a Pony ghobt. Und bei die Kiehe sei zwei Ponies gwesn. So hob ich olba noch gekennt die eine Pony geben. So duit wird sie auf die ponies aufgewachsen.

Duit ist die *Chin Lake*. Sie lauft suti rund. Do ist die colony und duit weit so wiederum lauft die *lake*. Do ist die Brücke, und daher ist a *mile* zu der *Chin Lake*. Die *Chin Lake* ist brat und do ist about ander holb *mile* gwesn. So verläng der *lake* doda ist viel viergonge wo mir Zeit gspendet hobn. Grod do von der *lake* sei mir oi glufen bode [*whispering*]. Und dey wos ponies hobn ghobt sei erst unter. Die onder sei oi glufen eine

*mile*. Jo, *the lake* hat viel *bays* ghobt, weisst, so *inlets*? Und dos sei die Platz gwesn zu fischen. In dr Chin san Fisch gwesn: *pike* und *whitefish*. Jetzt dey *bays* wo mir gbodet hobn, dos ist der Erschte Bay gwesn, und run um a Riggele ist der Zwatte Bay gwesn, und dann ist der Dritte Bay gwesn, duit hom olba die grosse *pike* fange, weil es tief [iss] gwesn, weil die ander sei *flat* gwesn. So wenn du bist gonge fischen bist du olba aufgonge zu Erschten Bay und bist du verläng runter gongen von ei bay zu onder bist du a Fisch gfongen host. Manixsmol host du gor kei Fisch gfonge.

Die Englischa Leit san olba duit kummn und hobn ach gefischt verläng und san mir eu gonge und mir hobn gschaut mit grosse Augen, [und] die Zunge ist aussrghonge. So hobn mir uns gsehnt da a *fishing reel* zu hobn, die *rod*, obr mir hobn dey nier erkennt *affordin*. Dr sebm san mir olla Orm gwesn, kola die englischa Leit nit. Und mir hobn Zillela gmocht. A Zillela ist a klei Ding grad sowie a Schlitten. Und wann du das anklengen tuist mit a diener Schnurr, na kannst du verlänga Wasser gehen und das Zillela zieht sich eine, und du gehst verläng ziegst und wos dos Zillela tuit ist olba Bissele auf der *angle* und wenn du einwärts ziegst. Hinter der Zillela a *hook* fest ghobt, a *spoon* ghobt (es lauft a Millele rund mit drei Haken hinter fest) und das lusst zu die Fisch a Fischella. Dann sei mir gongen verläng der Wosser, auf der *shore*, und hobn die Zillela gezogn. Drum sein mir von ei bay hoch gonge zu Zweiten bay und zu verläng gong zu Dritten bay – dass sie kann stiller stehen. Und wann du bist gonge hast du gspiert wie der *hook* drinne ‘*spoonin*’ tuit, weisst, du bemerkst so wie es *vibratin* tuit. Und was du gewartet host ist auf der *Rix*. Als er a Rix geben hot, hot der Fisch gebiesse. Now bist du mol auf der Riggele aufrgelufn, das Zillela ausserziehen, und des ausserkummn hot der Fisch hintergezappelt. Denweg hobn mir noh die Fisch gefangen. Obr dos mant laufn hin und her verläng und wenn du duit bist host du kola a Schwung gebn, denweg host du dich umgedraht und bist du wieder hintergonge. Denweg hobn mir Meilen gmocht. Mir seien nier *bored* gwesn, entweder sei’s *kites* gwesn, oder, *stilts*, oder *bow and arrows* untr Zillela. Heit hob ich a *fishing rod* wenn ich wo tat fishin, obr wie ich bin aufgewachsen hob ich das fishin’ vergessen. Ich hobe ach noch nier Zeit ghobt zu ton.

Und bei der *lake* hobn mir a ‘zwa Gallon’ ghobt, a zwa gallonig’s Emerla. Weisst, dos ist olba Roger’s Golden Syrup drinne gwesn in der gallonig Emerla mit der Deckel

drauf. Well, dey Emerla, dey mit a feine Habbela drauf ghobt, dey host du fr viel Stoff gebraucht: dey host du gebraucht zu Fisch broten und du host dey gebraucht zu cricknlaufen - zu Weigsele klaubn untr Junipern.

Da bei Chin Lake sei richtige *coulees* und Bergen, und duit sei Waldle gwesn. Duit sei Junipern gwesn und Weigsele. Und noch ein Ding wos du host miesst aufpossen iss Brennisol. Brennisol, dos ist *poison ivy*. Wenn du in der *creek* bist gonge (mir hobn gsogt in der *creek* wenn mir san gonge und Weigsele klaubm untr Junipern), die Waldle sei olba die "*creeken*" gwesn, und miesst du *watchin*, dass du nit zu dey kommen tuist *cause* dey<sup>3</sup> hobn su gebrennt; die Fiesse gonz rot gwesn und gschwulln und hot die Mwitter auf der Nocht miesst rubbing drauf ton . . . wos war noch für Dinge gwesn?

Die Waldele verläng doda hobn ach Nomen ghobt. Dos Erschte ist, *well*, do ist a Zaun gwesn; auf der Seit Zaun her untr Lond ist kei Wold mehr gwesn und wos grad drin im Zaun ist dos Erschte Wold. Dos Erschte Wold hot Junipern ghobt, dos Zwatte Wold hot a paar Junipern ghobt obr viel Weigsele, und da ist dos Dritte Wold gwesn, dos hot grosse Weigsele ghobt. Und da ist nuch eins gwesn, dahin weiter ist die *ditch* glufen. Jetzt duit ist a Wold gwesn, doss hot nier nemmt gewisst, dass duit a Waldl ist.

My Taurus Vetr, das ist der Schoff Mensch gwesn, der hot viel Zeit ghobt und der ist oft Heim kumn mit feine Weigsele und mr können ih nier ausreden wo er hot dey hergnommen. Bei Erschten, bei Zweiten und bei der Dritten ach nit . . . [obr] der findet olba viel Weigsele. Hobn mir ih a Mol *gwascht*, hobn mir gsehn der kommt von do ehel hinter verläng. Duit iss nu a sort Bergen, die *ditch* lauft duit. San mr duit hin und hobn duit a Waldl gfunden wos *viel* Weigsele ghobt hot. So, wie wän mir dos Waldl heissen? Hobn mir gsogt die Taurusa Wold duit. Taurus ist *Darius*. Es kommt von *Darius* sowie my Vetr. Und hobn mir sie Taurusa Waldle ghassn. So mir hobn olba gekennt reden von der Plotz: bei 'Erschten Wold', unter bei 'Zweiten Wold,' oder bei 'Dritten,' untr über bei 'Taurusa Wold' und doss olles ist auf den Weg auf zu der [Tabor] bridge.

## ZU LEIT KUMMN

### Apprenticeship

Und noh iss weitergonge, erst bin ich zu Kiehe kumme, gholfen bei Kiehe melichen. Und als ich älter bin wordn and na hob ich a Injine gkriegt. Wirst du sechen wie Stulz ich bin gwesn wann ich my erschten Injine ghobt hot. Und vo duit un hob ich a *backhoe* gkriegt. Wann was iss zu grobn dos iss my job gwesn: die Haisr ibrgmocht, hob ich die gonze Keller ausgegrobn mit dr *backhoe*, die Erde auf dr *truk* gton und weggefiert. Untr mer hobn a *waterline* neu eineton. Und wann olles iss fertig gwesn hob ich a *map* gmocht wo olles iss, wo die *waterlines* übroll gehn, die *gaslines*, die *powerlines*, olles untr dr Erden gwesn. So denweg iss es von Jugend auf du kummst von andr job auf dr ander und olla Mol lernst du wos.

So wann du älter wirst du Wirt untr Prediger, und noh miesst du a Wissenschaft hobn untr a Gefiehl hobn von dr gonze Orbeiten. Warum? Iss es dei Aufgob die Junge sogn wie sie ton sulln - *apprenticeship*. Jeder iss unter (mr sogn auf englisch *apprenticeship*) duch seine Jugend - sogn mr lern dos und dos. Und noh sowie in Wintr bin ich bei olla von die Jobs gwesn, die jobs bei die Viech: ei Johr bei Schwein gwesn, dos nächsten Wintr bei die Schof, die nächsten Winter bie die Hähne (Ale ausnomme), die ondr Wintr drauss bei Kolbviech auf dr Steppe. Und suti geht's rum su jeden Bua, tut er i Wintr durch ei von die Jobleits helfen und denweg lernt er sich die gonze Sochen. Wann er nuch älter wäd und er kummt af dr Job drauf, wos fr ihn iss zu nochschaugn, sowie zum Beispiel wenn er Hähnermensch wäd hot er scho a *idea* wie man mit Hähner umgehn tuit, untr in dr Schmitten, untr in dr Werkstubm. Kola bei Schullehrer, duit gebn sie nier kein *help*. Wann man Schullehrer wäd, noh musst du a neuer Onfong, obr doss lernt sich ach.

### Orbeit

Jo, Orbeit. Es sog's dr Weg wos dr Himmlvotr gmocht hot firen Mensch zu es Lebn *enjoyin* iss duch seine Orbeit. *Well* wann du wos onfongen tuist und dos glickt er, noh iss kei bessre *feeling* als wie wisse du host wos onfongen und dos kennest du es

ausfiehden und dos iss guit *ausgeturnt* nit? Dos iss die gräste *reward* wos iss. So Orbeit iss eins von die besten Dinge a Mensch erlebt.

S: *What was your favorite job?*

E: Well, ich können nit sogn dos ich eins besser glichn als dos ondr. Ich hob oller geglichen zu dr Zeit. I hob a *backhoe* ghobt, a Injine, i hob a *combine* ghobt, i hob a *swather* ghobt, i hob a *baler* ghobt, ich hob dey olla ghobt und hob sey olla *enjoyed*. Wovon hetzt *my most favorite* war das wass ich nit. Wann du mr hetzt gefrogt dreizig Johr hintr wofir a Job i wullet hobn, ich hät's sie nit gekennt sogn wovon i wulle. Obr in dr Gmane iss so, du brauchst keine erwäldn, es wird dr a Job gebn. Und iss maniglich dey Job wos *the next in line* ist trifft dir, wasst, es geht e Bissel nach dr Ränd? Somit ich wass nit wovon ich mr erwählt hät. Und noh bin ich Schullehrer gwordn und hetzt denke ich dos iss die bester Job.

## **DIE VERPFLICHTUNG DES ERWACHSENEN**

### **Die Kinder lernen**

*My* Orbeit do in der Gman iss Schullehrer. Dos ist my hächste, die notwendigste, Aufgob *really*. So a Schullehrer, der wos sich bemiehet die Kinder zu unterrichten, beide sei zeitligen untr ach geistlichen. Die zeitlign, mit die Lebenswesen, wasst, suwie andr gegen ondr sein soll, ein Mensch gegen ondr. Und olles muss gelernt werden, miess ach lernen orbeiten, Gehorsamsein fulgen, wie mr sog, die Vorsteher. Die Vorsteher sein für die Kinder, dr Schullehrer, dr Voter, die Mwitter, die Eltern in Sonderheit. Und dos kommt na weiterhin wann sie älter werden ach die Prediger und die Weinsedl, dey wos seyn die Orbeit geben tuit. So von Jugend auf sull sie gelernt sein unterton sein, fulgn. Und dos sull nit gezwunge sein. Dos ist sein weil du einsehe tuist dos Ordnung müss sein: "*Halte Ordnung über Sie, Ordnung spart dir Zeit und Mühe,*" sogt unsr Sprichwort.

Es ist nit onderscht dos drauss in dr Welt wann Kinder zomm in der Schul gehn, dann lernen sie sich wie mann sog '*socializin*', ney? Dos gleicha Ding. Und dos olles muss man ihn ach und mer selber vorzustellen und Lehr draus nehmn, die mer die Biblischen Gshichten nehmen.

Weiss du die Gschichte was mer a mol do vorglesn hobn? Dey sei sehr lehrreiche Erzählungen, und duch dey lerne mer von viel Gottesmänners was gwesn sein in der Bibel sowie der Abraham, Issaac, Jacob, Moses, der Josep, untr David, Daniel. Dos sei kola a porr von seyn, da sei viel mehr. Dey olla hobn mit sendr *trubbl* zomm gelebt weil sie an Gott glaubten und ihn gefürchtet hobn. Hobn sie uns schöner *exempl* hinterlosse. Und wir sehen ach weil sie gfulget hobn, trei und ehrlich sei gwesn, hot Gott der Herr sie ach gesegnet und iss seine gonzes Leben guit gonge weil sie Gott treu gwesn sein. Jetzt wann du dey sehen tuist von dey, na kannst du fiernehmen, *well*, so will ich ach sein, dann werd<sup>3</sup> Gott ach mit mer zufriedn san.

In Gegenteil, hobn mr obr ach viel *exempl* aus'r Schrift vo die Unartigen, die was nit gefulget hobn in der Bibel. Zu merkn ist der Cain gwesn, der sein Bruider ermordet. Der Absalon, der was sie ein Aufruhr gmocht hot gegen sei Voter, der will ihn abschlogn von Königreich und er König werden. Der Isau, mer lernen von der geitzigen Gehasse, und von Ananias, und von der neidischen Saul. Die olla zeigen uns den Kontrast on gegen dey was Gott gfulget hobm und dey was nit hobm. Und noh sehn mer wie seyn sei gangn ist. Viel von seyn sei nit a Mol olt gwordn. Gott hot sie schon gestrofft, hot sie schon weggnohme erst in der Jugend. Drum lernen mr dey Biblischen Geschichten, wo ach unsre Glauben untr unsr Religion herkumme tuit. Und so miessten mer die Kinder ach lerne unsre hutterische Religion sowie die Ordnungen und die Sitten, (wos zu lerne und sie bekannt zu mochn damit) die Gmane ihre Gieter. [Und miessten mir sie lernen] wie sey mit Fleiss nachsegen werden unt erholten, dos nichts zu schoden gehen tuit in der Werkstaat sowie in die *shops* verlängt, auf'r Felde, in Goatn, in dr Kuchl, in dr Schul, überoll sowie ach bei Viech, bei die Schwein, Kiehe und dos olles und ach in Getreide aufen Felder. Dos muss olles die Kinder glernt werden von Jugend auf, bis sie miessen untr solltn sorgen af ihn; nicht weil's, gehn mer sogn, weil es die Gman ghört, weil es dir selbr gehört. Jedr ist selbr die Gmane, ney?

### **Dos hot mein Schullehrer glernt**

Wie ich a Mandel bin gwesn, klan bin gwesn, mir hobn a guitn Schullehrer ghobt. Der ist bei finfundzwonzig Jahr Schullehrer gwesn. Der hot ziemlich angefangen wie ich hob angefangen in der deutsche Schul gehn. Da wird man, sogn wann man 6 Jahr ist,

dann kommt man aus der klane Schul ausser und einfach in der Grosse Schul gehen, in der deutsche Schul mir sogn. Und der hot uns guit nachgeschaut. Der ist mir sehr guit gwesn, weil ich hob leicht glernt. I hob nie kein *problem* geben mit Faulsein sowie mit lernen. Und ich bin mit ihm guit abkumn. Oft ist a Kind ach grossmaulig mit sei Lehrer; er will klieger sein wie der Lehrer. Das hob ich nier geton. Warum? Ist nit dos ich Angst ghobt vor ihn, obr [weil] ich hob ihn, man sogt, *respected*. Und dos hat mich weit gebracht mit ihm. [*The dinner buzzer sounds and Zack says, "Das Kinder Essen"*].

Ich bemerk's heit, i hob da Kinder wos mit mir Orbeit tiem [und ] es sei rechter bäs Geistr<sup>3</sup> manixsmol - Geisstr, wenn man sogn tuit. Obr wann sie runtum mir kumme und mit mir orbeitn tiem, sei sie ziemlich mannierlich und sie sei behilflick. Wie kannst du gegen so a Kind bäs gesinnet sein? Verstehst? Wie konnst du schlechte Gedonken hobn über so a Kind? Wenn er a Tauganix ist gwesn obr sich behävin wann er untr mr kummt - er weisst jetzt ist Essenzeit [und] da kommt er mannierlich rein und da isst er mannierlich bei Tisch. Warum? Ich muss die Kinder bei Essen nachschaugn. Well, da denkst du das Kind hat Spass ghobt obr er weisst jetzt doda ist a Zeit wo jetzt wird man mannierlich sein. Weisst du wie der Solomon sog in seiner Sprüche?

*A Jedes Ding unter der Himmel hot seine Zeit. Es ist Zeit Sposs hobn und ist obr ach Zeit wo du musst änstlich san (Prediger 3:1)*

Somit, wann er bei Essen und bei der Lehr und Gebet (in der Lehrstubm und in der Schul) manniert ist, und wenn man af dr Orbeit sei (und der ist fleissig und orbeitet). Noh konnst du überschaugn e Bissele wann er zu an onder Zeit nit gonz iss sowie er sei soll und du frogst von my Lehrer, und ich hob denweg gut gholten mit my Lehrer. Maniger von seyn hobn ihn nit geglichen kola weil er sey oft richtig erschlogn hot. Obr er hot sey drum erschlogn als sie nit hobn ihn gwellt fulgn. So, I don't know, man kann velleicht klug san in den Weg wenn du fulgn tuist, kommst du so viel leichter vorbei, ney?

### **Von Votr glernt**

Ich kann *remembern*, wenn ich bin heimkumme von dr deutsche Schule, als a Kind, und ie werd da Heim gschwatzt hobn . . .weisst du wos geschwatzt meint?

Getadelt. Was ich in dr Schul, untr was dr Schullehrer in dr Schul mir geton hot. Er hot mich heit gschlogn, mich da hort ghaue. Weiss du was my Voter gton hot? Der hot die *strap* gnommen und hot mich wieder überlegt und hot mich wieder erschlogen. "Du host nit gsult gbraucht gschlogn werden. Du sollst folg'n." So ich bin nier Heim kumn und hob gschwätzt af my Lehrer *cuz my Voter* und my Muiter, dey helfen die Lehrer, enter als mir hom. Dos mahnt viel wenn a Mensch noh aufwoachsen tuit. Wenn du schon nicht glernt host dr Schullehrer fulgn, konnst du wedr Wainsedl untr den Wirt untr den Prediger ach nit fulgn. Drum ist es notwendig von klan da on, dy Ordnung, oder wie mon sogn tuit, in dir eingepägt wäd'n. Du sullst es selber verstehen, es wird nit a Ding sein wo Du gzwungen wärs't. Du miesst einsehn das iss das beste Ding fir olla Leit.

Well, ich weiss, ich bin schnell in *trubbl* kumme. My Votr ist richtig genau gwesn mit mir so hob ich nit leicht gekennt was ton. Du weisst schon wie die Jugend ist? Dey prowieden olles, dey wulln ach *stuff* . . . *well* jeder prowiert es a mol rauchen. Und dey san mit Alfablutschne fr Tabak und dann mit Zeitungspapier zomnrollen. Untr unsre erschte Rauchen was mir gmocht hobn ist von *pencil sharpener* Stoff gwesn. Dos lust nach Tabak, nit? Und dos hot a unguiten Rauch ghobt. Dos hobn mir nit geglich'n. So dos hot my Votr mich ertoppt und ich kann heit noch gedenke wie er mich überlegt hot vor rauchen. So wenn ich heit sehe die Kindele, so denke ich olba hinter, dos iss *about the same* was ich gton hob. Doss iss a Ding was ich nit *proud* bin, doss ich graucht hob, obr wenn mon a Kind ist, da tuit man kindische Dinge; wenn mon a *man* war da tat ich hob was kindisch gton.

Ich bin *easily hurt* gwesn. My Votr hot mich nit richtig erschlogen obr die Wörter was er gbraucht hot wän ärger weh gton. Ich hob mich drei Wuche nit vertraut zu ihn [gehn]. Dos iss schlechter als die wie da Stroff nehmen und grad vergessen. Wenn ich heit a Kind erschloge oder *punishen* tuit für irgendwas, so fehr die *punishment* gar ist, hob ich doss Ding vergessen. Kei Kind sull nachher noch schieldig fiehldn. Wenn du noch Stroff ghobt host dann sullst du frei sein. Ich bin mol *sure*, doss my Voter hot ach so gefielt obr ich bin so a Zinslich gwesn, kann mon sogn. Ich hobs nit lassen können vergessen. Ich glaube mein Voter hät mich übergelegt, hätte er mich 'deutsch' durchgefiert . . . es ist a Redensart, "Du wirst 'Deutsch' kriegn." Deutsch ist a "*german*

*beating.*" Wenn er mich deitsch erschlagen hot, noh wär ich's schnell überkommen als wenn er doss mit Wörter gton hot. Obr er hot da dos Beste bemeint, weil wenn ich da hinterdenk, er hot a guiter *method* ghobt mit uns. Ich probier heit oft doss gleiche Ding, die gleicher Weg ton.

A Kind kola erscholgen, ich sog's zu Kinder olba, wenn ich ein Kind erschloge, das ist zu leicht. Wenn es gar ist, ist das grad über. Ich werd was aufgeb'n was es länger werd zu seyn - a hundert mol a *line* obschreibn, das nimmt sey Zeit! Dann musst er nachdenken was er gton hot.

Ich hob Schul geglichen olba. Dos ist vielleicht warum ich hier jetzt auf der Orbeit bin. Wie wull viele Schullehrer was vielleicht kein Schullehrer sein sullen in die Gmahne san. Jederman muss man ein Bissele zwingen zu der Arbeit, obr dooch mit a Johr untr zwa, dann fängst du an *niedersettlin* und dann gehts gut. Bei mir ist das kei *problem* gwesn. Ich bin Schullehrer gworden, i hobs grad geglichen. I hob gton als wenn ich nit tat, obr ich hobs grad glichen. Jo, weisst du wos der Paulus sogt? I hob olba gdacht auf den Versen, und dos sog ich zu jeden neuen Schullehrer.

Der Paulus sogt:

*Dos ich das Evangelium predige, darfen mir nit rühmen, denn ich muss es tun, und wehe mir, wenn ich das Evangelikum nicht predigte. Wos Gott hatte berufen 'Du wirst gehen und predigen' und da sog er, tue ich es gerne, so wirst mir belohnet, tue ichs obr ungerne so ist mir dos Omt duch befohlen (1 Corinth. 9: 16-17).*

So ich muss es tun, *and just as well enjoy it!* "Ei gezwungener Diener tut Gott leid."

### **Der Goatn**

Neben meiner Schularbeit hobe ich auch a onder Orbeit und dos ist dey Goatn nochschaugn. Wass, du wirst Gietsch zieglen, ollerlei Gemiesse, Bäume, und olles wos gehörn tuit zu Goatn. Und wos bei den Ding interresant ist, es stimmt gut zomm dey Orbeit, Schullehrer mit'n Goatn. Wenn du es betrachten tuist, die Kinder nochschaugn . . . *well*, wenn ich in Goatn wär orbeitn kommt mr vier, die Pflanzle sei grad sowie die Kinder - beide von seyn sei zarte Pflänzchen, zarte Pflanzle. Die klane Kinder und die klane Planzle. Man miess ach von klane da on, sowie die Kinder von Jugend auf,

sorgfältig pflegen, wann sie endlich zu dr Fruchtbarkeit gerraten wäd. Du kannst a klanes Kind von klanr da on so behandle, doss wenn mon älter wäd, dos er guit glernt ist. Grod sowie du a klanr Bamm [behandelst], du miess sie longsom aufziehn. Und mer man's olba [es] ist dos gleiche Ding in der Schul und die Goatn - die Pflanzle, die Kinder sein ach die Pflanzle.

So hoffentlich wenn mer die schöner Gietsch Pflanzle in Friebling sorgfältig bewohrt (gesorgt) hot und mer hobn zwonzig pfundiger Gietsch hetzt im Herbst von seyn, hoffen mer ach die Kinder wos mer do von klane da on lernen tuit, und sey wär älter, und<sup>a</sup> noh wädn mer sehen die guitn Früchte af seyn. Es glückt nit olba, manixsmol hobn sie länger bis es bleibn tuit. Obr dos ist wo es hindeiten tuit - *setting good examples*.

Like the children, you have to leave the garden in a better state then it was when you got it. For example, I put in green manure (which is raising a barely crop and just using it as tilth, plow it into the soil). Your cabbage, carrots, tomatoes they take certain nutrients out of the soil. By rotating with a forage crop like barley or clover you're using up some of the nutrients that are in excess. Because your traditional roots crops does not require those some nutrients that barley or wheat does. You constantly have to have your soil in mind. By taking good care of your soil, you're also protecting yourself from diseases and deficiencies that plants need.

It can be poor soil. You can make good soil out of poor soil. You can take a Shauna who doesn't know anything about religion and plant a lot of good Verslen and things into her and it will enrichen her mind and her life and her religion and you can do the same thing with soil. You can take a poor sandy soil and make a good rich soil out of it by adding nutrients and by adding tilth. Like if you're sandy soil will produce barley grow some heavy barley on it and just incorporate that into the soil and that builds up trash (like straw that loosens the soil or peat moss, or leaves) and that. And soon if you treat it properly then in turn it treats you better. It's taught to you from childhood on you could say, to always look after your investment, whether it's land, or whether it's your hogs, or your cows, or your children, which is your biggest investment.

S: How old were you when you became gardener?

Z: Ich bin neunundzwanzig gwesn. Jetzt bin ich einundfünfzig. So jetzt bin ich zweiundzwanzig Johre im Goatn. Olla Johr ist wos Neies. Und dos ist guit. Wenn nichts Neuen ist host du kei Lust mehr. Ich probier ollr Johr wos Neies: a neuer variety von wos und a neuer Weg zu es ton. Heuer hob ich wos gton, doss man kenne Gietsch hobn. Weisst du wos Gietsch san? *Watermelons*. Hob ich a *blanket* gkauft, a grosser *row cover*, und hob meine Gietsch gsah und hob ich die *blanket* übergeton in Friebling. Da untr der *blanket* der Sonne kann durch und das haltet ach die Kälte vo der Frust. Nah werden da Pflanzen schnell aufgehn und gross wuchsen. Und wann has wäd, host du schon grosse Pflanzen. Hier jetzt hobn wir do schon so a grosser Gietsch. Mir hobn heit die erschten Gietsch aufgeschnitten in der Kuchl zu essen - siebzener Pfund ghobt! Die meiste Zeit hobn wir Gietsch wos *about* ocht Pfund werdn hobn und dey wären in mitten September san. Da seien mir ein ganzen Monat vor und dos ist a Bissele a Aufregung, exciting, nit? So und donn host du wieder mehr Lust. Wir hobn olla Johr da kola viele Mädal sahne und viele *beans* und *corn* und wenn dey gar san, umarbeitet, dann host du nichts zu vierherschauge. *Nothing to look forward to* wenn mon kein *goal* hast.

Ich weiss nit, bei mir, ich hob Dinge und Stoff selber پروiert. Ick bin viel gefohdn auf die . . . sowie die *province* hot *research stations*. Obn bei Brooks iss a *federal research station*. Zu dey bin ich [uft] gefohdn, sechen wos in dr field iss, und hob gschaugt wie sey Stoff tsiegl'n tiem. Und dey sein duit fir dos: zu schaugn wos mon in dr *area* kann prowiedn. Dey hobn viel Stoff auf *trials*: oller sorten *corn*, oller sorten *peas*, oller sorten Zwiebel. Und nuch an *end* vo Johr hobn sie a *list* von wos sie gesah hobn und wie gut's gton hot. Und da wärs't sey sogn ob sie's *recommend*en wäd'n fir den *area* untr nit. So konnst du dich richten nach den. I kann sogn i hob mein meistes Stoff von dey glernt. Und durch den, doss ich's vo dey glernt hob, dey hobn viel Gmanen von mir aufgeklaut.

So ich kennet vleicht sogn ich bin mehr *open-minded* gewesn, zu weiter ausserschaugn als wie kola zu ondr Gmah gehen und schaugn wie sey tiem. Wie wull dey bei der *research centres* sogn: "*We learn so much from our Hutterite friends.*" Warum? Jeder Huttrischer پروiert in seine Goatn wos Neues, wos onderscht, wos sey glücklich. *Everybody* bemerkt's und schaugt [wos sie tsiegl'en]. So die *research stations* hobn viel

gelernt scho von die Huttrischen. Warum? Die Huttrische sei in dr Weg ach a *research station*. Sie prowiedn olles. Sie sei nittla heuer duit a Johr untr zwa, sie bleibn duit!

Und da wenn man sterben tuit, dos iss unsr Zeit wenn mer doss ollr mehre *socializin* wenn mer sterben. Na host du a Ursoch zu dr Gmah zu fohdn. No host du a Ursoch zu dr colony fohdn auf der Wocht. Duit kummn Leit zommn beihnoh von jedr Gmah in Alberta, in Saskatchewan untr von Montana. Leit dey du nier sonst sehen wirst [siegst du] bei dr Leicht. Duit iss frei, kann *anybody* fohdn was getauft iss. Und duit findest du, *meetest* du viel Leit und natierlich, *well* wenn du heuer guiter Gietsch host ghobt will jedermann wissen wofür a *variety* host du heuer ghobt. Well, "Ich hob *Crimson Sweet* ghobt." *Crimson Sweet*, weisst du die grossen zwanzig'r Pfund was ich in dr Orm geholtn hob? "Jo, die werd ichs nächst Johr ach prowieden. Doss iss heuer was Neues. Jo wie host du sey gkriegt?" *Well* da verzählst sey do host a *rowcover* drauf gton. "Dos bringt dich drei zu vier Wuch fierher." So denweg lernt andr von ondrn. Die Weiber kummn zomm und verzähln. "Mer hobn schon heuer so viel Gietsch und so viel Blitsele unt Kratsawits su frier ghob." *Well* dos fongt on, es geht a *bulb* af dadrinne, da fongst du an zu wundern, wie tiem die denn?

Jo longen Johren hintr hobn mir olten Gortner gsog, "Den alten Freunden nicht vergiss." Dos ist *purdy* guit gewesen gel? Dos hot dich so weit gebrocht. Wann du was Neues prowierst, nit geh kola to dr Neue. Es is so wie dr Apotle Paulus sogt: "Prüfet alles, und das Gute behalten" (1. Thess. 5:21). So dos eine hob ich olba beholten was dr olta Vettr mir gsog hot, "Den alten Freunden nicht vergiss." Nein, ich bin glickech gwesn so weit, ich hob nit viel *disasters* ghob wo ich hob miesst zu ondr Häf fohden; dos iss a Ding was die Gmahn tiem. Wann hetzt a Gmahn nix wird hobn in Goatn, gehn mir sogn, keine *corn*. *Well* die ondr Gman hot mehr wie sie braucht und konnst du hinfohdn und fr nixs klauben, Waglischan untr irgendwos.

### **Farmer's Market**

Mir tiem was viel Gmane nit tiem, mr hobn a *market garden*. Schon was ich in Goatn bin, tue ich viel *vegetables* verkaufen und ich fohr schon vo erschten Johr on (iss Heuer zweiundzwanzig Johr) af *Farmer's Market*. Dos meint untr die Wuch Stoff bereiten, und schön packen. Dos iss a Plotz wo ich vlleicht mehr *exposure* krieg zu dr

*outside* Welt wie viel ondr Gärtner tiem. Warum? Ich *come in contact* mit viel Weltleit duch sey *vegetables* verkaufen. Wann ich Samstag noch Lethbridge fohde auf Farmers Market, na ich hob scho *actually* a Verlonge zu dey *customers* sehe wos zu Tisch wär kummn. Ich kenn sey schon. Ich wass grad so wos dey will wählnd wann sey zu Tisch wäd kummn. Und ich wass wie gross sendr Augen wäd wann sie die klane Katuffele wäd sehn, untr wann sey *my baby dill* wäd sehn. Dos is grad *my reward* fir dr gonze Wuch orbeitt duit, zu dey Leit sehe mit *a smile* af sandre Gesichtr. So denweg denke ich auf *my Christian duty* untr Schuldigkeit zu dey Leit. *Well* [ich denke] wos ich gegen my Nebenmensch ton sull ach, nit nur doda in dr Gman, ach die ondre Leit mit dey wos ich *business* tue.

Viel Weltleit sei vo Natur *anti-Hutterite*. Und die Ursoch wos es sein iss, sie wissen nichts von die *Hutterites*. Wie sogt mon do, *ignorance breeds contempt*, ney? (Es iss *something like that*). Je weniger du von dr Ding wasst, je ärgre Gedonkn host du übr ihn. Obr fonge mit dr Leit a mol on, red mit seyn von wos du bist.

"Oh mr hobn nit gewusst dos du so a Leit sei." "Wos host du gmant?" "*Well, I don't know.*" In *some expressions* es lusst beinoh wie als wann mr vo *Mars* kummn tat. Sie wissen nit ob du *horns* hot untr wos. Obr in täglich lebn sowie auf *business*, auf *Farmer's Market* oder irgendwo, dey sei grad so Leit wie mr sein? So in denweg tust du, *well*, wie mr sogn:

*Du bis a Licht auf dr Leuchte. Man zündet ach nicht ein Licht an also lasset Eure Lichte leuchten (5. Matthias. 15-16)*

## **Die Bayer**

Und hob ich nuch a ondr Orbeit, die Bienen. Die Bienenzucht, die Bayer wie mer sogn. Und dos Bienenvolk ist a sehr interresantes Ding. Wenn man *watchin* tuit wie dey olla zomm, zommtrogn tiem. Wos sey orbeitt tiem, bringen eines in die Kosten: bringen sey Honig und Wochs und *pollen*, olles zu den *hive*, untr den Kasten zu aufbauen und anfieln, anfilln (*to fill up*). Und wann mer dos betrachten tuit sowie dey tiem, noh denke ich olba auf unsr Huttrische colony doda; sowie die Bayer olla zommtrogn in a Kost so dey dos olla hobm, grad so tiem mr do in dr Gmane. Olla Mensch wos hier orbeitt, tiem

sie olles zomm, nicht fir sich sondern jeder fir'n onder so dos sie es olla hobm. Nämlich in dr Gman, eben sowie die Bienen tiem, nichts gezwungen, olles ist freiwillig. In dr Gmane hot eignetlich nemmt eignet nichts, obr duch jeder eignet olles. So dey drei Aufgobn holtn mich dos Johr long *busy*, ziemlich *busy*.

*Well* i Winter iss es dos olla *busiest* mit die Kinder, mit lerne in dr Schul. Dos iss olles wos ich nah tue, nemm Biechle einbinten, (wass, wos von Hof wird gbraucht untr Schule oder neue Biechele mochn). Somit mit dr Kinder iss dr Winter die olla heftigste Zeit. Obr mit'n Goatn iss es natierlich i Sommr dos olla *busiest*. Und die Bayer sein ach bei nei Friehling iss mehreste Orbeit wann du wieder rum aufbaue, schaugn dos sie fertig sein zu wann die *crop* wird ankummn, dos sie trogn tiem. *Crop*, ich sog *crop*, die Ernte, wann die Erntezeit wird kommen, doss sie fertig und bereit wird sein zu einsammle. Wann die Blemble olla bliehen da tiem, noh miesst du a grosser *stock* hobn wo viel Bayer drinnen hot, Bienen. Wann dr *hive* untr dr Kosten mit die Bayerle orm iss, untr wenig Bayer und du host viel Blemble draus, noh sei nit viel zu einetrogn. Obr wann du von Friehling on fuiten tuist und dos du sey richtig aufbaue tiem (viel Bayer wärn), wann die Blemble bliehn und gehn sey olla aus und könne in dr Geschwindigkeit a hundert Gfund honig tsoimmtrogn. Grod sowie viel Leit und in dr Geschwindigkeit eine grosse Ernte einnehmen, dos iss dos gleichr Ding. *And if one bee is lazy the rest will drive her away or kill her. They are very clean and keep their hives clean. In short, they work themselves to death for the welfare of the hive or colony.*

### **Der Himmlvotr**

So i Sommer wird mr sogn iss es *physically* schwarer und i Winter iss es *mentally* schwarer. Obr mr kann sogn es iss a *busy thing* olba. Es iss a gutr *change*, a Veränderung. Dr Himmlvoter hot olles guit eingerichtet; er hot vier *seasons* gemacht. Wann du sot bist kummt dr Sommer. Wann dr ibr ist kummt dr Herbst. Wann du in Herbst scho miede bist von dr gonzen Orbeit, kummt dr Winter. Bist olba froh wann a neuer *season* kummen tuit. Olles iss sehr weislich eingerichtet.

Der Psalmist sogt:

*Herr wie sind Deine Werke so gross und viel du hast sie alle weislich geordnet und die Erde iss voll Deiner Güter (Psalm 92:5).*

Mann muss sie kola *recognizen!*

Zum Schluss an dieser Geschichte meines Lebenslaufs, ich fuehle, dass weil ich vielleicht viele Fehler gemacht hob ohne Zweifl, duch hob ich probiert es Beste tun und mit den Himmlischen Votr sein Segn viel ausgerichtet. Ich hoffe nuch weiter kenne gehn und wonn meine letzten Tag wird kommen, dass ich kann hintr sehen und mit den Apostl Paulus sogn:

*Denn ich werde schon geopfert und die Zeit meines Abscheidens ist vorhanden. Ich habe einen guten Kampf gekaempfet, ich habe den Lauf vollendet, ich habe Glauben gehalten. Hinfort ist mir beigelegt die Krone der Gerechtigkeit, welche mir der Herr am jenen Tage, der gerechte Richter geben wird. (2. Timothy 4:6-8).*

Amen.



**Illus. 1: Zack and his students**



**Illus. 2: Zack, wife Elizabeth, and granddaughter**

## Appendix B

### DIE LEBENSGESCHICHTE VON ELIZABETH WIPF

#### ELIZABETH

##### Die Familiengeschichte

*My mother's mother died when she was 14 years old. She was the youngest one and she was feeling hurt because she lost her mother so fast and so young. And she always told us, "Dad, we thought he'd get as old as ninety, but he only lived five years after her Mom." When she was nineteen, her Dad also died and then she married my Dad the same year. My Dad was five or six years older than she was but they said, what else should they do, he was alone, his Mom and Dad had died, and her Mom and Dad died. So they married. They raised a big family, fifteen children. We were eleven sisters and four brothers. Four of us were born in the U.S., in South Dakota, but then we moved to Canada in 1932 and we lived at Hutterville colony at Magrath. That's where we grew up. My Dad was the schoolteacher and my Mom had all those children.*

*She wasn't well with some of the children. I remember with one of my sisters - she was the eighth of the family - she was very sick after she was born. She had pneumonia. We all feared for her, were so afraid she was going to die. I remember in those days there wasn't antibiotic and things like that, or intravenous. They put flax on her whole body, upper body you know. They put cooked flaxseed in bags and that helped that pneumonia. Well she got up again, cause she had six more children after this one. And she had to work hard and we had to help her too. She was a good Mother. She was a very good person, I think at least. She was liked by everybody.*

#### KINDHEIT

##### Nach Kanada kommen

*We came to Canada on the account of the war. She always told us about two young men that were in concentration camps that died. They lived on the colony where*

she was. Have you ever heard about that? [Elizabeth's husband comes in and she asks: "You want something to eat Father? Go into your room. That's okay he can eat in there.] Oh that was a very very sad story. They mistreated those people so much. That's why they died. They wanted them to put the uniform on and they refused. And they only had their light underclothes on and they got pneumonia. And they brought 'em to the hospital and there they died. And they had families at home. But one had only one child and the other one only two. One was 24 and one was 26. The wives both remarried [Her husband tells their grandson to come in]. These two men were in Alcatraz. They write about that in our history books.

When we came to Canada I was just one and a half years old and, in thirty-seven, it was really dry. I was too young to tell much about it. We didn't have as much as we had today; there was a bushel of apples divided up every year. That is practically all the fruit that we had, and hardly a orange. In the late forties we started to get bananas and oranges. When we were small, we didn't see anything like that. [Her husband comes out of his room and says: "Imagine dat eating a bushel of apples in a week!"]

### **Früheste Erinnerung: der Bua und dre Bintr**

I'll be 68 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August. Okay, if that's any use, I was born in South Dakota in 1930 and we moved to Canada in 1932. I was one and a half years old. You know, I don't remember that, that's just what they told me. But [sigh], I can remember when I was four years old. It happened in August. One of the colony boys got killed with a binder – mit dre Bintr. In Deadly Coulee, wasst duit hobn mir unsr Schof ghobt. Und es iss a really a gara Riegl gwesn. Ist er mit dre Bintr duit gfohdn [und] seine Tucks sei obgonge von die Roos. Wass du wos dos mahnt, die Tucks (reigns)? See die Roos san einfoch eingspont gwesn. So kann ich's erlauben describen. Und dey sei loose gonge. Ist apparently dey Bintr in dr Erd gangen und er fiehl untr die Roos gfolen. Er ist nit grad do gwesn. Ich mein dos kann ich gut remember'n. Dos iss passiert vor Mittag um holbe zäher Uhr. Ich bin in dr Klana Schul gonge. Ich bin grad erscht vier Jahr olt. Es ist, ich glaube, es ist im zwaundzwansigste August gwesn. Ich wäre nit gonz sogn obr ich glaube das kann mon leicht hintr tracin wenn dr Bua noch gstorbn ist. Mir san beim north Kellela, duit af dr Treppen gessen (die klana Schulkinder) und gewatscht hobn sie ihn in

dr Ambulanz einegeton und weggefiert. Dos ist bei Hutterville, duit hobn mir gwohnt. Und das, dos kann ich remembren wie heit. Zwa Uhr in dr Nockt iss er gstorbn. Und ich wass ach guit den ondern Tog bis sie ihm Ham gbrocht hobn. Sie hobn ihn vor'n Mittag Ham gebrocht. Und die andere Schulankela, hot sie uns nach'r schlofen uns hingefiert [und] ihn anschauen. Waßt, dos wass ich von von den toten Kerper obr vo dr Leicht, ich wass nichts.

Dr iss in Eis eingmocht gwesn. Weiter hinter hobn mer an großes Haisl – ein großes Haus ghobt, a Eishaus. Dos hobn sey noch Neujohn, wann Eis so dick iss gwesn, und dey Monnsleit hom den gmocht. Und den Eis, dr iss nur erschlogn wordn [und] wann a Totr ist gwesn in *jars* rund um eingmocht gwesn. Dann ist dr Tote gkiehlt wordn denwig, doß er nit schmecken wäd. Dos ist dra Mol in Tog ist dos *gechanged* wordn - dr ist ergongen waßt. Und dos wass ich noch guit. Ich wass nit warum, vor dre Leicht, dos wass ich not nit mehr. Ich wass nit warum. *See* die Leicht ist erscht in ondern Tog gwesn. Ach die Begräbnis, dos kann ich mr nit zudenken. Obr ich kann hintrdenke wie er ist verunglückt und wie sie ihm heimbrocht hobn und weggefiert.

### **Deadly Coulee**

Und denn wenn mer aufgewochsn san, wann man in dr Schul ist gonge, san mer in die Summe in der Deadly Coulee gonge af *weekends* (wo dr verunglückt ist); san mer gonge Weigsele, na Junipern klaubm und Weigseln. *Saskatoonberries*, doß hobn mer gonge klaubm in dr, in dr *Criecksle*, dr a *mile* von unser Hof ist gwesn. In der *Deadly Coulee*, duit hobn mir unsr Schof ghobt. Dos ist *really a enjoyable* Ding einfoch *saskatoons* und Weigsele gklaubt in dr Deadly Coulee und ach in dr Meeks Coulee. Dey san *connected*. Die Deadly hot uns ghört obr dr Meeks hot niet. Oh dey hot schöne Weigsele. Junipern hom mer nier so viel gklaubt [duit] - in Deadly Coulee san mehr gwesn. Milford hobn sey getrickelt und in Wintr noh gekucht. Und weiter hinter iss dos su nit gwesn - hot die MUITR a Tupf Weigsele und Äpfelschnitts hot sie einegeton und gekucht. Jo, wilde Weigsele und wilde Junipern. Jo, umhum. Bei Bockranch dey hobn olle Sorten ghobt, "Schweschen" - erbamlich große Weigsele, so groß (dey san wie *plums*) und noh hobn sey a andr Nome ghobt. Ich wass es hetzt nit mehr. Die Sanna Basl wäd's besser wissen.

## Cricknlaufen

I mahn so a Ding hobn mer in Summe gton da, weil mer Kindr sei gwesn. Und wie mer nahr aufgewachsen sein, noh hobn sie duit bei Magreth, Patol Crick hot's ghassn. Duit sind mr ach hingfohdn Juniberrn klaubm. Obr nit nur eingekucht, hobn sie ach Juniberrn *jelly* gmocht. Wasst du die Ankela mochn's und iss ach guit gwesn. Juniberrn *jelly is actually* guit. Jo, dos ist kola wilde Crickn gwesn. Jo *creeks*. Dos heissen mer *crickn*, wie man dos hetzt auf deitsch genannt odr auf englisch haße? En *creek*. *I don't know* wos ist dr Weg dazu. Duit sei Schlue, Schlichten. Wasst du *slough*wosser? Ist olba richtig reichlich gwesn für so was [su wochsn].

S: *If you had to describe the landscape, what do you remember most clearly in your mind?*

E: *I can remember die crickn very clearly in my mind.* Iss a großer Berg gwesn . . . odr sull ich englisch? *There were big hills and on the side of these that's where da trees were, where da berries were. We had to climb quite high to get them.* Manixsmol san die Bamme huch gwesn und host du eu gton und host du den geklaubt. *You pick them like . . .* ich kann nit so guit englisch. Obr dos ist einfoch uns su a pleasure gwesn, cricknlaufen. Dos hobn mr gehassn cricknlaufen, waßt, klaubm wie mer Kindr san gwesn?

Und noch wenn mer vierzehner Johr sa gwesn, noh san mer bei dr große Leit gwesn und san mer uft gfohdn und su wos ton, klaubm. *Even* nach dre *reserve* san mer gfohdn, wo die *Indians* sei und hobn Weigsele gklaubt (*cherries*), wilde Weigsele um Wein zu mochn. Oder sull ich dos nit sogn? Mer kummt vier ich kann nit sechen wos *wrong* ist in den. Ich mahn dos ist so a *pleasure* gwesn, dos ton, waßt? San mer um vier Uhr in dr Friehe schon aufgestonden und zwa Monsleit sei mitgeföhden mit uns. Und san mer gfohdn af'n Wogn gwesn (mit huche Seiten af Räder und mit Roos), zomm mit die *boys*, und hobn mer die Weigsele einegton. Es ist erbamlich viel Weigsele. Do host viel miest hobn fr Wein mochn. Unsr Wirt hot Wein gmocht. Dos ist *really a pleasure* gwesn fr die Diene dos ton. Mer hobn olba vierher gschaut af den. Mir kummt vier mon hot den Himmlvotr noch mehr gsehn ols mer in die crickn san gwesn.

*While* du dos hetzt frogst, ich sah do af dr *weekend*, af dr Leicht in Saskatchewan, odr even af den Weg, es hot mich *really reminded* wie es gwesn ist. Wasst, san coulees und cricken gwesn. Wasst wie die Bergen san? Duit san Bamme, andr hot a dunkl gräne, die ondr a *blach*, die ondre hot a gell, und untn verläng Wossr laufen, wasst *sloughs*. Wann mon af a *trip* wo ist, dann denkt mon viel mehr ols wenn mon da Ham ist und Orbet tuit. Obr *even* bei Milford mir hobn a große *crickn* ghobt wo mir san eu gonge Weigsele klaubm. Es iss einfoch viel schänre Waldle gwesn: Junipern und Hatschaputscha, dos hot schon olles a ondr *color* . . . obr wann a Waldle iss gwesn mit Brennisol,<sup>3</sup> do san nit eingonge. Dos ist da most giftifste Ding gwesn wos es gibt.

## KINDHEITSPFLICHTEN

### Molichen, Goatnorbet, und Babysitting

Wenn mr Kindr san gwesn mer hobn gmoliche - *we milked the cows*. And in Summe, wonn mon untr vierzehner sa gwesn, wenn die Weibr hobn Gorbn gtrogn, einfoch *stooks* [gtrogen] von zehn Johr on (die Diendle – *the ten year olds up to fourteen*), na hobn mer die Weibr sandr Orbet gton. *We milked the cows and did the gardening. We were higher you know then.* Sey hobn *really depended on* uns. Mir hobn Katuffl gschält, *washed the dishes, and they went out right after breakfast and stayed till noon. After noon they went out again and they even had their supper on the field. Everybody had their supper on the field. Like the binder people, they never came home for their meols because they had to be ahead of the stokers. But the evening meols were brought to all of them. We had to tend the babies, they were left for the children at home. The ones who had to nurse the children, they came home once in the afternoon.*

### Gorbn trogn

I told them just before you came. Ich bin vierzehner Johr gwesn. I was fourteen years old on the twentieth of August, on a Sunday, and on the next day I had to go stooking. I only weighed a hundred and six pounds. I was very small. Und ich sog, waßt, die Räntne, sowie dr Bintr die Gorbn hot ausglegt? Dey hobn mir uns getallt, so und soviel Räntne ghobt; zwa und zwa hom die Weiber und i wass mer san mit anr von my cousins gwesn, dr grain eingpitched hot. Dos ist hort gwesn because ich bin so a klan's

Kind, a Diendl nuch gwesn. Dos grain hots nit gonz guit obgschnittn ghobt – it hung together and that made the stooks heavier. Obr dos wass ich wie dr grain, wie dr hot gschmeckt, na sure! [Laughing] Wann schön still ist gwesn olles iss es erbamlich lustig gwesn, obr wann Wind ist gwesn iss es viel viel schwarer gwesn - ach Gorb n trogn ist ach verschieden gwesn. When there was such wind, oh gosh that was lots harder. But that was our policy, when we were fourteen years old, (well we went to school until fifteen) but if it was summer time you had to go work with the women, whatever they did, Gorb n trogn und olles.

M<sup>er</sup> hobn, wasst die Diene und die Weiber, die *stooks* afgstellt. Obr bei zwatn Weltkrieg seien ach unsr Monsleit, die *boys*, in die *camps* gwesn. Die gonz junge Leit hom sie weggnomme und die Diene mießtn *einepitchin*. Nit my Votr, es san *actually* (ich sog dos Wort su uft) einfoch meine *cousins* sendre Weibr gwesn, die Monnsleit wos san gonge. Sie hom's eingzugn, so hom si'es ghießn, 'eingezugn', doß sey einfoch in die *camps* mießen san. Ich wass es guit wie sey san weggfohnd. Es iss *actually really sad* gwesn fr die jung verheiratetn Leit. Dey Kindr mießen sie lossn. Und hom die Diene gmießt Watz fiehrn und Gorb n trogn. Dos hobn mer olba mit dre Bindr [gmocht].

I mahn von unsr Kindrjohrn wass ich hetzt nit so viel es haßt von Lond ols wie wie ich nuch vierzehner Jahr einfoch mit'n Binter hobn sie mießt mane und hobn Gorb n gmocht, Gorb n sei *bundles*. Und dey host du nuch mießt zommnklaubn. *See* dey hot dr Binter gschnietn und gebunten; drum hot er Binter ghassen. Dey Gorb n hot dr einfoch miest binden und nuch hobn mer sey aufgestellt, doss sey trickle. So hot's anfonge Häckeke. Ich wass nit wos mon af english dey hassn, *I guess a stook*. Jo dos ist recht. *See* dey san in dey Stuppel gstonde und na host sey *zugepailt*, bis a schöner *stook* ist gwordn. Und dos ist wos gwesn wie grad du die Ränten host gekennt mochn und ist ach besser gwesn wann dr Shiefloadr dey hot aufgeklaut. Und wann dey Gorb n nur long getrickelt sa gwesn, dey Häckeke, dey *stooks*, na hobn sey mit dre *stookloadr*, der hot dey Häckeke nuch eingnomme und tut sey auf'r in dre Oustwogn, in dre *grainwagon*. Dos dreschten hot länger gnommn. Heitzutog iss so a großr *machine* untr a *combine*. Und hobn dey Diene miest a *grainwagon* nehme und hobn Watz gfiehrn. So hobn's ghassn, "Watz fiehrn." Anstots die *menfolk because* sa nit mehr gwesn, hobn dey Diene gmießt

[ton]. San sie hingfohdn su dr *granary*, zu *alavätor*. Wie hassn dos obr hetzt, oder haßt dos *alavätor*? Wie haßt dos wo sey oblodn, dos lange Ding? [*asking Lydia*]. Die *auger*.

S: *Do you remember the different crops?*

E: Dos wass ich von Gorbñ trogn. *Because* iss Rupñ (*rye*) erscht gwesn, noh ist *oats*; Hobr hobn mr den ghassn. Und nuch iss Gerschn gwesn (*barley*), und Wintrwatz (*winter wheat*), und nuch Frieblingwatz (*spring wheat*). Dey finfr *varieties* hobm mer ghobt ols wir hom Gorbñ gtrogn. Dr sebm iss kan *durum* gwesn. Ich wass obr hetzt dos a Feld *durum* iss dunkler *in color* ols wie die andr. Und wann a schänr Watz iss gwesn und so a Ernt, wenn es so dick iss gwesn so wie dein Finger, dos host du gsehn und bemerkt. Ich denke ich seh hitzt mehr wenn ich außrfohre, obr ich tue nit mehr. *A ripe wheat field when it was standing for sixty [days] and so. I can picture me that better than any other.* Obr es ist onderscht gwesn in dey John, du host nit su viel gehärt von *yield*.

*Flox*, kann ich mir weit hinterdenke dos die Leit hobn ghobt. Bei Hutterville, wo ich aufgewachsen bin, hom mr nier kan *flox* ghobt. Obr dann wann ich zu Milford bin, ich waß, dey hobn *flox* ghobt dey erschten Jahr. [*Lydia asks, "Winifred hot olba flox?"*] Ach Rosedale wass ich, wonn i vier Monat duit bin gwesn bei my Votr, dey hom ach *flox graist*. Wir hom nit so viel ghärt von den. [*Lydia interrupts and says, "Ich hob flox lotion."*] *Flox lotion* fr ihre *ruffr hands*. Dos iss von viel verrichten, da kummn dey splittir so uft. Du reibst dos inwendig. Schau mol wie schän sey san. Tue e Bißel da hintr und reibt sie an, es ist grad so *smooth*. *Her aunt gave her the recipe*. Ich wäd dos Rezept einbringe [*Lydia goes to get the recipe*]:

Dos ist dos Rezept:

5 spoons of flax

1 quart water

2 spoons of sweat oil (glycerine)

2 spoon fulls of vinegar

Cook flax over heat and let stand a day or two.

Dos iss a gonz oltes Rezept. Es mocht die Hond guit maclich zu fiehdn und der ist *cheap*. Muiß ich sogn, man härt hetzt nichts vo die Weibr vo eckligr Händ. Mer hom olle so a *mess* ghobt, olle so aufgriemtr Händ, so chippigr, eckligr Hond. Jo su viel woschen. Ich muiß es hobn wenn es heuer in Summe nit so viel ist in Wossr gwesn, nit so

schwar, vielleicht drum san sie ach schänr die Händ. Ich muß es hom. Es wird ach ghulfn hobn. *We get one bottle at Christmas time from the boss and we need that plus another two bottles. Next week we begin our fall cleaning. You better believe we'll need lots of lotion.* Jo, wo bin ich hetzt gwesn . . . Dos wass ich, die Weibr hom gemißt die Monsleit viel ghulfn.

S: *What did you like the most about farming?*

E: Working together was the nicest thing. Now in Hutterville as I told you, die Räntne san gezählt und getallt wordn (they were counted and divided). But when I got married, those people did it different. Okay sey hobn a group Weibr und a group Monnsleit und dey san durchgonge. Es iss viel mehr gehn gwesn (walking). Dey hobn (wo ich hingheiot hob), dey Gman hot onderscht dey bei Hutterville. We did it together but there, there was lots of more walking. Okay ich und my Schwester hobn zehn Ränten ghobt zu aufstellen bei Hutterville. When the binders came along we stooked that and then we could sit. We had knitting along and crocheting in our spare time. We spent our time in the fields when they were "mowing" (wenn sie "gmaht" haßt das af deitsch). Du bist miede gwordn (you got more tired) ols wenn du dei Räntne do ghobt. Dos hobe ich scho uft gsogt: dos iss dos Guite gwesn wenn mr zomm sowie Gorbn gtrogn hom. Dos iss dos Beste in Leben. Ich hob olles gsogt wos ich waß. Ich wass nit wos ich dir nuch tat sogn.

### **Feder schleissen**

Und vo Feder schleissen dos iss a guitr Zeit gwesn wenn mer dos hobn gton zuzomm. Unsr Versle hobn mer schnell glernt dos mer es kenne nach'r Nochblink. Und dann sei mer gonge Feder schleissen. Wenn mer in dr Schul sei gonge hobn mer af dr Nocht gekennt die Weibr helfen. Dey wos aus dr Schul san gwesn sey hobn den gonzn Tog Feder gschliessn. Dos hot sicher vier zu finf Tog, ach manixsmol dey Wuch gnomme. Wenn a große Familie iss gwesn, wo zwei, drei Pfund is gtaht, dey hobn mer af dr longe Tisch afgebratet und einfoch rundum gesessen mit dr Emer und hobn dey wos su a schöne hortr *schemm* san gwesn außrgton. Jo, oh dos hobn mer geglichen. Dos hom mer einfoch *enjoyed*, dos zommton. Es ist nit gwesn wie heizutog.

## Wulle spinnen

Und noh ich hob damol verzählt hob von spinne (dos ist in Juni gwesn). Dos hobn die Männer olle geton, Schofgeschodn.

S: Schof . . . shären?

E: *See unsr language* iss so. Konnst du deutsch schreiben oder tuist du lateinisch?

Die ältere Weibr, die Ankela, dey sei gegonge und hom die schöne Rohnene (dos iss a Schof) dey hom dey Spinnwolle gkennt (*they knew her*), hom sey ausgklaubt, die Rohnene, die schöne, die Spinnwolle. *See* maniger hom erbamlich gkrauselte Hoar und dey host du nit gekennt spinne. Dey was long ist gwesn, dey hom sie ausgeklaubt und noch iss sie gtallt wordn. Die große Leit bis vierzehner, dey hobn a Gfund und dreiviertl gekrieg, und die zehnjährig andrholb, und die Klana hobn a dreiviertl Gfund. Und dos hot jedr Gman sich selbr noch gmießt spinne.

Wenn a Diene iss vierzehne Jahr gwesn, noh hot dr Schreiner (*the carpeneter*) ihr *a spinning wheel* gmocht. Erscht hobn mer olle mit'r Fuiß getriebn. Ich wass ich hob ach noch mit a Fuiß ghobt obr noh später hobn sey a klana *motor* drauf gton; es ist einfoch leicht gwesn. *Oh my*, ich seche *my* Muittr heit noch kummt mir vier, wie mer nunit hobn gekennt spinne sey *watchin* mit dr *stumpfen* Fieße. Sie hot erbamlich dicke Fieß ghobt; sie hot *vericose veins* ghob. Ihr Fieß san gschwulln von den gonzen Tog treibn. Ich mahn wie *my* Muittr allan iss gwesn, *my* Votr hot ihr ghulfn *even* Wulle zommlossn mit dre *spinning wheel*. Wulle fr Stimpf hob ich noch. [*She goes to get a sample of wool*]. *See* dos ist *tree-ply* Wulle. Schofwulle iss schworz (*dirty*) gwesn und dey hobn mer mit dr Hond mießt woschen bis sie rein ist gwesn. Dos hobn mer geglichen. Mer hobn nittla fir uns gesponnen, mer hobn fir *relatives* gesponnen was viel Kinderle ghobt. So olle Jahr hobn mer Wulle gesponnen und Feder geschliessen und wann sie fertig san gwesn, hobn mer dey hingschickt. So a Dinge hobn mer geglichen. A Muittr mit viel Diene hobn mehr gmießt außrhelfen.

## Gons, Onten, und Hähndle auftsieglen

*Every family had their own geese. Four laying geese had to be tended by the one family.* Mer hobn Hietne ghob (*lodges for the chickens and the geese*) und dey Ale, was

sey glegt hobn in Friebling, dey hobn mießt zomnton. Und wenn dey Gans ausgebrüetet san, wann dey nuch fertig sa gwesn na host du dey eu trogn, su dr Gonsstohl - *the "geese centre."* Dos ist so a *pleasure* gwesn, wann du host wos ghobt zu obtrogn . . . in dre Kastle. Dey san schrecklich schön gwesn die klana Gänsle. Und dos sin gehärig klore Ale, obr manigr sei weggfohln (*all depends* wie die Gons ist gwesn, wie gruß er iss gwesn). Mer hobn anr ghobt, a grauer, dos hot Rot Ring ghassn. Dos ist a schware Gons gwesn, dey hot zwelf Gonsle olamol ghobt. Dos ist viel gwesn. Wann du host sechs odr ochtr ghobt host guit gton. Dos ist einfoch a psundere Gons gwesn.

Und ach Hähdle (*little chicks*), dey hobn da Heim in dr Hietn ausgebrüetet. Verstehts? *Do you understand that? Every family* hot sechs brüetigr Hähne gkriegt und su und su viel Ale untr gton. Und wann dey ausgebrüetet sa gwesn (dey Hähdle) und dey *family* nuch mießt weitertsiegle i Summeibr. Mer hobn einfoch Hietne ghobt daust (*lodges fir animals*) waßt, fr dey Hähne und fr die Gonsle). Duit iss a *pair* gwesn (a Monsleit und a Weib); a *couple* dey af dey gsorgt hobn. Obr die Hähne, die *chicks*, dey Klana, dey hot jedes *housewife* ihrer ghobtsu siegle in Summe. Dos iss obr ach guit gwesn Lydia, du host dey gfuttert und Wasser hington. Dos ist so schrecklich onratslich gwesn und guit. Host du sey sechen wochsen ghob. *It actually was a challenge, it was.* Einfoch dey Hähdle duit, einfoch sechen wochsen, sey fuitn. Af dr Nocht host'd gschaut dos sie einekumme, dos sey nit zu kolt wädn.

Und na wann dr Herbst kummn ist (*fall*), na hot dr weribr die Hähne ist gwesn, einfoch gsogt, "Heit ist Zeit die Hähdle auf'trogn." *And we took them down to the chicken barn* und hot dr Hähnemensch sey ibrnahme. Dey san ach gfreckt (*you know some of them died*). *Even* ach die Antle, dey hobn ach Hähne, die Fossilanten. Wie haßt mon dos? Die Andiker und dey Anten, dey san bei dr Gman gwesn zomm bei Leit wos die Gonsle hobn. Wass du dey *individual couple*, dey hobn sey ach ausgebrüetet. Und wann dey ausgebrüetet sa gwesn - die Anten sowie die Gonsle - jede *family* hot a Gons gkriegt obr die Anten hobn mer nur die Ale gkriegt. Und dey hobn mir ach eu gton in die Antenstohl, in die *duck pond*. Und da untn mer hobn a großes *dam* ghobt und ist a *couple* gwesn (a Mon a Weib) und dey hobn af dey nochgschaut den gonzen Summeibr. Dey hot nit gebraucht kuchen, obwoschen, nichts, dey Ontnmuittr.

Obr my MUITTR hot viel Diene ghobt. A MUITTER wos viel Diene ghobt hot, na hobn mer noch soviel mehr [Hähndle] gmießt hobn - dos ist die *minimum* gwesn, einfoch ochter. My zwa älteste Schwester, dey *had to hatch* a Sots, einfoch *two sets*. So ist es gonge. Wenn mehr Diene san gwesn, dey hobn gemießt so und so viel. Hetzt iss es onderscht. *It's not that there isn't work anymore, but it is much easier. I mean that is a big job to clean out the Huitten. The girls had to do that.* [Three of the five grandchildren in the room are screaming and crying in the background. Lydia and Elizabeth's husband are also present and reprimand the children for not getting along].

S: *Did you have to worry about predators?*

E: Sometimes san geese ungebracht wordn. Well there was nothing you could do. Sure they would tell the police or something like that. But if the wildlife comes in you would never kill them. They tried to get the coyotes. They set out traps to get them. Even now if that happens, if a colony gets into a flock of geese, they set out traps for them. That won't affect our religion, no. Maybe I should not say that but the boys they set out traps to catch wildlife and to sell the furs. Sure they caught wolves too. But there are colonies still now that have geese and sometimes you hear there were 300 dead in the morning. That's not against our religion to get the . . . what did you call, predators.

Die Weibr, sie hobn GorbN gtrogn, Katuffl gschält, und die Kieh gmoliche. Ich mahn, sowie dos kummt mir fir, sulige Dinge hob ich mane Kindr verzählt. Dos ist a *typical* Ding gwesn. Und dey Kindr sey san ach die Luckele, einfoch sowie die Diendle dey Kinder gsort hobb: af dr Nocht schlofn legen, und olles, Geschirre obwoschen, die Wäsche ton und die Kiehr glernt molichen . . . dos ist a hortese Ding gwesn. Dos host du gmießt lernen vo dey wos älter sa gwesn. *Anyway* dos kummt mir vier, von dr oltn Tog wos *typical* sa gwesn. Die Gäns ausbruitten und die Anten *raisin*, und dey Huitten mießt ausgmisstet wädN und onderscht Stroh eington.

## WEIBLICHE AUFGABN

### Zommorbeitm

So ist es heit nuch Lieber. *If we don't have work* sowie heit bei schlochten und gestern hobn mer den gonzen Tog *corn* gklaubt: gefiesselt, *gecreampt* und eingekucht dey gonzen Tog. Es lusst es bringt uns nuch *closer* zomm wenn mer zommorbeiten. *We really like it because* es lusst wenn du allane bis in dei Haus es ist nit zu viel vertraue wann du *even* gehst essen. Obr wann du hort zommorbeit's, dos holtet des zomm (*that keeps us together*). Ich mahn Mensch ist Mensch, mer hobn olle Fahler, und du siegst ba ondr vleicht nuch mehr Fahler, obr wann mon zomm tuit iss mehr Anigkeit. Es ist viel viel besser. Ich wullet fir kan ondr leben in dr Welt schaugen.

### Kreitr klaubm

*Hatschaputscha, I don't know* wer sie eingredt hot; bei Milford ist dos gwesn. Hobn mir an Mol a Zeit was olle Hatschaputscha gklaubt und getrickelt und ols Tee getrunken. Dos iss ach a Ding gwesn fir Kinder, *for bedwetting*. Es sei Familien gwesn was suligr ghobt hobn. Obr unsre Familie iss damit guit obkumme; my Kinder hobn nit einegepischt. Wenn dey andrholb Jahr sind gwesn, ist es gor gwesn.

Wonn die Hutterviller san sey *auf'rgmoved* zu Caster und duit hobn sie richtig wilde *strawberries* gklaubt olba, obr hetzt hobn mer in Goatn sulichr. Oh jo sowie, Schofgorm su Kupf woschen. Wie haßn sie dey af englisch? Ich hob a Biechele da drin, a gränes Biechele mit *herbs*, shau mol drinne. Und Wermit (Wermuit) ist gwesn, dos ist guit gwesn [whispering] fr Weibr, hobn sie dos *geused* wenn mer Bauchweh hot - einfoch kuchn. Mer hobn erbamlich viel, *really* viel gholtn von ihn. Es lust nit dos es nuch *geused* wäd. Und Brennisol hobn mer dos ghassen [pointing to a picture of poison ivy]. Dos hot ermbamlich gbrennt. . . [Lydia schaut in das Büchlein "Alpenpflanzen" nach Schofgorm aber kann es vom Bild her nicht erkennen]. "Kennst du kane Schofgorm, kennst du kane wasst du mit dre weiße Kupfle? I hob hetzt kane Zeit dos ton! " [Lydia gigles at how iritates her mother is with her for not being able to find *Schofgorm*].

## Traditionelle Arzenein

Oh jo weiterhinter hobn olle so wos *geused*. Wenn die Muittr *pneumonia* ghobt hot, hobn mir sie mit *flox* blegt. Mir hobn viel ghobt sowie fir Bauchweh; fir *diarrea* hobn sie Wermit gekucht. Es hot erbarmlich guit gschmeckt nach *peppermint*. Es sei viel Mittle gwesn wos sie weiterhinter *geused* hobn. Ich kann hetzt nit grod *namin* doda. Jetzt tuit mon nit mehr; man sei af *antibiotics* or so a Wirtschoft. Es lust es ist dr Welt ihr lauf hetzt. Einfach dr Welt *is different now*.

Obr *actually my* Lydia ist af *herbs*. Dey iss so *depressed* gwesn vor zwa Jahr obr hetzt ist sie af *herbs*. Vlleicht ist sie deswegn so dick, ich wass nit. Mir gehn ach mit dr Zeit mit. Hetzt krod ist einfoch viel auf *herbs* - es ist nit dos sie nit glaubn dey Leit und's *usin*. *In the colonies* sa dort viel wos so was hobn. Zum Beispiel do bei Winifred, do ist a Ankela, a *midwife*; dey hot viel *remedies*. Wasst du die Kindle, wann sey andr Seit nit tutlen, na zu auflegn . . . ich bin do mit der klana David a Wuch hintr; hot sie gsogt einfoch er war dahintr zu verschwullen. Na hot sie gsogt mir sulln einfoch zommixn: zwa Läf Siessel und zwa Läf *Vaseline* und zwa Läf Gränetrupfen; dos zommriehren und einschmiern. *Or even* ach mit Gonsschmolz, wann a steiles Gliedele wo iss. Dos tuit sie ach richtig und mon findet dos es ach hilft. Und *even* wann die Weibr zu ihr fohdn, vor dr Geburt, sie kann's zurecht mochn. Olba hobn sie in dr Gman *delivered*. My Tante iss a *midwife* gwesn bei Milford. Ich hob kola *nine* Kindr wos sie *delivered* hot. Grod do af'n Hof, *in my house*. Ich bin mit meiner drei letzte in *hoschpital* gwesn. Sie lusset sey einer [in *hoschpital*] wann die Weiber nach Medicine Hat fohdn.

Es ist nit dos nichts *geused* wäd. Ich mahn uft kummt wos auf fir *ulcer* und suti, tiem sie ach oltr *remedies*. Ich kann sie hetzt nicht *namin* wos *geused* wäd, obr es sei Leit wos es brauchen. Do hobn sey hetzt krod a *solution* fir *cataracts* in Auge: *apple cider vinegar* und honig und *distilled water*. Dey dreier zommton und dr Auge denweg auswaschen. Es war fir *cataracts*. Ich wass es nit ob dos schon gehulfet, dos san Leit wos es tiem. Ich *even* hob dos Auge heuer im dreißigsten April geschnieten. Und dos [die andre Auge] do wird vleicht in a Jahr fertig san, obr ich probiere hetzt grod dos *remedy*. Ich hob's angmocht, es brennt obr - nicht wo ich es gschnitten hot. Es kummt von my Schwogr. Dey hobe ich hetzt *gemeetet* bei dr Gman wo dr Vettr gstorbn ist. Er sogt es

mocht die Augen so macklich. Wann es tuit olba brennen, du mießt dreißig Mol *blinken*. Ich mahn suligr Dinge wädn nuch viel gton in dr Gman. Sie hobn ach fir *ulcer* oder even fir *piles* (fir *hemorrhoids*).

Ich mahne, ich bin *sure* es sa wo Leit die so was aufgeschrieben hot. Olles kann sey nit beholten. Ich hob nit genug Zeit ghobt dey hetzt zu frogn [referring here to her cousin who has written many medicinal plant and home remedies]. Eben sowie dos Pfefferminzkraut. My Basl (*a midwife*) hot Pfefferminzkraut (es schmeckt richtig nach *peppermint*) und na hot sie ihn gkucht und in dr *toilet bowl* hot sie in dr Haisle und drauf sitzen vor<sup>3</sup> dre Kind. Dey hot *cocoa butter* eingemocht. Vor dos labor ist gwesn, dos *cocoa butter* inwendig tun [she goes to close the door] *if it was false labor* - es lusst es san *contractions* obr es tiem nichts. [*Whispering*] Ich findet es san Leit wos dos nuch tiem. Odr wann a *miscarriage* ist oder suti, es sei viel *remedies* wos ich nit waß, wos ich ach vergessen hob obr wos die Leit *usin* - wenn ich kola *at all* wos helf.

Vlleicht wär ich, wenn du auf's Jahr wieder wärst hintr kummen, vleicht wär ich ach nit mehr leben *you never know*. Obr vleicht wär ich, waßt, wann du mit die ältere Leit zommkummst, wann du redst, von dey kann ich a Bißel *notes* mochn dos ich dir die Nomen kennet besser sogn. Hetzt do bei dr Leicht sei sey do gwesn, obr iss nit genuig Zeit fir dos. Warum? Es kumme so viel Leit. Es ist schod dos du nit außergekommen bist. Ich hob ach zu dr Zech gsogt ich wullet dich *funen* obr Schowna konnst du glauben *it slipped my mind*.

### **Von my Muiutr lernen**

In an Weg ich wass ich bin grod so wie my Muiutr. My Muiutr hot dos "Klana Biechl" irgendwos gekentt wenn my Voter wird wos singen mit uns . . . wasst, ba Liedonstog, bei singen? Und wonn er unrecht Ontzog hot, dey ist grod zu schorf gwesn, und so bin ich heit nuch. *Well* dey ist ins Haus gwesn. Sie hot uns glernt nahne und kuchen und olles.

Olle Muiutr hobn sandre Kindr glernt stricke und nahne. (She calls to Lydia to bring her bag of knitting – "Bring krod so dr *sok* her!") Ich bin nine Jahr olt gwesn ols my Muiutr mich glernt stricken. [*Seven of her grandchildren come into the house and the*

*conversation shifts for a moment*]. Wasst du wie viel [Enkelkinder] ich hob? Draundvierzig. Ich hob zehn gheiratete Kinder.

In andr weg hot die Muittr uns viel glernt obr my Votr, ich hob a huche Ehren, doß er einfoch so ist gwesn und uns recht aufgezogen hot. *My Dad he was very religious*. Er ist Schullehrer gwesn und dr hot olba olba verzählt, doß wir nier den Himmlvotr vergessen und dos lebt on. My Votr hot von dr Bibl uns viel mehr gsogt wie my Muitter. Sie hot nit viel Zeit ghobt. Dr Votr kann die Kindr mehr lernen *cause* dey Muittr muß nahne und stricken. Jeder Diene mießt stricke lerne [und] merke (*cross stich'n*). Jede Diene hot a *cross stich* mit ABC'ne und *flowers* und hobn mer die Buah Hondtiechl gmerkt. [*Elizabeth's husband comes out from his bedroom and teasingly asks, "Did you tell her that you were pretty windich?"*]

S: Windich?

E: Buabisch . . . und ich bin die dritt älteste gwesn. Ich hob my älteste Schwester gholfn. Jo ich hob so a Natur ghobt, ich hob my Muittr gholfen. Ich hob gsogt sey hot finfzehner Kinder ghob und natierlich so a Muittr hot nicht die Melich wos sey hot bei die erschten. Obr in dey Tog hobn sey kane Bodille ghobt. Und dey orme Kindr, wann sie nit gnug gkriegt bei dr Muittr dann hobn sey nit gkennt schlofen in dr Nocht. [*The children are whispering louder and louder into the recorder*]. Und dr Votr ist ach olt gwesn, (er iss schon sechs Jahr olter wie sie) und hot er sey ghauet dey Kindr und hob ich dey uft in my Bett gnomme. Sie hot olba gsogt wenn ich my Elizabeth nit hät. Ich hob einfoch so a Natur ghobt, ich hobe nit gkennt sechen dr Votr dey klane Kinder haue. Unsere jüngste, dey hot sie nuch af dre Bodile gton. Odr wie sey gzeppft wor. Sie hot vier Diendle ghobt. Ich hob dey Klane gezeppft. Host du schon gsehn so zeppfle?

### **Corn Blutschne, Bockfetsen, und die Bibel**

S: *What sort of lessons did your parents pass on to you?*

E: Our mother and father they taught us so that we saved everything and stayed together and you don't forget that. Sparen (savin, nit?) dos wän mr von Kind auf glernt. Dos geht mit mir gleich weiter. Mr hom glernt du mußt fir olles orbeitn. "*Spar in dr Zeit so host du*

*in dr Not.*” *No matter* wieviel ich ach olba hob ghobt von Zeich und olles (die *Hutterites* hom genugn Stoff und olles) ich kann a fertiges Ding nit wegschlogn. Ich prowied wos anders draus mochn. Ach so iss es mit Essenstoff. Su iss es bei meine Muittr ach gwesn. Sie hot mich glernt wie mon sporen tuit.

Mir hom *even* noch, es hot Blutschne ghassn, Corn Blutschne. Die Corn Blutschne, waßt, die *outside*, die *husk*? Hom mr dos getrickelt. In dey Togn iss nit so viel gwesn und hom mr Blutschrsäck anstots Feder *geused*. Heit hom mer hetzt *sponges* fir dos. *Instead of a boxspring*, Blutschne sei’s gwesn untrrun in dei Bett. Und host du a Feder Ding ghobt obndriebr. Suti, wann mer heiret, kriegn sie *a set* und noch a Untrpultschtr wenn mr kei *boxsprings* hom. Ich wass vo uns nit so viel *change*, *see* dos hot die Muittr ghob. Obr wie mir noch mehr *advanced* sei gwesn und noh hom mr Feder geschliessen (die große Feder hom mir dey einegton). Und noch hom mir die klana Stängl von die klandre Feder *mitgemixt*. Noch die Corn Blutschne sei dey gwesn. Dos iss ans sichr, *because* dey große Feder dey wädn sonst wegschlogn. Ich *bet* dich, doß meine erschte Schlofbonk wie ich gheiratet hob, iss noch suligr mit Stängl gwesn von Gons untrrun. *See* a Schlofbonk iss kola a Brett. Ich mahn der *change* wass ich.

Je länger man redt, dey mehr kummt’s Ham bei mir. Man denkt einfoch ach nimmer so leicht obr wenn man redt da kummt’s du hintr. Oh ja Lieber [*to Lydia*] mir hom in unsr Schlofbonk getrickelte Corn Blutschne ghobt untrrun (*dried cornstalks underneath*) [*Lydia laughs in disbelief and asks “Hom sey grauscht?”*]. *Sure* hom sie grauscht! Noh iss es a Bißel besser gwordn mit Stängl eingmisch. *See* dann iss es ach nit so muisig (weich wordn). [*She holds up a boy’s suit that she is mending and the conversation changes*].

Die erschte *suit* wos a Mandel hot, es trogt sie nit so long und dann gibt sie san Geschwester - *usually they go down to the younger brother and if not of any use any more for garage rags*. So tiem sie: mochn kleineres won das *material* noch guit ist. Wann a Familie groß ist, *reusin’* sie viel, Phadtlen [und] Hosen wonn’s nimmr zu brauchen; *even* zu rugs striken. Wann dos Klad Tsaich fit iss dann tiem mr dos fir Injinefetsen – waßt, fir die *hands* obputzen? Dos *interlock* iss nit so guit su putzen sowie *sheer*. A Wannig zu Beispiel, dey *side* putz guit. Erscht, ich geb’s in dr *garage* bei *usin* dr *truk*

Mensch. Den gebe ich fir Woschfetslen. *I [also] give them to my son Joe, the mechanic, to wipe his greasy hands.* Und die Kietl, die tiem mr fir Kehdmsäcke (*bags to dry sunflower seeds*), or even for Bockfetsen (*baking pads when we put it out from a hot oven*). Hondschicht mochn mr ach mit dre Kietl. Dos iss a großes por Hondschicht. [*Lydia comes out with an old skirt and a pattern for gardening gloves made from a used calendar*]. Goatn Hondschicht; ach fir schlofen san sie erbamlich guit.

Und mr gebn die Mennonites ach olta Tsaich. Mennonites kummn do, und sogn sie hätten keine *material*, sie wädn orm. Und mr gebn sey was mir hetzt nit mehr *usin* und wullet's nit wegschlogen. Sie sogn sie mochn sich Kladr von seyn. Olles was mon kann, tiem mr. Es iss heitzutog scho viel was nimmer hot. [*She continues organizing the size of Kappele by size and laughs when she sees one that is numbered "null"*]. Iss dos nit lieb? Dos ist a Kunst gwesn.

Und noch deutlicher können wir an unsern Voreltern sechen, wie sie nur heut auf morgen san gwesn. Wann sie hobn gmeint sie hobn sich was aufbaut, san die Räuber kummn und hom ihnen verbrennt und ach gstuhln. Dos hot a große *influence* in mr wie unsr Vorväter san *getreated* wordn. Und wonn dey nit viel ghob hot, warum wädn mir gehn und so viel verschwenden? Mir tiem so richtig. Das ist von wo wir das allermeiste glernt hobn von sparen. Wär noch viel mehr zu anzeigen wann die Zeit wär. *You're doing a good job dear.*

S: *What has Christianity taught you about not wasting?*

E: *There are so many passages in the Bible that tell us that we should not waste. But a person has to read his Bible, as is written in the New Testament. In St. Luke. 12 sogt's:*

*Es war ein reicher Mensch, des Geld hatte wohl getragen. Und er gedachte bei ihm selbst und sprach: Was soll ich tun? . . . Das will ich tun: Ich will meine Scheunen abbrechen, und größere bauen, und will drein sammeln alles . . . und meine Güter. Und will sagen zu meiner Seele: Liebe Seele, du hast einen großen Vorrat auf viel Jahre; habe nun Ruhe, iss, trink, und habe guten Mut. Aber Gott sprach zu ihm: Du Narr, diese Nacht wird man deine Seele von dir fordern; und wes wird's sein, das du bereitet hast? Also gehet es, wer sich Schätze sammelt, und ist nicht reich in Gott.*

*So we shall be rich in God and at the same time we should not waste.* Mancher denkt, nun will ich gut essen und trinken von meinen Gütern und er weiß nicht, daß sein Stündlein so nahe ist und muß alles ändern lassen und sterben. Les das ganze Kapitel oder auch den ganzen Sirach. Auf einer Stelle sagt er, "Spar in der Zeit so hast du in der Not." Evangelium Johannes 6 Vers 12 hat unsre Heilung gesagt, "Sammelt die übrigen Brocken das nichts umkomme." Das lernt uns sparen, nicht Shauna? Sowie die Sirach sagt in 18 Kapitel 25: *"If you have enough thing when you can get poor again. If you're full think when you can get hungry again. From morning to evening time can change. A wise man is always sure of himself and thinks on that."* So it's better not to waste.

## **ADULT REFLECTIONS**

### ***My Mother's Ordeal und Gebet***

*My mother's name was Sanna. When mom was 49 and a half years old she had a stroke on the right side that left her paralyzed. She couldn't do anything anymore. She lived two months less than twenty-five years after that. She was a big woman, one hundred and seventy pounds. My father took good care of her, dressed her all the years, said their prayers with her out loud, read and sang to her without stopping. My mother couldn't do it herself. I mean she could understand everything fine, but she couldn't read. That was hard for my father. Since the four oldest were married, the single ones took care of her. She also had sisters come and they would take turns every two weeks. She couldn't talk the first four to six months.*

*There was a midwife, one who had lost her husband in the war on the same colony, and she had lots of remedies. She steamed her with towels and blankets, her entire body, so in time she started to talk. She massaged her as well. She got better so that she could walk with her cane but there was always somebody near who watched her. Then three years before she died she had another stroke on her left side that took her speech. She couldn't use her left hand anymore, so from then on she was bedridden 'til she died. She was forty-nine years old. We weren't with our Mother when it happened. We had already married off and I already had three children.*

Sie hot olbr gsungen obr nit nach der *stroke*. Sey hot mr olba gsogt, “Wenn ich gonz allan bin do in Haus da tue ich ‘Christus dr Herr in Goatn ging.’” Weißt du wos dos fir a Liedl iss? Von dr Kreizigung (*when they crucified our Lord*). Ich schlof nit ein af dr Nocht wenn ich mir dos nit aufsog. Es sa zwelf Vers. Olla Tog vor’n einschlofn sog ich dos Gebet.

*Christus dr Herr in Garten ging  
 Sein bitteres Leid da anfing.  
 Dos ihn sein Haus von Blutschweiß naß.  
 Da trauet Laub und grünes Grass . . .  
 Sull ich’s dir aufsogn?  
 Da kamen die falschen Juden gegangen  
 Verstehst du wos?  
 Sie täten den Herrn in Garten fangen  
 Sie täten ihn Geiseln und Krönen  
 Sein heiliges Haut auch sehr verhölen . . .*

[*She forgets the next line and surprises herself. She goes to get her Songbook (Liedlbuch). Before she continues reading the prayer she says, “My und ich hob nier kein trubbl wenn ich in Bett tue!”*] Und a Mensch wos olba af den denkt kann nit folln kann er? *Hopefully.*

### **Meines Voters Glauben**

Ich wass es guit ich hob olba daheim gsungen. My Muittr hot mich manixsmol “*Professor*” ghasn – [das heißt] ich sull scho mol aufhörn singen. Und my Votr hot olba gsogt, “loß sie singe wenn sie singen will.” My Votr iss a *religious* Mensch gwesn und dr iss so blicbn bis on End. Dr Himmlvotr hot schon gsog: “Wer beharret bis das Ende, der wird selig.” Und dos iss er. Dr hot mit nichtst nochgebn wenn wer gonge ist ohne Huit oder wer kan Tiechl aufgehobt in Haus hot, dos hot er nit nochgebn, nah! Wasst dr iss zu uns kumme spazieren, du host nit gekennt afstehn vorschlofn wenn er kummt: “Dein Tiechl, setz dei Tiechl af!” So ist er einfoch gwesn [*laughing*]. *Well* er ist stondbhof blicbn bis on End. Der hot uns recht aufgzogn. Dey Dinger wos er dir gsogt hot, dos Guite und dos Schlechte, dos vergesst mon nit.

## Taufe, Heireten, und Familie

S: What were the most important events growing up?

E: *Well baptism is da most wichtigste in my life, wos ich waß. Do host du'n Himmlvotr versprochen trei zu san in dr Gman. Ich mah'n mit a Mensch zomm leben ist ach wichtig und dey Kindr aufziehn. Mir hobn's ach bemahnt ton, recht aufziehn. (Laughing) I suppose everybody is dreaming about having a boyfriend. I guess so, because we're all human. Mir san ach nit onderscht wie die outsiders. I had a crush on my husband ever since I laid eyes on him and I guess he had it to. [He yells from the bedroom, "Is that about me?"] Well jo ich mah'n, doß is af wos mir gdocht hobn, wann mon a junge Dien iss gwesn, heiraten. Mon feels left out wenn mon nit hot, cause es lusst sich gehär'n nindisch hin wenn sie nit gheirat hobn. When I saw him for the first time and I thought I could love him. It's for the boys to come and see the girls. He came over to Hutterville four years before we were married. We get married after your baptised. You can't get married before your baptised.*

Ich hob gheirat und hob zwölf Kinder ghobt. Ich hob olle Jahr a Kind ghobt: sieben boys ghobt und finf Diene. Ander die älter ist *born in sixty-six*. Der ist schon finf Jahr bei Schwan. *The youngest*, der iss hetzt achtundzwanzig Jahr. *He got married in June*. Und dra hobn mer bei Milford glossen, ach verheiratet. Und die Tächter sin ach verstraht. Und dey [Lydia] ist Ham mit uns. Dey hot *epilepsy* ghobt vo dra Jahr on. Einfoch sie hot olba *seizures* ghobt und hetzt sechs Jahr hinter hot sie *head surgery* ghobt. Sie hot's nimmr. Sie hot obr ach *siliac disease*. Weißt du was dos ist? Sie muß af a *gluten-free diet* (extras Brot extras Gerschtl). Olles wos mon kuchen kann mon kan weißes Mehl rein tun.

## Der Pfad zu Himmel

Ich bin hetzt schon ochtundsechzig Jahr obr dos kummt mir olba mehr und mehr vier wie dr Himmlvotr duit mit dr Kindr von Israel. Duit ist streng gwesn, strenger wie mir heit san. Am Sontig hot andr kola Holz afglegt werd, einebrocht fir Feuer am Sabbath Tog. Wann den a andre gsehn hot, iss er vor Moses gmießt kumme, hot sey ausgfirt und gstanigt. Wos sull er denken, es ist Sabbath Tog. *Think of the Sabbath Day*

– *six days* sei gwesn, *were made to work*, and dr siebeter (*the seventh*) is heilig gwesn. *It was in their laws that they shouldn't work on Sundays and if they saw somebody even pick up a bundle of wood for the fire, they told Moses and they took that person* und die Kindr Israel hobn ihn gstanigt! So streng ist dr Himmlvotr. Wenn mer dos olle Jahr härt, mer hobn von dr gonze bäs'n *examples, bad examples* [von] wonn dr Himmlvotr dey gstrofft hot. Wenn du dos olle Jahr, olle Jahr härst, dos versichert dich nuch mehr, dos mer af dr rechtr Weg san. Er hot nittla bei dr Kindr Israel dos gton, ach untr uns passiert uft wos. Er strofft uns ach.

Sowie die Wegglufener (wos von dr Gman wegglufen san), wos iss da vor zwa Wuchn passiert? Andr von dr Crystal Spring Colony zu Oschen verbrennt. *That was a bad one* [sighing]. Host du schon ach gsehn in dr Zeitung? Und [er] iss nit dr Erschte, doß sei schon viel vo unsr Leit wos dos passiert ist. *I was taught that from two years on to think I was lost without* die Gman. Wo taten mer bleibn wenn mer dr Himmlvotr nit hät? Ich hob zwelf Kinder ghobt. My Lydia is a *exceptional* Kind gwesn. Sie ist kronk gwesn, von drei Jahr on hot sie die *seizures*, die *epilepsy* und *celiac disease*. Sey iss erbarmlich kraksick gbliebn und schwoch. Dos hot olles aus ihr Kerper auß'nommen. Und so a Dinge bringt dich olba gleimr (näher) zu Himmlvotr, nit weg. Wos ich den anbelangt Lieber, mer hobn den Glaubn dos mer af'n rechtr Weg sei. Ich will nemmt verdomme, und tue ach nit, obr mir san af dr rechtn Weg. Die Gmahnschoft ist dos Rechtr. So guit hot's kan Mensch wie mir - so guit kummt's mir vier.

*I don't know what I should tell you more. I was telling you about that boy that got killed in 1934. His brother got killed in 1943, nine years later. Same family. Oh it was so hard. Oh jo they went to Heaven. They were only fifteen years old. You're not baptised. Well if you're old enough, and know what's right and wrong, then you should be. Oh jo, you believe.* Wer glaubet und getauft wird . . . der wird selig sein.

*Here is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm I would like you to end my interview with:*

*Der Herr ist mein Hirt, mir wird nichts mangeln.. Er weidet mich auf gruenen Auen, er fuehrt mich zu stillen Wassern. Er erquickt meine Seele. Er leitet mich in Pfaden der Gerechtigkeit um seines Namens willen. Auch wenn ich wandere im Tal des Todeschattens, fuerchte ich kein Unheil, denn du bist bei mir, dein Stecken und dein Stab, sie trösten mich. Du bereitest vor mir einen Tisch angesichts meiner Feinde; du hast mein*

*Haupt mit Öl gesalbt, mein Becher fließt über. Nur Güte und Gnade  
werden mir folgen alle Tage meines Lebens; und ich kehre zurück ins  
Haus des Herrn lebenslang. Amen*

*May the Good Lord lead us till the end.*



**Illus. 3: Elizabeth (right) and youngest daughter Lydia (left)**



**Illus. 4: Elizabeth with her granddaughters**

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LaTosky, S.L. "Abusers or Caring Users? The Life History as a Method for Understanding Hutterian Perceptions of Nature." *The Centre for Studies in Religion and Society Graduate Student Publication*, University of Victoria, 1998-1999, 67 – 82.


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