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**Amish Paradise or Paradise Lost?  
(Effects of tourism upon Amish communities)**

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Prehlasujem, že som túto diplomovú prácu vypracovala samostatne a uviedla úplný zoznam citovanej a použitej literatúry.

V Olomouci dňa .....

.....  
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Chcela by som sa týmto poďakovať vedúcemu práce, za ochotu a pomoc pri spracovaní.

V Olomouci dňa 7.5. 2015

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to introduce and discuss the complexity of the Amish tourist industry that has developed in many Amish settlements throughout the years.

This is because I believe that the Amish community presents a rather intriguing phenomenon in the field of American Studies. However, I think this subject is often overlooked in terms of academic debate and does not get the attention it would deserve on the Czech academic platform.

One of the most current issues regarding the Amish society is tourism. It is quite surprising that the strictly religious community is nowadays in the minds of many a symbol for popular tourist destination of a paradise-like quality. This thesis will try to provide an insight into this matter and clarify this perception of the Amish. It will be discussed in what aspect the Amish settlements might be compared to a paradise, and if at all.

But first of all, the Amish population will be introduced. The story of their origin as well as the main aspects of their culture will be introduced. This part should serve as a basis for a better understanding of the Amish community, and hence also the issues connected with them and discussed afterwards.

Then the thesis will attempt to clarify the circumstances that initiated the tourism development in the Amish areas. Precisely, how the public learnt about the Amish and why people started to take interest in them. Further, the areas with the most-developed tourist industry will be introduced. Consequently, it will be analyzed what tourist industry has to offer to the potential visitors as well as how is Amish tourism marketed.

In succession to the previous part, I will discuss the issue of Amish tourism from the perspective of the Amish. In this regard, I will try to show how the Amish react to the tourism. It will be discussed whether the Amish are willing to engage in the tourist industry, or not. And if yes, in which ways they participate and what are their motivations to do so.

Afterwards, the focus will be shifted on the tourists. It will be questioned what kind of tourists come to the Amish counties and what inspires their visit.

Finally, the changes the tourism brought to the Amish life will be analyzed and the possible impacts it might have upon the communities in the future.

At this point, the sources that I will use will be briefly introduced. Regarding the literature, it should be noted that the literature written on the subject is limited. The basic sources that will be used are *Amish Society* by the Amish-born sociologist John A. Hostetler, and *The Riddle of Amish Culture* by college professor Donald B. Kraybill. Hostetler serves as a leading scholar of ‘Amish Studies,’ and although his works are not the most current, they are still considered very relevant and are cited by practically everyone who publishes on the subject of Amish. These works will serve as a basis for the chapters on Amish origin and culture.

In chapters about tourism, more specialized and up-to-date publications, such as *Selling the Amish: The Tourism of Nostalgia* by Susane Trollinger and *The Amish* by Donald Kraybill et al. (published in 2012 and 2013, respectively) will take over the lead. In addition, different research articles regarding the matter from various perspectives conducted in the Amish-populated areas will be discussed and compared with each other as well with the theoretical basis provided by the publications above.

I will also be using the work by the scholar David Luthy, who was born Amish. I believe his insight could prove to be beneficial for my work as he has a first-hand account of Amish experience, and hence can provide an authentic insight on the matter.

## **2. THE ORIGIN OF THE AMISH**

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the historical background of the Amish. The origins of the Amish can be traced back to the religious group of Anabaptists which originated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe. The chapter will proceed from these early beginnings and formation of the Anabaptist movement up to the circumstances that led to the Amish division. Further, their emigration to the United States will be discussed as well as the challenges they had to face after the emigration, leading to the present state of fragmentation within the Amish community.

### **2.1. 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe and Reformation**

The religious climate in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe was rather tense. There was growing dissatisfaction in the society with the doings of the Catholic Church and more and more people started to show interest in joining some of the newly emerging radical religious movements. That was because they considered the Catholic Church to be exploitative, legalistic and irrelevant.<sup>1</sup>

The rebellion against the social system led to several religious wars. Probably the most prominent figure of the reformatory period is Martin Luther, who was fighting for changes within the Catholic Church and is also a founder of the Lutheran Church. Among other prominent reformers, whose reforms are perceived as more liberal than Luther's, were Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin who are considered founders of the Reformed Church in Switzerland. Although these reformers brought some vital changes to the Church, they still faced disapproval from the more radical movement. This called for more thorough changes, such as rejection of infant baptism and separation of church and state. The movement became known as the Anabaptist movement and is considered to be a predecessor of the Amish church.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 25-26.

<sup>2</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 26.

## 2.2. Anabaptists

The main characteristic of the Anabaptists was the already-mentioned refusal to baptize infants. They claimed that infant baptism was not supported by the *Scripture* as a new-born does not possess the knowledge of good and evil. Hence, it can not have any sin that should be removed by the act of baptism. Nevertheless, the rejection of infant baptism was not the only concern of the Anabaptist movement. They also called for social and economic reforms, and therefore represented a great danger for many religious and social institutions across Europe.<sup>3</sup>

An important date in Anabaptist history is February, 1527. It marks a secret conference of the Anabaptist leaders. Here, the declaration of ‘Brotherly Union’ was issued. This declaration, also known as Schleithem articles, consists of seven articles which are still considered to serve as the basic guidelines applied in the lives of the Amish.<sup>4</sup> The emphasis lies upon the importance of the *New Testament* as a guiding authority for everyday life. The seven articles represent the following religious beliefs:<sup>5</sup>

1. *Adult baptism*
2. *The church as a covenant community*
3. *Exclusion of errant members from the community*
4. *Literal obedience to the teachings of Christ*
5. *Refusal to swear oaths*
6. *Rejection of violence*
7. *Social separation from the evil world*

At their time, the Anabaptists were seen as a threat to the authorities. For this reason the Anabaptist groups were persecuted, tortured, imprisoned and consequently murdered. This oppression lasted for nearly two centuries. An important reminder of those times is the 1100 pages-long book *Martyrs Mirror* which chronicles the stories of the Anabaptist persecution and is still to be found and read in many Amish households.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 26-27.

<sup>4</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Donald B. Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. 2nd ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 5-6.

<sup>6</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 5-6.

### 2.2.1. Martyrs Mirror

*Martyrs Mirror* (also referred to as *Bloody Theatre*) is a collection of the works of various authors. It was first published in 1660 by Dutchman Tieleman Jansz van Braght. Van Braght served as a Mennonite minister in the Dordrecht congregation and according to Studer was “the greatest of all the Mennonite martyrologists.”<sup>7</sup> The original version of the book was titled *Het Bloedigh Tooneel der Doops-Gesinde en Weereuloosen Christenen* and was published as a single volume (later editions appeared as two volumes) with two title pages.<sup>8</sup>

In the book, the accounts of “at least 4,011 burnings of individuals are recorded, besides numerous stonings, crucifixions, imprisonments, decapitations, brandings, severed tongues, ears, hands, feet, etc., gouged eyes, rackings, burials alive, suffocations, whippings, and so on, treatment as torturous and as varied as the imaginations of heathen and the belligerents of Christendom will allow.”<sup>9</sup> Additionally, the book also contains the letters of farewell, testimony, etc. as well as formal confessions of faith and an in-depth debate about the purpose and meaning of the baptism.<sup>10</sup>

Chronologically, the content of the volume is divided into three parts. In the first one, Van Braght chronicles the history of martyrdom from the time of Jesus Christ to the end of the Middle Ages. The second part gives an account of the lives of Anabaptists in the period from 1524 to 1660. This section is a compilation of confessions, letters, hymns, and other records. The last part is represented by the letter of intercession from 1660 on behalf of the Anabaptists.<sup>11</sup>

Studer explains that the Anabaptists felt closely connected to the martyrs’ tradition. It was the reason why they collected all the available martyr stories. The intention was to inspire the readers with these heroic stories, and help them to boost their courage to defend their faith despite the difficult times.<sup>12</sup>

Even today, the Amish perceive themselves as peculiar people. Buck explains that “to be Amish is to take a vow of peculiarity.”<sup>13</sup> All good Amishmen consider themselves

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<sup>7</sup> Gerald C. Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 22 (1948): 169.

<sup>8</sup> Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” 169-170.

<sup>9</sup> Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” 171.

<sup>10</sup> Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” 171.

<sup>11</sup> Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” 171.

<sup>12</sup> Studer, “A History of the Martyrs' Mirror,” 171.

<sup>13</sup> Roy C. Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” *Rural Sociology* 43, no.2 (1978): 228.

‘chosen people’ who were persecuted and martyred over the centuries. This historical background provides the Amish with a strict discipline for their community life.<sup>14</sup>

### **2.3. Jacob Ammann and the Amish division**

As a result of the persecution, many Anabaptists migrated to the northern Europe region. Arguably the most influential Anabaptist leader in the Netherlands was Menno Simmons, who was originally a member of the Catholic Church. However, he acknowledged the Anabaptist interpretation of the Scripture and left the Catholic Church in 1536. Soon after that he became a prominent preacher of the Anabaptist movement. His followers were called ‘Mennists’ or ‘Mennonites’. The name ‘Mennonites’ was later adopted by the Swiss Anabaptists who came to America and the name is still used today.<sup>15</sup>

Jacob Ammann is the personality behind the Amish division of the Anabaptists (also often referred to as Swiss Mennonites). He is believed to have been born in Switzerland, later relocating to Alsace, where he became a local spokesperson of the Anabaptists.<sup>16</sup>

The Amish division was a result of a sequence of conflicts that originated between the original group of Anabaptists in Switzerland and its branch in Alsace. The events surrounding the division can be recollected on the basis of the letters written during that time by several prominent representatives of the Anabaptist Church.<sup>17</sup>

It is believed that it all started in the summer of 1693, when Jacob Amman urged other congregations to support his idea that the annual communion should be held twice, instead of once a year. This proposition, however, did not cause a problem because the congregations did not oppose Ammann. The representatives agreed that holding the communion once a year is sufficient, but when someone could prepare himself twice, they can hold the communion twice a year.<sup>18</sup>

Consequently, Ammann began to focus on another issue - *Meidung*. *Meidung* denotes the practice of social avoidance towards the excommunicated members. Whereas Swiss Anabaptists practiced the excommunication according to Schleithem articles (see 2.2),

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<sup>14</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 228.

<sup>15</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 31-39.

<sup>17</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 33.

<sup>18</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 33.

they did not practice *Meidung*. However, Anabaptists in Alsace did and, in addition, practiced also foot washing. Both these practices are in compliance with Dordrecht Confession of Faith of 1632.<sup>19</sup> These two issues are dealt with in the following *Articles XI* and *XVII*:

### ***Article XI. Of the Washing of the Saints' Feet***

*We also confess a washing of the saints' feet, as the Lord Christ not only instituted, enjoined and commanded it, but Himself, although He was their Lord and Master, washed His apostles' feet, thereby giving an example that they should likewise wash one another's feet, and do as He had done unto them; which they accordingly, from this time on, taught believers to observe, as a sign of true humility, and, especially, to remember by this feet washing, the true washing, whereby we are washed through His precious blood, and made pure after the soul. John 13:4-17; I Timothy 5:10.*<sup>20</sup>

### ***Article XVII. Of Shunning the Separated***

*Concerning the withdrawing from, or shunning the separated, we believe and confess, that if any one, either through his wicked life or perverted doctrine, has so far fallen that he is separated from God, and, consequently, also separated and punished by the church, the same must, according to the doctrine of Christ and His apostles, be shunned, without distinction, by all the fellow members of the church, especially those to whom it is known, in eating, drinking, and other similar intercourse, and no company be had with him that they may not become contaminated by intercourse with him, nor made partakers of his sins; but that the sinner may be made ashamed, pricked in his heart, and convicted in his conscience, unto his reformation. I Corinthians 5:9-11; II Thessalonians 3:14.*<sup>21</sup>

*Yet, in shunning as well as in reproof, such moderation and Christian discretion must be used, that it may conduce, not to the destruction, but to the reformation of the sinner. For, if he is needy, hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, or in any other distress, we are in duty bound, necessity requiring it, according to love and the doctrine of Christ and His apostles, to render him aid and assistance; otherwise, shunning would in this case tend more to destruction than to reformation. Therefore, we must not count them as enemies, but admonish them as brethren, that thereby they may be brought to a knowledge of and to repentance and sorrow for their sins, so that they may become reconciled to God, and consequently be received again into the church, and that love may continue with them, according as is proper. II Thessalonians 3:15.*<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, s.v. "Dordrecht Confession of Faith (Mennonite, 1632)."

<sup>20</sup> *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, s.v. "Dordrecht Confession of Faith (Mennonite, 1632)."

<sup>21</sup> *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, s.v. "Dordrecht Confession of Faith (Mennonite, 1632)."

<sup>22</sup> *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, s.v. "Dordrecht Confession of Faith (Mennonite, 1632)."

Jacob Ammann supported and advocated both of these practices and since the congregations across Switzerland did not unanimously supported these, he and three other Alsatian ministers visited several Swiss congregations and discussed these issues on numerous meetings. The most important matter was the practice of *Meidung*. Nevertheless, he was also interested in their opinions on two other topics. These were: 1) whether true-hearted persons (non-Anabaptist sympathizers) should be saved and 2) if members who were found guilty of telling a falsehood should be expelled from the church. Ammann was very persistent regarding these issues and finally succeeded in division of the congregations into two opposing groups.<sup>23</sup> In 1700, Ammann and his somewhat established 'Amish party' tried to make amends with the other congregations and even admitted that his actions were probably too rash and hasty. But reconciliation did not happen due to Ammann's opinion about *Meidung* which he held firmly and refused to surrender. Moreover, the debate over the foot washing was still an issue. And hence, many congregations were against the reunion.<sup>24</sup>

Hostetler hints that the real reason behind the Amish division is not so much the conflict over the reforms as Ammann's own personality and leadership ambitions. Even Ammann's contemporaries viewed him as a confident and stubborn man, deeply convinced about the rightness of his opinions.<sup>25</sup>

Another part of the Ammann controversy was that he preached strongly against trimming one's beard and fashionable clothing.<sup>26</sup> Later, the buttons represented the distinction between the Mennonites and the Amish. Whereas Mennonites used buttons and were therefore called *Knöpflers*, the Amish were wearing eyes and hooks on their clothes and were referred to as *Häftlers*.<sup>27</sup>

Today, the Amish people still refer to themselves as Anabaptists or *Wiedertäfer*. However, most of them know very little about Jacob Ammann. Yet both the practices of foot washing and *Meidung* have been preserved within the Amish communities up to this day.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 38.

<sup>25</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 39.

<sup>26</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 39.

<sup>27</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 39.

<sup>28</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 47-48.

## 2.4. Migration to New World

Another major landmark in the Amish history was the mass immigration to the New World that started in the 1730s. In 1737, the ship *Charming Nancy* was the first known to carry a big group of Amish to the United States. Most of its passengers settled in the Northkill colony in southern Berks County, northeast of Lancaster. This colony is one of the first two known Amish settlements in America. The other one was located northeast of today's city of Lancaster and was called Old Conestoga. These two colonies are often labeled as 'mother colonies' of the present-day Lancaster Amish Country.<sup>29</sup>

## 2.5. Further Tensions and Splits

Amish settlers were not united when it came to certain religious questions. That resulted in further divisions of the Amish. Until 1850, Amish settlements were quite small and isolated. But as the industrialization began to gain prominence, the Amish started to differ in their opinions about the occurring changes. In order to discuss the differences regarding the cultural and religious practices, the first General Ministers' Conference took place in 1862. These conferences were held annually and were attended by Amish ministers from different states. They took place in big barns and were open for all members to attend and discuss the current issues affecting the Amish communities.<sup>30</sup>

Although General Ministers' Conferences proved to be helpful, they did not manage to resolve all important issues such as if members refusing to shun excommunicated members should be also expelled. The differences grew and it became more and more difficult for the congregations to find a common ground. That meant the end of not only the annual conferences in 1878, but also the attempts to unite the Amish on the national level.<sup>31</sup>

Since then, continual fragmentation of the Amish started to take place. After 1878, three prominent directions emerged: 1) Egli and Stuckey Amish who were the most progressive, 2) Old Order Amish who were the most traditional, and 3) Amish Mennonites

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<sup>29</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 9.

<sup>30</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 280.

<sup>31</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 280-281.

who were in favor of certain mild changes. The last group eventually merged with the Mennonite Church.<sup>32</sup>

### 2.5.1. Egli and Stuckey Amish

These groups united more progressive affiliations of Amish. They were both of Alsatian origin, but they have already abandoned some aspects of their traditional heritage.<sup>33</sup>

Egli Amish originated in 1866 when Henry Egli, an Amish bishop from Indiana experienced a ‘regeneration of the heart’ after a severe illness. He started to criticize the church and claimed it was lacking the spiritual vivacity and was ignorant towards the old traditions. He also began to rebaptize church members who have not experienced the heart regeneration during their first baptism. Consequently, the supporters of Egli started their own church. Egli gained many supporters from the other states such as Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, or Kansas. The main concern for Egli Amish was the individualistic religious experience. The Egli group slowly began to lose symbols typical for other Amish groups, such as plain dresses or German language. After Egli died in 1890, the group shifted its primary focus towards the missionary work. Nevertheless, in 1898 a discussion about immersion occurred which led to a further division of this group. One part of the members formed Missionary Church Association. The rest changed their name to ‘Defenseless Mennonite’ and eventually to Evangelical Mennonite Church.<sup>34</sup>

Stuckey group were supporters of bishop Joseph Stuckey who was a prominent figure in General Ministers’ Conferences. However, Stuckey was more open-minded about many current issues than majority of other Amish bishops of that time. He became a controversial figure after he defended the poem written by one of his church members. The poem expressed a belief that all men would be eventually saved. Such stance was considered a heresy among other bishops and affiliations. The ministers discussed the issue and decided that Stuckey must excommunicate the man who wrote the poem. Stuckey refused to obey as well as he refused to make a public confession. As a result, Stuckey and

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<sup>32</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 281.

<sup>33</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 281.

<sup>34</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 282.

members of his congregation formed in 1872 their own church. In 1899, the group was officially organized under the name Central Illinois Conference of Mennonites. After Stuckey's death in 1902, this group merged with the General Conference Mennonite Church.<sup>35</sup>

### 2.5.2. Old Order Amish and their branches

The term Old Order Amish (OOA), also referred to as 'Alt Amish,' is used to denote the congregations which favor retaining of the old traditions and try to avoid changes as much as possible.<sup>36</sup> Sometimes they are also called House Amish because they hold their church services in their houses.<sup>37</sup>

Those groups of OOA who were looking for more progressive approach tended to unite with the Amish Mennonite congregations after 1878. These changes have passed rather peacefully.

However, there were also several small OOA groups that existed separately from the Mennonite groups. In 1910, Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference was established. The word 'conservative' was used to mark their position somewhere in between the progressive Amish Mennonite congregations and the strictly traditional OOA groups. They held Sunday schools and supported evangelism as well as charitable work. They dropped the word 'Amish' eventually from their conference title in 1954.<sup>38</sup>

In 1927 the group of Beachy Amish was established from the OOA. The leading figure was the Pennsylvanian bishop Moses M. Beachy. Beachy experienced disagreements in questions regarding the way of conducting Sunday schools, use of electricity and automobiles. Those Amish that supported the use of automobiles, electricity and church houses joined the Beachy Amish. Despite the growing number of the affiliating congregations, Beachy Amish are not formally organized into a conference. There are also growing differences in the traditions and in the way of dressing between the Beachy Amish and the OOA. Moreover, Beachy Amish also use English instead of German in their preaching services.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 282-283.

<sup>36</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 281.

<sup>37</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 26.

<sup>38</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 283.

<sup>39</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 283-284.

Another prominent group which developed from OOA movement is known as ‘Nonconference Conservative Mennonites.’ This group first appeared around the year 1956. The members are prevalently former Beachy Amish and members of Mennonite congregations who were searching for a more conservative affiliation.<sup>40</sup>

Last well-known group that separated from OOA to be discussed is New Amish. They started to emerge in 1966 in Pennsylvania and Ohio. They differ greatly from OOA in their dress code, attitude towards technologies, use of tractors and other farm machinery, telephones and the dress code. Another notable difference is their negative stance towards tobacco and general preference of a healthier lifestyle. They, as the OOA, practice the religious services in their houses. In comparison to the Beachy Amish, New Amish do not allow the use of automobiles or church houses.<sup>41</sup>

All of these divisions enabled the OOA community to get rid of the ‘progressives.’ As a result, the Old Order Amish could keep most of their traditional values and traditions. Furthermore, they also managed to avoid the unnecessary worldliness in the form of technology and changes within their religious practices.<sup>42</sup>

It is still difficult for the OOA to maintain a balance between modernization and traditions. Generally, Amish way of life requires many sacrifices if they want to keep their tradition and church loyalty. Many Amish, who are not willing to make these sacrifices, join the more progressive branches. The question of how much modernization is acceptable is frequently debated among the ministers. When they are unable to reach an agreement, often a new congregation is formed.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 284.

<sup>41</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 284.

<sup>42</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 26.

<sup>43</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 126.

### **3. AMISH CULTURE**

This chapter will be dealing with the most crucial aspects of Amish culture. It should serve as a basis for a better understanding of Amish life and its fundamental principles. As was stated earlier, Amish people are a very heterogeneous community and hence it is difficult to make generalizations. However, there are some aspects which are typical of all the Amish communities which are to be described.

To be more precise, Amish life resolves itself into three basic components, namely school, church and home, which are closely intertwined and create the core of this chapter. In addition, the question of language will be dealt with as well as it also plays an important part in the Amish identity.

#### **3.1. Church and religious principles**

It was already mentioned that the Amish hold their religious services at home. One church district consists of several families. This means that the families attend religious services together. Every church district succumbs to the *Ordnung*, which serves as a model for the desired behavior. It contains prescriptions and restrictions regarding the Amish demeanor. *Ordnung* is handed down orally and reviewed twice a year before the Communion. Each congregation is entitled to the construction of their own version of *Ordnung*.<sup>44</sup>

The two cornerstones of the Amish spiritual life are obedience and separation. If one wants to live their life in harmony and receive God's blessings, then it is necessary for them to obey church doctrines and separate themselves from the world.<sup>45</sup>

Moreover, the rather abstract concept of *Gelassenheit* (submitting, yielding to a higher authority) plays an important role in the Amish religion and worldview. It means that one should yield to God's will by being obedient, humble and calm. This principle governs Amish behavior towards each other as well as their attitude towards the outside world. This principle stands in the contrast to the prevalent competitive and aggressive

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<sup>44</sup> Charles Hurst, and David McConell, *An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the World's Largest Amish Community* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 16.

<sup>45</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 22-23.

individualism of today's society. The focus of the Amish lies on the community instead of on the individual.<sup>46</sup>

### **3.2. School**

As much as education is valued in today's society, the opinion of education within the Amish communities is quite the opposite. According to Hostetler, education to the Amish "signifies self-advancement, independence, obtaining power over others, and disregard for the simple life."<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, true education helps to cultivate humility, obedience to God and simple living.

Most Amish children attend Amish schools; however, there are also Amish children who attend public schools. Nevertheless, public schools possess a certain threat to the Amish lifestyle in the eyes of many Amish. They prefer Amish schools because there they can teach the children what they consider important and do not need to worry about the dangers of technology. Amish schools are typically one-room schoolhouses. This means that all 8 grades learn their lessons in the same room. The pupils here are taught the 3 Rs – reading, arithmetic and writing.

The most prominent year for Amish schooling was 1972, when the United States Supreme Court in the case known as *Wisconsin vs. Yoder* ruled that Amish were allowed to end their formal schooling at 14 years of age. Study beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade is generally considered as unnecessary for the Amish way of life.<sup>48</sup>

### **3.3. Home and family life**

Family is a basic structural unit within the Amish culture, hence it is also perceived differently among the Amish and non-Amish people. A typical Amish family consists of two or three generations living together on a farm or in adjoining houses. Children are usually born at home. The family plays a key role in their life. It is frequent for an Amish

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<sup>46</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 29-30.

<sup>47</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 171.

<sup>48</sup> Hurst and McConell, *An Amish Paradox*, 141-144.

family to have five or more children. The grandparents typically retire on the farm because there are no such institutions such as retirement homes.<sup>49</sup>

The major functions of the Amish family are procreation, nurture and socialization. It is also important to mention that the family has an authority over the individual throughout their life. The Amish tend to assume traditional gender roles: while men work, women typically do not hold a job and take care of the household and children instead. However, the number of working Amish women has grown over the years (see also 6.3).<sup>50</sup>

### **3.4. Language**

A prominent constituent of Amish culture is the language. Most of the Amish population living in the United States is bilingual, as they speak English as well as Pennsylvania Dutch (also referred to as Pennsylvania German or Deitsch). Pennsylvania Dutch is a part of the cultural heritage Amish brought with them when they migrated to the United States in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It resembles German dialects spoken in the southeast Palatinate. Whereas Pennsylvania Dutch is spoken at home, English is spoken at school. This is because the Amish find it extremely important for their children to be able to communicate with the outside world, especially when they are engaged in the business sphere.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 13.

<sup>50</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 145-153.

<sup>51</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 13.

## 4. AMISH SETTLEMENTS

This chapter introduces the basic structural units of the Amish community. It also provides an overview of the largest Amish settlements in the United States and discusses the current population density of the Amish.

### 4.1. Structure of the Amish community

The structure of the Amish community is very specific and consists of several hierarchically arranged units. The smallest unit is the *family* unit. Other prominent structural units are *settlements*, *church districts* and *affiliations*.<sup>52</sup>

A *settlement* consists of Amish families that live in the same geographical location. The sizes of settlements differ greatly. There exist settlements that encompass several families only, but also settlements which encompass several thousand families. Within a settlement, there are also many non-Amish families to be found.

*Church district* (also *congregation*) is another very important structural unit within the Amish society. It is a unit that encompasses a specific geographical area within a *settlement*. It typically unites around 25-35 families. This depends on the number of people that can be accommodated for the church services in one farm dwelling as all of the Amish church services are held at home.<sup>53</sup> According to the statistics, approximately 52% of all Amish settlements have only one church district. On the other hand, bigger and older settlements such as Lancaster County have more than 195 congregations.<sup>54</sup>

The last structural unit to be described is *affiliation*. *Affiliation* is defined as a cluster of Amish congregations that follow similar religious practices and cooperate closely with one another.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 91.

<sup>53</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 13.

<sup>54</sup> "The Twelve Largest Amish Settlements (2014)," Elizabethtown College, accessed December 3, 2014, [http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest\\_Settlements\\_2014.asp](http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest_Settlements_2014.asp).

<sup>55</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 13-14.

## 4.2. Contemporary Amish settlements

As it was mentioned in 2.4, the oldest Amish settlement is Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. However, today the Amish can be found in various geographic locations across the North America.

According to statistics<sup>56</sup>, the Amish population is currently located in 30 American states and Canadian province of Ontario.

**Figure 1** shows settlement and district statistics from May 1, 2014. It can be seen that the three biggest Amish settlements are Lancaster County in Pennsylvania, Holmes County in Ohio and Elkhart/La Grange area in Indiana. About two-thirds of the overall Amish population (64%) lives in these states.<sup>57</sup>

**Figure 1 The Twelve Largest Amish Settlements**

Settlement	State	Estimated Number of Church Districts	Estimated Population
Lancaster County Area	Pennsylvania	197	32,900
Holmes County Area	Ohio	251	32,630
Elkhart/LaGrange Area	Indiana	163	22,820
Geauga County Area	Ohio	108	15,230
Adams County Area	Indiana	57	8,210
Nappanee Area	Indiana	42	5,590
Arthur Area	Illinois	30	4,200
Daviess County Area	Indiana	29	4,090
Mifflin County Area	Pennsylvania	28	3,360
Allen County Area	Indiana	21	3,025
Indiana County Area	Pennsylvania	21	2,795
New Wilmington Area	Pennsylvania	19	2,415

According to the same statistics, the contemporary Amish population is estimated to be 290,100, with a growth rate of 3 percent. That means an increase since 2013 of approximately 8,400 residents. In 2014, 11 new Amish settlements were established. That makes for the overall number of 480 Amish settlements. These new settlements are usually

<sup>56</sup> “The Twelve Largest Amish Settlements (2014).” Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College. [http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest\\_Settlements\\_2014.asp](http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest_Settlements_2014.asp).

<sup>57</sup> “The Twelve Largest Amish Settlements (2014).” Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College. [http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest\\_Settlements\\_2014.asp](http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest_Settlements_2014.asp).

very small, with only one congregation. The reasons behind the continuous growth of the Amish community are closely related to the size of the typical Amish family (parents usually have 5 or more children) and the rather favorable retention rate of around 85 %. That means that most of the Amish children get baptized as adults and hence they officially join the Amish church. It is also possible for outsiders to enter the Amish church; however this is not very common and has negligible influence on the growth of the Amish community.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> “The Twelve Largest Amish Settlements (2014),” Elizabethtown College, accessed December 3, 2014, [http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest\\_Settlements\\_2014.asp](http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Largest_Settlements_2014.asp).

## **5. OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES**

This chapter will introduce the development of Amish occupational patterns. First of all, it will discuss the history of the farming tradition and its importance for the Amish communities. It will also explain the political situation which forced the Amish to explore other options of making living and why such options were not always acceptable for the Amish. Additionally, the phenomenon of a mini-industrial revolution and its irreversible impact upon Amish communities will be analyzed. Finally, the interconnection between the small enterprises and tourism industry will be analyzed.

### **5.1. Farming Tradition**

Farming has in the Amish culture very long tradition. It is connected to Amish religious beliefs and New Testament. Hostetler mentions that Amish see land as a God's property which they should take care of on his behalf. They believe that soil requires a lot of hard-work, proper nourishment and rest in order to prosper. They are never exploitative towards the soil because they believe that such treatment causes the land to yield poorly. Most importantly, Amish do not farm in order to get rich. They do it to remain as self-sufficient as possible. It also enables them to avoid the interferences from the outer world. Hence, farming has always been the most popular Amish occupation. When farming is not possible, jobs connected to the agriculture are preferred.<sup>59</sup>

Farming is among the Amish considered a family business. To operate such a business, it is necessary to have a good management. Every member of the family is valuable and has their assigned tasks that help to keep the business running. Wives typically serve as accountants and possess a general knowledge regarding the finances. Amish in general are known not only for being cooperative and hard-workers, but also for their orderliness and punctuality.<sup>60</sup>

Therefore, Amish do not tend to hire outsiders to work on their farms. They think that the outsiders do not possess the necessary skills to perform well on the farm. They assume

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<sup>59</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 114.

<sup>60</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 140.

that non-Amish lack the motivation and do not work hard enough for the Amish standards.<sup>61</sup>

Typical workday on the Amish farm starts at 4-5 o'clock in the morning with milking the cows. Amish have a six-day work week and the only rest day is Sunday when they take care only over the most necessary chores. The main task on Sundays is preaching service. And on every alternate Sunday the Amish visit their relatives and friends.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, farm has been always considered among Amish to be the best place to raise a family. Even today, many Amish businessmen save their money in order to be able to purchase a farm for their family in the future.<sup>63</sup> Those families, who already own a farm, try to save up money to buy an additional farm for their children. In the Amish tradition, the parent farm is normally inherited by the youngest son. Amish always take pride in their farms and never hesitate to invest a considerable amount of money in their improvement when needed.<sup>64</sup>

Many Amish were preoccupied with farming already during their time in Europe. However, it is important to mention that farming was not the only Amish occupation at that time. In the history, there were many Amish making living as blacksmiths, brewers, tanners or operators of the saw mills. Hostetler notes that the farming tradition as we know it today is connected to the second wave of Amish immigration to the Unites States. That means that from about 1830 it became very uncommon for the Amish to have a non-farming job. This lasted to the 1950s when the financial struggles forced the Amish to start seeking different ways of earning living.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 132.

<sup>62</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 132.

<sup>63</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 239.

<sup>64</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 129.

<sup>65</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 135.

## 5.2. Financial Struggles and Factory Work

Hostetler notes that the most rapid transformation of the job patterns occurred in the 1960s. This was due to the fact that not even hard work could secure the living for the families. Most common causes were the lack of money (that led to the inability to purchase a farm), high interest rates, etc.<sup>66</sup>

Amish have always refused any kinds of subsidies in cash from the government. They are afraid about possible moral consequences this might have. They do not desire to elevate their living standards by rising income and costs as they advocate moderation and contentment. Moreover, they believe that the real values can not be purchased.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, they still had to search for ways of coping with the emerging financial crisis to provide for their families.

That forced many Amish to seek an employment in the non-Amish environment. Hostetler mentions that one of the options was to start working for the boat factories or mobile-home industries. These were often located in the Amish neighborhood with the intention to recruit Amish employees because the Amish prefer to work close to home. Such employment was perceived as a temporary option until it became possible to relocate back on the farm.<sup>68</sup>

However, factory work did not become popular among the Amish leaders. Kraybill mentions several reasons why.

Firstly, working in a factory meant that the father was separated from his family and his children during most of the day. Hence, the children were not only lacking supervision, but also a model figure.<sup>69</sup>

Secondly, the authorities worried that too much exposure to the non-Amish environment might change the values of the Amish working there. And lastly, church leaders believed that such a job might collide with community solidarity. This would mean that the employers would not enable the factory workers to participate in community events such as weddings, funerals or barn raisings.<sup>70</sup>

Lastly, factory work generally offers several benefits such as health insurance or retirement funds. These undermine the mutual co-dependency that is typical of the Amish

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<sup>66</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 136.

<sup>67</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 130-131.

<sup>68</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 138.

<sup>69</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 242.

<sup>70</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 242.

communities. This might lead to the complete disintegration of the community. Therefore, the Amish were trying to find other solutions how to withstand the financial crisis.<sup>71</sup>

### 5.3. Mini-industrial Revolution

As mentioned, Amish were searching for new ways of coping with the monetary struggles. Besides the factory work, there were several other options: use of birth control, migration (either abroad or within the United States), subdivision of the already existing farms and several other forms of nonagricultural work.<sup>72</sup>

Kraybill states that several families started to use some form of birth control. However, it was not a very common solution as it is in contradiction with Amish religious beliefs. In addition, families with more children are very much honored.<sup>73</sup>

Migration abroad was not a popular choice either. Nevertheless, many families migrated to a different state within the United States.<sup>74</sup>

Some Amish have not left the state, but the outer pressures forced them to relocate to the smaller farms or buy the farm from the non-Amish. Especially, as the prizes of the farms soared rapidly.<sup>75</sup>

Arguably the most favored solution became farm subdivision. Larger farms were split into two, sometimes even three parts.<sup>76</sup> This forced the Amish to buy the feed for their animals elsewhere for the lack of their own farming opportunities.<sup>77</sup>

Farm subdivision also caused the Amish farming to become more specialized.<sup>78</sup> Specialized farming led to growing of the crops such as potatoes, tomatoes or tobacco for cash. There also occurred an increasing production of fluid milk and poultry, but specialized farming also brought the growing use of pesticides.<sup>79</sup> Obviously, for the Amish to become somewhat successful in this type of business it was necessary to be open to

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<sup>71</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 242-243.

<sup>72</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>73</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>74</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>75</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 120.

<sup>76</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>77</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 131.

<sup>78</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>79</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 120.

certain technical development, such as telephone to be able to compete with the automated market.<sup>80</sup>

Hostetler argues that it is not surprising that Amish went preferably for those options which allowed them to stick with the farming tradition. Especially because farming enabled Amish fathers to work at home so they could spend time with their children and teach them to work.<sup>81</sup>

However, it was not always possible to find a pleasant way of coping for everyone. As a result, many Amish abandoned farming completely and turned again to the nonagricultural occupations. Even though they agreed to abandon the farm, they were reluctant to seek factory jobs. They were willing to compromise, but they had several demands. First, they wanted to work at home or in its close neighborhood. Second, they required to have some control over the nature of their job. And third, the employment could not collide with the moral code of the Amish faith. Therefore, they were preferably looking for the Amish work environment instead of non-Amish.<sup>82</sup>

As a result, many new occupations, which were not typical for the Amish communities before, started to emerge. Among these were accountants or school teachers. Originally the Amish children attended public schools, only later Amish started to school their children at home (see 3.2). Teaching job was usually performed by single women, but sometimes also by married men. Additionally, some young females started to work as practice nurses. But that was more of an answer to the needs of the Amish communities (as there are no Amish doctors) than an official way of earning living.<sup>83</sup>

Nevertheless, the undoubtedly most favorite choice among the non-farming occupations became the small enterprises – e.g. bake shops, cheese houses, chair shops, cabinet shops, clocks and watches, etc. These shops were established usually on the Amish farms, and originally served only to provide an additional income to the money the Amish earned from the farming. The beginning of enterprises marks the biggest change in the Amish society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 121.

<sup>81</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 131.

<sup>82</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 244.

<sup>83</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 136-139.

<sup>84</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 137-138.

## 6. SMALL ENTERPRISES

There are several reasons why small enterprises gained such popularity among the Amish. Kraybill et al. explain that these “required a much smaller start-up investment than farming, offered work for children and extended family, and tethered work close to home.”<sup>85</sup> Another reason why many Amish people decided to abandon farming and go into business instead was that they were unable to compete with the mechanized market.<sup>86</sup>

When discussing what an Amish enterprise looks like, Kraybill notes that it has typically up to twelve, prevalently Amish employees.<sup>87</sup> Smith considers it advantageous for Amish businesses to be small because it allows for informal work relationships which contribute to a lower level of bureaucracy.<sup>88</sup>

As for their location, the businesses are usually situated close to the owner’s home. But sometimes they can be a few more kilometers away to provide a good access to the roads for the transportation of materials and products. Most typical Amish businesses are manufacturing of farm machinery and furniture-making. Also, retail stores are a common option.<sup>89</sup>

Hostetler mentions that many Amish people work in the trades within their society – e.g. blacksmiths, cabinet makers or carriage makers. Then there are other traditional occupations that are useful and desired in the Amish community, such as butcher, beekeeper, shoe repairman, carpet maker, etc.<sup>90</sup>

He also mentions that approximately one-third of Amish enterprises focuses primarily on the Amish market, another third prevalently on the non-Amish customers. The last third targets Amish as well non-Amish customers (e.g. greenhouse).<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Donald B. Kraybill, E.J. Wesner, and S.M. Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” *Global Business and Economics Review* 12 (2010): 7-8.

<sup>86</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 7.

<sup>87</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 7.

<sup>88</sup> S.M. Smith et al., “Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish: A New Phenomenon,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 13 (1997): 238.

<sup>89</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 8.

<sup>90</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 136.

<sup>91</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 8-9.

## 6.1. Obstacles

Kraybill et al. deal in detail with the cultural obstacles that Amish have to face when running a business. There are three main areas that interfere greatly with the development of enterprises in Amish communities. These are religion, education and technology.<sup>92</sup>

### 6.1.1. Religious constraints

Amish religious values and practices stand in contradiction with Amish entrepreneurial efforts. Religion teaches Amish to be humble. Hence, the entrepreneurs that speak out about being successful are seen as arrogant and disrespectful of the religious teachings.<sup>93</sup> Smith et al. mention the tendency of Amish entrepreneurs to trivialize their business achievements. They do not desire to draw attention to their success.<sup>94</sup>

Further, Amish try to separate themselves from the outside world and its values such as consumerism or individualism as much as possible. However, entrepreneurship reinforces growing interaction between Amish and the outside world in order to run their businesses successfully –e.g. contacting non-Amish suppliers, customers. Such interactions violate the religious principle of separatism.<sup>95</sup>

Religion also prevents potential Amish entrepreneurs from development of particular businesses. Especially those related to alcohol, gambling, entertainment, electronic communications are strictly forbidden by the church. Businesses that require air travel are not allowed either.<sup>96</sup>

Another aspect of entrepreneurship that collides with the Amish religious beliefs is advertising. There are many constraints when it comes to the advertising of Amish enterprises. Naturally, it is forbidden to advertise businesses on the television or radio. Also advertisements with owner's photograph are not allowed. And there are many more, however, these differ among the congregations.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, the church tries to control the size of Amish enterprises. Although entrepreneurial activities are no longer a reason for excommunication, church leaders as well as the rest of Amish community do not approve of Amish businesses that get too

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<sup>92</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 10-12.

<sup>93</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 10.

<sup>94</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 241.

<sup>95</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 10.

<sup>96</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11.

<sup>97</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11.

big.<sup>98</sup> They worry about the impact it might have upon the community. Amish community is egalitarian and too big businesses might cause the imbalance in the distribution of wealth and power. Hence, the church authorities force Amish businessmen who get too successful (for Amish standards) to sell their enterprises. When they refuse to obey the authorities and sell, they might get excommunicated.<sup>99</sup>

### 6.1.2. Educational Constraints

As mentioned, Amish education ends after the eight grade (see 3.2). This means that Amish entrepreneurs have neither high school nor college education, nor any kind of technical or specialized training.<sup>100</sup>

Smith et al. point out that this lack of formal education has not prevented Amish from becoming successful businessmen. But the importance of the previous work experience that Amish entrepreneurs gained on or off the farm before starting their own businesses is stressed. Amish respondents in Smith's survey admit that the knowledge from their previous work experience served as a base for the setting-up of their own enterprises.<sup>101</sup>

### 6.1.3. Technological Constraints

Church authorities regulate the types of technological equipment the Amish are allowed to use for their businesses.<sup>102</sup> But the rules regarding the technology use vary greatly among the church districts.<sup>103</sup> Despite the existence of regulations, church authorities always try to seek a compromise in order to help Amish entrepreneurs. Only when it comes to a radical violation of the rules, the entrepreneurs might get excommunicated.<sup>104</sup>

Generally, the biggest taboos are cars and all other types of motor vehicles. The ownership of computers is forbidden too. Frequently debated issue is the use of telephone. It is normally not allowed to have a telephone on the Amish property, but it is somewhat

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<sup>98</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 240.

<sup>99</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11.

<sup>100</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11.

<sup>101</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 245.

<sup>102</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11-12.

<sup>103</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 249.

<sup>104</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 11-12.

tolerated to use it for business purposes. According to Kraybill et al., the telephone is typically located in a shed outside the enterprise where the business owner is allowed to use it at appointed time.<sup>105</sup>

Despite obvious technological restrictions, Smith et al. argue that the use of high-tech equipment is not necessary in order for the microenterprises to be successful and have a competitive quality.<sup>106</sup>

## **6.2. Resources**

Despite the restrictions mentioned above, there are also several advantages the Amish entrepreneurs have in comparison with the non-Amish. These are directly related to their ethnic affiliation with the Amish community. When discussing the advantages, Kraybill et al. speak about ethnic resources and ethnic infrastructure.<sup>107</sup>

### **6.2.1. Ethnic resources**

There are several ethnic-related qualities that Amish people possess which help them to succeed as entrepreneurs. These are work-ethic, integrity and frugality.<sup>108</sup>

The farming tradition and religious beliefs lead Amish to develop a strong work ethic from an early childhood. Hard-working men are seen as virtuous and work as rewarding. This means that as entrepreneurs, Amish often become successful due to their strict work ethic. Even as business owners, Amish usually work alongside their employees.<sup>109</sup> Both as workers, as well as employers, they work long-hours, do not take too many breaks during the work-time and barely ever go on vacations.<sup>110</sup>

Second very important personality virtue of Amish people is integrity. This is also one of the reasons why Amish prefer to work among (or employ other Amish) – they assume their honesty as they know that it is something the community teaches them. Being truthful is in harmony with the teachings of God. Kraybill et al. assume that the trustworthiness of

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<sup>105</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 11-12.

<sup>106</sup> Smith et al., “Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish,” 249.

<sup>107</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 11-12

<sup>108</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 13.

<sup>109</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, “Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship,” 13.

<sup>110</sup> Smith et al., “Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish,” 249.

Amish employees leads to a greater work efficiency and decrease of bureaucracy.<sup>111</sup> Smith mentions that according to Amish and non-Amish businessmen, the integrity contributes largely to the success of the Amish businesses. The Amish entrepreneurs themselves are aware of their reputation in the business as honest and are motivated to affirm this reputation.<sup>112</sup>

Third important feature of Amish people is frugality. This means according to Kraybill that Amish are thrifty in their enterprises. They try to keep their overhead costs at the minimum, do not invest excessive amount of money into advertising and try to fix the broken equipment rather than buying new. These practices help them to improve the prosperity of their businesses.<sup>113</sup> Smith agrees with Kraybill that frugality of Amish entrepreneurs largely contributes to their success. His research showed that it is common that other family members help the owner with the business without any financial compensation. Also, bookkeeping is usually done by the owner or other family members to avoid extra expenses.<sup>114</sup>

### 6.2.2. Importance of Ethnic Infrastructure

As stated, Amish do not support individualism and promote the community interests instead. This translates in the entrepreneurship as well. For instance, when starting a business it is the community who provides starting capital.<sup>115</sup>

In addition, the community provides a big amount of potential employees including family, neighbors, etc. This is in concord with the preference of Amish businessmen of hiring co-ethnic employees.<sup>116</sup> Also, the elderly people can work part-time in the business and hence contribute to the family enterprises.<sup>117</sup>

Despite the preference of Amish employees, it is common to hire non-Amish for the jobs that are normally prohibited by the community, such as driving trucks.<sup>118</sup>

Ethnic infrastructure within the Amish communities means that there is a whole ethnic network of closely co-operating businesses (suppliers of materials, manufacturers, owners

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<sup>111</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 13.

<sup>112</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 249.

<sup>113</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 13.

<sup>114</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 249.

<sup>115</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 13.

<sup>116</sup> D.B. Kraybill and S.M. Nolt, *Amish Enterprise: From Plows to Profits*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 229.

<sup>117</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 15.

<sup>118</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 13.

of retail stores). There are also annual gatherings of the tradesmen where they can exchange their experiences and new techniques.<sup>119</sup>

Another advantage of the ethnic infrastructure is that the Amish do not need commercial insurance. It is because they know that they can rely on their community for aid in times of need. This reduces their costs, and in times of financial trouble they know they will get help. So basically the insurance exists among the Amish, but in a very informal, community-based form.<sup>120</sup>

### **6.3. Social Changes within the Communities**

At his point, the social changes that the development of entrepreneurship caused in the Amish communities will be analyzed. Smith notes that that the rising amount of various Amish enterprises leads to a rapid social change within the Amish communities.<sup>121</sup> Many of the traditional practices and values were affected by this development.

To begin with, the location of the work has changed. In spite of the fact that many Amish still manage to work at home or in its close neighborhood, there is a growing number of Amish who have to travel to work. When the father works away, the mother typically takes on some of his duties and gains more responsibility at home. Working away from home also disrupts the Amish tradition of family members working together. This tradition provided the Amish teenagers with the opportunity of receiving an informal apprenticeship from working alongside their fathers.<sup>122</sup>

Second important change that the entrepreneurship brought is the changed position of women within the patriarchal Amish society. The women started to participate in entrepreneurship and generally earned many new opportunities.<sup>123</sup>

Thirdly, the Amish businessmen interact more with the outside world than other Amish. That means that those Amish are frequently confronted with different ideas, values and worldview than that typical for the Amish. They spread these to the other members of their community and the thinking of Amish is slowly changing.<sup>124</sup> It forces Amish to

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<sup>119</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 14.

<sup>120</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 14.

<sup>121</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 238.

<sup>122</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 16.

<sup>123</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 16.

<sup>124</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 16.

abandon some of the community values in exchange of a more individualistic and rationalized worldview.<sup>125</sup>

And finally, entrepreneurship largely contributes to faster implementation of new technologies to the Amish life.<sup>126</sup>

However, they still try to keep these changes as much in harmony with their ethnic principles as possible.<sup>127</sup>

Kraybill et al. note that approximately one-third of the Amish enterprises focuses primarily on the Amish market. Another third focuses prevalently on the non-Amish customers. The last third targets both groups (e.g. greenhouse).<sup>128</sup>

This shows that Amish enterprises do not focus solely on making and selling products to tourists. Rather, they are involved in various different sectors, with many businesses being oriented on the Amish population and its needs.<sup>129</sup>

However, the still-growing tourism industry provides an essential market for many Amish entrepreneurs. The most popular Amish-made products among the tourists are quilts, furniture, fabrics, and other handicrafts.<sup>130</sup> Generally, the success of many of these enterprises is due to the fact that tourists view Amish products very favorably. They see them as unique, handcrafted and of high quality (see also 10.4).<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 238.

<sup>126</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 17.

<sup>127</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 5.

<sup>128</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 8-9.

<sup>129</sup> Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 241.

<sup>130</sup> Kraybill, Wesner, and Nolt, "Amish Enterprise: The Collective Power of Ethnic Entrepreneurship," 9.

<sup>131</sup> S.M. Smith et al., "Nonagricultural Micro-Enterprise Development Among the Pennsylvania Amish," 249.

## 7. AMISH IN THE PUBLIC EYE

There occurred many sectarian groups in the United States over the centuries, but none of them managed to gain as much recognition, popularity and fame as Amish.<sup>132</sup>

At the turn of the 20th century, Amish population was relatively small (less than 6000 members) and did not attract much attention from the outsiders.<sup>133</sup> However, during the following years the situation changed rapidly. The small religious sect became widely recognized among the United States. What was quite surprising about this process was that it happened without any official promotional campaigns or a celebrity spokesperson. Yet “by the 1990s, comedians, cartoonists, and television scriptwriters could include offhand Amish references with the assurance that audiences—even if misinformed about the details of Amish culture—recognized ‘the Amish’.”<sup>134</sup>

Indeed, the Amish popularity among the non-Amish society has been steadily growing over the years. Even though the Amish do not care about the admiration or appraisal from the mainstream society, American public finds them very fascinating for their unconventional way of life.<sup>135</sup> It is the unique, prevalently religious character of the Amish communities that sets them apart from the mainstream society.<sup>136</sup>

Hence, this chapter will discuss in a greater depth how the Amish became popular in the public eye and what events contributed the most to the growth of their popularity. The opinions on the Amish were changing and oscillating between the positive and negative throughout the years. These opinions led to the creation of various stereotypes that are frequently connected with the Amish society. Such stereotypes will be introduced and analyzed. Finally, the impact of the media on the changing perceptions of the Amish in the public will be discussed.

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<sup>132</sup> Dachang Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” *Journal of American Culture* 17 (1994): 59.

<sup>133</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 164.

<sup>134</sup> Donald B. Kraybill, Karen M. Johnson-Weiner, and Steven M. Nolt, *The Amish* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 50.

<sup>135</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 59.

<sup>136</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 229.

## 7.1. Technophobes Frozen in Time

Amish are often stereotyped by the public as relics and technophobes. This became most apparent in the course of the 20th century because it brought many technological changes that Amish refused to employ in their lives, such as cars, telephones, farm machinery, etc. They also refused to connect to the public utilities.<sup>137</sup>

Also, they remained persistent in the use of the horses and buggies despite the growing construction of the highways system. And so they became known as “horse-and-buggy people,” and evoked the interest in many sociologists to study them as a folk society frozen in time.<sup>138</sup>

The stereotyping went even further and many non-Amish started to see the Amish as Luddites who oppose all technological development.<sup>139</sup>

Hostetler opposes this stereotype and says that Amish are not frozen relics of the past or a culture from a bygone era.<sup>140</sup> And even though Amish look old-fashioned, they are in fact not. They are merely selective in their choices regarding the modern technologies.<sup>141</sup> However, the selectivity in technology embrace often results in paradoxes and the Amish might appear to as contradicting themselves.<sup>142</sup>

Kraybill et al. argue that in the 1970s the prevalently negative image of the Amish as relics of the past in the public changed. This was due to the energy crisis and the emerging environmental movements. The Amish started to be viewed as role models who were ahead of their time. They were appraised for living off the grid and the fact that they did not let the technology master their lives.<sup>143</sup> Gradually, the Amish started to be viewed as “fashionably old-fashioned” in the public eye.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>138</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>139</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>140</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 3.

<sup>141</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 213-237.

<sup>142</sup> Deepak Chabra, “How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish,” *Journal of Travel Research* 49 (2010): 103.

<sup>143</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>144</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 59.

## 7.2. Rural Nostalgia

The reason why the old-fashioned ways of the Amish became so admired is, according to Dachang Cong, that their lifestyle reminds many Americans of the ‘good old days’ of America. They evoke in many Americans strong nostalgia for the American history and traditional values. Furthermore, some people believe that there is a direct connection between the rural lifestyle and morality. Thus, Amish are often perceived by the Americans as models for moral values.<sup>145</sup>

The results of Thomas Meyers’ field research (conducted in 2003 among the tourists in the Amish settlement in Shipshewana, Indiana) confirm this view. He notes that many tourists talked about the tranquility, peace and simple life that they experienced when visiting Shipshewana.<sup>146</sup>

Zercher writes about the rural nostalgia in reference to two Amish-themed novels. He states that in these books “the Amish are portrayed as either paradise lost or paradise found, that is, as what America was before it became tainted by greed and corruption, or what America could be if only it would become more Christian.”<sup>147</sup>

Hostetler argues that the idolized public image of the Amish as a kind of picturesque rural community is based upon the Amish living in Lancaster County. Lancaster Amish are typical for their well-groomed appearance as well as the “newly painted buildings, abundant gardens, and tidy children.”<sup>148</sup>

Arguably, one of the most popular features of rural nostalgia in the eyes of the tourists are horses. Mennonites, who use cars instead of horses, do not attract tourists to the extent the Amish with horses do.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 61.

<sup>146</sup> Thomas J. Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 77 (2003): 115.

<sup>147</sup> David Zercher, “Homespun American Saints” (Ph.D. diss., U. of North Carolina, 1997), 52.

<sup>148</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 118.

<sup>149</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 61.

### 7.3. Government Conflicts

Another reason why the Amish became so widely popular in the public is their conflicts with the government. These conflicts resonated in the media and showed the Amish in a rather negative light. As a result, the Amish were stereotyped as stubborn and backwards people.

The first major conflict appeared in 1937 when the Amish refused government money for the construction of a new school building. The reason why Amish refused the money was that they always tried to resist the interferences of government into their lives. Nevertheless, the event got a fair share of media coverage and depicted the Amish as stubborn traditionalists. Kraybill states that “the image in these stories was of backward and ill-informed people fighting a futile battle against the future.”<sup>150</sup>

The conflicts between the Amish and the government continued. Whether it was conflict about the workplace dress code or elderly care, the Amish refused to participate. Another prominent conflict started in 1955 was when several self-employed Amish farmers refused to engage in Social Security program. They, however, received support from other government critics such as the editors of *Reader's Digest*. Eventually, in 1965 the Amish received a congregational exemption. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, Amish received several additional group exemptions regarding the Occupational Safety and Health Act mandates.<sup>151</sup>

Arguably the most significant event was the already mentioned case of *Wisconsin vs. Yoder* from 1972 (see 3.2) which had to be resolved in the U.S. Supreme Court. The conflict was about the compulsory high school attendance that the Amish refused. As a result, they won but were depicted in the media as anti-modern and backward farmers with no desire for advanced schooling.<sup>152</sup>

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the public image of Amish was affected by several other public issues. These were prevalently dealing with the healthcare issues such as immunization of Amish children, or the use of primitive plumbing that did not match the standards. Further, the cases of child abuse emerged. Then the Amish stubbornly defended their self-trained counselors and home-based treatment centers. They claimed that these

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<sup>150</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 164-71.

<sup>151</sup> Peter J. Ferrara, “Social Security and Taxes,” in *The Amish and the State*, 2nd ed., edited by D.B. Kraybill, ( Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 125-144.

<sup>152</sup> William C. Lindholm. “The National Cominttee for Amish Religious Freedom,” in *The Amish and the State*, 2nd ed., edited by D.B. Kraybill, ( Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 109-124.

were better suited for handling victims and punishment of perpetrators than social services workers. This again caused an outrage in the public eye.<sup>153</sup>

## **7.4. Utopian community**

Yet on the other hand, it is the Amish desire to remain self-sufficient and independent from the government that earned them an appraisal from certain groups of non-Amish. The Amish try to avoid the interferences from the government simply because they wish to stick to their own ‘political system,’ and stand separately from the outside world. Some people, especially those who oppose the US government and mainstream culture, tend to perceive Amish communities as utopian ones. Cong mentions that interest in alternative lifestyles and utopias has always been popular within American society. Therefore, Amish set an example for people who are seeking an alternative way of living. In this aspect, the Amish serve as a proof that such lifestyle can not only be achieved, but it can also be sustainable and satisfying.<sup>154</sup>

The community is always in the foreground for the Amish. It is never the individual as it is in the mainstream society. Individualism is considered destructive. This emphasis upon the community is what makes the Amish appear as a utopian-like society. Even though there are richer as well as poorer families among Amish settlements, there are no homeless or permanently unemployed Amish. And those, who are not quite so well-off, receive financial support from the relatives, friends or their congregation. Moreover, divorces are very rare and care for the elderly is very human.<sup>155</sup> Hostetler described the elderly care as following: “The system includes housing, transportation, limited employment, the maintenance of intergenerational living facilities, social participation and custodial care.”<sup>156</sup> This is because the social class is perceived very differently among the Amish population. The retired couples are of the highest social prestige. Despite their small earnings and savings, they are respected by the community. They managed to bring up their children well according to the Amish principles and remained in faith.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 51.

<sup>154</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 61.

<sup>155</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 62.

<sup>156</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 143.

<sup>157</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 139-140.

Being a family-based community, Amish take special pride in taking good care of their children too. Kinship values are very important to the Amish and so they usually have large number of friends and relatives.<sup>158</sup>

Unconventional is also Amish political system. Congregation is a basic political organization. The leadership of the congregation consists of a bishop, two to five preachers and a deacon. Despite the various responsibilities (e.g. they serve as legal authorities), the clergymen do not earn money for their work. This political system has proved rather effective. The sanctions are always predictable and clearly defined, and in concord with the Amish religious beliefs.

Therefore, the Amish serve as an example that small, well-established community can collectively solve any problems.<sup>159</sup>

## 7.5. Media Icons

As shown, the media played a crucial role in the changing opinions of the Amish in the public throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kraybill et al. mention two events which took place at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that transformed the Amish into media icons. These events became high-profile crime stories in the media.<sup>160</sup>

The first one happened in 1998. Two young men, linked to cocaine distribution were caught selling cocaine to their Amish friends from Lancaster County. The ‘Amish drug bust story’ became an overnight sensation and resonated in the public sphere. Especially because it managed to uncover the fact that many unbaptized Amish teens led a rather ‘non-Amish lifestyle.’<sup>161</sup>

As a result, *Rumspringa* (from *herumspringen*, literally ‘running around’)<sup>162</sup> became an interesting object of the public debate. As a consequence of the public interest, an independent movie *Devil’s Playground* (dealing with the drug use among the young Amish in Indiana) was filmed. Also, other issues related to Amish were publicly discussed, such as alleged child and animal abuse. As result, the portrayal of the Amish in media was

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<sup>158</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 62.

<sup>159</sup> Cong, “The Roots of Amish Popularity in Contemporary USA,” 62.

<sup>160</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 54.

<sup>161</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 54.

<sup>162</sup> *Rumspringa* is the period when Amish teenagers can experience freedom and socialize with their friends before they are officially baptized and official members of the church.

again rather negative. They were shown as hypocrites pretending to be good and caring people, when in fact they were not.<sup>163</sup>

The second crime story happened on October 2, 2006 when a non-Amish man shot 10 girls in an Amish school near Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania. Afterwards, he killed himself. Consequently, reporters arrived at the place to cover the story. What shocked the reporters was the attitude of the Amish towards the incident. They not only forgave the killer almost immediately after the incident, but also reached out to his family in compassion and offered them their support<sup>164</sup>

After this incident, the Amish were depicted in media as unbelievably forgiving people who live in concord with the Christian values. However, Amish did not like this image of themselves. As one explained: “Now we’re under the public eye .... We wonder: can we Amish people really be what the public expects of us now?”<sup>165</sup>

As the two stories above showed, the opinions on the Amish persist to be ambivalent. On one hand, they are seen as a simple, pious community. But on the other, they are seen as ‘fallen people’ and subject of the jokes that and criticism regarding the hidden and repressed nature of their life.<sup>166</sup> Weaver-Zercher concludes that these opinions almost always go hand in hand. The positive view reassures the non-Amish that they do not have to feel guilty if they show admiration for the Amish. Nevertheless, they usually very quickly dismiss the Amish way of life.<sup>167</sup>

Of course, the fact that most Americans perceive the Amish in certain ways probably says more about the mainstream society than it does about the Amish. Still, some stereotypes have impact on the ordinary Amish life - affecting everything from public policy to tourism.<sup>168</sup>

According to Kraybill et al., “by the twenty-first century, Amish identity was, at least in part, tied up with the expectations, fears, and dreams that mainstream Americans projected onto them.” However, the reality was more complex and most of the time rather different than any of the stereotypical images of the Amish portrayed by media.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 54.

<sup>164</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 55.

<sup>165</sup> Donald B. Kraybill, Steven M. Nolt, and David Weaver-Zercher, *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 49-50.

<sup>166</sup> David Weaver-Zercher, *Amish in the American Imagination* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 192.

<sup>167</sup> Weaver-Zercher, *Amish in the American Imagination*, 185–196.

<sup>168</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 50.

<sup>169</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 55.

## 8. AMISH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned, Amish today are even more popular among the American public than ever before. According to Harasta, this fascination was to a great extent triggered by the portrayal of the Amish on the television shows. Lately, shows such as *Amish Mafia*, *Breaking Amish*, or *Amish: Out of Order* started to occur and gain prominence. Harasta argues that occurrence of the Amish in media contributed largely to the Amish tourism in Lancaster County.<sup>170</sup>

For many Americans (but also tourists from elsewhere), are Amish settlements a must-visit travel destination. The three largest settlements: Lancaster County in Pennsylvania, Holmes County in Ohio and LaGrange County in Indiana attract annually around 19 million tourists and produce over \$2 billion dollars.<sup>171</sup> This chapter introduces the most important events that contributed to the tourist industry development in these areas.

### 8.1. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

As Lancaster County is the oldest Amish settlement, it comes as no surprise that the very beginnings of Amish tourism are connected to this particular county. There are several aspects that played role in the tourism development in Lancaster County.

David Zercher mentions the influence of the Amish-themed works of fiction on tourism. The Amish and their way of life are in these books are often depicted in a somewhat romanticized and idealized manner what attracts people and encourages them to visit Amish Country (see 7.2).<sup>172</sup> The first time the county got noticed was in 1905 when a novel *Sabina: A Story of the Amish* by Helen R. Martin was published. This was second out of thirty novels that Martin published in her lifetime and most of them featured protagonists of Pennsylvania-German origin.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Joseph M. Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," *Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies* 2 (2014): 24.

<sup>171</sup> Susan L. Trollinger, *Selling the Amish: The Tourism of Nostalgia* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2012), 141.

<sup>172</sup> Zercher, "Homespun American Saints," 52.

<sup>173</sup> David Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," in *The Amish Struggle with Modernity*, edited by D. B. Kraybill and M.A. Olshan (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994), 114. Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 114

The first Amish-themed postcards appeared around the same time, issued by Isaac Steinfeldt, owner of a newspaper and tobacco shop in Lancaster.<sup>174</sup>

In November 1935, magazine *Travel* published an article titled “Domain of Abundance: Exploring a Unique Section of America.” The article was the first to promote Amish in Lancaster County. It included several pictures of the Amish country and author’s own travel experiences.<sup>175</sup>

In the following years the interest in Amish was on the rise and simultaneously the first tourist booklets appeared. In 1937, *The Amish of Lancaster County*, a booklet by Berenice Steinfeldt (the above-mentioned Isaac's daughter) was published. The cover featured a drawing of two Amishmen and was based on an actual photograph featured in Fuller’s *Travel* article.<sup>176</sup>

Nineteen thirty-seven is moreover significant for another event that led to an even greater popularization of the Amish in Lancaster County. That year the Amish refused a \$45 000 grant from the Public Works Administration to build a public school. They did so because they preferred to stick to their traditional one-room schoolhouses instead.<sup>177</sup> This caused an outrage in the public sphere. *The New York Times* as well as other popular magazines, such as *Time* and *Newsweek* covered the story several times. The incident greatly contributed to the popularization of Amish among the Americans. People developed a growing interest in the Amish and their unconventional way of living.<sup>178</sup>

Children's books also largely contributed to the rising interest in Amish communities. There were many books of fiction for children featuring Amish themes published in 1930s and 40s. Luthy mentions that many tourists learned about the Amish through these books. The very first children’s book that was set in Lancaster County was *Henner’s Lydia* by Marguerite De Angeli published in 1936.<sup>179</sup>

But it was not solely the printed media that contributed to the development of ‘Amish tourism.’ Also motion pictures played their part in this process. The very first short movie featuring the Lancaster County Amish was released around the year 1940. Although it was very short (only up to five minutes), it is considered to be the first commercial motion picture about Lancaster County.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 114.

<sup>175</sup> Raymond T. Fuller, “Domain of Abundance,” *Travel* 66 (November 1935): 15–17.

<sup>176</sup> David Luthy, “The Blue Gate Legend,” *Family Life* (May 1981): 19-20.

<sup>177</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 116.

<sup>178</sup> Paul L. Blakely, “Rebecca of Honeybrook Farm,” *America* 58, no.11 (December 1937): 245-246.

<sup>179</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 116.

<sup>180</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 117-118.

In the following years it was followed by Hollywood-produced movies with national impact. The very first Hollywood movie with Amish characters was *Violent Saturday* released in 1955.<sup>181</sup>

Several Amish-themed movies were produced solely for the purposes of the tourist industry. One of these was a 37-minute “The Lancaster Experience.” This was created specifically for the Pennsylvania Dutch Convention and Visitors Bureau of Lancaster County.<sup>182</sup>

However, the movie that is held responsible for the biggest wave of the tourist expansion in Lancaster County is the Academy Award–winning *Witness* from 1985, starring Harrison Ford. The Amish in the movie are portrayed as naive, old-fashioned and unfamiliar with the outside world.<sup>183</sup> Luthy notes that the impact of this movie upon the tourist industry was staggering: “In the twenty-five years that followed the film’s release, the annual number of visitors to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, skyrocketed to eleven million.”<sup>184</sup>

Another important event was the opening of Pennsylvania Turnpike in 1940, which had an exit close to the Amish county. This circumstance along with the growing number of people with automobiles caused an even bigger flood of the tourists in Lancaster County.<sup>185</sup>

Soon afterwards, first guided tours occurred in Lancaster County. First to offer these was Hotel Brunswick (located in Lancaster) in 1946. In 1950 Hotel Brunswick merged with Parker Tours of New York City. Since then, the number of buses grew rapidly. Later, many other companies such as Caesar Tours, Bingler Tours, etc. appeared.<sup>186</sup>

By the mid-1950s, local tourist industry was flourishing. “Bus and car tours to Lancaster County promised views of an old-fashioned way of life for northeastern urbanites living in a postwar society undergoing dramatic social change.”<sup>187</sup> As a result, Lancaster County became in the 1950s an unofficial Amish ‘capital’ and a top-ten tourist destination.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 118.

<sup>182</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 118.

<sup>183</sup> David Weaver-Zercher, *Amish in the American Imagination* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 152–180.

<sup>184</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 54.

<sup>185</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 119.

<sup>186</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 119.

<sup>187</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>188</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

At this time, there was an increased production of tourist booklets and brochures regarding the Amish Country.<sup>189</sup>

The most accurate and comprehensive tourist booklet of that time was, according to Luthy, *Amish Life*. It was written by sociologist John A. Hostetler and published in 1952 by Herald Press. Due to an astonishing demand, the original edition was reissued in 1982 under the title *The Amish*.<sup>190</sup>

Zercher also mentions the importance of John A. Hostetler – a sociologist devoted to the study of Amish whose early works, according to Zercher, greatly contributed to the mass admiration and popularization of the Amish culture. Zercher considers Hostetler a part of the movement that popularized rural culture in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>191</sup>

Simultaneously with the tourism development, the restaurants featuring Pennsylvania Dutch cooking started to gain prominence. One of the first such restaurants was Miller's Dutch Restaurant at Ronks established in 1931. It could seat 175 people by the beginning of the 1950s and used the pictures of the Amish for advertisement of their Pennsylvania Dutch recipes.<sup>192</sup>

In 1949 the Hotel Brunswick started to promote Pennsylvania Dutch cooking in all five of its restaurants. The promotional materials featured a caricature of Amish boy labeled as 'Yonnie.'<sup>193</sup>

In 1955 the 'Amish Farm and House' was opened for the visitors. A farm, originally built in 1805, offered the visitors a chance to get an impression of what a typical Amish farm looked like. 'Amish Farm and House' is considered the first staged Amish attraction in Lancaster County.<sup>194</sup>

During the 1970s emerged a growing interest in Amish quilts. This was largely due to the exhibition titled Design in American Quilts which took place in the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City in 1971. The exhibition not only introduced this functional handicraft to the masses, but it also managed to elevate it to bold representative of a modern art.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 119-120.

<sup>190</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 120.

<sup>191</sup> Zercher, "Homespun American Saints," 52.

<sup>192</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 120.

<sup>193</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 121.

<sup>194</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 121.

<sup>195</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 53.

Along with the growing numbers of tourists, the Amish-related merchandise started to get produced massively. The largest distributors became by 1980s Conestoga Crafts of Gettysburg and Garden Spot Gifts, Inc., of Lancaster.<sup>196</sup>

In addition, also Broadway plays such as *Plain and Fancy* from 1955 contributed to the popularization of Amish tourism.<sup>197</sup> *Plain and Fancy* was a musical comedy portraying the Amish in Bird-in-Hand near the Lancaster County. It attracted many playgoers; despite it was an inaccurate depiction of the Amish.<sup>198</sup>

## 8.2. Holmes County, Ohio

Holmes County, Ohio is the second largest of all Amish settlements. The Amish settlements spread from the Holmes County to the neighboring counties of Wayne and Tuscarawas as well. The first Amish settlers arrived to this area as early as of 1808.<sup>199</sup>

The first reference of Amish tourism in this area dates back to June 1957 when the writer of Cleveland's daily newspaper *The Plain Dealer*, Grace Goulder, in her column "Ohio Scenes and Citizens" featured a plan of an Amish tour through the Holmes County based on her own travels. The article was also accompanied by a road map.<sup>200</sup>

The first organized tours to Holmes County started back in 1960. At that time, two Amish women – mother Elva Miller and daughter Betty Miller started serving meals for tourists at their home. Later, in 1973 they published their own cookbook entitled *Mrs. Miller's Amish Cookbook*.<sup>201</sup>

In 1971, a woman from Cleveland named Betty Goodman started to organize tours for the tourists to Holmes County. She managed to get acquainted with some Amish families what enabled her to bring tourists to an authentic Amish school. Her focus group were children (aged 2-12), but later she started to organize tours for the adults as well. Her main aim was to introduce Amish to the public as accurately as possible.<sup>202</sup>

By 1975, the tourists were traveling to Holmes County in astonishing numbers and numerous touristic brochures promoting Amish tourism in Holmes County emerged.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 121-122.

<sup>197</sup> Zercher, "Homespun American Saints," 52.

<sup>198</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 122.

<sup>199</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 122.

<sup>200</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 123.

<sup>201</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 123.

<sup>202</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 123-124.

<sup>203</sup> Luthy, "The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism," 124.

The unofficial centre for Amish tourist industry in Holmes County is the village of Berlin. Luthy notes that the major Amish attraction of Holmes County is located approximately one mile from Berlin. ‘Amish Heritage Village’ originated in 1976 and consists of approximately 20 buildings. It offers a tour of an Amish farm, buggy rides and numerous shopping options. Twice a year (in July and October), arts and crafts festival ‘Der Dutch Peddler’ takes place here.<sup>204</sup>

Very important event for the Amish tourism was the opening of the Mennonite Information Centre in 1981. It is also located close to Berlin and provides a rather detailed account of Amish and Mennonite history. In 1989 it was visited by approximately one million visitors.<sup>205</sup>

In April 1988, *Ohio Magazine* labeled Amish as the ‘Ohio’s biggest noncommercial tourist attraction’ and featured them among the ‘Seven Wonders of Ohio.’ However, Luthy argues that there is not much about the local tourist industry that can called noncommercial.<sup>206</sup>

Luthy also argues that the Holmes County tourist industry was to a great extent inspired by the tourism in Lancaster County. However, he assumes that it may never reach the popularity of the latter due to the rather hilly terrain.<sup>207</sup>

### **8.3. LaGrange County, Indiana**

La Grange County in Indiana is the third largest OOA settlement in the United States. The Amish built their first settlements in LaGrange and neighboring Elkhart County in 1841. The Amish tourism rose to prominence here approximately ten years later that it was in Holmes County, Ohio. The earliest item advertising tourism in Indiana is a brochure titled “Amish.” It has only four pages and was published in 1966. Luthy thinks that the brochure proves that already in 1966 there were enough visitors asking about the Amish tourism in Indiana, otherwise such brochure would not be published. In June 1967 magazine *Travel* published an article “Overlooked Indiana.” This article mentioned the location of Amish settlements in Indiana.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 124-125.

<sup>205</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 125.

<sup>206</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 125.

<sup>207</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 126.

<sup>208</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 126-127.

First prominent Amish-themed restaurant was built at Middlebury in Elkhart County in 1970. It was called “Das Dutchman Essenhaus” and was styled as an Amish barn.<sup>209</sup>

Except from Middlebury in Elkhart County, also Shipshewana in LaGrange County started to gain more and more prominence until it eventually became a main centre of the Amish tourism for both counties. The development of Shipshewana to a prominent tourist center is connected to the growth of the local flea market. The flea market attracted many tourists to Shipshewana, who there often also got interested in the Amish.<sup>210</sup>

*Welcome to Shipshewana*, an annual free newspaper for tourists, started to get published in 1977. The newspaper included a map of tourist places and various other information for tourists.<sup>211</sup>

Later, in 1980 the magazine *Amish Country* emerged. It was published at Middlebury and it focused on tourism in both counties (Elkhart and LaGrange).<sup>212</sup>

Important development was the establishment of ‘Menno-Hof’, a visitor centre, in Shipshewana in 1988. Located close to the flea market and styled as an Amish farm complex, it is run by local Mennonites and Amish-Mennonites. Seven months after its first opening, it had already hosted over 32,000 visitors from all 50 U.S. states.<sup>213</sup>

## **8.4. Smaller Amish Settlements**

Luthy notes that whereas the Amish tourist industry is most apparent in the three aforementioned counties, there are many smaller settlements where it does exist as well. To the most popular Amish attractions, besides the already mentioned ones, belong ‘Amish Acres’ at Nappanee, Indiana, ‘Amishville’ at Berne, Indiana and ‘Rockome’ at Arthur, Illinois. Another rather popular Amish settlement is Kalona in Iowa. Luthy concludes that basically any Amish settlement of a driving distance from a bigger city is affected by tourist industry.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 127.

<sup>210</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 127.

<sup>211</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 127.

<sup>212</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 128.

<sup>213</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 128.

<sup>214</sup> Luthy, “The Origin and Growth of Amish Tourism,” 129.

## 9. HOW AMISH RESPOND TO TOURISM

The purpose of this chapter is to show how the Amish respond to the developing tourist industry. The Amish see tourism as a “needless nuisance,”<sup>215</sup> and an empty pleasure seeking.<sup>216</sup> However, it is something that affects their communities greatly and so obviously they have to respond to it. This chapter will discuss why some of the Amish became willing participants in this industry and profit from it. Then, there some who benefit only indirectly from the tourism, for example as the suppliers of products such as quilts or rugs for the gift shops.<sup>217</sup> Other Amish remain to keep their distance from tourism or speak openly against it. Lastly, the ways how Amish can protect themselves from the tourism will be analyzed.

### 9.1. Active Participation

The previous chapter showed that the development of Amish tourist industry is to a great extent a result of the media, and the non-Amish who stand behind them. However, only small attention was given to how the Amish participate in this development. Therefore, now the focus will be solely on the Amish. In foreground will be the motivations that led them to become active participants in the tourist industry, and also various ways in which they engage in the tourist industry will be discussed. Moreover, their opinions regarding their participation in tourism, based on the results of Joseph M. Harasta’s research, will be introduced.

To begin with, the Amish were, in the beginning of the tourism development, reluctant to engage in the tourist industry. Paradoxically, the more Amish tried to stick to their religious beliefs and avoid the interferences from the outside world, the more attractive to the tourists they became.<sup>218</sup>

Hovinen, based on the articles from *Lancaster New Era*<sup>219</sup>, confirms, that during the early stages of Amish tourism development boom (1960s), the Amish objected to the

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<sup>215</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 225.

<sup>216</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 233.

<sup>217</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 319.

<sup>218</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 317.

<sup>219</sup> Hovinen refers to two particular issues of *Lancaster New Era*, one from October 1966 and the other from May 1962.

tourists and the invasion of their privacy. Therefore, it might seem quite surprising that Amish have become active participants of the tourism industry over the years.<sup>220</sup>

Even today Amish normally do not actively seek the attention from the tourists, but this does not mean that they do not interact with them. The interactions are naturally more frequent in those settlements which are known for their tourist industry, such as Lancaster County. Many Amish in these settlements keenly participate in the tourist industry. The most common way of participation is the making and selling of the traditional hand-crafted products. Other way of participation is, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the preparation of traditional Amish meals for the tourists in their houses. Several families went even one step further by renting small apartments to the tourists.<sup>221</sup>

In some counties, the Mennonites established information centers for the visitors. The aim was to educate the tourists about the Anabaptist history and traditions. The Amish have actively participated in the programs of two such centers: Amish and Mennonite Heritage Center in Berlin, Ohio, and Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Indiana.<sup>222</sup>

One more example of Amish participation is the founding of ‘Amishville.’ In 1967, a young Amish farmer David Schwartz joined powers with three Mennonite businessmen and reconstructed an old vacated Amish farm, which he later opened to the public tours. This venture was named ‘Amishville’ and enjoyed almost immediate success. Schwartz admitted that he thought it was important to educate the outsiders about the Amish, their lifestyle and traditions in order to achieve a greater understanding of the Amish among the non-Amish folk.<sup>223</sup>

Similarly to Schwartz, many Amish agree that it important to educate the public about the Amish. All in all, this is, according to Kraybill et al., the most common reason why the Amish are willing to actively participate in the tourist industry. Some of them also see it as a good opportunity for subtle preaching of the Christian faith and values to the outsiders.<sup>224</sup>

Fagence discusses a rather different kind of motivation that makes Amish active participants - money. He argues that the less strict orders are willing to engage in conversation with the tourists, partly because they see that they could profit from them

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<sup>220</sup> Gary R. Hovinen, “Heritage Issues in Urban Tourism: An Assessment of New Trends in Lancaster County,” *Tourism Management* 16 (1995): 382.

<sup>221</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 391.

<sup>222</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 392-393.

<sup>223</sup> Bill Thomas, “Amishville,” *Indiana History Bulletin* 46, no. 9 (1969): 117–18.

<sup>224</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 392.

financially.<sup>225</sup> Moreover, the Amish are well aware of the fact that tourists are beneficial not only for the local, but also the state economy.<sup>226</sup> And they do more than engaging in the conversations with tourists. Amish know what the tourists look for, “and therefore oblige by dressing for the part, and engaging in appropriate behavior.”<sup>227</sup>

It should be noted that the nature of Amish participation in tourist industry varies from one community to another. The more conservative Amish groups tend to restrict interaction with tourists to local farm stands, but others actively participate in businesses that cater specifically to tourists.<sup>228</sup>

Hovinen assumes that even though the number of Amish who have a non-agricultural occupation is growing, it does not necessarily mean that they are supportive of the tourism industry.<sup>229</sup>

This opinion, however, does not entirely agree with the results of Harasta’s study which focuses on Amish and non-Amish entrepreneurs engaged in the tourist industry in Lancaster County. The results showed that nearly all of the Amish entrepreneurs were accepting of their roles as entrepreneurs who sell their goods to the tourists. Some of the Amish respondents, however, voiced certain concerns related to the growing dependence of the Amish on the tourist industry. These were nearly identical to the ones regarding the small enterprises in general, discussed previously (see 6.3). In short, the Amish expressed their fears about the decline of the tight family structure. They are well aware of the fact that tourism forces them to interact more with the outside world, and makes it increasingly difficult for them to separate themselves from the outside society. They also fear that growing interaction with non-Amish might result in the change of traditional values.<sup>230</sup>

Despite these fears, Harasta’s respondents spoke positively of their interactions with the outsiders. They admitted that the conversations were mostly strictly of the business nature, but they hardly ever experienced any interactions which they would label as uncomfortable.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Michael Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” *Journal of Tourism Studies* 12 (2001): 68..

<sup>226</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 316.

<sup>227</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 68.

<sup>228</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>229</sup> Hovinen, “Heritage Issues in Urban Tourism: An Assessment of New Trends in Lancaster County,” 382.

<sup>230</sup> Harasta, “The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” 29.

<sup>231</sup> Harasta, “The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” 32.

Harasta notices that it is mostly the older generation that worries about the impact of tourism on Amish society. The majority of the younger Amish respondents turned out to be completely accepting, and even optimistic of this way of life.<sup>232</sup>

## 9.2. Criticism

It should be noted that many Amish refuse the active participation in the tourist industry. Moreover, there are some who openly criticize it. Kraybill et al. demonstrate this with the complaint notes taken from the *Budget* newspapers.<sup>233</sup> Here, the Amish openly speak against the tourist industry – they criticize the noise, traffic, crowds as well as ridiculous forms of advertising.<sup>234</sup> Also Hostetler observed “the inconvenience caused by leisurely, gawking tourists, who peep into schoolhouses, farms meadows, and fields.”<sup>235</sup>

However, for many Amish people, the main problem with tourism is not that they are being put on display. It is the fact that the entire enterprise symbolizes worldly pleasures. One Amish woman commented on the issue as following: “We are serving as a tool to lure tourists to Lancaster County. Personally, I do not feel any resentment against tourists, but... we are opposed to having our souls marketed by having our sacred beliefs and traditions stolen from us and then distributed to the tourists, and sometimes having them mocked.”<sup>236</sup>

Although the examples above show some evidence of the Amish openly discussing tourism, this is not very common, particularly for the members of stricter orders, such as OOA. Buck discusses the difficulty he encountered when trying to obtain the opinions of the OOA on tourism. Although the Amish usually enjoy having a talk with the outsiders, they do not like the notion of a direct interview. Also, they find it difficult to provide a specific answer on the questions that require evaluative judgment.<sup>237</sup> Hence, the responses Buck obtained were, for the most part, very vague.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Harasta, “The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” 30.

<sup>233</sup> see O. Vernon Miller, “Shipshewana, Indiana,” *Budget*, Feb. 1, 1989, 16. and Sarah Weaver, “Millersburg, Ohio,” *Budget*, Sept. 28, 1983, 14.

<sup>234</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 393-394.

<sup>235</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 317.

<sup>236</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 292.

<sup>237</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 226.

<sup>238</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 225.

Fagence encountered the same problems with his study, and explains that this is the reason why the scientific evidence regarding this matter is very scarce. He mentions that OOA are simply unwilling to take part in a research connected with the ‘secular studies.’<sup>239</sup>

One of the few researches with OOA participants is Deepak Chabra’s study conducted in 2009 among the OOA in Iowa. The research deals with the impacts of the tourist gaze on OOA community. In this research, quite surprisingly, the majority - 67% of the OOA respondents - thought that tourist gazing results in benefits and only 33 % thought that it had only negative impact upon their society. Majority of the critics perceived tourist gaze as intrusive and thought it showed a poor understanding of their culture. Another very frequent complaint was about picture-taking.<sup>240</sup>

That is because the Amish are unwilling to get photographed. Camera is seen as means of intrusive behavior. To take pictures as well as pose for them is forbidden in the Amish communities. Hostetler mentions that this stance comes from the following passage from the *Bible* which discusses the prohibition of the graven image:<sup>241</sup>

<sup>4</sup> “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,<sup>242</sup>

However, there are some Amish who do not object to having their picture taken as long as they do not pose for them.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 69-70.

<sup>240</sup> Chabra, “How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish,” 101.

<sup>241</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 319.

<sup>242</sup> “Exodus 20: 4-5.” Holy Bible, New International Version, Accessed April, 16, 2015, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2020:4-5>.

<sup>243</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 319.

### 9.3. Means of Self-defense

Even though the intrusion caused by the tourists is rather obvious, there is, according to Hostetler, very little the Amish can do about it. This is due to the fact that “the Amish are unwilling to use legal means to protect themselves.”<sup>244</sup> Humor, joking and laughter is virtually the only informal means of self-defense.<sup>245</sup>

Stricter orders try to avoid any direct contact with the visitors. The Amish are non-confrontational.<sup>246</sup>

Besides that, there are several other ways in which the Amish react to the tourist activity. Fagence mentions that members of the stricter orders, such as OOA who do not want meet the tourists typically respond by ignoring them and go about their day without interruption.<sup>247</sup>

Another possible reaction to the tourist activity among the OOA is that the whole families migrate away from the tourist areas to the periphery in order to avoid any contact with the outsiders.<sup>248</sup> There is evidence for reduction of the land-ownership, forced migration, and changes in language as a result of tourist activity.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 318.

<sup>245</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 318.

<sup>246</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 69-70.

<sup>247</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 68.

<sup>248</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 69.

<sup>249</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 72.

## 10. MOTIVATIONS FOR VISIT

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the most common motivations that inspire the tourists to visit the Amish settlements. Although there are big numbers of visitors coming to the settlements every year, the reasons for their visit differ. The four most common that will be analyzed to a greater detail are: search for authenticity, search for entertainment, confirmation of moral superiority and shopping experience. Finally, what the Amish think about the different types of tourists will be shown.

### 10.1. Search for Authenticity

The question of authenticity is a frequently debated when it comes to the motivations of tourists for visiting Amish communities. Meyers defines an archetypal tourist as a person who is “on a quest seeking an authentic experience – an intimate, face to face encounter with representatives of a group of people with a core belief system that is rooted in a community of memory as well as a specific geographic location.”<sup>250</sup> This type of the tourist is on the search for a different kind of reality, the one which opposes the materialistic mainstream culture. These people believe that Amish life is somehow less superficial than their own.<sup>251</sup>

Susan Biesecker-Mast argues that many, among those visiting the Amish communities, do so because they feel alienated from other people, and hence search for a genuine human contact. They feel that the modern communication technologies tend to disconnect them, rather than connect them to other people. That is why they are tempted to come to the Amish settlements where face-to-face interaction is the norm.<sup>252</sup>

Another reason to search for the authenticity among the Amish is, according to Meyers, that for many tourists Amish settlements bring back the nostalgic memories of their childhood. He discovered that there exists a connection between the Amish culture and the

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<sup>250</sup> Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” 112.

<sup>251</sup> Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” 126.

<sup>252</sup> Susan Biesecker-Mast, “Tourism in Holmes County and the Ministry of Behalt,” *Memnonite Historical Bulletin* 61 (2000): 4.

rural culture experienced by the tourists as children (probably due to the fact that two thirds of Meyers' respondents were past midlife).<sup>253</sup>

The question is: can one experience a genuinely authentic experience when visiting the tourist areas such as Lancaster County? Hovinen thinks so. He mentions that it is possible to arrange a meeting with the Amish family, or simply engage in the conversation with the Amish working at the roadside stands. He argues that there are many various options how one can experience the authentic Amish heritage.<sup>254</sup>

## 10.2. Search for Entertainment

However, not everything the tourist encounters in the Amish country is authentic - quite the opposite. Dean MacCanell introduces the phenomenon of staged authenticity in relation to the tourist industry. He compares the touristic experience to the visit of a theater and differentiates between the front-stage and the back-stage tourist experience.<sup>255</sup>

There are many tourists experiencing the Amish country indirectly by visiting replicas of Amish farms and schoolhouses, or by taking a guided buggy tour. Naturally, these tourists are not confronted with the Amish reality, only with a distorted version of it.<sup>256</sup>

Kraybill notes that when visiting Lancaster County, one usually experiences the front-stage presentation of the Amish life. That means that all tourist attractions are part of a carefully controlled environment.<sup>257</sup> Hostetler also believed that Amish tourism in Lancaster County offers very little authenticity.<sup>258</sup>

Though Hovinen admits the existence of staged attractions, he believes that Lancaster County offers a whole "range of experiences, from the garish and offensive, through the more or less carefully staged, to the unstaged and authentic."<sup>259</sup> And all of these together create Lancaster's County diversified tourist base.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 115.

<sup>254</sup> Hovinen, "Heritage Issues in Urban Tourism: An Assessment of New Trends in Lancaster County," 383.

<sup>255</sup> Dean MacCanell, "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings," *American Journal of Sociology* 79 (1973): 597.

<sup>256</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 119.

<sup>257</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 289.

<sup>258</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 315-321.

<sup>259</sup> Hovinen, "Heritage Issues in Urban Tourism: An Assessment of New Trends in Lancaster County," 383.

<sup>260</sup> Hovinen, "Heritage Issues in Urban Tourism: An Assessment of New Trends in Lancaster County," 383.

Basically, the whole tourist environment is designed to engage tourists in a program of staged and scheduled activities, in which the Amish with their farms and shops provide only the background for the front-stage experience.<sup>261</sup>

Buck describes the practice behind the staged attractions in Amish areas as simple: “Advertise Amish country as a curious and scarce commodity ‘well worth seeing.’ And then in the name of education, convenience, and moral responsibility, develop staged substitutions for actual activities.”<sup>262</sup>

As a result, the tourist is, for the most part, treated as a passive consumer, rather than an active participant.<sup>263</sup>

Meyers points out in his study (conducted among the tourists in Shipshewana, Indiana) that there were some tourists who openly voiced their dissatisfaction with the front-stage presentation and expressed their desire for a more personal experience. They also complained about the inability to get to the back-stage.<sup>264</sup>

It also turned out that many of the respondents were not able to tell the authentic from the staged.<sup>265</sup>

However, there are tourists who look for particularly this kind of tourism. MacCannell assumes that these tourists’ main goal is not the search for authenticity, but the search for entertainment. Hence, instead of authenticity, they are favoring a duplicate of the authentic experience in a convenient and predictable setting.<sup>266</sup>

Buck’s research conducted in 1978 in Lancaster County confirms this reasoning. He observed that only few tourists were interested in an authentic Amish experience.<sup>267</sup> Rather, for many tourists it was sufficient to read all the available tourist literature and have some fundamental awareness of what goes on ‘behind the scenes.’ But they preferred to stay within the tourist infrastructure and seemed content with being told what they were seeing.<sup>268</sup>

Meyers’ research from 2003 (conducted in Shipshewana, Indiana) came to very similar results. It not only showed that many visitors are well aware of the staged presentations, but also that they are content with this kind of Amish experience.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 230.

<sup>262</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 229.

<sup>263</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 229.

<sup>264</sup> Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” 118.

<sup>265</sup> Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” 117.

<sup>266</sup> MacCannell, “Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings,” 596.

<sup>267</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 232.

<sup>268</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 231.

<sup>269</sup> Meyers, “Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall,” 119.

Finally, Harasta's research from 2014 (conducted in Lancaster County) also confirmed that "the authenticity of tourist experience seems unimportant"<sup>270</sup> to many visitors.

### 10.2.1. Boundary maintenance

At this point, the reasoning behind the staged attractions will be clarified from a slightly different perspective. One way to explain the existence of the staged attractions in Amish settlements is that their existence is desired by the entertainment-seeking types of tourists. But there is other side to this phenomenon. Amish tourism, as any other kind of cultural tourism causes the crossing of certain cultural borders. Hence, a kind of mediation is required to take place between the tourists and the local community.<sup>271</sup>

The tourist industry consciously tries to minimize direct contact with the Amish. So, the staged attractions were developed. Important part in this development play the information centers which serve as guides, and navigate the tourists to the attractions instead of letting them intrude the Amish privacy. The tourists are content because they have a place to spend money and the Amish are protected from the direct contact with them.<sup>272</sup>

Hence, with the careful development of merchandising, advertisement, and education, tourist industry actively helps the Amish to retain their identity and traditional values. Moreover, that way Amish desire for separation can be to a great extent fulfilled.<sup>273</sup>

But this practice, as Buck explains, was not always the case. Originally, when the Amish tourism was only mildly developed, the visitors had to create their own sightseeing program. And therefore, the authentic experiences in the form of interpersonal conversations with the Amish were much more frequent.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 36.

<sup>271</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 119.

<sup>272</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 318.

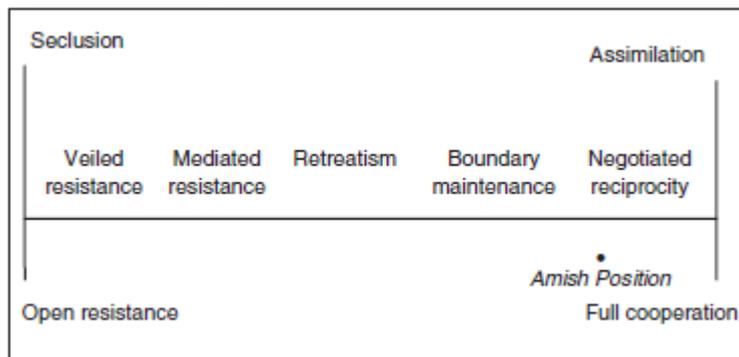
<sup>273</sup> Buck, "Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community," 232.

<sup>274</sup> Buck, "Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community," 225.

### 10.2.2. Negotiated Reciprocity

Chabra does not entirely agree with Buck's assertion of boundary maintenance and the OOA. He mentions that based on his research the OOA take less radical approach towards the tourism than boundary maintenance. **Figure 2** shows how Chabra positions the Amish on a scale which leads from the open resistance to the full cooperation. Whereas open resistance takes the form of an open protest and agitation, the full cooperation as an approach in which "the host community fully adapts to tourist needs."<sup>275</sup>

**Figure 2 Positioning the Old Order Amish on the resistance continuum**



As shown above, Chabra places the Amish somewhere between the boundary maintenance and full cooperation. He depicts this position as 'negotiated reciprocity.' However, he admits that the willingness of the OOA to cooperate with the tourist industry might be due to the fact that his respondents were from area where the tourist industry is not fully developed in comparison to Buck's research in Lancaster County. Therefore the negative effects of tourism are not yet that visible in these areas.<sup>276</sup>

Also, another factor might be the financial and environmental problems and the increasing difficulty to remain a part of the diminishing rural community makes the Amish more willing to negotiate with the mainstream culture.<sup>277</sup>

<sup>275</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 95.

<sup>276</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 103.

<sup>277</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 103.

### **10.3. Confirmation of Moral Superiority**

Meyers' research showed that some tourists come to visit Amish County in order to confirm their moral superiority over the Amish. These tourists were critical of the Amish society for various reasons. Many tourists implied that Amish people are not really free, and criticized their way of life as inappropriately obsolete. Also, the discrepancy in the attitudes of Amish towards the use of technology was criticized and labeled as dishonest. The tourists claimed that if Amish really wanted to lead a 'simple life' they should abandon all modern technology. Some visitors criticized the patriarchal nature of Amish society and labeled it unfair towards the women and children. Also, the lack of medical care was frequently debated.<sup>278</sup>

All in all, these tourists believe that they are able to see the reality of the Amish life which differs greatly from what they read about them in the touristic brochures. This leads them to believe in a moral superiority of their own culture in comparison to the Amish one.<sup>279</sup>

### **10.4. Shopping Experience**

Most of the tourists coming to Lancaster County are, according to Hostetler, not interested in learning about the Amish lifestyle; rather they are preoccupied with the shopping experience.<sup>280</sup>

This was proved by Meyers to be true for the tourists coming to Shippshewana too. In his research, majority of the tourists were interested in buying Amish-made products such as quilts, furniture, food, etc.<sup>281</sup> The tourists are intrigued by the plain life, but only at the surface. Their primary goal is to purchase a bit of the host culture to take home with them.<sup>282</sup>

Harasta's findings confirm that the nature of the contemporary Amish tourism is prevalently commercial. His respondents (visitors of the Lancaster County) showed little

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<sup>278</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 121.

<sup>279</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 122.

<sup>280</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 315-321.

<sup>281</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 125.

<sup>282</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 126.

interest in authenticity. They were interested predominantly in shopping and visiting all the most popular venues.<sup>283</sup>

Amish merchants in Harasta's field study find food items as most desirable items for tourists to purchase. They also mentioned their worries about the stiff competition in the form of big chains stores that started to emerge in their neighborhood.<sup>284</sup>

Trollinger mentions that in relation to tourism, Amish are often referred to as a brand like for example 'Nike' or 'Apple.'<sup>285</sup>

Harasta also comments on the rapid growth of commercialization of the Amish lifestyle in recent years and the threads it poses. "More and more development using the Amish image to sell itself means less and less Amish lifestyle for tourists to observe."<sup>286</sup>

Research showed that majority of the tourists do not mind the use of Amish as a brand for advertizing purposes.<sup>287</sup>

Meyers's study showed that for many tourists the Amish brand is a synonym for home-made, high quality products.<sup>288</sup>

Paradoxically, the demand for home-made products often results in adoption of the new technologies as the Amish try to boost the production processes in order to satisfy the demand.<sup>289</sup>

It is necessary to mention that not all the merchants selling Amish-related products in the Amish areas are Amish. There are many non-Amish entrepreneurs as well. Meyers points out that most of the tourist shoppers do not discern between the products and services offered by Amish and non-Amish merchants.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 36.

<sup>284</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 32.

<sup>285</sup> Trollinger, *Selling the Amish: The Tourism of Nostalgia*, 31.

<sup>286</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 29.

<sup>287</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 37.

<sup>288</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 123.

<sup>289</sup> Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt, *The Amish*, 52.

<sup>290</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shippshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 122.

Fagence argues that most of the non-Amish businesses in Lancaster County attempt to link their products and services with the Amish image and market them under the label of Amish experience.<sup>291</sup>

In Harasta's research, the non-Amish entrepreneurs admitted that they do, in fact, use the Amish image but refused the accusations of exploitation. They argued that Amish image is an inseparable part of their inherited family businesses and so it is also a part of their own tradition. Moreover, they did not think that they use the Amish image against their will.<sup>292</sup>

One respondent concluded: "Most of us are friends or have ties with Amish families, and they have no problem with us and our business here."<sup>293</sup>

According to Buck, tourist enterprises focus predominantly on OOA. They are the most interesting for the tourists because they are considered "a scarce human species."<sup>294</sup> Fagence also points out that the tourists are interested prevalently with the products that are associated with the OOA symbolism.<sup>295</sup> Most of the Amish merchandising is based on association. That is that the visitors of the Amish settlements automatically associate the products sold in those areas with the Amish, although they often do not have any reference to the Amish. However, the association with the Amish makes the products more valuable to the tourists. More important than the product is the association with the Amish people and with what they stand for. The tourists regard their purchases as pieces of the Amish culture that they bring home.<sup>296</sup>

This is also the case with the non-Amish merchants selling prevalently products that are not Amish-made, but rather carry only a sort of symbolic association with the Amish, e.g. hex signs or books about Amish.<sup>297</sup>

Fagence mentions that the importation of the mass-produced replicas of the original Amish-made products from Asia is becoming more and more common.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Fagence, "Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture," 71-72.

<sup>292</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 33.

<sup>293</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 33.

<sup>294</sup> Buck, "Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community," 223.

<sup>295</sup> Fagence, "Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture," 72.

<sup>296</sup> Meyers, "Amish Tourism: Visiting Shipshewana is Better Than Going to the Mall," 123.

<sup>297</sup> Harasta, "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," 32.

<sup>298</sup> Fagence, "Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture," 72.

## 10.5. Amish Perceptions of Tourists

As shown above, there are various types of tourists coming to the Amish settlements - from the seekers of authenticity to eager shoppers. So the question is: Do Amish differentiate between the different types of tourists and if yes, what types of tourists are most welcome? In Chabra's research, the majority of his OOA respondents admitted that they preferred certain types of the tourists in comparison to the others. Unsurprisingly, Amish working in the business sphere preferred the shoppers so they could profit financially from them.<sup>299</sup> However, the most respondents said they would prefer "respectful, polite and sensitive"<sup>300</sup> tourists.

And it is sensitivity in particular that Chabra emphasizes, regardless of what the motivation is. Unfortunately, neither promotional materials nor the tourist information centers provide information on how to behave towards the OOA in a sensitive and less intrusive way. For example, the guided tours through the Amish backyards give the impression that the Amish community is eagerly expecting the tourists, when in fact the Amish do not approve of such tours at all.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 101.

<sup>300</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 101.

<sup>301</sup> Chabra, "How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish," 101.

# 11. POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Hostetler thinks that the rapid tourism development makes the Amish communities more vulnerable.<sup>302</sup>

The concerns about the impacts of tourism upon Amish communities are related to the differences in the value systems between the Amish and the mainstream society. Fagence fears that because the Amish are non-confrontational, they might not be able to withstand the growing intrusion.<sup>303</sup> OOA, in particular, “hold a very low threshold of psychological carrying capacity.”<sup>304</sup> On the other hand, he believes that those Amish groups who are well-established (the stricter orders, such as OOA) will manage to withstand the challenges by separation from the less strict orders.<sup>305</sup>

Hostetler hints that the behavior of the Amish changed as a result of tourism. For example, Amish used to greet other people when working in the fields, but the big numbers of tourists caused them to stop as they could not greet everyone and still manage to get the work done.<sup>306</sup>

Buck admits that the Amish feel the pressure of tourism but he did not observe any signs of the Amish culture falling apart or signs of personal discomfort. Quite the opposite - he assumes that tourism managed to strengthen Amish sense of identity.<sup>307</sup> “In the tourist industry they have a handy object lesson, in their view, of a wasteful and meaningless enterprise.”<sup>308</sup>

Hostetler notes that also the praise the Amish receive from the public might be harmful to the communities. He mentions that Amish are perceived as some kind of celebrities. And so, the tourists coming to the Amish settlements have their expectations of the Amish unreasonably high, what makes the Amish rather uncomfortable.<sup>309</sup>

According to Fagence, “the scientific evidence of the impact of host-guest interaction is scarce.”<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 315.

<sup>303</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 71.

<sup>304</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 72.

<sup>305</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 71.

<sup>306</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 317-318.

<sup>307</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 233.

<sup>308</sup> Buck, “Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community,” 234.

<sup>309</sup> Hostetler, *Amish Society*, 318.

<sup>310</sup> Fagence, “Cultural Tourism: Strategic Interventions to Sustain a Minority Culture,” 69.

However, it is possible that financial problems as well as “increasing acculturation of so many OOA families into mainstream culture might have made the remaining OOA more tolerant and eager to craft negotiations with the mainstream culture.”<sup>311</sup>

Kraybill notes that many sociologists predicted the gradual assimilation of the Amish into the mainstream culture. He disagrees and points out that because OOA culture is highly integrated one, it is also more resistant to change. The culture manifests itself in their clothing, language, or buggy transportation. But the Amish are constantly negotiating the implementation of changes into their lifestyle. This is the reason why there are some many different groups of Amish.<sup>312</sup>

Harasta believes that the popularity of Lancaster County as a tourist destination leads to its destruction. He assumes that “the area is becoming a victim of its success – too many people not finding what they are looking for because there are too many people looking for something that is no longer there.”<sup>313</sup>

Many Amish tend to relocate as a result of the growing tourist industry. But it is also to be noted that tourism brought many new economic opportunities to the Lancaster County that were not here before. In Harasta’s research, the older Amish respondents expressed their opinion that it is really up to the younger generation to decide about the future of the Amish communities. They also admit that for the younger generation is this way of life more acceptable because it is the only way they know. In addition, there are still economic pressures that do not let the Amish abandon the tourist industry.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Chabra, “How They See Us: Percieved Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish,” 103.

<sup>312</sup> Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 272.

<sup>313</sup> Harasta, “The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” 31.

<sup>314</sup> Harasta, “The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” 31.

## 12. CONCLUSION

To begin with, the cited literature will be shortly evaluated. Firstly, it should be noted that the lack of literature regarding the studied subject did not allow much space for a selective choice. What, oddly enough, gives an impression that the interest of the public in the Amish is possibly greater than that of the academic community.

Secondly, it should be considered that many of the sources used are written by the same authors; hence the perspective might be rather one-sided. Especially the figure of Donald B. Kraybill can be found in many of the used sources either in the role of an author, co-author or editor. This fact made it difficult at times to make comparisons between the particular sources.

Also, the evidence regarding the qualitative research in this area is scarce. Nevertheless, the existing studies managed to provide some insight into the attitudes of the Amish towards the tourism, and the tourists' attitudes towards the Amish as well. It should be considered that the research projects discussed were quite different, not only in their primary research focus, and the location in which they were conducted, but also in their date of publishing. Nevertheless, even the articles of older date, especially Roy Buck's "Boundary Maintenance Revisited: Tourist Experience in an Old Order Amish Community" published in 1978, proved to be largely resourceful despite its seeming obsolescence. This article still serves as a basis for many current research studies regarding the Amish tourism.

Further, the choice of the location (some research projects were conducted in the areas barely affected by the tourist industry), might have had, according to Chabra, an impact upon the results (see Chabra's "How They See Us: Perceived Effects of Tourist Gaze on The Old Order Amish"). Finally, most of the studies discussed were designed as a small-scale research projects. Harasta in his article admits that this might result in slightly distorted results and hence suggests an additional research (see Harasta's "The Amish – A People of Preservation and Profitability: A Look at the Amish Industry in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.").

The aim of this thesis was to provide a complex overview of the issues related to the tourism in the Amish settlements. It was clarified that the settlements are largely affected by the tourist industry. As mentioned, tourist activity today is on the growth not

only in the biggest settlements such as Lancaster County, but also in the smaller ones where the tourist industry is not yet fully developed. The three biggest settlements: Lancaster County in Pennsylvania, Holmes County in Ohio and LaGrange County in Indiana attract more than 19 million visitors each year.

It was explained that the development of the tourism went hand in hand with the change of the occupational patterns and the development of small enterprises. These were reinforced by the financial crisis and inability on the side of the Amish to purchase a farm. The Amish saw in the small businesses a friendly solution, which would enable them to withstand the financial crisis and would not force them to compromise their lifestyle and religious choices to an extent that would be unacceptable. Rather unexpectedly, the Amish proved to be quite successful in the roles of businessmen, even though they do not have any higher formal education and try to avoid the use of modern technologies in their businesses. This is because their religion does not allow them to do so. However, they possess many qualities that ensure their success in this field such as strong work-ethic, integrity and frugality. It should be noted that small enterprises play a crucial role in the tourist industry development, even though only approximately one-third of the enterprises is devoted to tourism.

Further, it was shown how the Amish due to their peculiar lifestyle, refusal of technological innovations and conflicts with the government won the attention of the media and subsequently the public. It should be mentioned that this attention was unwanted and the Amish gained it simply by staying true to their religious beliefs and traditions, not by acting rebellious as the media depicted it. Obviously, the portrayal of the Amish in the media influenced heavily the public opinion on them. But most importantly it contributed to the development of various stereotypes which, in many cases, reinforced the tourism development. As discussed, the opinions of the Amish in the public were, and still are, changing and ambivalent. Generally, they oscillate somewhere in between admiration and contempt. The appraisal is connected to the notion of rural nostalgia and yearning for the 'good old days' of America. For many they also serve as good example of an alternative lifestyle which is largely self-sufficient and sustainable. On the other hand they are despised especially for their lack of education and dismissive attitude towards technologies.

These opinions are naturally mirrored in the various types of tourists who come to the Amish areas. It was shown that there are different motivations that encourage tourists to visit Amish settlements. These are often of positive nature, reflecting the admiration,

such as search for an authentic Amish experience in the form of a genuine human interaction. This is because these tourists believe that Amish life is somehow more real and less superficial than that of the mainstream society. But there are also tourists motivated by the contempt who come in order to confirm their own moral superiority over the Amish.

Nevertheless, it was revealed that the majority of tourists come in search for entertainment or in order to shop. This showed that the present-day Amish tourism is of highly (and prevalently) commercial nature. This fact is connected with the development of 'Amish brand,' which is perceived as highly valuable among the visitors. They tend to believe that Amish products are hand-crafted and of high quality. This was, however, disproved. Rather, it was shown that it becomes more and more common that the products sold under the 'Amish brand' are mass-produced and carry very little authenticity. But, as revealed, most of the tourists are unable to tell the authentic from the inauthentic.

Furthermore, it was explained how the tourist infrastructure in these areas works. It is designed as a set of carefully-staged attractions that ensures that the Amish (OOA in particular) are protected from the direct contact with the tourists. Among the most common tourist attractions are: horse-and-buggy rides, visitation centers, reconstructed Amish barns, restaurants serving traditional Amish meals, guided tours through the backyards of Amish houses, etc. Even though the tourist locations are typical of the staged attractions it is still possible to experience the authenticity if one really looks for it. But it was shown that the majority of the tourists are content with the staged version of the Amish reality.

Regarding the attitudes of the Amish towards the tourism, the scientific evidence is scarce. As discussed, this is largely due to the unwillingness on the side of the Amish (especially those of the stricter orders, such as OOA) to participate in any kind of 'worldly' research. This is understandable because, as it was shown, such actions stand in sharp contrast with their core beliefs. The existing studies, served as a basis for an overview of the most common responses of the Amish towards the tourism. It should be reminded once again that the Amish population is very fragmented. There are constantly new groups being established, who differ from the other in their religious practices and lifestyle choices. This is reflected also in their attitudes towards the tourist industry.

Generally, the more progressive groups are more willing to participate actively in tourism, whereas the stricter ones prefer to distance themselves from it. The most frequent motivations that lead the Amish to participate are: 1) they want to educate the public about their culture, 2) they see it as an opportunity to preach their faith to the non-Amish, and 3) they need to make money for living. But there also many Amish (especially the more

conservative ones) who refuse to participate and criticize the tourist industry. They complain predominantly about the intrusion of privacy, crowded streets, traffic, picture-taking and noise. Despite the criticism, there is not much the Amish can do to protect themselves from the tourists. This is because they refuse to use legal means to ensure their privacy. Hence, their usual response to the intrusion is that they ignore the tourists and turn the whole matter into a joke. More radical response is that the Amish migrate away from the areas with the blossoming tourist industry.

Also, the Amish living in the bigger settlements (such as Lancaster County, Holmes County, etc.) with the already developed tourist industry hold different opinions on tourism than those living in the less touristic-developed areas. It was shown that the latter group tends to be more open to the tourism. However, this might be due to the lack of evidence in these areas regarding the impacts of the tourist industry.

There is no comprehensive study regarding the effects of tourism on Amish communities. But it is obvious that the tourist industry affect the lives of the Amish greatly. Quite popular opinion is that the Amish will gradually integrate into the mainstream society. However, this was proved unlikely, at least for the Amish of stricter communities such as OOA. This is because it is largely believed that the more integrated the community is, the more resistant it is to change. It was also hinted that tourist industry might be what makes the Amish more unlikely to assimilate – it is an example of how they do not want to live. However, the Amish of the more progressive orders are more likely to assimilate eventually. Nevertheless, it still holds true that many Amish are dependant on the tourist industry as a source of financial means. That makes them more willing to negotiate the changes with the outside world.

So can the Amish communities be classified as a sort of paradise? It holds true that Amish are frequently depicted and marketed in the media as such - the pious community living the simple life. However, as this thesis showed the reality is quite different. The Amish encounter many problems in order to simply survive. As a result, they are sometimes forced to negotiate with the outside world more than they would wish to.

## 13. RESUMÉ

Táto práca podáva prehľad problematiky cestovného ruchu v amišských komunitách. Cestovný ruch je v súčasnosti výrazne rozšírený nielen v najväčších osadách ako je napríklad Lancaster County v Pensylvánii, ale sa dostáva sa postupne do popredia aj v menších, menej známych lokalitách. Tri najväčšie osady samotné (Lancaster County v Pensylvánii, Holmes County v Ohiu a LaGrange County v Indiane) prilákajú každoročne približne 19 miliónov turistov.

Je dôležité si uvedomiť, že rozvoj cestovného ruchu úzko súvisí so zakladaním malých podnikov. Mnoho amišských podnikateľov totiž pracuje práve v oblasti cestovného ruchu. Vzniku malých podnikov predchádzala finančná kríza, ktorá najviac zasiahla amišské komunity v 60-tych rokoch minulého storočia. Nakoľko kríza spôsobila nárast cien statkov, boli mnohí Amiši nútení zanechať poľnohospodárstvo a začať podnikat'. Napriek počiatocnému skepticizmu zo strany verejnosti sa Amiši ukázali byť úspešní obchodníci. Zato vďaka najmä svojmu silnému pracovnému nasadeniu, a zmyslu pre česťnosť a šetrnosť.

Amiši sa postupne vďaka svojmu osobitému životnému štýlu, odmietaniu technických výtvarných a opakovaným sporom s vládou dostali do pozornosti médií a verejnosti. Táto pozornosť bola samozrejme zo strany Amišov neželaná. Každopádne médiá do veľkej miery ovplyvnili názor verejnosti na amišskú komunitu. Taktiež prispeli k vzniku mnohých stereotypov spojených s Amišmi, ktoré síce pretrvávajú dodnes, ale ktoré výrazne prispeli k rozvoju turizmu. Je nutné poznamenať, že názor verejnosti na Amišov sa neustále mení a osciluje medzi obdivom a pohrdaním. Verejnosť obdivuje Amišov najmä preto, že si ich mnohí spájajú s akousi morálnou čistotou a zmyslom pre tradičné hodnoty. Taktiež sú vzorom pre ľudí hľadajúcich alternatívny životný štýl. Na druhej strane sú Amiši neustále kritizovaní za svoju nevzdelanosť a odmietavý prístup k technickým výtvarným.

Prirodzene tieto názory sa zrkadlia aj v myslení turistov, ktorí prichádzajú do Amišských osád. Aj keď mnoho turistov zmýšľa o Amišoch pozitívne, nájdu sa aj takí, ktorí prichádzajú s pocitom nadradenosti a Amišmi pohrdajú.

Čo sa týka motivácie, drvivá väčšina turistov prichádza za zábavou, alebo za účelom nakupovať. Títo turisti sa zaujímajú o výrobky, ktoré nesú takzvanú 'Amišskú značku.' Tá je pre turistov akousi nepísanou známkou kvality a ručnej výroby. Žiaľ, pravdou je, že mnoho takto predávaných produktov je výsledkom strojovej výroby.

Turistická infraštruktúra v amišských osadách je tvorená vysokým počtom turistických atrakcií, ktoré majú za účel upútať pozornosť turistov, a zároveň tak zamedziť ich osobnému kontaktu s Amišmi. Medzi najtypickejšie atrakcie, ktoré tieto lokality návštevníkom ponúkajú, patria turistické centrá, zrekonštruované stodoly, reštaurácie ponúkajúce tradičné pokrmy a mnoho ďalších.

Neexistuje mnoho literatúry mapujúcej postoje Amišov voči cestovnému ruchu. Tento fakt je do veľkej miery spojený s neochotou Amišov účastniť sa akýchkoľvek prieskumov. Taktiež treba brať ohľad na to, že amišská komunita je veľmi rôznorodá. Teda neustále sa odčleňujú nové skupiny, ktoré sa líšia od ostatných náboženskými zvykmi, aj životným štýlom. V zásade však platí, že progresívnejšie skupiny Amišov sú ochotnejšie aktívne sa podieľať na cestovnom ruchu, zatiaľ čo tie ortodoxnejšie si zachovávajú odstup. Niektorí dokonca cestovný ruch otvorene ho kritizujú. Vadí im predovšetkým hluk, dopravné zápchy, preplnené ulice, fotografovanie a v neposlednom rade narušovanie súkromia. Nakoľko však odmietajú právnu pomoc na jeho ochranu, nemajú veľa možností ako sa pred ním ubrániť. Preto mnoho Amišov turistov jednoducho ignoruje. Niektorí reagujú aj radikálnejším spôsobom, a to tak, že sa odsťahujú do oblastí menej zasiahnutých cestovným ruchom.

Taktiež Amiši žijúci v oblastiach, kde má cestovný ruch dlhšiu tradíciu, ho vnímajú inak, ako tí čo žijú v oblastiach, ktoré sú cestovným ruchom poznačené menej. Dalo by sa povedať, že druhá skupina majú voči turizmu otvorenejší postoj.

Aj keď turizmus výrazne zasahuje do života Amišov, preukázalo sa ako nepravdepodobné, že by v budúcnosti došlo k úplnej asimilácii Amišov s americkou spoločnosťou. A to najmä čo sa týka striktnejších rádov. Bolo dokázané, že čím dlhšiu má komunita tradíciu a čím viac je jednotná, tým je pravdepodobnosť, že zanikne menšia. Ale ani táto súdržnosť nemení nič na fakte, že Amiši sú do veľkej miery závislí na cestovnom ruchu, čo ich často núti robiť kompromisy s okolitým svetom.

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## **ANNOTATION**

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This thesis discusses the tourist industry that has developed in the Amish settlements in the run of the 20th century from various perspectives. It analyzes the circumstances that led to the tourism development in these areas, and made the Amish a desired paradise-like travel destination. Moreover, the thesis provides an insight into the various motivations of the tourists that come to the Amish settlements and how such visits affect the local community.

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Práca pojednáva o cestovnom ruchu v Amišských osadách z viacerých uhlov pohľadu. V prvom rade sa zameriava na okolnosti, ktoré viedli k rozvoju turizmu v týchto lokalitách a spôsobili, že sa oblasti obývané Amišmi stali vyhľadávanými turistickými destináciami. Následne sa sústreďuje na faktory, ktoré motivujú turistov k návšteve Amišských osád, ako aj nato ako cestovný ruch vplýva na život Amišov.