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The life style of the Amish community in Lancaster county "Pennsylvania" 19th century

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I dedicated this work from deep heart to my fiancée Khaled, and dearest Mother and Father who gave me the inspiration to fulfill this dream with their support, prays and encouragement.

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Abstract

This research sheds light on the Amish people of Lancaster Country Pennsylvania, a study that covers many phases, spheres about this community. Though the Amish life style and values are problematic in some ways, and are not always easily translatable to the external, broader society, nevertheless there are some ambiguous points that push any thirsty researcher to be closer to this group of people. In this regard this dissertation is divided into two chapters, the first chapter strikes up by the Amish origin and history, then a slight comparison between the Amish and Mennonite group, in addition to their religious, economic ,and political practices, the last part of this chapter was devoted to the Amish population. The second chapter is about the Amish's life style, way of living, it explores the Amish basic beliefs and culture concerning clothing, Education, Farming, Family, marriage , Funeral and modern conveniences moreover, the study covers the Amish Subgroups, also tackled some Amish issues with appropriate solutions.

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General Introduction

General Introduction:

Our research is about the Amish community in Lancaster Pennsylvania in the nineteenth century. This group of people believe that the community is at the heart of their life and faith and that the way to salvation is to live as a loving society apart from the world ,they help each other and the whole community members work together to help a member in trouble. The Amish stress simplicity and humility. They avoid anything associated with self-exaltation, pride of position or enjoyment of power.

Amish live in small rural communities where strong family and social ties allow their own distinctive and separate way of life. The family is the heart of Amish community, individual identity and spiritual life. The Amish believe that it is essential to keep themselves separate from the world so they live in their own small communities and differ from other Americans in the way they dress, their language , work, travel and Education , which makes them special people and urges us as researchers to study this sample of population. Thus, who are the Amish as a community? And what makes that community so special?

This dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter entitled « Amish Community » will deal with the Amish origin and history, and the second chapter entitled « The Amish culture and beliefs » is devoted to their culture and life style.

Chapter One:

Amish Community

1-Introduction :

Before starting any research, it is important to collect the adequate data and make the necessary investigation that allow us to get forward and penetrate deeply in our study which is about the Amish life style in Lancaster Country.

The first chapter is concerned with the Amish's origin and history which was devoted as a preface of this research, then a brief comparasion between the Amish and Mennonite groups .The last part of this chapter tackles Amish's religious, political and economic aspects.

1.1The Amish Community:

Amish lifestyle is guided by the Ordnung¹, the term that is different from one community to another, and within a community, from district to district. What is acceptable in one community may not be acceptable in another.

¹Ordnung : German word for order ; it is a set of rules for Amish, old order Mennonites and conservative Mennonites living. Source;:Wetmore,Jameson (2007). « Amish Technology :Reinforcing values and building community ».IEEE Technology and Society p :26(Accessed in April 2016)

One of the greatest functions of the Amish family are raising children, and living with neighbors and relatives. The Amish believe That God blesses large families as it is shown in figure one.

Figure one: The Amish people.



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

1.1.1 The Amish Origin/ History :

The history of the Amish church started with what is called a schism in Switzerland within a group of Swiss in 1663 led by Jacob Ammann². They are a group of traditionalist members of Christian church fellowship related to but different from Mennonite churches, with whom they share Anabaptist³ origins, in fact they became known as the Amish.

In the early 18th century many Amish and Mennonites started emigrating to Pennsylvania fleeing persecution. Many statistics assert that in 2000, over 165,000 Amish lived in the United States, and about 1,500 live in Canada, beside, between 1992 and 2013 the Amish population increased by 12%. The Amish Mennonite adopted the name « Swiss Brethren ». They were Anabaptists which means one who baptizes again, they traced their origins to Felix Manz (1498-1527) and Conrad Ghebel (1498-1526).

Amish and Mennonite's migration and trip to Pennsylvania was a large part from the palatinate and neighboring areas, which was a reaction to poverty, religious wars and persecution. Amish first immigrants travelled to Berks country Pennsylvania but later moved, due to many land issues and security concerns tried to the French and Indian war (1754-1763).

2 Jacob Ammann : also Jacob Ammann (12-February 1644- between 1712 and 1730) was an anabaptist leader and namesake of the Amish religious movement. Source; Gratz, Delbert (1951). « The Home of Jacob Amman » (The Mennonite Historical Society) p :137. (Accessed in March 2016)

3 Anabaptist : also called Swiss Brethren European people who came to the USA more than two centuries ago to escape persecution, this word means one who baptizes again a reference to those who had been baptized as infants, later adopted a belief in « believer's baptism », and then let themselves again be baptized as adults. Source : Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press) (Accessed in 21 January 2016)

1.1.2 The difference between Amish and Mennonite groups :

There are so many varieties and similarities between the Amish and Mennonite group :

1.1.2.1 Similarities:

In Lancaster country, the Amish and Mennonites share many common points mainly in religious beliefs, and this is not very abrupt since both of them share the same historical roots.

The Amish and Mennonites grew out of Anabaptist movement which emerged in 1525 in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church as well as the protestant reformation movement⁴ brought on by Martin Luther⁵.

1.1.2.2 Differences:

What is the difference between The Amish and Mennonites? As history proves, the term « Amish » differ from the term « Mennonite », though many people suppose and mis-use them as if they were equivalent:

1.1.2.2.1 Amish

In 1963 in Europe, Mennonite and Amish were separated; they felt the Mennonites of that time were failing to practice things. Amish believe in strict plain form of dress and other things, they also think that their people should be steady and not affected by external world and modern thing such as electricity,

4 Reformation Movement by Martin Luther : also called the protestant reformation often referred to simply as reformation , was a schism from the Roman Catholic Church initiated by Martin continued by John Calvin and other early protestant reformers in 16th century Europe. Source : Patrick Renaissance and Reformation p.131 (Accessed in April 2016)

5 Martin Luther : was a German professor of theology a seminal figure in the protestant reformation , Luther came to reject several teachings and practices of the late medieval Catholic church. (10 November 1483-18 February 1546). Source : « Martin Luther King Jr. name change ». German-way. Retired July 9, 2013. p : 85 (Accessed March 2016)

automobiles and tractors, though without electricity, many homes have running water and bathrooms.

1.1.2.2 Mennonites

Different groups of people and churches are called Mennonites in the world which deals with the church of god in Christ Mennonites. They believe that plain, simple and modest dress with a true spiritual experience is the right path to enter the kingdom of god and be saved. Moreover, they have historically sought to increase their fellowship through missionary activities throughout the world. Whereas, the Amish have never felt the need for such activities. Figure two below shows a difference between both groups

Figure two : Mennonite and Amish groups



Source : <https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Thought Amish and Mennonites groups are apparently similar, one can notice that they are different in many spheres.

1.1.3 Religious practices:

The Amish believe that God has called them to simple life of faith, discipline, dedication and humility, their religion should be practiced rather than focusing on perceptible symbols or complicated rituals. The Amish submitted the « will of Jesus » through a set of norms, is at odds with individualism central to the wider American culture, the Amish anti-individualist⁶ orientation is the motive for rejecting labor saving technologies. The Amish based on several practices in their religion, among them :

1.1.3.1 Hochmut and Demut :

The Amish way of life is based around two key principles ; Hochmut that refers to a combination of pride, arrogance and haughtiness, those negative traits are rejected by the Amish community. However, Demut is defined as humility or an individual's humbleness.

The most interesting thing about the Amish religion is that probably why they are very often mis-understood by fellow Americans. The Amish submit to the « Will of Jesus » and this is expressed as a group norm which is far from individualism of most Americans and other Western cultures.

⁶ Individualism : is the moral stance, political philosophy ideology, or social outlook that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual. Source :Ellen Meiksins Wood. Mind and Politics :An Approach to the meaning of Liberal and Socialist Individualism pg.7(Accessed in March 2016)

1.1.3.2 Rumspringa and Shunning :

According to the Amish and other Anabaptists the child can not be baptized. Amish children are expected to obey their parents in all matters, but when they became adolescent they take their decisions themselves.

Before teenagers are baptized they are given the right to live the outside the world of the Amish community. This period is known as Rumspringa⁷ translated from Pennsylvania Deutsh as running around.

Amish young adults are expected to find a spouse and be baptized while those who choose not to be baptized gradually drift away from the community. However, unlike those who break the vows of baptism they can continue socializing with their family and relatives, those young people who leave the church prior to being baptized are not shunned. Shunning is also sometimes imposed by bishops on church members guilty of offenses such as using forbidden technology.

1.1.4 Political practices :

Politics, like higher education, is too worldly for the Amish who view government with an ambiguous eye, although they support and respect civil government.

Amish involvement with the government is minimal but they do pay taxes except for social security because they do not rely on these benefits in their old age. They are not entirely self-sufficient⁸. Support for state and local government may be given through voting, only a small number of Amish cast ballots in presidential elections.

⁷ Rumspringa ;also spelled Rumschpringe or Rumshpringa ;is a term for adolescence use in some Amish communities. Source :Schachtman, Tom(2006). Rumspringa ;To Be Or Not To Be Amish. New York p :156 (Accessed in February 2016)

⁸ Self-sufficient ;also called self-containment, is the state of not requiring any aid, support, or interaction for survival. Source :John A. Hostelter-Amish Society-Fourth Edition p :51 (Accessed in April 2016)

In political organizations membership and holding public office are forbidden for several reasons, first running for office is viewed as a kind of arrogance unlike Amish values of humility and modesty, second office holding breaks the religious principle of disconnection from the external world, finally legal force must be used if necessary to settle civil disputes. Even if an individual is exempt from income taxes for whatever reason, most will still pay some form of tax.

Most people are required to pay Social Security and Medicare taxes if they work, but there are exceptions .While the Amish community pays state and federal income taxes and property and sales taxes, the group is exempt from paying social security or Medicare.

1.1.5 Economic aspects:

Amish life is rooted in the soil and agriculture which has been popularly defined as « Backbone of an economy » due to the European persecution that pushed them into rural areas, the Amish have been farmers, since the middle of the twentieth century and some of them settled in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The expensiveness of a farmland in older settlements led to the Amish crisis soil, thus farms have been subdivided into smaller units, some families have migrated to the rural back waters of other states where farms could be purchased at much lower prices, the Amish have been known as some of the best farmers in the world.

By the late of 1990's, the rise of cottage industries and small shops marks an historic turn in Amish life. Since the 1970's, new enterprises have reshaped Amish society, by the late 1990's, more than half Amish adults in Lancaster are employed by these small industries as plumbers, painters and self-trained accountants, professionals like lawyers, physicians and veterinarians are missing from Amish ranks because of the taboo on high school and college education.

Conclusion :

To sum up, this chapter has been devoted for the Amish Origin and History. In this study, the Amish has been presented as a modest humble community who love and embrace simplicity and believe that simple life is the best and the proper one. Yet, the last other part of this chapter tackled their Amish religious political, economic aspects. As a supplement to all of these, the next chapter covers Amish's culture and lifestyle.

Chapter Two :

The Amish Culture and Beliefs

1-Introduction :

In the second chapter of our dissertation, we will discuss the Amish culture and beliefs. In this part we cover many cultural spheres about these groups of people ; their main beliefs and principles, their practices concerning Clothing, Education ,Family and their interaction with each others, Farming and how they raise their crops, in addition to that Marriage and Funerals , Modern conveniences which concerns Vehicules ,Electrical devices, telephones, and even Religious services. However, the last part of this chapter is devoted to the Amish problems and conflicts with some appropriate solutions.

1.1The Amish culture and beliefs :

The Amish people adopt a certain way of life and a set of beliefs. Both Amish and Mennonites believe in one God and think that God loved the world so much that he gave his only son to die on the cross and that through faith in the shed blood of Jesus they are reconciled to God. For them the Bible is a part of God inspiration and revelation, in Christianity brotherhood is essential to live

as undivided society. They believe that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, and also empowers believers for service and holy living⁹.

Among the beliefs that set the Amish apart from other protestant Christians « Nature of Salvation »¹⁰ which is an unearned gift from God, they do not believe that faith automatically guarantees salvation. Many reject the beliefs common to other protestant denominations that anyone can be certain that his salvation is guaranteed. They consider such certainty to be arrogant.

1.2 Lifestyle of the old order Amish :

For an Amish person, the Ordnung may dictate almost every aspect of one lifestyle, from dress and hair length to buggy style and farming techniques. Ordnung varies from community to community and order to order, which explains why you will see some Amish riding in automobiles, while others do not even accept the use of battery-powered lights.

Amish people are known for their simple living, plain dress, and reluctance to adopt many conveniences of modern technology. Practices shared by most of the Old Order Amish, the largest Amish group, are listed below.

1.2.1 Amish Clothing :

Amish clothing is symbolic of their faith humility. Amish intended to set apart from the rest of the world. The Amish dress in a very simple style, avoiding all but the most basic ornamentation. From the way Amish people dress, one can tell that they are Amish. Their clothing is made at home of plain fabrics and is primarily dark in color.

⁹ Source : A History of the Amish ,1993,p :88 (Accessed in April2016)

¹⁰ Nature Salvation ;is stated as the saving of the soul from sin and it's consequences.
Source :Wilfred Graves,Jr,In Pursuit of Wholeness :Experiencing God's Salvation for the Total Person(shippensburg,PA :Destiny Image,2011) p :9(Accessed in 2016)

Amish clothing is a cornerstone of the Amish identity. And as Jakob Ammann said ; it is one of the glues that holds the Amish culture together and keeps it strong. He notice the influence that clothing had on people and that dress identified a person's culture in life. He also saw that success and individual accomplishment were proclaimed by personal appearance.

Amish and Mennonites and other groups began migrating to America in the 1730's, in search of religious freedom. Along with this freedom came the right to own land. Their ethic, frugality, and farming skills helped them to blossom and thrive all year long. Thus, they have steadfastly continued their tradition of distinctive Amish Clothes which helped them maintain their identity in the ever-changing modern world.

In Pennsylvania, Ohio¹¹ and Indiana settlements, affordable farmland has become rare, which helped the Amish men ameliorate their life conditions. Amish worked in factory, construction jobs, restaurants and even retail stores, which threat their culture and way of life. Amish clothes are considered to be an expression of obedience, separation, humility, simplicity and non-conformity to the world.

Since Amish people do not adapt with the world, they must conform with the society in which they live, and their way of life symbolized a badge of solidarity and sign of unity.

The Amish traditions are designed to unify the Church together. Amish believe that clothing should not be used to distinguish the individual from the group by making that person more "attractive" over others, the whole Amish culture is based on placing group over the individual.

¹¹ Ohio ;a state in the midwestern region of the United States. Source; Cyton Andrew R.L.Ohio :The History of a people.Columbus,OH :The Ohio State University Press.(Accessed in january 2016)

Old Order Mennonites and Amish share the same conservative beliefs and lifestyle, Mennonite women might wear dresses made from small print material and though they wear head coverings, they still paint a picture of modern culture when compared to the Amish women in their plain dark homemade Amish attire.

So, as a whole When it comes to Amish women's clothes, they wear modest dresses made from solid-colored fabric with long sleeves and a full skirt ;not shorter than half-way between knee and floor. These dresses are covered with a cape and apron and are fastened with straight pins or snaps. They only believe they need four dresses; One for wash, one for wear, one for dress, and one for spare. A married woman wears a black cape and apron to church, with a plain colored dress underneath, and a single woman wears a white cape and apron to church, again, with a plain colored dress underneath. Amish women do not wear jewelry (see figure three below).

Figure three: Amish Women



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0a>

Concerning Men's dress, they wear black colored suits which are fastened with a hook and eye and have no outside pockets, straight-cut coats without lapels, broad fall trousers, suspenders, solid-colored shirts, black socks and shoes, and black or straw broad-brimmed, the suit coat has no buttons or collars because these are all reminiscent of military uniforms that represent the war that pacifist Amish reject. Amish men do not have mustaches, but they grow beards after they marry. (See figure four)

Figure four: Amish Men



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Amish distinctive clothes encourage their humility and separation from the world. They believe clothing is not a costume; it is an expression of their faith

1.2.2 Amish Education :

Education is a big part of the Amish beliefs and home life, they provide formal education through the eighth grade and only in their own private schools. They are free from state compulsory attendance beyond the eighth grade based on religious principles. Learning focuses on the basic reading, writing and math skills, with vocational training and socialization in Amish history and values. They even learn about farming, animal care, carpentry, masonry and other skills conducive to their lifestyle in agricultural Lancaster County.

Amish young women hold jobs as many school teachers for a few years out of school themselves before marrying (see figure five below). Some of them do well but it is a difficult challenge for others. Finding capable teachers for the school is one of the bigger challenges of the school board. Sometimes Amish mother will have responsibility to teach their kids until they can find an older girl to serve in that capacity. In some communities, a man will take the responsibility of educating the children but it is unusual.

Figure five: Amish Classroom



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Amish schools function just like other schools. They become a center of social activity from picnics to parent/teacher meetings to school programs. The scholars like to demonstrate what they have learned whether it is singing, reciting or reading a story aloud. It is generally believed that the Amish education and school system has been very successful in preparing children to live productive lives within the Amish community and society. The real challenge, the Amish faced that parochial schools aren't available and the students are sent to public schools, they only speak Pennsylvania Dutch¹² in their homes.

With farming and homemaking skills education is considered as an important part of an Amish child's upbringing. At an early age, they are given chores around from ; helping in the kitchen, assisting in doing laundry and cleaning up the house for the girls to barn chores of cleaning out the stalls and feeding the animals for the boys. There is also a turn in the garden during the summer. Thus, Amish education preserves the traditions and values of the society and discourages the young adult from leaving the Amish community.

1.2.3 Amish Family : Inside The Amish Family

The family is the most important social unit in the Amish culture. Large families with seven to ten children are common, the Amish family is the foundation of the Amish way of life, family structure and traditions that seem to be taken from a page out of history, have remained an integral part of the Amish culture.

Household chores are clearly divided by sexual role in the Amish home ; the man who usually works on the farm, while the wife does the washing, cleaning, cooking, and other domestic chores. Typically the father is considered the head of the Amish household.

¹²Pennsylvania Dutch: are a cultural group formed by early German speaking immigrant to Pennsylvania and their descendants. Source: Moon Spotlight Pennsylvania Dutch Country, by A, Dubrovsk p 204 (Accessed in April 2016)

When family members live together, work together, worship together and socialize together, the Amish family is made stronger and it creates a desire for unity and conformity between them. The Amish consider the Ordnung to be a sacred trust that separates them from the outside world and that guides them through all the details of everyday life.

1.2.3.1 The Marriage Relationship

The Amish family is based on farming. Man is considered as the leader of the house, he is the one who takes all the major decisions regarding his family, farm, and household. The Amish marriage ceremony directs the bride to be submissive to her husband¹³.

As any human relationship, the ethic of the each partner determines how much value the husband gives to his wife's input. For sure, marriage is a partnership so the degree to which the husband includes his wife in the decision making process varies from family to another.

1.2.3.2 The man is the primary breadwinner of the Amish family

Amish family relies in her living on farming. For nearly 300 years the Amish man has tilled the soil to produce crops and livestock for a living. In farming, cottage industry helps the man to work at home. Businesses such as ;Bakery, Cabinet shop, Furniture manufacturing shop, Engine repair shop, in addition to Greenhouse Bookstore, Dry goods store, Harness and leather goods shop, Clock and watch repair shop and Sawmill.

In traditional Amish family Parents are supervisors of their children. Every family member is indoctrinated into the Amish lifestyle beginning at the earliest age. Working in the building industry is a popular choice for many.

¹³ Source :John A Hosteler,AmishAmerica p :965Accessed in April 2016)

Plumbing, roofing Carpentry, and other trades where the man can work for himself, are considered compatible with the Amish culture.

1.2.3.3 The mother is in charge of running the household

The efficiency of any Amish family depends upon the skill of the mother in many areas. The Amish woman must be an excellent leader of her house.

Amish mother always takes care of her garden, a productive garden is a great asset to the family since Amish food is home grown, when possible¹⁴.

Cleaning, yard work, laundry and food preservation are mother's role in Amish family. She might even make crafts to sell at a roadside stand. In addition to all of that, she often helps with barn chores and harvesting. The older girl must help her mother in their house affairs. In the other hand, a young Amish girl is expected to hone her skills at running the household so she will be fully ready when her time comes to run a household of her own.

Finally, Amish women make most of the clothing for the family, which are very plain and of usually solid colors, which reflect their humility. This is why the Amish are often referred to as plain people.

1.2.3.4 Grandparents remain a vital part of the family

Grandparents play a vital role in Amish family. They pass the farm down to one of their children, and they usually continue their life in a farm house. The grandparents provide assistance for chores and contribute to the family in many ways. They sell food or crafts produced by the family. Their Advice and wisdom are treasured asset to the family.

¹⁴ Source : « The Amish History,family »,religious tolerance (Accessed in march 2016)

In contrast to current popular belief, the farm is not always inherited by the oldest child. Usually, the parents are not ready to retire until after their entire family has been raised. Then the empty nest is ready to be occupied by a new family. By this time, the older children might have families of their own and be well established elsewhere. Many Amish homes do not include three generations, since there are many children and there is only one farm to inherit.

1.2.3.5 Children are also seen as a valuable asset to the Amish family

As any children outside the world, Amish children are pampered by their parents. After the age of two, Amish children can expect to be spanked for their lapses in good judgment. Amish kids spend their childhood playing with their siblings and toys which are very simple and non-electrical. By the age of five, Amish children are performing simple chores in the house or around the barn. Their workload is increased as they develop the required strength and skills¹⁵.

When Amish children work on a farm, they get a feeling of accomplishment and actually see the important contribution they are making to their family. They are instilled with the work ethic that prepares them for their life in the Amish community.

A large family is blessed and valued by Church. There are very few converts to the Amish religion because outsiders are not equipped to cope with the psychological and physical rigors of Amish life.

¹⁵ Source :Ruder ,Katherin Kate(July 23,2004)Genomics in Amish coutry(Accessed in April 2016)

1.2.3.6 Down time

The Amish family spend most of their time in the farm, feeding the livestock and taking care for other agricultural concerns that must be done daily. After that, they go to church services which are held on alternating Sundays. A light lunch is served after the service. Then they spend the afternoon with their family.

On the "off" Sundays, they visit other families or just stay home and rest. The Amish consider Christmas, Thanksgiving, Pentecost Easter and Ascension Day as a part of their Amish culture and traditions. The Amish enjoy gathering at many occasions such as weddings and auctions, barn-raising in which they cooperate and help each others.

1.2.4 Amish Farming:

Scale of farming enabled each farm to be worked by a family where a father and his son could easily work. If more help becomes available the operation may be expanded to include more livestock or possibly specialty crops such as vegetables¹⁶.

No Amish farm would be able to survive long without the assistance and hard labor of the horse. Whether it is a draft horse hauling a plow in the field or a carriage horse pulling a buggy to services, the horse is invaluable to the Amish farmer.(see figure six)

¹⁶ Source :Clifford,Michael(August 6,2000) At ease with the alternative Amish way p :256 (Accessed in April 2016)

Figure Six: Amish Farmer



Source : <https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Many Amish families and communities depend on farming for income. Some have changed their rules to accommodate for new technology. Many of these are fiercely contested and have led to separations of congregations and communities.

The Amish have chosen to do without some of the technology that other farmers use. For example, they often use horses to plant and plow their fields instead of tractors and combines. Many Amish also avoid using pesticides. Instead, many Amish farmers use manure to fertilize the land. The Amish work to combine their knowledge of science, technology and experience to maintain their traditional way of farming. The Amish prefer farming as a vocation over all others. They see all work as important and of value and they honor what is called the process and the product.

1.2.5 Marriage:

Weddings are typically held on Tuesdays and Thursdays in November to early December. Couples who plan to marry are « published » in late October, they are married in one of their homes during November or early December, choosing a mate is the most important decision in an Amish man's life.

(see figure seven)

Figure seven:Amish wedding



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

When boys and girls turn sixteen, they began their search for a spouse. At the age of twenty, he or she is looking forward to the wedding day, thus a young man asks his girl to marry him. She wears no makeup and will not receive an engagement or wedding ring because it is forbidden for Amish women to wear jewelry and instead of that, he gives her an etting or a clock.

The couple's intentions of marriage must be kept secret until July or August. So, when a woman tells her family about her plans to marry, the father announces the date and time of the wedding and invites his relatives to attend, the couple does not attend the church service on the Sunday they are published,

instead the young woman prepares a meal for her fiance, then the newlyweds enjoy dinner alone at home.

When the girl's family returns from the church, the daughter formally introduces her fiance to her parents; the bride wears a new blue dress that will be worn again on other formal occasions.

Amish men do not wear bow ties, but for weeding they do. All attendants in the wedding party play a vital role, but there is not best man or maid of honor.

The marriage ceremony may take several hours, followed by a community reception that includes a banquet, singing, and storytelling. Newlyweds spend the wedding night at the home of the bride's parents.

1.2.6 Amish Holidays : What holidays do Amish celebrate ?

The Amish holidays schedule differs somewhat from that of the typical American and they appreciate time off to rest and spend time with family and for religious observation. They observe a variety of religious holidays and some public holidays as well¹⁷.

1.2.6.1 Public holidays

Public Holidays do not take part in Amish celebration, though may be granted days off from work depending on their employer. The Amish do recognize Thanksgiving as well as New Year's Day, in some settlements Amish might take in fireworks on the Fourth of July, for instance Amish do not give any concern to Halloween, but may display decorative pumpkins and gourds during the autumn months.

¹⁷ The Amish History, Practices, Religious tolerance (Accessed in March 2016)

1.2.6.2 Amish religious holidays :

Amish, like other Christians celebrate many religious holidays among them Easter, Good Friday, in addition Christmas on December 26th, Pentecost, and Ascension Day. Pentecost, Easter Monday, and second Christmas may not be celebrated in all communities¹⁸.

Amish do not have special church services on Easter Sunday or Christmas, but will cover the appropriate parts of Scripture during the Sunday service closest to those days. Amish undergo fasting the day before communion in spring and autumn. Good Friday and St. Michael's Day are days of fasting as well. Though the Amish do not put up a Christmas tree or teach children about Santa Claus, they exchange gifts at Christmas. Some Amish schools may put on an annual Christmas school program (see figure eight below). At Easter, Amish children may color eggs.

Figure eight: An Amish school Christmas experience **December 26th, 1998.**



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

¹⁸ Source :The Riddle of Amish Culture p 256(Accessed in March 2016)

1.2.7 Modern conveniences:

Among the Modern conveniences are labor-saving devices which facilitate the task better than traditional method. Due to the historical use of the term, in way of living around the world. It is a relative term based upon the conveniences previously available to a person and his or her neighbors¹⁹.

According to American definition of "modern convenience" is likely different from that of an individual living in a developing country. The term "Modern Conveniences" is used to express personal lifestyle and home life. Generally, the Lancaster Amish shy away from the use of modern technology and conveniences including electricity, automobiles and computers to survive their religious beliefs of separation from worldly influences.

Despite the fact that they do not consider modern developments as evil, they want to avoid being drawn into temptations associated with technology that threaten and influence their values and beliefs. The Pennsylvania Amish community disagreed to connect into public power lines. And this does not mean that the Amish do not occasionally use electricity. Depending on a particular district's ruling, the use of electricity is limited ;electric fences,certain appliances,or lighting buggies at night. Technology is accepted in limitation as long as the Amish lifestyle remains true and suitable to these core values. Amish want to preserve their focus on God, family ,work and community.

¹⁹ Source : Technology in Donald B.Kraybill,Chapter 19 p 153(Accessed in March 2016)

1-2-7-1 Amish Vehicles:

Amish people can ride in cars and busses, but are forbidden to own one. The Amish can ride tractors on the farm, though they must have metal tires instead of rubber to prevent them from being used for traveling long distances. (see figure nine below)²⁰.

Figure nine : Amish buggy



Source : <https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Amish people selectively use technology , choosing what will serve their community and rejecting what may harm it. Although each church makes its

²⁰ Taming the power of technology in Donald Kraybill,chapter 5 (Accessed in April 2016)

own decisions about technology all of them reject television, computers in their homes, and the ownership of cars.

1.2.7.1.1 Prohibition Against Car Ownership :

Church rules deprive and prohibit members from owning as well as driving a car, although the Amish are allowed to use automobiles for social and business functions. The Amish businessmen are also not allowed to provide loans to non-Amish employees for the purpose of buying a vehicle. Although car ownership is considered as a taboo ,many churches allow members to hire vehicles and a non-Amish driver for long distance and business travel.

In general, the Old Order Amish have a strict taboo against automobile ownership for the baptized members of their group. Despite this taboo the automobile is a necessary functional commodity which aids in perpetuating their way of life. This paradox hinges around the deft Amish distinction between automobile ownership and automobile utilization.

1.2.7.2 Electrical devices:

Amish people do not use technological devices in terms of electricity or radios, TV Sets, personal computers games...etc Amish believe that electricity is an evil which threatens Amish values and society²¹.

1.2.7.3 Telephones :

There is no real position given by the Amish church concerning telephones. Telephones are an interesting mean by which the Amish families incorporate technology into their lives. As is typical of the Amish, when a new

²¹ Source ;Charles E.Hurst ;an Amish Paradox :Diversity and Change the world's largest Amish Community,p :310(Accessed in April 2016)

technology comes along, the Amish examine its effect on the church and community. The technology should not be an intrusion into the home, but rather serve the social purposes and goals of the group

Many people mistakenly think the Amish use nothing modern and have no relation with modern technology. Yet, when they observe an Amish person making a call from a pay telephone booth, they might be surprised.(see figure ten)

Figure ten:Amish phone booth



Source :<https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

In the Amish community, there is some debate as to how much of the new telephone technology will be allowed, and what impact it may have. The fairly common use of pagers, beepers, and even cell phones among the Amish is raising even more questions.

The Amish do not generally own mobile phones, but they do have exceptions for people who are disabled or women who are pregnant for health and safety reasons. This is because most Amish people are out working in the fields, markets and barns during the day and not in close contact in case of an emergency. The New Order Amish do permit phones and electricity in their homes.

Business men who need to have mobile phone for work are permitted to own one, but only for business purposes. If a mobile phone is not permitted, there is usually a small hut provided with a phone inside for such needs. Such a hut is near to the Amish homes, but down a discreet path in a field to keep from temptation. There is often a log book for each person to write down long-distance calls made, and the phone bill is divided up for monthly payment accordingly. This kind of phone came about after the 1950's when land began to become less available and the need for other jobs with the outside community grew. With the growth of the mobile phone market, common phone booths died out making a communal phone a necessity. The Old Order Mennonites also use a community phone and often share it with their Amish neighbours.

1.2.7.4 religious services :

Religious services are held every other Sunday. They reflect the simplicity and plainness of Amish life. Children sit with their parents during the long service. Youth, separated by gender, sit in special section of the congregation, and there are more comfortable chairs for some of the older members and the ministers.

Worship begins at about 8 :00 a.m and usually last over three hours. Hymns are sung from the Ausbund²². There are usually three to seven preachers and bishops at a services. These men retire to a room during the singing to decide who will be preaching the two sermons that day.

1.2.8 The Amish sub groups :The Amish share different ancestry and speak multiple languages ;

1.2.8.1 Ethnicity:

The Amish share a German or a swiss-German ancestry, they use the term Amish for members of their faith community. They are descended from the Swiss Mennonites who fled to the United States of America to escape persecution in the 18th century. They tended to emphasize tradition to a greater extent, and were perhaps more likely to maintain a separate Amish identity. When describing ones race or ethnicity you are referring to a person who shares other things with another group or people. These people could share a common heritage, language, culture, and other things. Young person attached with the church raised in Amish homes is considered to be Amish.

1.2.8.2 Amish Language:

The Amish of America speak a hybrid dialect called Pennsylvania Dutch²³ or Pennsylvania German which refers to non-Amish as "English", regardless of ethnicity. It is a Germanic language with a good amount of English mixed in. One of the best parts of Breaking Amish is when they start speaking to each other in their own special language. The Amish speak Pennsylvania German

²²AUSBUND :a special hymnal used by the Amish.

²³ Pennsylvania Dutch :is an American language that developed from the immigration of German speakers to colonial Pennsylvania.

among one another and it is the language of sermons in church. English is used mainly with non-Amish relatives and friends, but it is also the dominant medium of literacy. While most Amish have a good reading knowledge of the standard German of the Bible and other religious texts, they read and write mainly in English. English is the medium of instruction in Amish parochial schools.

In general Amish speak three languages ;one which is used at home and day-to-day life,second in church they use Hochdeitsch or high German,and finally the English language is taught for business purposes and to interact with outsiders.

1.2.9 Amish Conflicts :

As any society Amish face some obstacles and problems in their daily life, although they present a unified face to outsiders, Amish communities are sometimes troubled by disputes which may lead a family to join another community or found a new one. Among these problems²⁴ ;

1.2.9.1 Behavioral rules :

There have been disputes within the Amish community in North America, especially when many members wanted to construct churches and hold meetings there rather than in homes where they educate their children beyond the elementary grades. They also faced problems concerning their clothing, they even did not have the right to vote or become involved in public life.

²⁴ Source : D.Holmes Morton,et al, »Pediatric Medicine and the Genetic Disorders Of Amish and Mennonite people Pennsylvania.p17(Accessed in March 2016)

1.2.9.2 Theological disputes:

Amish also faced problems concerning their beliefs and religious practices. Though the Amish seem to be as religious, modest, humble community due to their strict religious practices, the external world view them too severe and rigid society. The Amish refuse government dealing or any linkage with the modern world. They have a policy of non resistance, which means that when government instruct them to do things that are against their faith and religious beliefs, they refuse to do them but accept the consequences of their refusal without arguments.

1.2.9.3 Accidents :

Throughway, accidents between motor vehicles and Amish black horse and buggies are a concern to many as it is shown in (figure eleven below).

Figure eleven: Amish buggies accidents



Source : <https://www.google.com/search?q=Amish&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0>

Horse-drawn vehicles generally travel between five and eight miles an hour. Some Amish are reluctant to mount a slow-moving-vehicle sign on the back of their buggies. In some states, they line the back of their buggies with reflective tape as an alternative to a sign.

1.2.9.4 Genetic Diseases:

The vast majority of Amish in Lancaster County are descendents of about 200 Swiss citizens who emigrated in the mid 1700s. There are two obvious ways to reduce the incidence of these genetic diseases towards levels experienced in the general population ; A massive influx of converts to the Amish faith by outsiders, artificial insemination using sperm donated by non-Amish²⁵.

Testing of Amish adults for genetic diseases and persuading any that test positive to refrain from having children. Unluckily, all of these paths are probably unacceptable and maybe offensive to the Amish. And so, unfortunately the genetic diseases will probably increase in frequency over time.

Conclusion:

This chapter has been concerned with the Amish culture and beliefs as a whole. The Amish keep themselves apart from the communities around them in several ways ; they do not own modern technology, they have their own education system, they also reject state benefits. Besides, they wear distinctive clothes and they marry only among their community.

²⁵ Source : D.Holmes Morton,et al, »Pediatric Medicine and the Genetic Disorders Of Amish and Mennonite people Pennsylvania.p118(Accessed in March 2016)

General Conclusion

This research is about the Amish community in Pennsylvania in 1963. The Amish did not want themselves to be affected by other cultures. For this reason, they remained completely isolated from the outside world.

From our analysis, we have discovered that this group of people stick to the traditions and rules that they had for years based on the Bible, and any other influence is not allowed or acceptable. Moreover, the Amish live stuck in time, so their role in the modern world is quite minimal. They rely on the hand made goods and home grown crops, the lack of these commodities make their contribution and role in the modern world weak. Even though electricity is something so vital to most of the rest of the world, it is not used in the Amish society because it is a connection to the godless world, however they do teach the modern world what it is like to live a lifestyle that is devoted to religion and how it is possible to succeed in that way.

To conclude our research, we can say that, despite the fact that the Amish's lifestyle has been somehow different and complicated, it was a thriving and flourishing culture for them. As researchers, we saw that it is advantageous to make the external world recognize this kind of culture.

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