

Market Integration and Agricultural Efficiency in Communal Amana

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DURING MY LAST VISIT TO AMANA in the Summer of 1991, Henry Schiff, the guide at the Museum of Amana History, presented me a challenge with his comment: "I've seen many writers and would-be-writers come and go over the years. Very few have been able to understand what happened here." I am not exactly sure what he meant. Surely, volumes of research devoted to Amana history could not be futile. The comment nevertheless registered the question in my mind whether a different approach might be necessary for a better understanding of Amana history.

I would like to inquire here into the truth of Mr. Schiff's allegation. We might start by asking whether a different set of questions is necessary to improve our understanding of Amana history. It is possible, for instance, that the focus on the "Great Change" of 1932—when business was separated from church and communal ownership of property was abolished—might have produced an unbalanced historiography of Amana. The Great Change was certainly an important point in Amana history. The danger lies, however, in viewing the pre-1932 period solely as consisting of events leading to the Great Change, which undermines the importance of life in communal Amana. Close to 90 years of communal history certainly justifies its own study and a shift of focus from the decline of the Society to its persistence.

The focus on the Great Change might be considered appropriate if the usual presumption of social and economic isolation of the

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Amana Society prior to change were correct. If isolated, influences from the outside world would be artificially eliminated. Combined with an economic system based on self-sufficiency, this would then eliminate the mystery around the longevity of the Amana Society. It follows from this argument that the Great Change could be a result of the eventual breakdown of isolation.

The problem with this line of thinking is that the presumption of isolation is not justified. I argue below that the Amana Society was highly integrated with the outside world. This fact has not gone entirely unnoticed in Amana historiography.¹ What is provided here is new evidence on the issue, a discussion of the implications of Amana's economic interactions with the outside world, a comparative assessment of Amana's agricultural efficiency, and suggestions for how we might revise our questions about Amana history.

Economic Isolation in Amana Historiography

Economic isolation of Amana has not received much careful consideration. In fact, some scholars have viewed economic interactions with the outside as irrelevant to the general spirit of isolation, even when they acknowledge both. In one of the earliest treatises on Amana history, for instance, Chaffee clearly views Amana as an isolated community with a 1930 article titled: "The Isolated Religious Sect as an Object for Social Research." yet the economic interactions with the outside world are acknowledged on the second page, with the statement that "[t]wo big woolen mills turn out goods by the yard, and Amana blankets are favorably known throughout the United States and Canada."² It is thus necessary to determine the extent of such interactions and their role in Amana's isolation.

An implicit distinction is sometimes made between economic isolation and self-sufficiency (mistakenly understood as the absence of purchase only). Self-sufficiency, by definition, implies the desire and ability to produce for internal consumption only, with minimal trade with the outside world. Minimal, I think, is the key word here. How much interaction would constitute dependence on the outside and how much independence is necessary for "self-sufficiency"? Any distinctions drawn between isolation and self-sufficiency require clear

1. See, for example, Jonathan G. Andelson, "Communalism and Change in the Amana Society, 1855-1932," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1974), chapter 4. Occasional references to Amana's external trade can also be found in other studies, as will be discussed later.

2. Grace E. Chaffee, "The Isolated Religious Sect as an Object for Social Research," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 35 (1930), 619.

answers to these questions. Otherwise, contradictory accounts of Amana's economic organization might be inevitable. Consider, as an example, Shambaugh's description of Amana industries in her 1908 classic, which laid the foundation for all later contributions to Amana history. In her account of "Industrial Amana," she rightly mentions the fact that the "rigid honesty [of the Amana Society] has secured them a market Nation wide."³ Later on she claims, however, that "[i]t is the aim of the Community to produce and make as far as practicable everything that is needed by its members, not alone for the better grade of goods thus obtained but for the independence from the outside world thus secured."⁴ She thus gives the reason for the existence of a shoemaker, tailor, and so on in each village. Both accounts represent accurate descriptions of Amana's past, but also imply a community aiming at independence from the outside, yet one that has maintained a reputation in trade with the same outside world. Self-sufficiency is a goal with implications for sale as well as purchase from outside.⁵ This raises, once again, the question of how much interaction was sought and achieved in Amana.

Amana's economic integration is sometimes recognized as a gradual event, which is then given as an explanation of the Great Change. Barthel, for example, attributes the economic problems of Amana just prior to the Great Change to the inadequate organization of its industries which allegedly failed in the face of increasing dependence on outside markets.⁶ She argues that the "village based organization of the Amanas was appropriate to the period in America's history when local community was the focus of life and the basis of economic

3. Bertha Shambaugh, *Amana That Was and Amana That Is* (New York: Benjamin Bloom, Inc. Publishers, 1908), p. 179.

4. Also see, Robert E. Clark, "A Cultural and Historical Geography of the Amana Colony," (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1974), p. 123, where he makes a similar point about Amana farming: "The Amana Colonists, being subsistence farmers, did not strive to produce a surplus of crops and animals or to clear the land at a rate greater than the needs of the population."

5. One might argue that the sale to outside was for reasons other than the purchase of goods from outside. The reasons might be to purchase land or to provide insurance against production risks (e.g., crop failure). But the fact remains that the sale of goods required continuous contacts with the outside world. At the time Shambaugh wrote, for instance, there were 10 full-time salesmen employed outside, seven of whom were Amana members.

6. See Diane L. Barthel, *Amana: From Pietist Sect to American Community* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984). She claims, for instance, on page 70 that "[t]he major difficulties arose because the Amanas had never achieved economic independence from the larger society and because after the turn of the century they were increasingly tied to the national market, especially through their woolen manufacture."

exchange."⁷ While this claim might be partially correct, it does not explain how Amana's large scale industries such as the two big woolen mills fit into this "village based economy," why their interactions with the outside did not constitute economic dependence, and why this dependence did not cause any problems earlier during the nineteenth century. The economic explanations of the Great Change need to be sought in factors other than the breakdown of economic isolation. If in fact Amana was integrated with the outside markets much earlier. The precise timing of Amana's integration with the outside world is thus critical. The timing of events is essential for other explanations of the Great Change, too. Some of the events given as reasons include cultural changes such as those caused by the coming of the railroads, the automobile, or the employment of outside labor, each of which applies to a different time period. What the foregoing argument suggests, in short, is the need to determine the nature and timing of Amana's economic isolation, or its absence.

Economic Integration of Amana

The incompleteness of Amana's economic isolation has in fact been pointed out by various authors. Andelson, for instance, states in clear terms that Amana "was no self-sufficient, agricultural community such as the Hutterites. Amana depended heavily on the sale of farm produce, calico prints, and especially woollens".⁸ A systematic discussion of the issue is nevertheless necessary, incorporating the previously provided evidence with new facts, in order to clarify the controversy around the extent and timing of Amana's economic integration with the outside world. Amana could interact economically with the outside in two ways, through purchases and sales. Let us take these in order by examining carefully the Society's transactions of goods and services.

Each village had a store that functioned as a center of exchange. All purchases of goods and raw materials for the Society were thus handled by the stores. It is clear that the primary purpose of the local craftsmen, such as the shoemaker, blacksmith, and tailor was to provide for the needs of the Amana people as much as possible. It is

7. Barthel, *Amana*, p. 66.

8. Jonathan G. Andelson, "The Double Bind and Social Change in Communal Amana," *Human Relations*, 34 (1981), 119. Also see his Ph.D. dissertation for an excellent account of the social and economic organization of the Society, based on extensive use of Amana archives. He states, for instance on page 74, that "[a]t no time was Amana entirely self-sufficient; it always purchased some materials and foodstuffs from and sold its surplus production to the outside."

also true, however, that Amana stores did not hesitate to purchase the same goods from outside when prices were more favorable, especially during the late nineteenth century. Shambaugh notes, for instance, the introduction of machine-made furniture and ready-made clothes to village stores prior to 1908.⁹

By 1897, Amana stores were purchasing goods extensively from outside. In that year the West Amana store had 181 invoices for orders, with multiple items purchased in each, showing transactions with 103 businesses from around the United States, of which only 5 were other stores and industries in Amana. During the same year, the Middle Amana store had transactions with 181 businesses, with a total of 732 invoices (about 2 orders per day).

Such transactions with the outside existed as early as 1866, although at a smaller volume. An account book covering the period between 1866 and 1875, for instance, shows transactions with 29 companies from major cities, including Chicago, New York and Philadelphia.¹⁰ Another account book, covering the period between 1866 and 1885, gives detailed lists of items purchased by a store, amounting to \$14,877.52 worth of transactions from March through December of 1866.¹¹ The Society's population was 1231 at the time, only a few years after the completion of the move from Ebenezer, New York. Items purchased during this year included coffee, sugar, candy, boots, linen, pills, and various other items of food, kitchen utensils, hardware, clothing, and other household goods.

In addition to goods for consumption, the Amana Society had purchased various raw materials for its industries since their original establishment. The wool required for the woolen mills, for instance, was only partially supplied by the Society's own sheep. Nordhoff reported in 1875 that the Amana Society bought "much wool from the neighboring farmers."¹² Shambaugh similarly reported in 1908 that "over half a million pounds of raw wool used annually . . . is considerably more than the Society's three thousand sheep can furnish."¹³ In addition to raw wool, the mills purchased, in 1903, "coal . . . , oil, grease, starch, rubber boots, pipes and fittings, coffee,

9. Shambaugh, *Amana*, pp. 138, 158.

10. It is not clear from the records which store or business kept the account.

11. The store name is not specified in the account book, although we can infer from the records that it was not one of the shipping stores. It was possibly the West Amana Store.

12. Charles Nordhoff, *The Communistic Societies of the United States* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965 edition, originally published 1875), p. 42.

13. Shambaugh, *Amana*, p. 176.

sugar and butter for employees, the services of carpenters and locksmiths," as Andelson reports.¹⁴

Similar to the woolen mills, the flour mills purchased most of their grain in the outside market, and the calico print establishment used cotton goods manufactured in the Southern States. While the evidence reported here refers to the turn of the century, there is reason to believe that the purchase of wool, grain, cotton goods, or other raw materials remained much the same since the late 1850's, the time these business were established. The situation in Amana regarding the production of both the raw materials and the finished output must have remained similar, at least in proportion.

The services performed by hired labor were significant to the various industrial and agricultural operations of the Society. Starting from the construction period in Amana between 1856 and 1864, "hired hands" constituted a substantial proportion of the work force. In 1863, for instance, the numbers reached nearly 100, when the Society's total population was 1,027.¹⁵ The Society employed outside labor mostly for unskilled jobs, but for others as well. As Shambaugh observed, 175-200 were hired to do the field work, 16-18 in the woolen mills, 3 for the marketing of the woolen products, 10-12 in calico-printing establishment, and 5-6 in flour and grist mills, circa 1908 (when the Society's population was about 1,600).¹⁶ Examples of other services purchased from outside by the Society included hospitals, railroads, banking, and communications services.¹⁷

The purchase of goods and services from outside does not seem to support a picture of the Amana Society as economically isolated. What about sales to the outside? A substantial proportion of many of the goods produced by the Society's industries were in fact sold to the outside. Products of the woolen mills, for instance, were sold around the nation since their establishment in Ebenezer in the 1830's, before the migration to Iowa. Andelson reports that in 1903, "the woolen mill in Main Amana sold products worth \$3,107 to the stores in Amana for purchase by members and \$172,004 worth to buyers outside the Colonies".¹⁸ At least since 1871, the woolen mills distributed advertisement postcards (printed by the Society's printing of-

14. Andelson, "Communalism and Change," p. 94.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

16. Shambaugh, *Amana*, pp. 169, 177, 179, 182. Andelson also argues that "at no time between 1875 and 1932 were there fewer than 200 in residence." See Andelson, "The Double Bind and Social Change," p. 119.

17. It is significant to note that Amana had established telephone service in 1880, only a few years after its invention.

18. Andelson, "Communalism and Change," p. 94.

Table 1
Wool and Flannel Prices

| Years | US Wool (\$/Lb.) | Amana Flannel (cents/Yd.) |
|-------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1871 | 1.068 | 70 |
| 1877 | .910 | 64 |
| 1878 | .748 | 64 |
| 1879 | .718 | 62 |
| 1883 | .860 | 66 |
| 1886 | .740 | 58 |
| 1896 | .394 | 46 |
| 1904 | .686 | 62 |
| 1906 | .718 | 67 |
| 1916 | .845 | 70 |

Notes and Sources: U.S. Wool prices are from the *Historical Statistics of the United States*. Amana Flannel prices are compiled from the advertisement postcards of the woolen mills, available at the Museum of Amana History. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between two prices is 0.86.

fice) around the nation with the prices of their products printed in English, testifying to the extent of their market coverage.

The price information provided by the postcards can be used as a direct test of Amana's market integration. Table 1 shows the correlation between the wholesale wool prices in the United States and the price of wool flannels (plain, white) produced by the Amana mills.¹⁹

A quick glance at Table 1 will reveal clearly the extent of Amana's market integration. The two prices are highly correlated (correlation coefficient = 0.86), which implies that the Amana Society was highly integrated with the outside markets. The high correlation suggests that either the Society's purchase of wool from outside was substantial enough to determine the price of Amana flannels, or that the Society's sales of flannels was in substantial quantities and covered a wide enough market to be affected by outside prices. Possibly both were the case.

Similarly, the Amana Society sold its calico products nationally. Andelson notes that "in 1903 Calico worth \$2,587 was sold to Amana stores compared with \$75,863 worth sold outside the Society."²⁰ Certain agricultural products such as onions were also sold in the Chicago market.

Amana stores sold goods to area farmers for cash, and the phar-

19. The selection of the years is based on the availability of the price information about the woolen mill products.

20. Andelson, "Communalism and Change," p. 95.

macy marketed some drugs. It is important to note that Amana was the first place west of Chicago to manufacture pepsin. The pharmacist Conrad Schadt's (1845-1915) efforts eventually led to the marketing of this product nationally.

In addition to the marketing of products, the Amana Society provided various services to outsiders. First, the Society provided food and shelter to "hired hands." Second, visitors to the Colonies were provided food and other services. Society kitchens, for instance, served food to visitors, as early as the 1860's. Similarly, the Society operated hotels in Lower and Upper South Amana, Homestead, and Main Amana, primarily because of the railroad stations located in each, for passengers staying overnight. Shambaugh estimates the number of visitors around 1,200 annually. Information available about the Homestead Hotel, provided by Table 2, suggests her estimate to be a good approximation, considering that not all visitors stayed in this Hotel only.

The decline in numbers in the 1920's was caused by the increased use of the automobile (and the new bridges constructed) and the increased number of day-long excursions from Cedar Rapids. Thus, visitors had less need for the hotels.

The Society's mills and industries were some of the first in the state of Iowa and thus provided various kinds of service to other farmers in the area since the 1850's.²¹ Shambaugh argues, for instance, that "[t]he two flouring and grist mills . . . were important centers half a century ago for the pioneer farmers for fifty miles around."²² Local farmers also used the sawmills for their lumber and the tannery for their hides.

Further analysis of Amana history might produce more evidence testifying to the extent of the Society's integration with the outside markets. It is clear at this point, however, that as early as the 1860's the Amana Society was not an isolated community. The evidence compiled here suggests that such isolation is more a myth than a statement of fact. The Amana Society was involved in extensive trade with the outside world through the purchase and sale of goods and services.

Agricultural Efficiency of Amana

One must carefully interpret what Amana's integration with the outside markets means. It does not follow, for example, that all mem-

21. The first flour mill of the Society was set up in 1856, the sawmill in 1857 (in High Amana and 1859 in Main Amana), and the tannery and the woolen mill in 1859.

22. Shambaugh, *Amana*, p. 176.

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Table 2.
Homestead Hotel Visitors

| Year | Month | Number Registered | Year | Month | Number Registered |
|------|-----------|----------------------|------|-----------|----------------------|
| 1898 | January | 58 | 1900 | January | 76 |
| | February | 41 | | February | 85 |
| | March | 46 | | March | 92 |
| | April | 31 | | April | 69 |
| | May | 72 | | May | 82 |
| | June | 36 | | June | 76 |
| | July | 45 | | July | 72 |
| | August | 67 | | August | 56 |
| | September | 64 | | September | 68 |
| | October | 89 | | October | 40 |
| | November | 87 | | November | 43 |
| | December | 61 | | December | 40 |
| | TOTAL: | 697 | | TOTAL: | 799 |
| 1913 | January | 36 | 1925 | January | 9 |
| | February | 60 | | February | 9 |
| | March | 38 | | March | 24 |
| | April | 85 | | April | 26 |
| | May | 54 | | May | 25 |
| | June | 54 | | June | 29 |
| | July | 80 | | July | 46 |
| | August | 73 | | August | 37 |
| | September | 54 | | September | 58 |
| | October | 52 | | October | 42 |
| | November | 74 | | November | 28 |
| | December | 24 | | December | 19 |
| | TOTAL: | 684 | | TOTAL: | 352 |

Source: Amana archives.

bers of the society had extensive interactions with outsiders. Only the leaders of the Society may have carried out the transactions and had relationships with the outside markets. Similarly, market integration by itself does not indicate the existence of certain cultural patterns usually associated with market societies. Economic behavior of individuals in Amana and their interactions with each other may have been based on entirely different principles. The absence of monetary rewards, for instance, did not prevent individuals from pursuing various creative accomplishments. Finally, integration does not necessarily imply complete specialization of the Amana Society or its total dependence on outside markets. Being responsive to outside markets

and being dependent on them are clearly different ways of interacting with other economic units. Any conclusion drawn about such issues would be tentative without further evidence.

What is at stake in a society's choice between being open or closed to economic contact with others? Isolation, most importantly, would provide protection to an economic unit against the potential competition from other units. As I have argued above, however, Amana did not choose this artificial protection. Amana chose competition in the national economy over isolation from market forces, implying a certain confidence in their economic enterprises. Perhaps the most important implication of market integration, therefore, concerns Amana's competitiveness within the comparative framework of the American economy. It makes sense to judge Amana's economy with competitive criteria of efficiency.

Well-known potential costs exist for communal organization of economic activity, particularly those caused by the free-rider problem (e.g., shirking of work, reduced incentives to innovate). It is also true, however, that the longevity of Amana's communal experience and the highly noted quality of its products present signs of its economic success. A quantitative assessment of Amana's productivity is thus necessary to determine whether Amana was at a disadvantage with its communal organization and paid a price for it. Put differently, how did the productivity of Amana enterprises compare with others?

Few analysts have attempted to test Amana's efficiency quantitatively. One early account of Amana history, for instance, argues that "communistic [Amana] enterprises fall behind in productiveness."²³ The only basis for this claim is a comparison of the per capita property assessment of Amana in 1890 with those of Iowa County and of the state of Iowa. This measure, however, in addition to being a measure not of productivity but of total wealth, may not do justice to the Amana Society. The Society was slow to develop per capita wealth accumulation. Its population almost tripled between 1860 and 1890 as new members entered with little or no wealth.²⁴ Shambaugh also identifies inefficiency based on her observations of the higher productivities and wages of hired workers as compared to Amanans.²⁵ In a more recent study, however, Andelson finds that yields of Amana in

23. William R. Perkins and Barthinius L. Wick, *History of the Amana Society* (Iowa City, IA: State Historical Society, 1891), p. 91.

24. Perkins and Wick also point out that their argument may be "modified by the facts that at the present time [i.e., circa 1890 there are perhaps more than the average number of unproductive members'. Ibid., p. 91.

25. Shambaugh, *Amana*, p. 187.

corn, wheat, and barley "compare favorably to national averages for 1874."²⁶

Previous arguments provide limited evidence of how Amana's productivity compared with others. Each argument uses a particular dimension of what constitutes the efficiency of an economic system and provides empirical evidence for only one year. A more satisfactory comparison would examine how the *overall* productivity of Amana differed from others and whether the difference persisted over time. Data limitations on manufacturing industries make it difficult, in fact, to provide such comparisons. On the other hand, it is possible to make a comparison that excludes manufacturing production and that includes only total agricultural production. Although limited, agricultural production provides a satisfactory account of how Amana's efficiency compared with the surrounding county, with the state of Iowa, and with the United States.

When the total output includes more than one product, a meaningful comparison of productivities requires measures of the total value of the output produced and of the total cost of the inputs employed. These measures, in other words, have to account for all products and inputs rather than comparing each separately. Such measures are often difficult to provide, because the required aggregation of value involves finding the relevant prices and quantities for all inputs and outputs. The same difficulty applies to the comparison below, simply because the required information is not always available. A close estimate can be provided, however, utilizing the information recorded in the agriculture schedules of the U.S. Censuses for 1860, 1870, and 1880.²⁷

The information is less detailed for 1860 than for 1870 and 1880. Output values are provided in 1860 for orchard products, produce of market gardens, home manufactures, and animals slaughtered (or sold for slaughter). The only cost items provided are the asset values of farms, farming implements and machinery, and livestock. The estimate of total cost is thus restricted to the user cost of capital only (calculated by multiplying the total value of these assets with the rate of interest).²⁸ Table 3 gives the revenue-cost ratios as proxies for

26. Andelson, "Communalism and Change," p. 90.

27. The agriculture schedules of the U.S. Censuses for Iowa are available on microfilm at the State Historical Society of Iowa City. Note, however, that the estimates provided here are restricted to 1860-80, because the schedules are not available for the period after 1880.

28. Railroad bond yields for 1860-80 are used to calculate the cost of capital, as reported in Sidney Homer and Richard Sylla, *A History of Interest Rates* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1st edition, 1963; 3rd edition, 1991), pp. 287-8.

Table
Agricultural Productivity, 1860

| | Cost (\$) | Revenue (\$) | Revenue/Cost |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Amana Society | 7,002.5 | 9,785 | 1.40 |
| Iowa County | 110,690.4 | 70,014 | 0.63 |
| State of Iowa | 8,921,253.5 | 5,035,967 | 0.56 |
| U.S.A. | 482,021,781.0 | 274,316,951 | 0.57 |

Source: Agriculture schedules and summary statistics of the Eighth Census of the United States.

the agricultural productivity of Amana and selected units of comparison.

The ratios presented in Table 3 do not show the whole picture, of course. Certain items of cost and revenue are not included, which explain why revenue is generally less than cost. For example, the schedules for 1860 do not provide information about the cost of labor, fertilizers, raw materials, and the revenue generated from crop production. Certain caution is necessary, therefore, in interpreting the Table. The results would nevertheless indicate the superior productivity of Amana, if the excluded items were proportional to those revealed in Table 3.

The census information for 1870 and 1880 is more detailed. For example, estimates of the total value of all farm production (sold, consumed, or on hand, including crops) are provided. Furthermore, information about cost includes the cost of building and repairing fences, and the cost of fertilizers purchased, allowing for a more reliable comparison. The results for revenue-cost ratios are given in Table 4.

The ratios presented in Table 4 for 1870 and 1880 are much higher than those in Table 3 for 1860 because of the difference between the two tables in terms of the items included in cost and revenue. Note also that the tables do not include the cost of labor, because the

Table 4
Revenue-Cost Ratios for 1870 and 1880

| | 1870 | 1880 |
|---------------|------|------|
| Amana Society | 5.25 | 4.59 |
| Iowa County | 3.41 | 4.03 |
| State of Iowa | 3.60 | 3.68 |
| U.S.A. | 3.43 | 3.42 |

Source: Agriculture schedules and summary statistics of the Ninth and Tenth Censuses of the United States.

census information about the Amana Society reports only the wages paid to hired hands (and for 1880 only), and not the unpaid labor input of Amanans. For consistency, cost calculation for Table 4 also excluded the information available about the labor costs of other units of comparison, with the assumption that the proportion of such costs to those included is equal in all units. Thus the essential implication of the results concern not the absolute levels, but the relative differences of the revenue-cost ratios.

With these considerations in mind, the results are clear. In all three years, the Amana Society scored consistently higher than the surrounding county, the state of Iowa, and the United States in agricultural productivity. The implication is also clear: Amana Society did not necessarily sacrifice agricultural output with its organizational structure. Indeed, they were more productive.

Conclusion

The stories told about history sometimes produce myths that overlook the realities of human societies. The same is true of the myths of isolation and inefficiency in Amana. In both respects, a careful study of the evidence suggests that the facts of Amana history are contrary to widely held beliefs.

These facts also suggest revisions in certain areas of Amana historiography. Amana's economic integration with the outside, for example, forces a reinterpretation of the Great Change of 1932, since the complexity of the events leading to the Change cannot simply be reduced to the breakdown of isolation. Similarly, the economic life in communal Amana needs closer scrutiny in light of the high productivity of Amana agriculture. What was it about the economic culture and inner harmony of Amana that made its members overcome the potential costs of communal organization? How did religious principles interact with economic life?

At a more general level, the experience of Amana raises questions about the intrinsic elements of the organization of economic life in an intentional community. With respect to the elements considered here, Amana history presents counter-examples to beliefs that an intentional community needs isolation for economic survival and that productive inefficiency is inevitable. Further analysis of isolation and efficiency in other communities might require a rethinking of such beliefs and a careful examination of what constitutes the "package" of an intentional community.