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Update about Christ Gerig who we believe was living in Cote D'Echery along with Moise Gerig in 1770

Yesterday In a French history book written by Jean Seguy, who was a French Anabaptist scholar, I found the following quote:

In 1758, nine others were admitted to the right of protection. In 1770, in a petition for exemption from the same right, (Christ Gerig anabaptist of Ste-Marie-aux-Mines) explained that he had lived in the Val for ten years. He got married there and lives with his father-in-law.

This is what we learn:

1.) Christ Gerig moved to Saint Marie-aux-Mines (SMaM) in 1760 from some other locale. If this Christ is our Christian Gerig II (the same man who moved to Hang in 1774 with his brother Jean), then his father, Christian Gerig I, must have moved the family outside the municipality of SMaM sometime after his son's Jean Gerig's birth in 1741 (1747 if Katharina Gerig is Christian I and Jean Gerig's sister as Katharina is documented also to have been born in SMaM).

2.) Christ married his wife here and is living with his father-in-law. Perhaps his marriage is why he moved here?

3.) Between 1760 and 1770 (the years Christ Gerig says he lived here) in SMaM there was an Anabaptist census in 1763. In that census we find a Christian and Moise Gerig just as we expect (likely living at Cote D'Echery). Our Christian Gerig II married Anne Blanck, and there is only one man with the last name of Blanck on that list - Niclaus Blanck.

4.) Niclaus Blanck therefore should be Christian Gerig II's father-in-law. He is proven to be 85 years old in a document from 1765. Therefore he would be 90 years old in 1770! This being so, Anne Blanck would have been his daughter from a 2nd marriage to a much younger wife when he was in his 50s or 60s.

5.) If Niclaus Blanck was 80 years old when Christian Gerig first moved here and married his daughter Anne, his age perhaps supports the idea that he is the correct father of Anne. He would welcome a son-in-law helping him maintain his home and farm at such an advanced age. Bennjamin Gerig experienced something similiar when he married his wife in Ohio at 20 years of age. His biography states that he not only gained a wife but also her family's home and land with the marriage. His mother-in-law was a widow at the time. She lived with her daughter and son-in-law for 18 years.

6.) Niclaus Blancks' father was also named Niclaus Blanck and was a minister and companion of Jacob Amman the founder of the Amish. The Blanck family came from Steffisburg, Bern, Switzerland. This is the town from which the vast majority of Jacob Amman's first early followers came from. Niclaus and his brother Michel were two of very few anabaptists that stayed behind and remained in SMaM after the expulsion of the anabaptists in 1712.

7.) The "Val" where Christ Gerig is living is likely an abbreviated reference to "Val d'Argent". This is a name given to the Valley of Saint Marie-aux-Mines and means "Silver Valley", which in turn derives its name from the silver mines of this area.

8.) The "right of protection" mentioned in the document is likely a protection provided by the feudal lords. You will recall that both Christian and his brother Jean are paying an annual feudal tax for their leased farms at Hang (I have discovered who their feudal lords were whom they leased their farm and will share that in a future post). The French term for these feudal lords of nobility is "seigneur". Since the Amish-Mennonites are averse to taking oaths of any kind and serving in the military, perhaps this petition Christ Gerig is applying for is an exemption from being conscripted for military service. In other words - you get the benefit of the feudal lords' protection but you must also be willing to be conscripted into his military's service. The Amish-Mennonites were paying an agreed-upon tax to avoid this service - I assume they had to apply for this exemption. The surrounding populace at times were jealous of the Amish-Mennonites of this exemption which created tension and difficulty.

L'ANABAPTISME À STE-MARIE-AUX-MINES DE 1712 À LA RÉVOLUTION

En dépit de l'Édit de 1712, une présence anabaptiste se maintient à Ste-Marie-aux-Mines jusqu'à la Révolution (et même au delà). Nous dirons ce que nous en savons avant d'exposer les efforts plus ou moins convaincus de l'Intendant d'Alsace pour mettre fin à cette situation irrégulière, et ceux du prince de Birkenfeld pour la dissimuler.

Des indices épars et des informations précises témoignent de la persistance anabaptiste à Ste-Marie pendant la période considérée. Une attestation de 1723 certifie que cette année-là il y avait quatorze familles de *Täufer* dans le Val⁹⁴. En 1758, neuf autres sont admises au droit de protection⁹⁵. En 1770, dans une supplique en vue d'être dispensé du même droit, «Christ Gerig anabaptiste de Ste-Marie-aux-Mines» explique qu'il demeure au Val depuis dix ans. Il s'y est marié et habite chez son beau-père⁹⁶. En 1774, nous voyons Jacques Reist solliciter son inscription au registre de bourgeoisie⁹⁷. Puis c'est Jean-Jacques Thobbe, «anabaptiste de nation», époux d'une fille Reckausy, également anabaptiste et demeurant au Val, qui demande à s'établir près de sa belle-famille⁹⁸. Quelques années plus tard, en 1779, l'Assemblée anabaptiste de Ste-Marie envoie des représentants à la