HARLEYSVILLE, Pa. — Historian Ben Goossen will speak on “Mennonite Migrations and International Violence” at 7 p.m. May 25 at the Mennonite Heritage Center.

In his new book, *Chosen Nation: Mennonites and Germany in a Global Era*, Goossen explores the tragic history of Mennonites’ encounters with mass violence on multiple continents. Taking the story through the Bolshevik Revolution and into the 1920s, Goossen shows how Mennonites in the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Austria-Hungary found solidarity in efforts to help their “brethren in need” in the collapsing Russian Empire.

As Communist soldiers, anarchist warlords and counterrevolutionary armies swept through Mennonite settlements like the Molotschna and Chortitza colonies along the Black Sea, a worldwide Mennonite welfare community began to mobilize. Aiming to save more than 100,000 coreligionists living in the new Soviet Union from the horrors of famine and ethnic cleansing, new organizations like Mennonite Central Committee sponsored mass population transfers to the Americas. By the end of the decade, they had brought fully a quarter of all Mennonites out of the Soviet Union and helped form an autonomous “Mennonite state” in Paraguay.

According to a Mennonite Heritage Center news release: “Told a hundred years after the First World War put Mennonites on a global stage, this story both illuminates the worldwide dispersion of Mennonite communities today and provides a warning against the rising tide of nationalism in our own age.” — MHC