Book Reviews

Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization. By Elaine Enns and Ched Myers. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books. 2021. $38 (paperback)/$49 (hardback).

Interpretations of North American nation-building as a settler colonialist project have grown more prominent over the past decade. This perspective understands that project as one to clear newly "discovered" land of the humans and non-humans that impeded its appropriation for European habitation and use. Beyond displacement and clearing, it imported enslaved Africans to enhance the profitability of that effort. These measures helped embed the construct of racial hierarchy deeply into North American culture.

Several books on this theme were published this past year,[1] including one especially helpful for considering ways Mennonites historically fit into settler colonialism. Elaine Enns and Ched Myers offer *Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization* as a substantial theological and ethical challenge to fellow non-indigenous North Americans. Though not written specifically for Mennonites, they anchor it in Enns's doctoral work that examined her Mennonite family's Ukrainian-Canadian migrations over several generations.

The book—which engages contested terrain over the meaning of national, faith, and racial identities—also draws on the authors' decades of experience as a restorative justice educator (Enns) and an activist theologian (Myers). It weaves diverse resources into a coherent narrative that guides the reader through their complex agenda. Those resources include biblical texts; communal narratives—"family lore, local legend, established community accounts, 'official' history, and group and national myths" (43)—and academic theories on decolonization, trauma, and modern social "hauntings" that linger from unresolved past violence.

The result provides both a call and a roadmap for non-indigenous North Americans to "do our own work" and untangle the implications of our presence here as beneficiaries of that history. The authors recognize this work as uniquely personal, given diverse immigration circumstances, and they name four immigrant types distinguished by their "social power" when migrating: colonist vanguard; subsequent wave opportunist; distressed immigrant; and forcibly relocated. They invite readers to explore three overlapping personal "storylines" that unpack the multi-generational paths from our pre-immigration origins to our present location. "Landlines" trace insights about places departed from and settled

1. For example: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Not a Nation of Immigrants: Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 2021); Alaina E. Roberts, *I've Been Here all the While: Black Freedom on Native Land* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2021); Sarah Augustine, *The Land Is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2021).

upon. "Bloodlines" identify particular people and their experiences in those locations, focusing more on kinships that formed our identity than on genetic lineages. "Songlines" reflect the "traditions of faith and Spirit" (22) that instilled past resilience and inspire justice and healing today. This work pursues a critical and conscientious grasp of those narratives and "how they shape our identity and practice." It aspires toward "personal healing" and "build[ing] capacity for social movements of decolonization" firmly grounded in "restorative solidarity" with Indigenous peoples. (44)

Beyond use of their own personal narratives, the authors share an array of examples where individuals, institutions, and governments have taken steps to begin, however partially and imperfectly, the reparation and repatriation of Native American losses. Other incisive material helps peel away layers of accumulated myths (conquest, destiny, progress, land "improvement") that protect and rationalize settler experience as normal, inevitable, and unchangeable. As examples: unresolved immigrant trauma can help obscure clear sight of local implications of settlement; their ten common moves to "innocence" by settlers sound uncomfortably familiar.

Myers's powerful exegetical skills emerge to unveil the relevance of biblical texts for a North American settler context. They reveal the "rich young ruler's" rejection of God's Kingdom (Mark 10) as refusal to repatriate unjustly appropriated land. Building on Ellen Davis's work, they place settler North Americans squarely in the role of Ahab and Jezebel who "grabbed" Naboth's vineyard, and Naboth's covenantal view of relationship to land as closer to that of Native Americans than settler views of privatized real estate (I Kings 21). Similarly, they illuminate Indigenous perceptions of treaties as covenant commitments rather than mere real estate contracts.

Other insights include distinguishing between healthy guilt and paralyzing shame, victimizing trauma and victimizer moral injury; critiquing faith traditions without demonizing or disassociating from them; embracing contingency and ambiguity. Each chapter ends with questions to guide readers on their own particular journeys toward restorative solidarity. They further assist with numerous cross-references, helpful graphics, copious footnoting, a massive bibliography, three appendices, and indices of subjects/places and persons/groups.

The book occasionally addresses the destruction of the land itself and links another facet of their activist/scholar legacy—watershed discipleship.[2] As a sequel, its thesis clearly demonstrates that the latter's relevance reaches far beyond "pre-political features of place," contrary to some caricatures.[3] Still, there seems value in further elevating and connecting these themes. The assaults on Indigenous Americans and on Africans facilitated maximizing production of cash crops, extracting minerals and other resources, and commodifying the land itself for

2. Ched Myers ed., *Watershed Discipleship: Reinhabiting Bioregional Faith and Practice* (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books, 2016).

3. See Luke Kreider, "Varieties of Anabaptist Environmentalism and the Challenge of Environmental Racism," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 94 (Jan. 2020), 49-54.

privatized financial speculation. This fundamentally disrupted massive proportions of North America's landscapes and ecosystems. Viewed together, "watershed discipleship" attends to the humans who have inhabited those watersheds; a holistic "discipleship of decolonization" remedies consequences to the land itself. *Healing Haunted Histories* certainly references the intertwining of settler devastation to land/ecosystems with its subjugation of non-Europeans, but may have done so more explicitly.

Further elevating those land-focused themes would have made a weighty and packed book even more so, however. As it stands, this ambitious volume warrants carefully reflective study, especially by members of a Mennonite tradition that often looks to its past to articulate identity and incorporates family relationships into that identity. Enns and Myers invoke the late Vincent Harding, a fellow-traveler of Mennonites, who asserted that "all moral imagination begins with memory" (243). Their encouragement to "de-assimilate" from settler colonial myths issues an apt call to examine the traumas carried (and vicariously idealized) and the social hauntings that hover in Mennonite past experience. They suggest that such work "resonates with our Anabaptist dissident origins" (212), and ask questions like, "Why did so many of our farmers embrace industrial agriculture and its market determinations of how we engage the land?" (211). Their call for this daunting work raises an implicit challenge for academic Mennonite historians to further unpack and communicate the particular socio-political contexts of past Mennonite experience into which genealogies may be placed.

But this study is especially helpful in that, unlike many who call for social change, Enns and Myers do not simply call for "resistance" and "dismantling" of existing structures with no vision for what to erect in their place. As Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* convincingly demonstrates, a sole focus on tearing down fails to consider the likelihood that—without a corresponding paradigm transformation—what follows will simply reflect the old structures' priorities in different forms. Beyond dismantling, *Healing Haunted Histories* offers a vision to nurture settler "response-ability" that listens to and learns from other experiences—like Black church insight that "the church is *meant* to be a social movement for liberation" (244) and particular Indigenous wisdom that "rekindle[s] the possibility of societies characterized by justice, sharing, and love" (274). Doing so can form a "restorative solidarity" with Indigenous (and other) peoples that ultimately transforms rather than temporarily reforms. For, "the good news at the root of our faith holds that new beginnings are possible when we acknowledge the end of our civilizational presumptions" (151).

Louisville, Kentucky GORDON OYER

Protestant Missionaries and Humanitarianism in the DRC: The Politics of Aid in Cold War Africa. By Jeremy Rich. Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer. 2020. $89.

As a history of the Congo Protestant Relief Agency (CPRA), an outwardly obscure relief and development organization, this book puts Mennonite missionaries and other humanitarian workers, rather than elite political leaders, at the center of Cold War politics in the post-colonial Congo crisis. The CPRA was formed by missionaries from many denominations who evacuated with the violence of decolonization and who returned to the Congo to staff abandoned hospitals and provide basic needs for displaced people. Throughout the tumultuous 1960s and early 1970s, CPRA provided food relief, medical volunteers, and agricultural development training. Using primary sources from the organizational archives of CPRA and other external organizations supporting their work like Church World Service (CWS), World Council of Churches (WCC), and the UN or US AID, Jeremy Rich highlights the role of expatriates who would not have seen their work in the Congo as inherently political. Yet, they wielded considerable influence, operating outside of government control and regularly negotiating movement among various political groups and support from international organizations, churches, and governments. Although other scholars have portrayed humanitarian work in the Congo solely as a tool of US policy to support Mobutu Sese Seko, Rich resists this simple characterization. The situation on the ground was ultimately more complex as CPRA workers innovated and experimented in the moment through an array of local and global relationships. Challenging a state-centered approach, Rich argues that it was these everyday dynamics involving faith-based organizations like the CPRA that created the framework for humanitarian work in Africa today. Although rejecting direct policy conclusions, Rich posits that understanding the historical dynamics of foreign aid from this perspective offers insights for negotiating current crises.

The CPRA story emerges in a series of chronological chapters that cover the different political consequences of regional projects and various political stances of CPRA leaders. Amid the enormous and complex political crisis in the Congo, expatriates made a convincing appeal, arguably for the first time, that international intervention was necessary for resolution of the crisis. Yet paradoxically, their appeal for donations to feed and house refugees erased the political causes and context of decolonization leading to rebellion, war, and lack of government services that created the crisis. The appeal relied, rather, on pity for starving women and children as passive victims. In spite of their claims to neutrality, individual CPRA missionaries had an outsized influence on the negotiation of local political alliances to distribute aid. CPRA was largely staffed by long-term missionaries who had worked in the region for decades and had an intimate knowledge of local languages, culture, and social networks. In the case of the massive distribution of aid in South Kasai (chap. 2), between 1960 and 1966, long-term Mennonite missionary Archie Graber maintained apolitical neutrality in his influential role as a broker with a wide variety of political actors. Embracing a more political stance, British missionary David Grenfell (chap. 3), at the end of his career in Angola, took a stand against Portuguese colonialism in administering

CPRA relief to Angolan refugees. Grenfell gave outright support to Holden Roberto, leader of the rebel FNLA and gave the rebels authority as a legitimate government in exile. In a very different set of alliances in the eastern Congo (chap. 4), CPRA supported the army of the US-backed Congolese government against the Simba leftist rebels. They used US and UN aid to support the army's efforts and after the revolt avoided confronting the political causes of malnutrition by focusing on Western technical solutions to improve Congolese diets.

CPRA medical work (chaps. 5 and 6) in the 1960s, including "Operation Doctor," also used a generic view of suffering to recruit volunteers and promote an apolitical view of their work in hospitals left without staff or resources when the Belgians left at independence. In contrast to the CPRA relief workers mentioned above, ecumenical Protestant missionary doctors served as short-term emergency volunteers, often with little understanding of the language, culture, or politics they confronted. Rich argues that this was one of the early precursors to the medical mission trip, emphasizing expertise over evangelism and self-discovery over long-term commitment. These overextended expatriate volunteers were often improvising in isolated rural areas as they figured out how to maintain the dispersed alliances necessary to run a hospital in the midst of an armed conflict. Their political impact was to keep the early Mobutu regime afloat until it was able to take control of public health. Rich reports that, in spite of their being ill-prepared and uninformed about Congolese health practices, local people and various political bodies were grateful for the services they brought. The politics of ecumenical, seemingly apolitical, international cooperation to help heal a society torn apart by the wars of decolonization is less obvious than the other sections. But it is rich in its exploration of paternalism and lingering racism on the part of expatriate doctors whose desire to help those in immediate crisis and build sustainable hospitals was often in conflict with the positions they came to fill.

CPRA work in the Congo changed and diminished as a result of the global recession in the 1970s and increasing national demand for decolonizing foreign aid (chap. 7). Although the politics of aid during this period supported the US goal of keeping Mobutu in power, Rich demonstrates the importance of complex relationships and conflicts on the ground that were not determined by elite politics. As the nation demanded autonomy and "authenticity," Congolese church leadership, represented by Pastor Jean Bokeleale, in 1968 unified the Protestant Churches under a single bureaucracy called the Église du Christ au Congo (ECC) to support the mission of nation building and break free of missionary domination. Missionaries working to maintain funding from CWS and WCC for CPRA projects came into direct conflict with these leaders, often accusing them of using their position for personal benefit and refusing donor accountability. As the nation gained more stability, CPRA transitioned from relief to development work, hampered by ongoing conflicts with the Congolese state and churches and lack of trust on both sides. In the end funding from outside agencies was seriously curtailed and delivered with ever more conditions. A similar set of dynamics characterized the creation of the Centre for Community Development (CEDECO), transforming CPRA into an African-led small-scale economic development agency with the goal of self-sufficiency (chap. 8). But these efforts, too, asserted an apolitical stance to survive Mobutu politics and focused on top-down

technological solutions imported from the West rather than drawing on local knowledge or confronting local power relations. ECC took control of CEDECO under national leadership and re-envisioned the project as income generation for the church in the context of recession and diminished outside funding.

Despite the rich texture of this complex story the reader is left wondering whether more analysis or other sources are necessary to clarify the political significance of a humanitarian organization that denied its own political power. One wishes that Rich would take the next step in synthesizing his argument rather than leaving much of that work to the reader. How exactly did the CPRA shape political structures and outcomes in the Congo? It may be that this is not possible without more direct Congolese sources. Rich himself notes a significant flaw in his analysis based on institutional archival sources that cannot adequately capture Congolese perspectives. Because of political violence and financial barriers, Rich was unable to do field work in the Congo. This lacuna was addressed by using secondary sources to contextualize what the aid workers were reporting and supplementing faith-based organizational archives with UN and US diplomatic records as well as interviews with expatriate workers. This research certainly demonstrates the possibilities for political analysis from these underutilized sources but calls for a companion study from Congolese sources.

The contribution of the book is to challenge the simplistic idea that humanitarian aid in Africa always and only props up autocrats and US policy, leading to corruption and no lasting change. Instead it posits that the political dynamics of significance for humanitarian work take place on the ground between people representing different national, religious, and political identities. An alternative to the state-centered approach is clearly important and this book demonstrates that civil society non-elite actors contribute to and participate in political power contests. The goal of the book was to center the relationships between US donors, workers, and churches with Congolese refugees, farmers, and churches. The dynamics of those relationships—both conflictual and appreciative—have political significance that transcends the expected Cold War political analysis. The sources illuminate CPRA workers' motivations, fears, guilt, and assumptions as they sought to act ethically and build relationships in chaotic times. Because the CPRA functioned in this "freewheeling era" of the 1960s and 1970s, their involvement was *ad hoc* and evolving in the moment and according to personality, place, and time. The reader is left with a sense of the contingent ways that historical outcomes are determined. What we walk away with then may be to attend carefully to the variety of relationships that are formed as a result of humanitarian work as the main determinant of the political consequences that ensue. This work is significant both for historical understanding and responding to the next crisis.

Goshen College JAN BENDER SHETLER

God's Law and Order: The Politics of Punishment in Evangelical America. By Aaron Griffith. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 2021. 335 pp. $35.

If the American public is finally waking up to its decades-long addiction to racialized mass incarceration, evangelical Christians now have a chronicler of the depth of their own complicity with the racist carceral binge. The headache is going to hurt. In his trenchant and carefully crafted history of American evangelicalism's relationship with law-and-order discourse and policy, Aaron Griffith argues convincingly that punitive prison policy and its devastating consequences were not merely a product of white Southern fear. They were shaped in part by theological voices steeped in individualism, a desire for respectability, and "color-blind" rhetoric that avoided any serious discussion of racial injustice.

At first blush, the author's implication that evangelical Christianity—especially in the work of Billy Graham revivalism—"planted seeds" that bore fruit in the emergence of a massive and racially skewed prison population seems a tad overwrought. This reviewer kept reading in part due to a measured skepticism about the actual impact of evangelical discourse on national penal policy. But Griffith is mostly careful not to attribute too much causal weight to evangelicals or their leaders. Indeed, one of the key takeaways from the book is its implication that even when evangelical leaders like Carl Henry and Jerry Falwell strove to be, in effect, "driving the bus" on policy matters, they were more often merely riding it—adopting and adapting popular sentiments in ways that helped them connect with their mostly white, mostly rural, and suburban audience, and thus expand their ministries.

Griffith reports that Carl Henry, as editor of *Christianity Today*, himself blessed the efforts of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and even made him a frequent contributor to the magazine, where the notorious law-and-order advocate promoted his Red Scare conspiracy concerns and thinly veiled racist alarmism about urban crime and disorder. Henry and his subsequent editor were well aware of the politics of respectability that Hoover's frequent presence could bestow on the journal and welcomed his theological-political harangues anyway. Of course, noting the bandwagon tendencies of such leaders does not relieve evangelicals of their burden of complicity in the creation of the carceral state. Providing a platform for Hoover's politically infused religious musings was a way of expanding the reach of law-and-order rhetoric even if it was hardly original. If anything, learning about the ways in which evangelical theology borrowed and adapted punitive ideology should provide conservative Christians with a sobering moment of reflection on the temptation to utilize the political zeitgeist for their own ends.

Not that all evangelical leaders universally agreed about crime policy. One of the strengths of the book is the author's examination of the variation across time as well as within the evangelical fold. Evangelical discourse about "law and order" was not "one thing" in the twentieth century. In the mid-century evangelical revivalism, a focus by leaders like Billy Graham, Tom Skinner, and David Wilkerson "on the conversion of criminals avoided a punitive approach" (55), writes Griffith. But even this more moderate discourse "planted seeds for later evangelical enmeshment with law-and-order politics" (55) in the 1960s and

beyond. Wilkerson's *The Cross and the Switchblade* may have opened the door for white evangelicals to take a compassionate approach to converted former gang members on the streets of New York City, but what of all of those *non-converted* black and brown youth? When street crime began its long upward climb in the 1960s and protests and rioting erupted following the assassination of King, white evangelicals were quick to join Nixonian calls for law-and-order.

By the mid-1970s, capital punishment would become became a rallying cry for many white evangelicals, providing a "particularly powerful glue for conservative Protestants" (130) in Griffith's apt phrase. Whether or not vocal evangelical activism on matters of law and order provided the new evangelical movement the kind of political clout worthy of the title "a new sheriff in town" (131) may be up for debate. But evangelicals were certainly expanding the list of policymakers willing to give them a hearing. And by the arrival of the Reagan administration—first in California and then in Washington—evangelicals had obtained a new standing in the public arena, and their traditionalist support for punitive policies along with their reverence for the Christian duty of born-again law enforcers was partially responsible for their heightened profile.

In sum, Griffith's book is both a readable account of American cultural history and a valuable opportunity for conservative Protestantism to reckon with some of the cultural skeletons in its own closet. He is remarkably kind to Anabaptists, many of whom drank deeply at the wells of Graham and Wilkerson's conversionism. (I was quite young but I have a vivid memory of watching Erik Estrada play Nicky Cruz on a 16-millimeter film at a very special Sunday evening service in my conservative Mennonite church.) Griffith attributes evangelical advocacy for restorative justice, most publicly promoted by Chuck Colson's Prison Fellowship, to Anabaptist influence. But such advocacy was too often lost in the scramble to make sure the forces of relativism and lawlessness would not prevail. Evangelical Christianity, including the Anabaptists on the edges of the movement, will have plenty to ponder after their encounter with this important work of history.

Goshen College ROBERT BRENNEMAN

Where the People Go: Community, Generosity, and the Story of Everence. By John D. Roth. Harrisonburg, Va.: Herald Press. 2020. $19.99.

Where the People Go is a history of Everence, founded in 1945 as Mennonite Mutual Aid, an American Mennonite church-related financial institution that includes insurance, a charitable foundation, and a credit union. The book's title is derived from a quotation from Orie Miller, Everence's first president: "In this changing situation, the church means to go along with its members and to help them wherever in conscience they need to go" (14). The book was conceived as an institutional portrait, not a social history, as the author explains: "As an organizational history, this account of Everence focuses largely on decisions made by leaders and on the larger social, economic, and religious context within which

those decisions were made. Largely absent from this history is a clear sense of the experience of ordinary employees at Everence" (19).

The book consists of eight chapters. The first is on the theology and history of Mennonite mutual aid, and the subsequent seven are organized chronologically on the history of Everence from 1935 (ten years before Everence's founding) to 2020. The second chapter considers the context of the Great Depression and World War II. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on Everence's expansion and legal recognition. Chapter 5 examines the national healthcare crisis in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, and the declining support for mutual aid among Mennonites during that time period. Chapter 6 explores the emergence in the 1990s of the concepts of Christian stewardship and socially responsible investing, while the next chapter discusses the organization's subsequent expansion and its name change from Mennonite Mutual Aid to Everence. The final chapter describes the institution's present circumstances and explores its potential future in light of its 2016 strategic plan, including a most useful discussion of the organization's history regarding gender and diversity.

The first chapter, on theology and the practice of mutual aid, is an unusual inclusion for an institutional history, but makes sense in this context. The chapter extends from the biblical foundations of the practice in the early Christian church through the history of the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement, and culminates in a discussion of late- twentieth-century critiques of organizations and institutions. For the latter section, Roth draws on the works of Reinhold Niebuhr, Marshall McLuhan, and Theron Schlabach, concluding that "the arguments [critiquing institutions] are not fully convincing" for "it is ironic that the most vigorous critics of modern Anabaptist-Mennonite institutions almost always draw on historical perspectives and theological insights that were made possible only by institutions themselves—their church-related colleges, seminaries, academic journals, and publishing houses" (47). This seems an odd statement—are critiques of institutions only to be accepted if they emerge from independent scholars? Thankfully, Roth does not rely solely on this criticism, but offers two others. He observes that "few if any of the most vocal critics are inclined to step out of these institutional worlds and return to a premodern way of life. . . . A reflexive suspicion of institutions—whether by the rural traditionalist, the radical activist, or the academic theologian—can easily mask a nostalgic sentimentalism" (47). And he asserts that criticism of institutions "reflects a certain naivete about the fact that institutions of some form or another are woven into virtually every aspect of life" (47). Roth's tendency to give institutions the benefit of the doubt shapes his casting of the history of Everence as part of "a larger story of earnest, imperfect Christians seeking to bear witness to their faith in a changing world" (49).

The remaining seven chapters of the book follow a more conventional approach to institutional history, taking a chronological and top-down view of the history of Everence, and placing the organization in a broader political, economic, and religious context. Roth provides a useful and interesting overview of the theological and legal challenges Mennonites faced in grappling with their economic need for insurance and financial advice in various forms throughout the twentieth century.

Though the book itself does not clearly state so, it was commissioned by Everence in recognition of its seventy-fifth anniversary; Roth thanks Everence's marketing manager for "shepherd[ing] the logistical and conceptual details of this project from the very beginning" (20). It is also unclear who is the intended audience for this book. The basic overviews of Anabaptist origins and of varieties of North American Anabaptists/Mennonites peppered throughout, together with an absence of an index, suggest that it might not be scholars of Mennonite history. But an opening chapter on theology and a concluding discussion of *incarnation* versus *incorporation* suggest that it might not be the broader non-Mennonite public either. Everence president and CEO Ken Hochstetler, in his comments at a Goshen College talk, noted that the primary audience consists of employees and board members of Everence itself (not all of whom possess an Anabaptist-Mennonite background).[4]

Sources include the organization's records (both archived and in the organization's private possession), as well as memoirs, biographies, and archived correspondence of prominent Mennonite community leaders such as Guy F. Hershberger. In addition, Roth conducted almost fifty interviews with Everence employees and board members. These interviews are something of a missed opportunity, however: No mention is made in the footnotes of where, if anywhere, they are archived; nor is there any discussion of the interview methodology. Certainly an oral history approach was not adopted. By way of context, Roth does note: "Memory, of course, is not always as trustworthy as written documents; but these conversations helped make the records come alive and often added a valuable human dimension to the sometimes tedious information preserved in board minutes, official correspondence, and financial balance sheets" (19). But as oral historians such as Alessandro Portelli point out, memory, even when inaccurate, is as useful as any official record in revealing history—see, for example, his *The Order Has Been Carried Out* for a discussion of how misremembering the date of a Nazi atrocity in Rome reveals the meaning Roman citizens ascribe to that event. "Even when [oral sources] do not tell the events as they occurred, the discrepancies and the errors are themselves events, clues for the work of desire and pain over time, for the painful search for meaning."[5]

Institutional history is not a popular genre among scholars these days. Yet institutional histories are needed, both to preserve the history of an organization and assist in its exploration of possible futures. The board and employees of Everence will undoubtedly find this detailed work a useful contribution for their present and future endeavors.

University of Winnipeg JANIS THIESSEN

4. John D. Roth, Ken Hochstetler, and Todd Yoder, "GC Talk: Where the People Go: Community, Generosity, and the Story of Everence," Nov. 23, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYohYI9blhM.

5. Alessandro Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 16.

Interkulturelle Begegnung – Anregungen zu einem harmonischen Miteinander im Chaco von Paraguay. By Wilmar Stahl. Filadelfia, Paraguay: Asociación de Servicios de Cooperacion Indigena – Mennonita. 2018. 100.000 Gs (US $15.00).

This beyond-average-sized book (7.5 x 11 inches) is lavishly illustrated and printed on high quality paper in an appealing layout. The pages are set in two columns with bold and italics besides ordinary type face; chapters are colored alternatively between light blue and eggshell; boxes are inserted in contrasting color with questions for further discussion, in-depth study, and literature. The volume is the legacy of a theologically trained Mennonite cultural anthropologist, himself a Chaqueño, who throughout his life participated actively in intercultural encounters with indigenous people of the central Chaco area in northwestern Paraguay. The rich experience that Wilmar Stahl acquired during his more than forty years of working with the Filadelfia-based Asociación de Servicios de Cooperacion Indigena–Mennonita (ASCIM) in seminars, projects, and interethnic dialogues is apparent both in the plain and gentle language used and the communicative style that seeks to engage the reader. The didactically well-presented materials, which are interspersed with numerous examples, also testify to the author's longstanding educational experience.

This is, first and foremost, a well-executed work-and-study book written at the request of ASCIM with a Mennonite audience in mind (which might explain why it is not published with an ISBN). But it is not just that. The author also wants to give "stimuli for living together harmoniously in the [multi-ethnic] Chaco of Paraguay," as the subtitle states, stimuli for a "happy coexistence" (296), which, ultimately, reflects "Shalom" (313).

The main body of the book is preceded by the unpaginated table of contents and a two-page introduction. The book consists of seven parts (11-315) divided into twenty-one chapters, all of which are broken down into subsections, followed by the author's vita, endnotes, captions, and bibliography.

The first three parts address anthropological and ethnographic basics like terminology, topics, and research methods, namely: (I) culture, ethnic identity, tradition, and change; (II) a cultural history of the Chaco; and (III) worldviews and values. The next three sections deal with topics of day-to-day interaction between the "Deutsch-Mennoniten" (as they used to be called), the indigenous people, and the Spanish-speaking Paraguayans in the religious realm (IV); religion of the Chaco people, Christian mission; school, healthcare, social organization (V); and in economic matters, such as ownership, subsistence, and labor markets (VI). The seventh part, titled "Interethnic Coexistence: Review and Prospect," is the study's climax, containing the key to understanding the whole. It is here where historical, economical, and other issues of multicultural coexistence in the Chaco are addressed head-on. These issues are wide-ranging. First, locals look upon Mennonites in the Chaco as invaders and conquerors even though they hold titles to their lands. Migrating from Russia and Canada Mennonites first settled in the unhospitable area and began cultivating it in 1927 after being told that the Chaco was uninhabited. Second, the Chaco war of 1932-1935 between Paraguay and Bolivia remains a traumatic memory for the indigenous populations of Enlhet,

Nivaclé, and Ayoreo, because they not only lost their traditional territories and hunting grounds but also suffered significant decimation by contagious diseases like smallpox brought into the region by the troops. Third, the war also brought with it an ever-increasing influx of Spanish-speaking settlers, which swelled further with the Trans-Chao highway, making the Latino-Paraguayans the largest ethnic group in the Chaco today. Since many are government employees, a growing impact of central bureaucracy is also felt. Finally, the economic strength of Mennonites as landlords, employers, and entrepreneurs causes tensions in their relationships with the indigenous people and Latino-Paraguayans. To overcome conflicts and common prejudices the author calls for engaging in joint interethnic projects, for competency in intercultural communication through dialogue, and for conflict resolution by mediation. He also advocates strongly for a biblically informed rethinking of lived multicultural convivence, especially with Christian humility. Uninitiated readers unfamiliar with the situation in the Paraguayan Chaco are advised to begin their reading in this section to better understand the topics addressed elsewhere in the book.

But the writer has something else in mind beyond pointing towards the need for competent intercultural communication. He also addresses vital issues of the Mennonite community in Paraguay, including how to preserve identity amid unavoidable cultural change brought close to home by being asked to integrate into the Paraguayan population as "Chaqueños"; to appreciate the democratic constitution of the country; and to abide by the laws of the country, particularly the labor laws, the foremost source for rising interethnic tensions. With the backdrop of the "Russian failure"—that is, the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies not succeeding in establishing satisfying relationships with the general public within 150 years—the Mennonites in the Chaco anxiously ask: "Will we be able to foster a harmonious interethnic convivence" (273f) like their religious siblings in Canada have achieved?

While Stahl repeatedly admires the adaptability of the indigenous people to changing circumstances he notices a respective reserve within his own community driven by economic prowess and self-esteem (236; 277). Chaco Mennonites worry about their identity and cultural peculiarity (67; 270; 293) and fear loss of privileges (298; 314). They are also skeptical of democratic ideas and resist the demand to become part of the unifying national culture (39; 96f; 100f; 293) even though they do not live in isolation any longer but interact continuously with the neighbors, the national society, and the globalized world (64). Stahl attempts to tame the fears of loss and ethnocentric (263; 277) uncertainties by advocating "Bikulturalität"—that is, dual cultural acquaintance (which one might see visualized in the alternate coloring of the book). He regards the art of dwelling in two cultures comfortably as a precious goal for living together in the multiethnic Chaco (302). Achieving dual cultural acquaintance, however, requires a high degree of cultural empathy, tolerance of differences, and cultural self-awareness coupled with a genuine desire for attaining harmonious coexistence (33). Schools will be the main means to achieve this harmony since they reach out to everyone in all the ethnic groups in teaching Spanish, Paraguayan history, and civil knowledge (161ff; 302).

As important as dual cultural understanding is for successful interethnic relationships it is even more so for maintaining one's very own existence, because cultural change and the search for identity are two processes within a larger project. That project organizes itself in dialogue by drawing on existing resources as well as newly acquired strategies for mastering existence (186; 244). However, the success of the project in the Chaco critically depends on *everyone*—Stahl underlines the word for emphasis—becoming culturally competent. By that, he means that everyone in every ethnic group must absorb the unifying national culture as second culture (302). That is what the author wants to communicate to his Mennonite compatriots as he states in their Low German / Plautdietsch in his concluding remark: "Daut es aulis waut etch saji wull" (315).

This is an important, honest, and courageous book. It certainly will be of great interest not only for Mennonites but also for the academic study of intercultural encounters in general; its use is enhanced by an index. The binding, though, gives cause for complaint. If used regularly, for work and study, the book soon falls apart, as this reviewer discovered.

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