

BOOK REVIEWS

Fügungen und Führungen: Benjamin Heinrich Unruh, 1881-1959: Ein Leben im Geiste christlicher Humanität und im Dienste der Nächstenliebe. By Heinrich B. Unruh. Mit einem Nachwort von Peter Letkemann. Detmold: Verein zur Erforschung und Pflege des Russlanddeutschen Mennonitentums. 2009. Pp. 509. € 24.00.

This is a much-awaited biography of Benjamin Heinrich Unruh (1881-1959), a pre-eminent Mennonite leader in the era of the world wars. His son, Heinrich, wrote it, with the assistance of other family members and an independently researched postscript by a Winnipeg scholar, Peter Letkemann. The first eleven chapters take the story to the end of the Weimar Republic and bear the earmarks of a distinctive Heinrich B. Unruh (1911-2003) style: scholarly to some degree, based on documents found in Unruh's own "Nachlass," federal archives and Mennonite archives. It is clearly written and committed to preserving his father's heritage as a revered scholar, teacher and leader.

The following three chapters deal with his life as a teacher in Halbstadt, Russia (1907-1914); the difficult years of World War I, the revolution and the civil war; and then the two years when his and his people's life seemed to swing between hope and fear. While treated only glancingly in the biography, Unruh's interest in politics and power would continue throughout his life and culminate in his actions with the Nazis during World War II. He thought the Nazis might succeed in the east and he would finally achieve the power he coveted. The Russian phase of his life culminated in his election to the Study Commission, which Russian Mennonites created to develop the ways and means of embarking on a mass emigration from Soviet Russia to some new home in a more hospitable country in the West. This took Unruh to Germany and on to North America, although he himself never joined the Mennonite migrations to the Americas but eventually settled in Germany.

What seem to be the most productive and active years of his service, 1920 to 1933, stretch from his departure from Russia to Hitler's rise to power in Germany. He devoted his work to organizing relief for starving Mennonites during the Russian famines and coordinating emigration from Russia to Germany, Canada and South America. With a handful of other leaders Unruh aided various relief agencies, such as the Mennonite Central Committee, and worked with the German government and international relief agencies such as "Brothers in Need," assisting Mennonites who sought to leave Russia, as some 20,000 eventually did during the course of the 1920s. In his Bechtel Lectures, historian Terry Martin has raised serious doubts about the wisdom of Unruh's relief campaign since his "political patrons included prominent Nazis," allowing the Soviets to later call this successful effort "Hitler help." This led to Stalin's campaign of repression and deportation, causing "Mennonites . . . to suffer terribly. . . ." ¹

1. Terry Martin, "The Russian Mennonite Encounter with the Soviet State, 1917-1955,"

While living in Germany during the Depression, Unruh's stipend from the Russian Mennonites had to be discontinued and his smaller stipend from the M.C.C. was not always delivered on time, or at all, forcing him to rely on his part-time salary from the Karlsruhe College, where he taught as an adjunct professor. Full-time employment was not possible as he had not taken out German citizenship. Unruh only became a citizen of the Reich in 1942, when he was already deeply involved with Himmler's Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (VoMi) and other race and settlement agencies of the S.S. and the Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories headed by Alfred Rosenberg.

In 1929 the attempted exodus from the Soviet Union by 13,000 citizens of German background, including Mennonites, created an international incident when they assembled in Moscow and demanded exit visas to Germany. Only 5,000 people were eventually allowed to leave for Germany, among them Mennonites and some Lutherans and Catholics. The rest were sent back to their colonies or exiled to Siberia, adding to the first wave of Gulag inmates condemned as "kulaks," or propertied farmers. How important Unruh's efforts were in getting the Germans to accept these people has been questioned by recent researchers who have suggested others, such as the German agricultural attaché in Moscow, Otto Auhagen, and the ambassador, von Dirksen, were more important than suggested in the present biography.²

For the period of the 1920s and 1930s Heinrich could have drawn on the voluminous written reports to add substance to his somewhat superficial account of these years. This is also true for the wartime years where, in writing the biography, Heinrich experienced great difficulties in coming to terms with his father's dealings with the Nazi Party, including Himmler's police regime, and the crimes committed by the Nazis in the name of the German people.

The chapter dealing with the Third Reich is undoubtedly the least persuasive. It was revised numerous times by Heinrich and edited by Unruh's two granddaughters, a niece and others. The result is a patchwork of impressions, observations and recitations of relatively insignificant events in the light of serious questions concerning Unruh's collaboration with the Nazis, his varied statements and his behavior during a period of close cooperation with Nazi party and government officials in Germany and in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union. In the minds of family and friends, Unruh's actions were justified as measures intended to help the Russian Mennonites survive.

The postscript and scholarly apparatus by Peter Letkemann is distinctively different from the earlier sections of the book. It includes an excellent summation of major issues of Unruh's concluding years and his life's work, using a wide range of sources. Unfortunately it fails to draw any significant interpretive conclusions, largely because its central thesis is weak and contradictory. The idea that Unruh maintained a position of "co-operative independence" (393) fails to

The Conrad Grebel Review 20 (Winter 2002), 37-39.

2. Erwin Warkentin, "The Mennonites before Moscow: The Notes of Dr. Otto Auhagen," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 26 (2008), 201-220; Erwin Warkentin, "Germany's Diplomatic Efforts during the 1929 Mennonite Immigration Crisis," *Mennonite Historian* 31 (Sept. 2005), 4, 8.

recognize that this was impossible in a totalitarian state. It also does not come close to describing Unruh's admiration for Hitler, his extensive relationship with the Nazi regime or his enthusiastic support for its programs and policies. Letkemann fails to note that the Gestapo's interest in Unruh was not because of any suspected disloyalty on his part, but because the secret police regarded him as an effective propagandist for the Nazi cause among Mennonites.³ Letkemann seems not to be aware of Robert Kreider's account of his visit with Unruh in the summer of 1938 where he reports Unruh's praise for Hitler when he compared Hitler favorably with George Washington and Menno Simons.⁴ This was long after the criminal elements of the Nazi regime had been revealed.

In one report Unruh referred to Hitler as "our glorious Peoples' Chancellor."⁵ On the surface this emotional adulation was typical of him and in tune with Hitler's popularity in the early years, but it also suggests certain elements of the picture Unruh was forming of the Führer that should have been troubling to Mennonite observers then and now. He thought of Hitler as a man of the people, especially sympathetic to people of the soil and with strong principles and personal religious beliefs.

The full significance of Unruh's three-day meeting with Himmler, after it appeared that the Nazis would defeat the Soviets, is poorly represented. The meeting was not about exemptions for Mennonites, but about Himmler's exploitation of Mennonites as examples of pure racial elites required to colonize the occupied territories and incorporate large areas of Ukraine into their proposed eastern empire. Attempts to minimize Unruh's membership in several S.S. organizations are transparent. Unruh joined the Fördernde Mitglieder der SS (contributing members of the S.S.) and made monthly financial contributions; he regarded himself as Himmler's representative in Himmler's capacity as Reichkommissar for the strengthening of Germandom. Unruh worked closely with officials of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (VoMi) throughout its existence. During the war Unruh also eagerly sought appointment as a government official in the Warthegau.⁶ Finally, he voluntarily testified at the Nuremberg trials in the

3. Unruh's controversial role as interlocutor for Mennonites in the Third Reich remains to be examined. An indication of the difficulties involved is a letter from the Gestapo in Berlin to Dr. Karl Götz in Stuttgart requesting details about B. H. Unruh. — Berlin Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt, Oct. 2, 1942: "In the course of discussing the community of Mennonites in Germany, the Reichsführer-SS reported that a leading Mennonite in Stuttgart, an old member of the party, had succeeded in recruiting numberless Mennonites for National Socialism by the expert use of appropriate means. At the same time the Reichsführer-SS indicated that you would be able to provide more details. I would be extremely grateful if you could provide the name of this leading Mennonite in Stuttgart and give us more information about his activities among his fellow believers." — U.S. National Archives/T-81/143/0181573.

4. Robert S. Kreider, *My Early Years: An Autobiography* (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 2002), 236-237.

5. B. H. Unruh, Bericht LXXIV (July 5, 1934) Vertraulich! CMBS/CFK/#18.

6. CMBS/C. F. Klassen Papers/#24 M.C.C. Reports and Correspondence, 1921-1946. Handwritten notes by C. F. Klassen in M.C.C. Executive Committee Meeting in Chicago, Feb. 17, 1940.

defense of a convicted war criminal, Werner Lorenz, the head of VoMi.⁷ He testified on the wrong side and evaded a direct question about the Holocaust.

None of this sounds like the actions of a person attempting to remain independent of either the politics or policies of a regime that had conquered foreign lands and suppressed its populations by use of force. Benjamin H. Unruh needs to be recognized as a collaborator with this regime in time of peace and war, not merely a well-meaning fellow traveler or cooperative independent observer. One cannot normally expect family biographies or histories to do this sort of thing, since they are by nature hagiographic. But now that the family account has been published and the sources and materials have been collected, Peter Letkemann could perhaps write a more balanced and critical biography as he has intimated he might do. He has already prepared a comprehensive bibliography of Unruh's writings and writings about him by others. All this is available to the general public in major Mennonite libraries and archives. This work alone is a significant contribution to the Mennonite historical enterprise.

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GERHARD REMPEL

Jumping Into Empty Space: A Reluctant Mennonite Businessman Serves in Paraguay's Presidential Cabinet. By Ernst Bergen, as told to Phyllis Pellman Good. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books. 2008. Pp. 204. \$11.95.

For any Anabaptist comfortable with a "two-kingdom" theology, holding an appointed or elective position in a secular government is an exercise in liminal reality. Such was the case for Ernst Bergen during his nearly four years in Paraguay's government, as he describes it in *Jumping Into Empty Space*.

The title illustrates the risk and reward for Anabaptist Christians willing to exercise discipleship in the borderland region between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this earth. "When we began five years ago," Bergen says in the epilogue, "we sometimes felt like we were jumping into empty space. Looking back now, I can see that the empty space was never bigger than the hand of God which held us" (174).

Bergen came to his powerful position as minister of finance from a separatist Mennonite culture in Paraguay's interior Chaco region. He recounts the journey to Phyllis Pellman Good, an American Mennonite editor and best-selling author. The style is somewhere between self-congratulatory memoir and autobiographical self-critique. Occasionally the language lacks depth and nuance, but this may be the result of Bergen's oral narrative—sometimes in Spanish, sometimes in German—being translated into English.

7. U.S. National Archives, RG 238, Case #8, Tribunal 1 US. vs. Ulrich Greifelt et al., Dec. 17, 1947, vol. 7 Transcripts, 2728-9. I should like to thank archivist John Thiesen of Bethel (Kan.) College for providing me with a copy of the transcript containing the Unruh testimony. When asked if he had known about atrocities Unruh answered that he had always been against anti-Semitism.

Bergen was a 39-year-old, highly successful businessman who had voluntarily run his businesses as “legal” in a country where most large firms did not. President Nicanor Duarte confronted Bergen’s two-kingdom theology directly, inviting him to join his government. When Duarte offered him the position of minister of industry and commerce, Bergen declined, suggesting that his background as a German-speaking Mennonite from the Chaco made him ill-fitted for the Spanish-speaking world of Paraguayan politics. “Yeah, yeah, that’s the way you Mennonites are,” Duarte responded immediately, adding, “You are very good at sitting in the bleachers watching a soccer game. You are very willing to criticize what’s wrong with the government. You throw rotten oranges at the players who make mistakes. In fact, you seldom applaud the good moves” (48).

Perhaps Duarte was sensitized to the separatist nature of Paraguayan Anabaptists because he occasionally attended the Spanish-language Mennonite Brethren congregation in the capital city where his wife, the first lady, Maria Gloria Penayo Solaeche, was a member.

The president’s challenge to the clear line Bergen had drawn between church and state set in motion a discernment process in Bergen’s hermeneutical community. He took the question to his congregation. “For my local congregation, this was a new and not-so-easy situation,” Bergen says. “The leaders had taken the traditional position of being basically critical about involvement in government” (55).

The result? “We can’t give a blanket endorsement for political activity,” the leaders responded, “but maybe there are times that it is okay. Public service should always serve others and should not be entered for any other reason” (56). Bergen accepted Duarte’s invitation and eventually became minister of finance, one of the most powerful positions in the Paraguayan government.

Once Bergen was handed the levers of great power, the characteristics of his empty space become clear. He had little spiritual or theological preparation for his roles. Furthermore, he had a low view of politics and an even more negative view of the secular press. But his liminal space—that slice of overlap between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world—was also a place of creativity and integrity. It might be compared to a swamp where river and solid land provide a muddy microenvironment that sustains flora and fauna not found in either the river or on the land.

Bergen describes a rudimentary *modus operandi* for that space (it was not really “empty,” it turns out) by drawing on a few simple Bible examples. “I did discover in the Bible that government is to seek the well-being of the people,” Bergen says. “As that settled on me, I wondered how to translate that idea into official language without being perceived as overly religious” (66). As he gathered together the people who would serve as his staff, Bergen imagined the process Jesus used to pull together his followers. “I remembered that when Jesus put his team together, he didn’t analyze who had the best public profile,” Bergen says. “He walked around the Sea of Galilee and looked for simple people with a high commitment to the cause. They didn’t have to have a high level of knowledge, but they needed to have a high level of commitment to the vision.”

By his own accounting, both the department of industry and commerce as well as the department of finance thrived under his leadership. The book includes reports from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund confirming the significant changes in Paraguayan economics by 2007.

For those comfortable with a two-kingdom theology, the danger of the liminal space is becoming acclimated to the kingdom of the world and losing touch with the kingdom of God. Only once does Bergen reveal—perhaps unwittingly—where this began to happen. Recounting a visit to Belgium, Bergen was upset with a staff member who did not get him the right hotel room (“a room beside the President’s room”) but “a poor room in another hotel.” Bergen publicly criticized the staff person; on the next trip Bergen had a room superior to the president’s—and was embarrassed by the excess (91). For the most part, however, Bergen’s four years in power transformed a simplistic view of government as evil: “The good guys are not only on one side and the bad guys on the other” (137).

Halfway through the book I stopped and wrote myself a note: “I hope this book is not a terrible example of the self-congratulatory white man explaining how he helped what he saw as a genetically inferior race govern itself.” After finishing the book and then reviewing my notes several times, I still don’t know. That evaluation belongs to someone with knowledge of the relations between those of northern European descent (Chaco Mennonites) and the mestizo population (90 percent of Paraguayans are descendants from Spaniards and the native Guarani). However, I note that Bergen’s narrative includes few, if any, references to Paraguayan Mennonites not of German descent. The primary exception seems to be the first lady.

But the notion of an “empty space,” in which God provides, can be instructive for any Mennonite population that becomes as powerful in their cultural context as have the Chaco Mennonites (Mennonites of all races total 1 percent of the Paraguayan population, one of the highest such percentages in the world): how to live in that slice of overlap between two kingdoms without becoming acculturated to the kingdom of this world.

Goshen, Ind.

EVERETT J. THOMAS

The Steppes are the Color of Sepia: A Mennonite Memoir. By Connie T. Braun. Vancouver: Ronsdale Press. 2008. Pp. 245. \$24.95

More than any other book I have read recently, Connie T. Braun’s *The Steppes are the Color of Sepia* left me asking questions about the nature of memoir and its relation to two other genres it traverses—history and fiction. Braun’s book makes a major contribution to the reconstruction of repressed memory of suffering and survival among Russian Mennonites and, coincidentally, but less clearly so, to the burgeoning field of Mennonite memoir.

Braun tells the story of three generations of Mennonites in Russia who struggled for survival on the vast prairie steppes of the Ukraine and Siberia: her grandparents, Jakob and Maria Letkemann; her parents, Peter and Erna

Letskemann; and herself. She divides the book into three parts: an introduction called "Promised Land," and parts I and II titled "Russia: A Pastor's Record of Repression" and "World War II: A Boy's Recollection of Survival." These parts correspond roughly to a reconstruction of her grandfather's memories of Russia and her father's memories of World War II. Interspersed throughout the book are helpful maps and evocative photos, both of which the author uses effectively to help establish another of the book's subjects: place. A trip with her parents and family to Russia and Ukraine in 2005 allowed her to suffuse the book with a poet's appreciation for landscape, fecundity and a "promised land" mythology, even as the same setting evoked her father's memories of cruelties endured under two of the twentieth century's harshest dictators, Hitler and Stalin.

Braun brings three extraordinary gifts to this tale. The first is passion and love of language. Her preface begins with a description of rivers where her father's memories flow: "along the river bank now and then are stretches of sugar-white beaches, various hollows where willow trees cast deep blue shade over fishing holes, and, further along, near the old quarry, high rocky ledges from where boys whoop as they slice, like blades of pocket-knives, through air and water" (ix). The second is a thorough comprehension of the relevant works of Russian and Canadian Mennonite history combined with literary and philosophical texts on the nature of memory itself.⁸ The third strength lies in conscientious detective work—uncovering deeply repressed and thus scantily recorded memories. She wants the truth, she deeply respects the documents and recorded history she uses, and when she imagines, as she often does, she "shows the work," to use Julia Kasdorf's apt phrase.⁹ We trust this author's voice, both for the narrative she constructs and the silences that remain within it.

As a descendent of Swiss-German Mennonites, I eagerly read this story for both its similarity and difference to my own. One thing that struck me is how inadequate our labels are for various kinds of Mennonites living in Canada and the United States today. Braun says in her preface that although her progenitors lived in Russia for a century, "we are not Russian and not Ukrainian. We are descendents of a migratory people, the Mennonites. We are survivors of dictatorship and war, and are now a Canadian family" (x).

The fields of Mennonite history and literature, at their best, illustrate the power of what Braun calls "peoplehood" to transcend the boundaries of time and space. They accomplish this feat well when they are the most particular. Braun never conflates the story of her family with that of the Amish or Mennonites in Pennsylvania or Indiana, for example,¹⁰ but she tells it in such a

8. See her fine essay "Silence, Memory and Imagination as Story: Canadian Mennonite Life Writing" at <http://www.mennonitewriting.org/journal/1/3/silence-memory-and-imagination-story/> for evidence of the scholarship that underlies her book.

9. "I love the essays that 'show their work,' in the words of my eighth-grade algebra teacher, the process more interesting than a flawless scholarly product" (xii).—Julia Spicher Kasdorf, preface to the 2009 edition, *The Body and the Book: Writing from a Mennonite Life: Essays and Poems* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2009).

10. Keeping the categories of different narratives and nationalities clear, while also showing what all Mennonites have in common, is a complicated task. Braun's diligent treatment of this subject stands in contrast to the recent humorous memoir of Rhoda

way that any descendent of the Anabaptists can recognize age-old issues—separation from the world, pacifism, family, community.

The kind of suffering detailed in this book is alien to many Mennonites of Swiss or Swiss German descent who, after escaping persecution in Europe, found land and freedom and have never lived under dictatorship. One of the questions history asks of us is, “Do I have the courage of my ancestors not to take up the sword, or not to recant my faith under the threat of death or imprisonment?” The complicated answers to these questions from those who lived with them under communism and national socialism in Russia and survived to tell the story are important contributions to twenty-first-century Mennonite identity—not only in Canada and the United States, but also in places where Mennonites have suffered more recently—Indonesia and Ethiopia, for example.

The book might have benefited from stronger editing. Even though the author’s lyric prose often captivates, occasional lapses occur. Sometimes the meaning is unclear: e.g., “At times, these distinctions of tense become blurred, but essential truths are sharpened” (xiii). Sometimes purple prose combined with conjecture seems jarring: “Was this pregnancy a whisper of hope to Jakob and Maria in the depths of winter’s hush?” (56). An occasional cliché—“new life emerges from brokenness and ashes”—in a dramatic place such as the end of the preface (xiii)—blunts the effect of a poetic description in the previous sentence.

These are small matters. But I am left with one larger regret. Ironically, it is the same regret the author has in relation to her grandfather’s telling of his tale in writing: “Unfortunately, Jakob did not reveal much of his interior life” (xi). I wanted more of the interior life of the author. We catch glimpses of her riding her bicycle in the suburbs. We can tell that she has academic training. But how have these stories affected *her* life? Her presence is strongly felt, but more in her imagination concerning the silences of others than in the impact of their stories on her. I expected more of Connie Braun’s own story. Her mother Erna’s and grandmother Maria’s voices were effaced by circumstance. Connie’s should ring out. Readers don’t even know if she is writing from the perspective of someone who claims the name Mennonite for herself. The author description uses the phrase “of Mennonite heritage,” which suggests, but does not confirm, that her location now is not inside a Mennonite community. She has a right to this story whether or not she claims the faith as her own, but she should claim her location now. Memoir promises insight and intimacy. It stirs curiosity in the reader that cannot be satisfied by biography of ancestry alone.

Finally, we know from a few details in the story (e.g., her father’s Italian leather shoes; allusions to business success in Canada) that his life and his family’s life changed drastically after immigration. The story of a “Mennonite memoir” should not end, like an old high school history text, with World War II, but should, at least in epilogue form, “show the work” that takes the present into the past and brings the past into the present.

Kalamazoo, Mich.

SHIRLEY HERSHEY SHOWALTER

First Be Reconciled: Challenging Christians in the Courts. By Richard P. Church. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2008. Pp. 230. \$19.99.

When did you last hear a sermon preached on I Corinthians 6:1-11? The passage is not found in the three-year lectionary cycle and is largely ignored by the modern Christian church. Indeed, the passage has always proved difficult for the church and has been honored more in the breach than in the observance.

Paul, writing to the Corinthian church, takes believers to task for suing each other in the civil courts. Why, Paul asks, do you “dare to take [your grievances against each other] to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it before the saints? Don’t you know the saints will judge the world? . . . If you have ordinary cases then, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? . . . In fact, to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather be wronged?”

Richard Church believes that this passage is meant to be taken seriously and applied practically. Church, an attorney and a farmer, has both a J.D. and a Ph.D. in theological ethics from Duke, where he studied the theology of John Howard Yoder under Stanley Hauerwas. Although he is not a Mennonite, he believes others can learn from Mennonites about how to deal with disputes, both within the church and in society.

Church begins with a story from *When Good People Quarrel*, edited by Robert Kreider and Rachel Waltner Goossen. The Quintelas, a Mennonite family, faced abusive and violent neighbors who made their lives unbearable. Supported by their church, they responded nonviolently even when they were physically attacked and their garage burned. At one point the church held a round-the-clock vigil at their house. In the end, however, the Quintelas were forced to move. They eventually filed and settled a lawsuit for the injuries they received—with their church’s approval. Church commends the process the Quintelas used, and the rest of the book explains why.

Church asserts that Paul was addressing two concerns in I Corinthians 6:1-11. The first was class divisions in the Christian community. The early church was one of the few institutions in Roman society to overcome class divisions, but wealthy members apparently continued to oppress the poor, in part through the use of litigation. Settling disputes within the church promotes equality. Second, Paul did not want worldly institutions to corrupt the church. By handling disputes within the church through forgiveness and reconciliation, Christians maintain a pure witness to the world.

The book examines the history of Christian interpretation of the passage. Augustine, representing the Roman Catholic tradition, counseled against pursuing claims involving worldly wrongs, but permitted litigation within the context of the canon courts. Luther counseled against litigation within the kingdom of God, but claimed that litigation was appropriate in the kingdom of the world. Calvin, himself a lawyer, saw civil law as ordained by God (Romans 13), and approved of its use. The early Anabaptists, with no pretension to civil power themselves, disapproved of any use of the courts by members.

The 1981 Mennonite statement on “The Use of the Law” was the culmination of a series of consultations on the topic, responding both to Reinhold Niebuhr’s midcentury challenge to nonresistance and to Mennonites’ increasing encounters with the law as they entered businesses and the professions. It affirms the legitimacy of law to bring justice and maintain order and also the obligation of Christians generally to obey the laws. Yet it also asks Christians to go the second mile and to not use the civil courts to settle disputes among themselves. Most important, however, from Church’s perspective, it calls upon Mennonites to turn to the church to discern when litigation is an appropriate course to pursue in a particular situation.

The book concludes with a thoughtful exploration of the role of the church in responding to litigation as the community of God’s people and God’s witness within the world. This section draws heavily on Yoder’s writings. The church witnesses to the reconciliation power of the resurrection. Law in the postmodern world maintains order in the absence of a common ethic. The church offers an alternative concept of justice based on repentance and forgiveness. Dispute resolution within the church is based on Matthew 18, aiming both to achieve reconciliation among brothers and sisters and to maintain discipline within the church. Conflict within the church is in fact a good thing—it can help us discern the movement of God—but it must lead to reconciliation and community. Ultimately, the church must determine when, and under what circumstances, litigation or other forms of conflict resolution might be appropriate for bringing reconciliation and justice. The 1981 “Use of the Law” statement comes closer to embodying this theology, Church believes, than any other statement on the topic.

Church’s book is the best statement I am aware of on the question of how Christians should approach litigation. The topic is barely discussed in law review literature, and I am unaware of a significant theological literature on the topic (although I do not follow theological literature).

Church holds up Mennonites as an example to other Christians. But where are we almost three decades after the 1981 statement? I am a law professor, my wife is a lawyer, and my son is studying to become one. I believe that the law has an important role to play in structuring society and in bringing justice. It remains clear to me that we must deal with conflict with another church member through the process Christ lays out in Matthew 18. But I rarely hear us talk in the church about when litigation is wrong or when it might be appropriate. Where in our decision-making is the centrality of the church for which we have been commended?

A particular issue we face is how insurance affects our use of litigation. I am aware of two situations in which Mennonites filed claims against other Mennonites as the only way to get the insurers to cover the catastrophic costs of a negligently caused injury. In both there was no breach of the relationship between the individuals, who understood this necessity. In a third situation, an attempt at a Matthew 18 process of forgiveness was aborted when one Mennonite followed his insurer’s advice against taking responsibility for an action that injured another and his pastor saw involvement in the confrontation inherent in Matthew 18 as beyond his pastoral role. The injured individuals had

the wrenching task of forgiving without the acknowledgment of wrong that could have eased their suffering.

The 1981 statement was issued in part to respond to the dissonance Mennonites experienced having accepted the purchase of insurance as ethically appropriate while remaining uncomfortable with litigation. As insurance pervades modern life we need to discern (1) when litigation is an important tool to guarantee that insurance we have bought actually compensates persons we may have harmed, and (2) when insurers interfere with the practices of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation within the church. This book sets before us an excellent explication of the history and theology that should guide our continued struggle with this issue.

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TIMOTHY STOLTZFUS JOST

Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas. By David Cortright. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press. 2008. Pp. 376.

To read through this epic history requires the discipline of the peace activist and the conviction, as David Cortright quotes Camus, that "words are more powerful." However, one is well rewarded by Cortright's work, which is a masterful contribution to, and indeed, a new cornerstone of, peace literature. The work is impressive: sweeping in its scope and meticulous in its detail. The style is somewhat dry but quite accessible, suitable for the university classroom as an excellent introduction to the field.

The work begins with a nuanced history of Western peace movements, from early pacifist societies and efforts at internationalism to fascism, disarmament and war refusal. Familiar events through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries are given fresh depth with Cortright's accounts of nonviolent responses to the threat and fact of armed conflict. His thoughtful reflections illuminate, for example, how a thin consensus between radical and conservative interests has sometimes had a significant impact on immediate circumstances, but without staying power. Cortright contextualizes key persons and movements as he reviews their ideas and social circumstances, and the settings in which they acted.

Space limitations make it impossible for the volume to provide the lateral perspectives that will be needed as the peace movement looks ahead. Although there is real strength in Cortright's coverage of the military industry, 9/11, the 2003 Iraq war and the emergence of global public opinion "as a superpower," the dots need more explicit connection in the context of globalization. The contemporary trend the author notes toward civil war, with a decline in international conflict, is coincident with the proliferation of cheap weaponry and communications technology, much of this developed with public funding from liberal democracies. Cortright points to Afghanistan and other cases where weaponry is found in the hands of enemy governments once battle lines are redrawn. But what of the same with nonstate actors? Many societies are increasingly weaponized and paramilitarized.

Cortright lodges his hopes for peace in the classic liberal or idealist tools of civic activism, international organizations, law and diplomacy, which in the context of gradual democratization are rendering states more willing to collaborate. However, peace movements and the neoliberal state are to be understood *only in conjunction* with civil violence, scantily considered in this volume. Low intensity warfare is often protracted and massively deadly, and may appear as a daunting postmodern leviathan with neither clear head nor tail. The war in Colombia is a case in point; such conflicts will fly under the radar of a peace movement and scholarship now increasingly in a rest mode with international warfare on the wane.

The second half of *Peace* shifts its lens to themes: religion and peacemaking, nonviolence, democracy, human rights, and social justice theory and initiatives. Here some Eastern ideas and practices are more fully explored—for example, the core principles of nonviolence within Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sufism. Cortright inquires briefly into Islamic minority pacifist sects and the principle of *salaam*. More gripping is his unpacking of *jihad* as rooted in the striving to overcome sin, submission to God's will and the pursuit of moral perfection, as understood by reformers who interpret *jihad* nonviolently. The Judeo-Christian tradition is considered with special attention to Catholic just war theories, Tolstoy, Rauschenbusch, Niebuhr, Yoder and Lederach. The book refers to the contrasting peace witness histories and practices of Mennonites and Quakers.

The book is scattered with little-known gems. One is Cortright's account of a 100,000-strong nonviolent liberation force once active in the northwest of present day Pakistan. Uniformed, highly disciplined and well-trained, the Khudai Khidmatgars ("servants of God") were the first nonviolent and unarmed army in history. Their charismatic Muslim leader, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, inspired and became a close ally of Gandhi in his struggle against British rule. The force was recruited on a pledge to abstain from violence, be respectful to all people, live a life of simplicity and serve the community. It was vital in the freedom struggle, leading demonstrations, boycotts, pickets, mass noncooperation, and village economic self-reliance campaigns (in conjunction with Gandhi's movement).

Cortright frames his grand project as a synthesis between peacemaking traditions. In deconstructing "pacifism," he seems to conclude that the term should be set aside as overdetermined to the point of uselessness if not meaninglessness. This is a disappointment to those he repeatedly dismisses as "absolute pacifists," in contrast to his own more "realist" or "pragmatic" stance. This thin vein of controversy offers a relief from Cortright's consistently objective tone (which leaves other voices to raise thornier questions), but it points to a difference that is far from semantic.

Weighty attention is given by Cortright to the question of intervention in cases of grave human rights abuses, with a focus on the Responsibility to Protect Commission (R2P), developed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. The success of this initiative, according to Cortright, has been in pacifying peaceniks by reframing the debate from intervention (raising fears of imperialism) toward protection. The author seems to concur with this "consensus" regarding the R2P principle. He suggests there may be no need to disband armed forces, because their focus is veering so substantively in favor of

constabulary and peacekeeping functions. This permissiveness for continued militarism is strangely at odds with his claim that the existence of nuclear armaments will almost certainly lead to their eventual use. Might peacekeeping's dependence on armed forces be used to justify extremely high levels of military training, research and arms production with the potential to be redirected at any time? Does not the use of military personnel for policing result in an intensification of militarism in policing, representing a step away from civilianizing, conflict transformation and democratization of social regulation?

Cortright sheds a more searching light on the elephant in the ivory tower: while peace scholars look at power in political realist contexts, he argues that they rarely address vested political interests and associated militarism. This is illustrated by Jonathan Schell's contrast between nuclear disarmament to "technical zero" versus the greater challenge of "political zero." One hopes that Cortright's identification of a key gap in research and analysis will stir scholars. Yet the chilly realist climate of political science and international relations departments has seen many peace scholars beat a retreat to scarce and poorly funded peace studies programs. Analysis from these interdisciplinary centers has been vital, but virtually silent from some perspectives, such as the pacifist political economy of the state security arena. One of the many strengths of Cortright's work, and an invitation to further scholarship, lies in his consideration of the divide between socialist and pacifist struggles, a question germane to these silences of academe. In short, for its insights and its challenges, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* is a most welcome addition to my bookshelf.

Canadian Mennonite University

PAMELA LEACH

The Work of Jesus Christ in Anabaptist Perspective: Essays in Honor of J. Denny Weaver. Edited by Alain Epp Weaver and Gerald J. Mast. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. 2008. \$26.95.

This is a festschrift for J. Denny Weaver, who has taught at Bluffton University for many years. A foreword by Myron Augsburger, a former president of Eastern Mennonite University, and an introduction by Gerald Mast, Weaver's longtime colleague at Bluffton, provide a good overview of the parts of the book (biblical studies, Christology, atonement and eschatology, ecclesiology, and Christian practice) and the essays in them. Some of the essays investigate Weaver's thought critically, and some of the essays accept Weaver's work as a beginning place from which ideas can be extended. At points, the coherent thread of the book threatens to come unraveled, reminding the reader of the Monty Python skit "100 Yard Dash for People with No Sense of Direction." They may all begin at the same starting line but they quickly take off in different directions. Ironically, this is almost a virtue since the best essays in the book are the ones that do not spend much time on Weaver's writings (which is not to say that doing so is not worthwhile). To be perfectly clear: Weaver has a lot to offer Anabaptists in terms of stimulating reflections on our convictions, the stories that

we tell of our beginnings as a people of God, and the way of life that we take up as a community.

What I wish the book did better is create a space for the essays to engage each other. For example, Ray Person accuses Weaver of being careless and idiosyncratic in his reading of the biblical texts but there is no way for Person to interact with Christopher Marshall, whose essay does the kind of work that Person is calling for and is neither careless nor idiosyncratic. Moreover, Ray Gingerich has a very good essay on Anabaptism in which he also begins to work out a theology of power but it is different (though not incompatible with) the theology of power that Alex Sider is developing. Harry Huebner's essay ventures into an Anabaptist aesthetic theology that flirts ever so carefully with the Platonic language of participation; it would be intriguing to have Malinda Berry's essay, which uses the aesthetic and craft-bound imagery of quilting from a womanist perspective, intermingle with Huebner's and register dissonances or tangled knots that might arise between the two. What the book does really well, as a book, is to invite the reader to articulate his or her own response to Weaver and thereby to add a creatively integrating and constructive voice to the essays already present. The book succeeds, then, in being a catalyst for conversation and in creating a space for a conversation to continue outside of its covers.

In discussing Weaver's thinking and writing, the conversation at some point begins to revolve around two foci: atonement theory and the creeds. First, Does God demand a sacrifice of blood (warfare against enemies, crucifixion of Jesus Christ or final apocalyptic battle)? Or, to put the question in terms of its inference, Is God violent? And, second, What are we to make of the creeds since they seem to be silent with respect to the prophetic and shalomitic politics of Jesus of Nazareth? Or, to put it more generally, What is our relationship with respect to important points of commonality in the broader Christian tradition?

Weaver insists that the God revealed in Jesus of Nazareth is not violent and that therefore we have a theological warrant to stand against all images of God as violent. This seems *prima facie* right to me, but interestingly it requires a high Christology; it needs the warrant that Jesus of Nazareth reveals God's identity to us because Jesus of Nazareth *is* God. So far, so good, although I am not sure that Weaver fully appreciates the high Christology from which his position could benefit. At the very least, a high Christology in the service of a Jesus-centered nonviolence would counter the ways in which Constantinianism has corrupted the creeds.

Weaver does have a point in placing quotation marks around the creeds: they have in fact been used in the service of Empire. But it seems to me that he does not consider the possibility of using the creeds as leverage for something like his own position. Much of the conversation around the creeds (and "law," "rights," "sovereignty," "election" or any of these sorts of terms) would benefit from an up-front awareness of their political ambiguity or instability. It makes all the difference in the world whether they are used by those in power, in the center of things, to control the unruly margin, or whether they are used by the those who are (relatively speaking) not in power, not in the center of things, in order to gain a hearing. "God has a plan" means something different when it is uttered by the slave-owner rather than by the slave. I see no reason why the Nicene Creed's

“We believe in one God . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ” cannot be inflected prophetically, or redeemed.

Issues of the atonement are very like the issues of what to do with the creeds. Clearly, if God is like a nasty schoolmaster in a Dickens novel, bent on destroying the souls of his miserable pack of boys by punishing them with successive raps over bare knuckles until blood flows freely, all for failing to conjugate “amo” and carried out in the belief that as long as there is punishment there is order, then we have ourselves a grade-A theological problem. But substitutionary atonement need not be taken that way: the dative in “he died for us” is open to redemptive inflection. What I mean is that one can read the sacrifice of Jesus as having a point and a reason. Jesus died for us (for our benefit) so that we might have life, and in that sense it is a substitution because we were on the path of death: he died (for us or instead of us) so that we don’t have to.

Take the sermon to the Hebrews, which Weaver discusses too briefly (and relying too heavily on a few Girardian readings). How are we to understand the “end of sacrifice” language in Hebrews? It seems to me that there are two basic ways in which this can be understood: Either the sacrifice of Jesus was the final-because-necessary sacrifice, or it was the final-because-absurd sacrifice. One reading legitimates the sacrificial system whereas the other subverts it from within. An honest reading would admit that the tension is kept alive throughout the epistle: on the one hand, without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness; but, on the other, where sins have been forgiven, sacrifice is not necessary. (This is, of course, the scandal of Jesus of Nazareth, that he would forgive freely the blind, the paralyzed and the prostitute without requiring a sacrifice of blood). There is good reason to think that the subversion of sacrifice is what is being indicated. The author places us in the life-world of Israel on its journey toward the promised land, not yet having established a Jerusalem with its kings, its military and its temple. The temptation, and thus the warnings against the sin of falling away, is to end the pilgrimage. The path, however, is costly. It is a self-sacrifice, and in the case of Jesus it cost him his life. He is like us and he died for us. He shows us the way into God’s rest and in this he is greater even than Moses. “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased” (Heb. 13.15-16). In the end, you can’t get much more Anabaptist than that.

Eastern Mennonite University

CHRISTIAN EARLY

Sites of Violence, Sites of Grace: Christian Nonviolence and the Traumatized Self. By Cynthia Hess. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books. 2008. Pp. 169. \$60.

In this discipline-bridging book, Cynthia Hess points out that she is not the first to put “Christian theology and trauma studies in dialogue” so they can inform each other. However, she may be breaking ground by being the first to

put the Christian theology of nonviolence, as outlined by John Howard Yoder, in dialogue with the study of trauma and how people heal.

Hess calls Yoder her “primary conversation partner” in this venture even as she pushes the boundaries of his analysis of violence and Christian nonviolence in her review of Yoder’s theology in the first chapter. She argues that Yoder’s focus on external violence, pacifism and the refusal of military violence does not go far enough because he fails to address the reality of internal or internalized violence, which can turn the self into a site of violence or even an agent of violence.

To fill this theoretical gap, she draws from the writings of Martin Luther King Jr. and feminist theory to explain how violence becomes internalized “when the relationships and cultures that form us are violent” (25). She turns to trauma theory to explain how sites of violence can grow in the self as a result of external traumatic violence that creates internal physical, emotional and spiritual wounds.

Two long but well-written chapters review the literature on how trauma fragments the self, and on the theoretical perspectives on trauma healing. The latter is organized around trauma scholar Judith Herman’s framework: establishing safety, remembering and mourning (which Hess calls narrating the trauma), and reconnecting (which Hess calls retemporalization). The only omission in these splendidly lucid chapters is the current debate over whether healing requires repeatedly telling the traumatic story—the promising experimental techniques of energy psychology appear to provide rapid, lasting release of trauma symptoms and healthy cognitive reframing with a minimum of talk.

The last three chapters provide a thoughtful interweaving of the two disciplines and identify concrete ways a theology of nonviolence can help to transform sites of internalized violence into sites of grace. The nexus and central tenet is that if nonviolence is the cornerstone of Christian faith, discipleship and mission, as Yoder claims, and if violence, according to trauma theorists, can become embedded in people’s bodies, minds and souls, then transforming that violence “must constitute an essential part of Christian nonviolence and an essential part of what it means for the church to be the church” (90).

Hess’s applications of how this is done range from the practical to the ideal. Running throughout is an emphasis on the positive potential of community, in particular religious community, in the three phases of healing. Trauma theorists cite supportive relationships as the most basic condition for healing. Hess acknowledges that the church is imperfect, so that at times it is incapable of providing the level of support trauma survivors need. Nonetheless, she contends that the church still can be a healing resource, “just by being the church.” What does she mean by this phrase, which she uses repeatedly? To define it, she turns to Yoder’s writing, with her own extensions:

The church is a voluntary communion with a confession of faith and commitment to discipleship forming the foundation of communal membership that is based on love, accountability, trust, agency and responsibility through the work of the Spirit.

The church is an egalitarian community where power is shared and the gifts of all are honored.

The church is a witnessing community. Here Hess goes beyond Yoder's emphasis on witness to the external world and points out the need also to bear witness to the laments of those within the church who have experienced violence.

These qualities form a liberating corrective to coercion, powerlessness, isolation and other negative characteristics of traumatic violence. In addition, Hess asserts that religious communities have many other resources that the trauma literature identifies as integral to healing. For example, she devotes several pages to outlining how the Gospel narratives that are embraced and embodied by the Christian community can play a part in helping people form a new identity through joining with other members in embracing the communal stories of hope. Rituals and caring listeners are also resources.

When the church lives out its calling, one result is the formation of a community that creates nonviolent people. This is an integral part (but not all) of what it means for the church to be the church (142).

Hess provides a valuable theoretical framework and concrete ways the church can move more consciously toward being a site of grace for those who have experienced trauma. Her emphasis on the communal and spiritual as important resources for healing serve as an antidote and needed addition to Western trauma theory and clinical healing practices that lean toward the individualistic and often leave out the dimensions of soul/spirit. Her theological approach to those who have experienced trauma is wholesome, deep and gentle (yet without sentimentality) compared with some theological approaches that offer spiritual platitudes and saddle trauma survivors with guilt for their symptoms.

Little explicit mention is made of those who perpetuate the violent acts that lead to trauma in others: they also need sites of grace. These individuals have usually suffered trauma themselves. It is a daunting standard and challenge to which Yoder and Hess call the church, both in general and in regard to trauma survivors. At times, the effects of trauma can manifest in behaviors that are hard to understand, deal with and even link to traumatic events. Taking seriously the call to be a healing community is not for the fainthearted.

Hess's book is based on her Yale University doctoral thesis in theology. Although a good text for seminaries, the scholarly style will, unfortunately, limit readership. So will the price. Yet the message of the book is timely given that many Christians continue to be deceived by the myth of redemptive violence, that abuse and domestic violence remain serious issues, that veterans are returning from battlefields and that refugees who have fled violence have moved to our communities. Thus the subject begs for both a more popular style that invites a wider audience and for a more detailed treatment of the ways that "the church can be the church." More broadly, perhaps such a book would also contribute to discussion and study in our churches of what nonresistance, pacifism and nonviolence can incarnate in our lives given the political, social and moral challenges of our time.

War in the Bible and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century. Richard S. Hess and Elmer A. Martens, eds. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbraun. 2008. Pp. 155. \$34.50.

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Rev. Ian Durie, one of the participants in a conference on war, terrorism and the Bible held at Denver Seminary in 2004. The conference was co-sponsored by the Association of Christian Conferences, Teaching and Service and the Biblical Studies division of Denver Seminary. Durie was a retired major general commander of the British Artillery Group in the Persian Gulf War of 1991. He was invited to speak in keeping with the association's practice of sponsoring international symposia in military ethics with officers from within the military of both the U.S. and Great Britain.

The authors of the eight fine essays collected in this volume represent both pacifist and just war views. The first and last essays, by Miroslav Volf and Glen Stassen, both contend that New Testament Scripture, especially Jesus, contributes to peacemaking (Volf) and points us toward transforming actions that lead to peace (Stassen). Volf develops his persuasive argument by taking on several influential writers (Mark Juergensmeyer, Maurice Bloch, Regina Schwartz, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Jacques Derrida) who argue, from either a violent God image or violence in creation, that violence is embedded deeply in biblical thought, and therefore Scripture, even religion generally, generates and justifies violence. Volf exposes these arguments as flawed; they misuse Christian faith. Concurring with Scott Appleby, Volf contends that "thin" religious experience often does promote violence, but that "thick" religious commitment and practice forms people to "play a positive role in the world of human conflicts and contribute to peace . . ." (15). Stassen's contribution is proforma, in keeping with his transforming peacemaking initiatives and "ten steps to abolish war." The distinctive strength of this chapter, concluding the book and coming after essays that take up "just war" considerations, is an engagement of his transforming initiatives and steps to abolish war with specific recent conflicts in the Middle East between Israel and Hamas, as well as wars elsewhere.

The chapters (2 and 3) by Hess and Martens address "war in the Old Testament" and the Old Testament's contribution to shalom-making. Hess describes the varied portrayals and types of war in the Old Testament. Ultimately, war must be understood within God's cosmic fight against evil. The diversity of war-types prevents ready use of Old Testament texts to address the ethics and constraints of war today. Both Hess and Martens note the "divine warrior" motif, but miss the Septuagint's startling translation of Exodus 15:3: "God crushes war." Martens approaches his "Toward Shalom" emphasis by "Point of Entry: Holiness, Righteousness, and Justice." He distinguishes between "the hard edge of justice"—to exterminate idolatrous populations for Israel's holiness—and "the soft edge of justice"—to compassionately seek to avoid violence (45-50). Both accept God's promise to fight for Israel and prerogative of judgment, the theological basis for the divine command that Israel trust God, not fight.

Daniel Carroll (chapter 4) focuses on the book of Isaiah to deal with the tension between realism and hope, in framing "Impulses toward Peace in a Country at War." He expositis "six woes" of judgment (Isa. 28-33), highlighting the hope prophecy (32:1-8) that anticipates a king who will rule in righteousness and justice. The miraculous events of Isaiah 36 prove Yahweh, not Sennacherib, to be the "great king." Influenced by life experience in Guatemala, Carroll says that what we as *Christians* should learn from these prophetic texts is "faith in God in the context of war," rather than taking on Niebuhr's agenda "to ascertain how nation-states should best respond to and limit conflict in the world" (75); and Christians should choose the "better path of peacemaking" rather than "participate in war" (78). Christians' unique *identity* and *mission* must guide our thinking and action.

Chapters 5-7 deal with just war analyses. Daniel Heimbach addresses the difference between just war and crusade, querying whether a regime change is a just cause for just war. The U.S. invasion of Iraq, a year before this conference, raises new questions: can President George W. Bush's rationale fit "just war" criteria or is it "crusade" ideology? Heimbach counters those such as Chuck Colson and Richard Land who argue that just war theory be stretched to include preemptive strike. Heimbach contends that when moral theory allows war in order to prevent atrocities before they happen, it is crusade, violating the *ad bellum* criteria for just war. However, he believes there was a just cause for the war, but not Bush's reasons. Rather, the just cause was Iraq's failure to live by the agreed terms of surrender in 1991. A *new* war was not justified, but rather a war to enforce earlier terms.

Tony Pfaff (chapter 6) takes up the issue of noncombatant immunity in the war on terrorism. Distinguishing between terrorism as a "criminal" act or a "war" act is his first step; he leans toward the latter. "[R]estriction against targeting civilians is called 'noncombatant immunity' and is central to Christian thinking on just war" (95). Further, "international law prohibiting soldiers from intentionally killing citizens of enemy states if they are not directly involved in the fighting makes moral as well as legal sense" (96). However, when terrorists hide themselves within a civilian population "noncombatant casualties may be permitted given the constraint of proportionality" (97). He later distinguishes between policing and Marine ethics: the *police* ethic uses the *least force possible*, while the Marine ethic uses the *most force possible* to kill (97). He takes up the distinction between criminals, enemies and terrorists, working out different moral responses to each, and concludes with reflections on "The Doctrine of Double Effect and Proportionality." He applies these to America's response to the terrorist 9/11 attack, and enunciates some important considerations, among which is that "America's . . . leaders must take care not to become like the enemy it opposes" (112).

Major General Durie's own essay (chapter 7) seeks carefully to define "terrorism." Having studied Bonhoeffer, Niebuhr, Lind, Ramsey and Yoder, Durie argues that the "state must be prepared to use force conditionally and in a closely controlled manner to deal with internal disorder and external aggression" (113). Christians have a part to play in this, though some may be called to be pacifists. Terrorism is the use of terror-inspiring methods that produce extreme

fear in governments or communities, or both (114). Durie takes up numerous fine distinctions, ending with a provocative notion: "terrorism is a potentially legitimate form of warfare, but terrorists never use it legitimately, and this is why it is not a justifiable means of resistance" (122).

These chapters (5-7) stretch a pacifist's thinking. They proceed from the assumption that just war theory ought to govern present war engagements, even a response to terrorism. The book delivers a pacifist-just war punch, both ostensibly in the service of peacemaking. It evokes critical thought, especially of the 2003 Iraq war and current U.S. war goals in Afghanistan responding to terrorist challenges. Hess and Martens are to be commended for bringing this book to print. It will generate lively discussion in churches, universities and seminaries where both pacifist and just war Christians interact.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

WILLARD M. SWARTLEY

Täuferium und Kabbalah. Augustin Bader und die Grenzen der Radikalen Reformation. By Anselm Schubert [*Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte*, vol. 81, Irene Dingel, ed.]. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus. 2008. Pp. 407.

In his Habilitationsschrift in church history at Göttingen University, Anselm Schubert has produced an interesting study that meets all the standards of professional history writing. It sheds light on a dark corner of early modern religious and cultural history—the bizarre, puzzling and somewhat repugnant world of apocalyptic conceptions that preoccupied the Augsburg weaver Augustin Bader in the early years of the Reformation, and ultimately led to his execution. This study is comparable to the much acclaimed book of Carlo Ginzburg (in its fifth edition in 2005) about the miller from Friuli who conceived of the world around 1600 as a cheese infested by worms, and fell into the hands of the Inquisition as a result of this cosmological extravagance. Another parallel that comes to mind is Guy de Ladurie's work, which has revived our memory of the Cathars of Montailou. Like Bader's, these are histories of an underworld that can be rediscovered only after laborious research and intricate argumentation has unearthed it from judicial archives.

The book is organized into two parts. First comes a biography of Bader (pp. 33-202), which will certainly remain the most reliable account of this odd individual for the foreseeable future. Next (pp. 203-306) there is an analysis of the apocalyptic conceptions that this layman developed in response to his day-by-day experiences. In the beginning of the book the state of the previous scholarship on Bader and Anabaptism is sketched, with its peculiarities and insufficiencies. The book concludes with an impressive summary of its accomplishment in discovering a symbolic world marked by a combination of elements of Anabaptism with the Jewish (and Christian) Cabbala.

Schubert shows how deeply Bader was immersed in the mystical and apocalyptic world of Hans Hut, an Anabaptist apostle influenced by Thomas Müntzer. Bader was elected to lead the Anabaptist congregation of Augsburg

(probably the most important Anabaptist congregation at that time) after many Anabaptist leaders were executed or driven away in the aftermath of the "martyrs' synod" of September 1527. Shortly afterward Bader had to step aside from his leadership due to controversies in the Augsburg congregation. When the date that Hut had set for the second coming of Christ passed at Pentecost 1528, Bader abandoned Anabaptism completely. Instead, he joined a small group of followers in wanderings between Augsburg, Esslingen, Strasbourg and the Ulm vicinity, expecting an imminent apocalypse. Stimulated by experts in the Jewish Cabbala, he moved his expectations of the coming of the Messiah to Easter 1530. On the basis of a vision by his companion Gall Vischer, he advanced himself as the messianic king whose rule should then be inherited by his newly born son. He gave a visual expression to Hans Hut's teaching of the three stages of the knowledge of God with the use of special costumes that he designed on the model of the traditional costumes of the estates of the Imperial Cities. These symbolic garments, aimed at a visible proclamation of Bader's message, introduced an egalitarian dynamic aimed at a millenarian reversal of the traditional hierarchy of estates. In the eyes of contemporaries, that amounted to a threat to the established order of estates. Particularly threatening was the fact that the proclamation of this egalitarian society was connected with Bader's preparation to assume messianic rule. He commissioned a goldsmith to produce the insignias of royal status: a golden crown, a scepter and a gilded sword, as well as a chain of office and other ornaments. This claim to authority by Bader, which was not, in fact, aimed at an actual usurpation, was connected by the authorities of Nearer Austria and the Swabian League with the intrigues directed toward the restoration of Duke Ulrich of Wurttemberg. It was construed as a political threat and prosecuted in an explosive trial.

Bader's turn to messianic ideology, not satisfactorily explained by previous scholarship, is clarified by Schubert in extensive and subtle research. He traces it back to the encounter in the vicinity of Strasbourg between Bader and a former Catholic priest, Oswald Leber, who instructed him in the basic conceptions and calculations of the end of the world of the Jewish Cabbala and its reception by the Christian humanist Hebraist Johannes Reuchlin. Leber maintained connections with Jewish scholars, particularly those of the important Jewish congregation in Worms. In this way Schubert has enriched Anabaptist scholarship with a component from religious history, presenting Bader as a "creative recipient" of ideas about the Cabbalah. Bader's ideas have generally been presented as the product of a more or less deranged mind; Schubert, in contrast, points to a productive combination of Anabaptist and Jewish beliefs. This combination, thoroughly discussed by Schubert, turns out to be not a foreign body in Bader's original apocalyptic thought but rather a confirmation of Hut's leading ideas in a changed situation. Schubert does not neglect to underscore the historical irony that the humanist Reuchlin, one of the most important jurists of the Swabian League, was the godfather of this reception of Jewish messianic teaching.

Schubert's biography of Bader takes its place in Anabaptist historiography beside the two excellent biographies that Klaus Deppermann devoted to Melchior Hoffman and Gottfried Seebaß to Hans Hut, although Bader is a lesser

figure than Hoffman and Hut in Anabaptism and the early Reformation, and it is not possible to derive such wide-ranging consequences from the study of his life for the renewal of Anabaptist scholarship as Schubert seems to claim. Although Schubert has presented us with a careful, empathetic and stimulating study of Bader and his following, shedding light on the interpretation of the Anabaptists and the radical factions on their margin, his analysis of the present state of the scholarship in this field is somewhat problematic. He outlines a rigid confrontation between theological and social history approaches, and offers his solution to this unproductive state of affairs. He launches a particularly sharp attack on the social history approach, saying that it reduces the unmistakable religious intention of the Anabaptists to a mere social function. That is simply not the case in the examples he cites. He misunderstands that here there is no attempt to contrast a social history reality, a “social history substratum” (27), or “the day-to-day world of social history” over against the “elite religion of theological history” (28). Rather the attempt is to find a way to illustrate the historical reality, the day-to-day world, as well as the theological ideas that arise in it and get their meaning from this reality and are not fully understandable outside it. This approach attempts the same thing that Schubert himself presents as his proposal to overcome the current impasse—that is, to bring the historical setting of the world into the analysis of religious ideas, and so in this way to come to a more adequate understanding of the religious or theological ideas of the Anabaptists. The revisionist social history of Anabaptism has refused to let itself be pushed into the false confrontation described by Schubert, and has already widened its perspective into the cultural history approach that Schubert demonstrates in this book. He makes a theoretical and methodological approach that is already being accepted and very welcome, and his book, both in its approach and its substance, has greatly enriched Anabaptist scholarship.

Hamburg

HANS-JÜRGEN GOERTZ
(trans. by James M. Stayer)

The Coat is Thin: Poems. By Leonard Neufeldt. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House/DreamSeeker Books. 2008. Pp. 99. \$12.95.

Leonard Neufeldt’s title tracks a polysemous coat throughout this book and further out into the community of texts. Inside Neufeldt’s collection, some poems suggest that the thin coat in the title refers to the poems themselves, which positions poetry as a paradoxical art form in Mennonite history: as clothing not quite adequate for the cold travels of immigrant and familial losses, and, a shade more positively, as the tattered but well-used linguistic and artistic cloth of culture. Outside of the text, the thin coat Neufeldt explores in Mennonite experience shares the classic Christian humanism of the thin coat imagined by William Butler Yeats in “Sailing to Byzantium”:

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless

Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress[.]

The soul sings similarly in Neufeldt's poem "Passing":

[. . .] our coats too thin; we sing and the wind
stronger now seeks our skin,
and through the skin our bones.

*Ich weiss einen Strom dessen herrliche Flut
Fliesst wunderbar stille durch's Land.*

[. . .] there are songs in which we live
forever, where the river flows
wondrously through our homelessness. (60-61)

In this passage, the thinness of the coat reweaves two threads: the vulnerability of homeless faith communities, and also its opposite—the ability to live and inhabit song, despite other forms of homelessness.

Earlier lines in the poem set up another kind of thin coat: that while the singing tradition helps the culture live, another approach to language in the culture is less life-giving. I understand the inherited reticence of the men who are the quiet in the land, as quoted from a husband in this poem about immigration experiences, as a kind of thinness of language:

At the evening table the father can't explain
his fear of finishing sentences,
fear struggling for words
like his aphasic neighbor
[. . .]

"My wife gave our children compassion, my father and I reticence." (57)

In one of the two prose poems of this book, a thin coat evokes the poignancy of young Mennonite men vulnerable to recruiting armies in Russia: the thin coat in this poem is the overcoat of the young Uncle Petya worn while praying "before being shot to death by Bolshevik recruiters" (39).

In the penultimate poem of the book, thin coats evoke Mennonite homespun down-dressing: "Admit that a loud-muttering heart can love / this day, its blue-eyed Siberian cold, / your ancestors, long winters in their bones, their frumpery of peace" (93-94). Again, this winter clothing reference functions polysemously, invoking both positive and negative valences: "frumpery" perceived as an outdated, unfashionable, outworn concept of peace, or intentionally dowdy clothing as an external sign of nonconformist ideologies, of nonviolence and simple living.

The organization of this book of poems suggests that, paradoxically, the thinness of poetry and language is not a problem, because fully rich, textured paradoxes and referentiality of meaning come through geography and time, not only language and related arts. The sectional divisions show an alternating dialogue among history and geography, nature and culture: "West of Time is Place," "The Coat is Thin," "The Cold War and After" and "Where We Find Ourselves." For this reader, the final section contained the strongest poems.

"Where We Find Ourselves" is not in some single place or essence, but distributed spatially and historically.

In a poem taking the dialogical form of an e-mail exchange, humorously entitled "Exchanges Among Elders," the images exchanged tend to get at how executives see the current order as a plantedness, an unchanging "natural" order. Neufeldt generously lets the executives develop a lovely image, when they make the status quo comparable to "a row / Of plants being held by earth, / A bird by sky" (85-86). At the end of this dialogic poem, the self of the poet disappears: the poet remembers playing violin, and losing a sense of a separate self to the music, and then feels "the poet too disappearing" into memories from traveling in Izmir, old Smyrna and a synagogue of Sardis (88). The executives ultimately argue for planting one's self in origins; the poet seems to be enacting forms of change.

Perhaps the most dialogical poem is "The Thesis on Plagiarism" (89-91). An eloquent argument for building self among a larger community of texts, it carries on a dialogue with the Canadian Mennonite author Rudy Wiebe, and thus addresses itself as an apostrophe to "you." "You" refers to Wiebe, but "you" also means "you" the reader, addressing the audience personally. The theme of the poem is thus enacted as the reader reads: the self comes to exist in relation to influence from the community of texts that form identity in the complex act of reading: "how can anyone turn a page / and remember who he is and when / he became that way?" (90). The self becomes itself in some sense in plagiarism, by reading and absorbing human exchanges (and thus, not inside the self by itself).

The final poem, "Annunciation," shows either clouds or a stream of postindustrial effluent offering an image in the sky rather than an angel or a nameable presence offering a speech. The image offers a very Mennonite-themed annunciation—a message of peace seems to be the annunciation rather than a message of an individual to be born: "a white ribbon of peace unfolding wings." The biblical world of shepherds and flocks is described as "slipping behind the green fringe of another / world" (95). This is the most visionary of the poems in the book, and like "Thesis on Plagiarism," it alludes to worlds of ideas beyond itself, making the poem a space where biblical texts and times slip behind a natural and then cultural set of landscapes. I see the ultimate turn to nature in Neufeldt's works as a sort of nonsectarian, nonconforming Emersonian process that works at understanding origins as a broad matrix. This final poem also alludes to Yeats's poem "The Second Coming," a prophetic voicing of impending paradigm change away from the perception of a centered, stable civilization based in Christianity toward a world characterized by multiple, anarchic systems. Yeats's famous lines that "the center cannot hold" and "what rough beast, its hour come round at last, / Slouches toward Bethlehem to be born" are evoked by Neufeldt's sense of worlds slipping behind worlds and the poetic annunciation's last lines: "a white ribbon of peace unfolding wings / and drifting toward the center as if to stay" (95).

Neufeldt's poems meditate on a range of literary, cultural and religious influences and even large-scale cultural change. The strengths of the poems lie more in their development of images that drive ideas, than in their lyricism or sonic texture. I can feel the poems wanting to be essays. The sadness and

seriousness of the poems speaks more strongly than the joy and humor that is somewhat understated in many cases. I can feel their disciplined and perhaps inherited reticence in finding a poetic structure and form.

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Paper House. By Jean Janzen. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books. 2008. Pp. 74. \$9.95.

Readers of Jean Janzen's poetry will, at first glance, find familiar ground in *Paper House*. Here are poems of Mennonite immigration, travel, family, art, love (I've said before and this book reaffirms it: no one writes about married love as honestly and beautifully as Janzen does). Like the poems in Janzen's three previous books, there's a quiet, luminous ecstasy to the images—not unlike one of her favorite painters, Vermeer, whose domestic paintings of women form the structure of Janzen's 2000 book, *Tasting the Dust*.

But while *Paper House* may still call up her Mennonite ancestors (her great-grandfather and great-grandmother, buried on opposite sides of the Atlantic; and her uncle, "the one who dared to leave"), and still roam the world a bit (to the Netherlands and Krakow), this is mostly a domestic book, set in the everyday North American world of children growing up, war, accident, disease and aging, school and church. The familiar world is beautiful, but "with its edge of terror," and often the speaker of these poems finds herself negotiating these kinds of conceptual opposites. In "Architecture of Falling" the scene at first is simply the sun coming up and shining on a house:

This house is married
to its shadow. Every morning
the stretch of angle and roof
over the clipped lawn, the slow
rise, braced and upright
into the bright unity of noon.

Obviously here and throughout the book, houses are more than just houses. This house, like the paper house of the title, is a mirror of our lives, substance linked to the insubstantial. The effect is a little like a time-lapse film of a flower rising from the ground, blooming, then fading—an allegory of life in eighteen lines. The sun rises to its apex, then starts its descent over the house, which is, like all of us, a little damaged:

floorboards
creaking, dry rot spreading
under the eaves. Cyprus leans
into the roof tiles, strokes
and loosens them. For falling
is the life of house and shadow,

the light holding their vows
as they become one.

This kind of “marriage” is at the heart of *Paper House*: how our houses and bodies are linked to their inevitable deaths, but miraculously held and rescued by breath/spirit/light.

One of the issues of the book is whether language—poetry itself—is adequate to the job of describing the mysteries of body and soul. In “The Heart of It” the speaker cries out:

What language shall I borrow
to speak this doubleness
of clinging and letting go?

And in “Penitential Psalms” the poet acknowledges that

I have nothing, then, to own
or guard, not even these words,
my hand loose on this pen,
which marks a trail on a white
field owned by no one, not even
you, reading this, you with your
borrowed breath, the stars far above.

In the end, the answer to the poet’s dilemma is not in art or history, but in meditation on the language of theology. The table of contents itself almost reads like a credo: “Invocation,” “Creed,” “Thy Kingdom Come,” “Intercession,” “Penitential Psalms,” “Five Lessons on Piety,” “I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body,” “Communion Box,” “A Catechism.” One could trace the weaving of any one of these ecclesiastical concepts through *Paper House*, but communion especially becomes one of Janzen’s central images to answer the mystery of mortality.

An act of communion opens both sections of the book. In “Invocation” the speaker visits a Frisian farm where they “still keep cows/in their houses, down the hall.” That night she dreams of “a congregation of cows” sharing her childhood house,

All of us
fed and washed under one roof,
singing together at dawn,
our longing and need rising
into the rafters.

In “Communion Box” when the speaker lifts her communion cup, the revelation is that we are not alone in the world:

Look, your hand is everywhere
lifting one cup, no,
a hundred, or thousand
in every direction. Drink now

with all the others who
 this day lift life to their lips.

Finally, in "Paper House," the long, beautiful poem that ends the collection, a child's cardboard playhouse "of paper and paint" presages the brick house where the speaker now lives, "shelter for decades,/yet in an earthquake//could fall."

In this fragile-seeming copy of the playhouse, the speaker and her husband have made a life:

Here is the table of coming and going,
 Here is the bed of beginning and ending.

Here is the doorway and the vine
 Where the hummingbird weaves her cup

Here, too, "Our children walk away/ through the walls./Can you hear them?" Here, too,

Our marriage
 light as a page
 a script of skin
 reading skin
 chapters glued
 together

the book thickens
 as it lightens
 one last breath
 and it floats
 out of reach

There's hard resignation in these lines, the speaker "turning the pages" of her life, not knowing whether she hears "a sob—or is it laughter." Surely there's despair just over the horizon, the sad "letting go" after the "clinging." But the poem's final sections do not despair, but rather answer with images of communion, resurrection and praise. All those "strangers" who have entered her life, "even friend, spouse, child" (and we as readers are included here as well) are invited to a final communion:

Here is a cup and chair.
 Here is spoon and knife.
 I do not know you, but I
 have made soup and bread.
 You and I eat the same light.

Janzen invokes the Magi more than once in *Paper House*, and the book itself seems a mirror of their waiting and searching. But the final lines of the book leave no doubt that God has been in the house, so to speak, all along, hidden in the ceiling cracks, the mortar and in the poet's hand, which is now both "clenched and open," the opposites resolved and embraced.

BOOK NOTES

Amish: The Way of Life of the Amish in Berne, Indiana, with a CD of Amish Hymns and Folksongs. By Brigitte Bachmann-Geiser; trans. John Bendix. Rockland, Maine: Picton Press. 2009. Pp. 246. \$37.50.

This book is a translation of the author's 1988 German-language volume on the Adams County, Indiana, Old Order Amish community, which in turn grew out of the author's field work in the settlement between 1976 and 1987. The English edition includes some updates to the footnotes and bibliography. The book is arranged topically, with chapters on clothing, church life, work and occupations, food, games and entertainment, marriage, architecture, childhood, holidays, aging and death. The text gives special attention to the Adams County Swiss dialect, and frequently provides quotations in Swiss speech with English translation. The book comes with a compact disc recording of Swiss Amish yodels sung by Fannie Klockner-Schwartz, who was raised in an Amish home near Berne. The yodels alternate with short commentaries by Klockner-Schwartz, in Adams County dialect, on aspects of Amish life and childhood memories.

"Follow Me": A History of Christian Intentionality. By Ivan J. Kauffman. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books. 2009. Pp. 251. \$30.

Ivan Kauffman, a founder of the Mennonite-Catholic dialogue group Bridgefolk, offers a history of Christianity told as the story of discipleship communities, both celibate monastics and lay evangelicals. The first four chapters survey monastic intentionality from Anthony and Benedict, through Martin of Tours and Cluny, to Bernard of Clairvaux and Martin Luther. Kauffman concludes with reflections on the monastic legacy, especially that of Francis. The second half of the book surveys lay renewal movements from the second century, through the medieval Waldensians and Hussites, to the Anabaptists and Pietists. Reflections on the evangelical legacy focus on the ways a "prophetic minority" has often "invented the future" (199). A concluding essay, "Meeting at the River," invites further interaction between these historic streams: "The Church needs its evangelicals, the evangelicals need their Church, and the world needs both" (227).

Transplanted German Farmer: The Life and Times of Christian Iutzi (1788-1857), 1832 Immigrant to Butler County, Ohio, in His Own Words. Neil Ann Stuckey Levine, ed. Trenton, Ohio: Friends of Chrisholm Historic Farmstead. 2009. Pp. 253. \$20.

This book offers primary and secondary sources related to an Amish Mennonite farmer, Christian Iutzi, and his wife, Maria Sommer, who moved from near Melsungen in Hesse to Butler County, Ohio, in 1832. The book opens with an essay by Steve Bartels on nineteenth-century agriculture in Butler

County, followed by editor Levine's biographical sketch of Iutzi. The bulk of the book is annotated translations from Iutzi's journal (May 1812-December 1825, and April 1832-March 1856) and from his financial logbook (1827-1857). The sources include rich material of farm economy, family and church matters, and observations on civic and community life. Also included, and of special interest to family and local history researchers, is a five-generation annotated genealogy and a descriptive roster of people mentioned in the Iutzi sources who do not appear in the genealogy. The book has indexes of place and personal names.

Les Houttériens. By Marie-Thérèse Lassabe-Bernard. Paris: L'Harmattan. 2008. Pp. 341. €22.

Lassabe-Bernard, who has previously published works on the Amish (notably *Les Amish: Etude Historique et Sociologique*, 1999), offers an introduction to Hutterite history, beliefs and society. The historical section (chapters 1 and 2) presents sixteenth-century Reformation context and Hutterite origins—drawing especially on Werner Packull's 1995 interpretation of Jakob Hutter—and Hutterite migration from Moravia through Eastern Europe and, eventually, to North America. The next chapter focuses on Hutterite theology and spirituality, especially the values of community, humility, *Gelassenheit* and separation from the world. Three chapters then detail the social structure of today's Hutterite colonies; gender, family and age cohort roles and expectations; and matters related to population growth and defection. The book concludes with a discussion of contemporary challenges, such as hostility from neighbors, formal education structures, colony life finances and debates over spiritual renewal. Five appendices reproduce sixteenth-century documents.

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